

CAB Corner: Language Justice

When providing trauma-informed services and educational resources, linguistic justice and cultural competence is highly encouraged to be at the forefront of your practices and messaging. Lack of translation or poor translation quality can affect individuals understanding of critically important information. Messages that are predicated on the values, beliefs, and practices of homogenous communities are less resonant, confusing, and can even be offensive to people from diverse backgrounds and communities. Communities may have preferred or popular communication channels that should be accessed to ensure that affected populations receive them. A range of communication methods from paper to audio to video allow providers to reach all individuals from a community no matter literacy, digital literacy, hearing ability and more.

While language access is critical to quality care and effective and equal outcomes in all services, it is important to know that certain services that receive federally funded are obligated to provide interpretation and translation. You can reference the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care [here](#). A reminder of the legal regulations for federally funded organizations can be found [here](#). You can also visit the U.S. government's Limited English Proficiency Working Group website [here](#) for resources and information to address language needs for individuals with limited English proficiency.

As you continue to think about how you can best frame your messaging and services to the community you are working alongside, we recommend using the process of Cultural Validation and Translation review. This allows for co-created community messaging in which bilingual, bi-cultural community members ensure materials are:

- **Relevant** – materials informed by the respective community are likely to have greater impact.
- **Accurate** – translations that are reviewed are more likely to have an accurate end product.
- **Accepted** – accurate and relevant materials help increase trust between the recipient and resource/service provider.

You can find the **Cultural Validation and Translation Review** toolkit [here](#) for more guidance. Language Justice affirms all individuals' right to understand and be understood in the language and in the way(s) in which they feel most comfortable and empowered, and as such, is central to equity in services and outcomes.