

★ Commonalities Among Families of Color ★

- ★The primacy of the group or family over the mainstream emphasis on the individual is extremely important.
- ★Although the structure of the United States family is rapidly changing, the emphasis in policies are still based on the assumption that the nuclear family is most ideal. All of the families of color are marked by some type of extended family structure.
- ★In United States society, biological parents have ultimate authority over children; in families of color, that authority may not be vested as much in parents as in elders or others viewed as having authority in the family structure.
- ★There are high levels of reciprocity and responsibility for those outside the nuclear family structure in many families of color.
- ★The focus on interdependence rather than the mainstream goal of independence is a significant difference.
- ★The high levels of spirituality and its importance as a part of the family system and values is often not taken into account by mainstream agencies and policies.
- ★Due to the emphasis on extended family, the composition of families of color may vary more over time in regard to members of the household than the mainstream nuclear family.

Source: *Cultural Competence Train-the-Trainer Manual*, Pennsylvania CASSP Training and Technical Assistance Institute, 1995.