

# the ABCs of...

## SERVICE LEARNING

### Valuing Differences

*Discovering Your FRAME*

All the things that make up who we are and how we view situations can be referred to as our FRAME. Our FRAME is made up of values we hold, our culture and background, and our life experiences. Life experiences include things that we choose to do, as well as things we do not have any choice about or control over.

#### Things that make up our FRAME include:

History/ancestral heritage	Neighborhood we grew up in
Family	Neighborhood we live in now
Religion	Physical abilities
Age	Values
Gender/sex	Education
Sexual orientation	Profession
Ethnicity	Culture/cultural traditions
Economic class	Nation/region
Language	

**F — Figure out the facts:** Not just what is apparent to you, but all the facts. Seek more information, ask questions and listen.

**R — Reflect on reality:** Is it my reality or their reality? Am I looking at this through my FRAME or trying to see it through their FRAME?

**A — Acknowledge and challenge assumptions:** Think about your expectations and whether they are appropriate. Are you making assumptions based on your FRAME?

**M — Maintain an open mind:** Just because someone else's FRAME differs from yours doesn't make them wrong. What can you learn from them? What can they learn from you? What do you have in common?

**E — Expand your experiences:** Explore, expose yourself, and encounter differences; expand your comfort zone; increase your cultural competence.