

# How to Create a Culturally Sensitive Project

Now, you have an idea of which minority group you want to work with and their needs, how do you make sure that they can enjoy the health fair and benefit from the activities?

**Remember to be culturally sensitive! Consider the following:**

## 1. Does your audience speak English as their native language?

If they are immigrants or refugees, they might not be able to speak English. In that case, you should have copies of the print materials in their language, and invite interpreters to the health fair. It is *extremely important* for enough interpreters to be present, especially if there are clinical screenings and presentations by speakers. Make sure to also have signs posted at the health fair in both English and the primary language(s) of your health fair attendees.

## 2. Does your audience have special customs or practice that should be respected?

Be aware of customs that should be respected when planning activities, and let your volunteers know. For example, if your target audience is mostly Muslim, don't serve pork/ham for refreshments. Remember to respect personal space issues that may differ among cultures. Health care workers are granted a privilege in being able to touch their patients so ask permission of your patients before you touch them - for instance, in some cultures, women should not be touched by men other than their husband so be sensitive to such needs when your patients let you know their cultural customs.

## 3. Appropriate preventive screenings

Make sure the screenings you provide are *appropriate* and *cost effective*. (e.g. You don't need to do blood glucose screenings if supplies are limited - better to save them for populations that are more frequently diagnosed with diabetes).

**Check out the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) website-**

<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm> (Click on "Recommendations for adults", "Recommendations for Children and Adolescents", etc or any of the "Resource Links" on the left)

The USPSTF is an independent panel of non-Federal experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine and is composed of primary care providers (such as internists, pediatricians, family physicians, gynecologists/obstetricians, nurses, and health behavior specialists). The USPSTF conducts scientific evidence reviews of a broad range of clinical preventive health care services (such as screening, counseling, and preventive medications) and develops recommendations for primary care clinicians and health systems. These recommendations are published in the form of "Recommendation Statements", which suggest whether specific screenings (eg - blood glucose) are recommended in specific patient populations based on evidence-based medicine approaches. You can even access these recommendations from your mobile/smart phone tool (ePSS at <http://epss.ahrq.gov/PDA/index.jsp>).