

Determining your Relationship to Dominant Cultural Values

AMERICAN VALUE	How does this value show up in <i>your</i> belief system, general ways of being, and interactions with others?	How does this value show up in your beliefs about child development, child rearing, and disability?	How do you think your internalization of this value shows up in your early intervention practice?
<p>Independence- In the United States we value the ability to do things ourselves without the support or assistance of others. We have a DIY (Do it Yourself) culture. We laud “self-made” business owners. We encourage children to gain independent feeding, self-soothing, and toileting skills at very young ages.</p>			
<p>Individualism/Personal Freedom Americans value the ideals of an individual’s right to freedom of speech and expression. We encourage people to follow their own paths and interests and to make their own decisions about how they live.</p>			
<p>Strong Work Ethic Americans value hard work. As a country, we work more hours</p>			

<p>and take fewer vacations than citizens of other countries. We value grit and the ability to accomplish goals through hard work. This value is strongly tied to our value of achievement.</p>			
<p>Achievement and Future Orientation In the U.S., we evaluate ourselves and others by academic, career, financial, and other accomplishments. We focus on what goals we can set and meet- grade point averages, college degrees, job promotions, raises, etc.</p>			
<p>Meritocracy and Social Mobility Americans have a deep-seated belief that people should be able to be judged by the quality of their work and character. Based on these things, we believe that any American should be able to work hard enough to improve their social condition. We believe that people should be promoted and recognized for their own merit rather than their family lineage or caste.</p>			

<p>Numbers and Data Americans place value on quantitative data and cited sources rather than anecdotes and stories of common experiences.</p>			
<p>Informality In the U.S., we tend to be less formal in our interactions with others. We often refer to each other by first names and don't speak defferentially to people with higher titles than we have. We tend to dress casually for work and appointments. When visiting a friend's home, they may encourage us to "help ourselves" to a drink rather than serving us. This informality can lead to friendly interactions with strangers.</p>			
<p>Directness and Assertiveness while also avoiding conflicts Many Americans from the dominant culture often communicate directly with each other at the same time trying to avoid having an open conflict.</p>			
<p>Privacy Our society values privacy and the right to make decisions</p>			

<p>and live our daily lives without our neighbors and peers being privy to details about what we are doing, how we manage our finances, or details of our medical histories. We say things such as “What I do on my own time is no one else’s business”</p>			
<p>Solution and Outcome Oriented Americans like to focus on how to solve problems or get the desired result, often prioritizing getting to the end of a process rather than the process itself.</p>			
<p>Importance of Time In the United States, we value time as a finite resource. We have sayings like “Time is money.” We use phrases like “It was a waste of my time.” There is a cultural value that can be described as being on time. Early Intervention is billed by time units (usually 15-minute increments), and IFSPs specify how many minutes of an EI provider’s time each family gets.</p>			
<p>Expediency - Closely related to the American value placed on time, is our</p>			

collective value on things being done quickly, practically, and conveniently. This contributes to our ability to be solution and outcomeoriented.			
---	--	--	--

For a list of American etiquette that you may be aware of, you can visit <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/american-culture/american-culture-etiquette>

Resources to further your learning
[Waking Up White by Debbie Irving](#)
[American Values and Assumptions: The University of Portland International Student Services](#)