

## **We Are All Rooted in Culture**

[Music]

Nina Jaffe: Well, the idea of family literacy also relates to the idea of cultural literacy and that the literacy and the literature of the parents may be in the oral tradition, as well as books. Things like songs, proverbs, riddles, all of these are ways that adults have always helped their children grow and build dreams for themselves.

Linda Rodriguez: I think it really starts with respecting the families and respecting the fact that every family has a strength to share with us.

Mindy Zapata: We share a commonality and goal with refugee families that we are interested in the well-being of their children and making sure that their children are going to be successful in this American education system, and that Head Start can play a very important role in helping them navigate this new system.

Gwen Henderson Freeman: We found that it's important to listen to the specific practices that each family has and use that to help us to achieve the goals, and those goals of the program are: learning about every family's culture; trying to get some understanding of the cultural practices; making every family feel welcome in the program and in the classroom; as well as being comfortable in their home, to figure out how to integrate all of that we learned into the classroom so that the children would be able to learn about all the other cultural practices.

Teacher: Cradleboard is that security and comfort, so when she's in there it's not like a restraint or anything. It's for her needs. Developmentally she is getting the love and everything with the cradleboard while she is sleeping.

Linda: We try and create an environment that really supports that, that supports the child, that supports the family, that supports the language that they speak, the cultures that they come from. And we also look at ensuring that our program is as diverse, in terms of our staffing, as our families within the community, so that there are familiar faces when families come in, where there are familiar languages when families come in, and it develops a sense of openness.

Teacher: Everyone comes from a different place/

All Together: Everyone has a different face/

Everyone does different things, you see/

but together we're one big family/

[Music]

[End video]