Box 15.2

CULTURAL ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Culture, Language, and Traditions
• What cultural, ethnic, or national identity does the client claim?
• What are the common verbal and nonverbal cues of communication?
• What are the common modes of communication?

Religion and Spirituality
• What are the religious/spirituality preferences and influences on well-being, health maintenance, illness, and death?
• Are there any daily living practices and taboos related to religion that influence health status or health care?

Health-Related Beliefs and Practices
• What health beliefs and practices exist related to disease prevention, disease causation, treatment of illness, use of indigenous/folk healers, among others?
• What are important life cycles or transitions (birth, marriage, death) for the culture and how are they acknowledged in the community?
• Are there any beliefs about food related to health?
• What are attitudes, values, and beliefs about one’s health or illness status?
• How do these influence behavior in terms of health promotion and disease treatment?
• How are education and scientific findings valued in the community?

Healthcare System
• What healthcare system does the child and family use: Western medicine, traditional/folk healers, etc.?
• Does the child have insurance? Is the child eligible for insurance?

Family and Kinship
• Describe the family household (traditional, extended, a variation of this). What are the typical family roles and communication patterns? Who makes decisions in the family?
• How do social networks (friends, neighbors, family, etc.) influence health and illness regarding support and caring?
• Do the values of privacy, touch, and personal relationships exist in the family?
• How does the person relate to someone outside his cultural group?
• Describe the local leaders in the family unit (formally and informally). What are their qualities and attributes? What makes them leaders?

Social Networks
• What is the daily routine of the group?
• How does the social environment contribute to a sense of belonging?
• What are group social interaction patterns?
• How is the political structure organized? Describe leaders of the community.
• How does the economic system influence cultural identity of a group and the ability to gain employment, property, etc.?
• What social problems exist in the larger cultural group?
Box 15.2 (Continued)

Worldview, Value Orientations, and Cultural Norms

- What are the patterns of daily living, including work and leisure activities?
- What cultural attitudes exist regarding time, work, and leisure?
- What are the beliefs regarding gender roles?
- What are the norms of the culture (authority, responsibility, dependability, competition)?

Source: Adapted from Andrews & Boyle (2008) and Boyle (2008).