

Kat & Latino Family

Kat was assigned by her supervisor to do home visits with Alma, a first-time mother from Ecuador who recently moved to Pittsburgh. Kat's supervisor knows that Kat took Spanish in high school and 20 years ago, when she went to college, she spent three months working in a Catholic pre-natal care clinic in a rural town in Mexico. Kat is very excited to work with Alma. She has always been interested in the Latino culture; she loves Mexican food and Latin music, and values the religious beliefs and strong family ties of Latino families. Kat thinks her knowledge of the Latino culture will help her connect better with Alma and provide the services Alma needs.

On one occasion during a home visit, Kat asked Alma about her adaptation process in order to identify areas of need. Alma mentioned that the adaptation process was taking her longer than she expected. Even though she speaks and understands English, Alma said that it was hard for her to develop friendships in her neighborhood because she felt she did not fit in and does not know other Latinos in the area. Alma expressed feelings of loneliness and sadness.

Kat knows the importance of religion for Latinos to develop both spiritual and social connections; thus, Kat spent the last portion of the visit sharing information on St. Regis Parish and motivating Alma to go to church to overcome her feeling of loneliness and get connected with her spirituality. Alma nodded politely and thanked Kat for the recommendation.

A few weeks later, Alma called Kat's supervisor and requested a new home visitor. Alma mentioned that Kat is very nice but she did not feel comfortable when Kat started talking about religion and her spirituality. Alma was confused as to why Kat did that, was she trying to convert her?

Discussion Questions

1. What went wrong?
2. How can you help Kat to become culturally humble?