

The Latino Community

MHSA Innovation Project

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Overview

- Latinos in the US
- Hispanic, Latino, Mexican
- Cultural Values
- Barriers to Services
- Values and Beliefs
- Stigma & Discrimination

Latinos in the US



- In the 1940s the US & Mexico established the “Bracero program”. This program brought thousands of Mexican nationals to work in agriculture.
- The '60s saw a massive immigration of Cuban refugees as a result of the Cuban revolution.
- The '70s & '80s witnessed significant immigration from Central America due to civil wars ravaging places like El Salvador and Guatemala.

Latinos in the US



- Latino/Hispanic is the fastest growing community in the US
- In the past 8 years, their presence has increased by 11 million.
- Largest minority group at 47 million mark by 2050.
- Every Latin American population migrated north for better economic opportunity.



Hispanic, Latino, Mexican

- The very term **Hispanic** was chosen by the US government to name a growing population of that was not a racial or a ethnic group, but people with roots in more than 23 Latin American countries sharing a common culture, heritage, and language.
- The term **Latino** emerged in the '80s/'90s
 - Examples of Latin American countries: El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru.
- The term **Mexican** identifies the people from Mexico.

Hispanic, Latino, Mexican



- **The Latino/Hispanic population in the US is very diverse** in terms of national origin, immigration and migration patterns, historical and racial backgrounds, languages, dialects, and cultural values.
- **Latino countries include** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, Spain, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico.

Latino/Hispanic Cultural Values and Beliefs

- **Importance of Family:** Family is the primary social unit and source of support. Family goes beyond parents and siblings, it includes the extended family (cousins, uncles, aunts, etc).
- **Respect:** It indicates appropriate behavior towards others based on age, gender, social and economic position, and authority.
 - Formality is seen as a sign of respect.
 - Use of suffixes are very important such as: Señor/Don, Señora/Dona.



Latino/Hispanic Cultural Values and Beliefs

- **Personalismo**: Latino/Hispanics tend to stress the importance of personalismo, personal rather than institutional relationships.
 - Person-to-person contact is very important to develop trust.
 - It's very common that Latino clients find it uncomfortable to leave messages in office voicemails.

Barriers to Access & Latino Families

- **Poverty:** Approximately 23% of Hispanic families live below the poverty level.
- **Language barriers:** Lack of interpreters or bilingual staff available.
- **Misunderstanding of cultural values:** The lack of bilingual staff in agencies and organizations leads to misunderstandings of cultural beliefs and values.



Barriers to Access & Latino Families

- **Legal status and fear of deportation:** Many Hispanics are not eligible for services because of their undocumented status.
- **Lack of knowledge about how the US health care system works:** They may think it's cheaper to go to the ER than to a PCP.



Barriers to Access & Latino Families

- **Many Hispanic families don't have access to health insurance coverage:** Latino children who are not US citizens or legal residents are not eligible for the state's health insurance programs.
- **Lack of knowledge on how the US educational and legal systems work:** Hispanics may think they can't file for protective orders or custody.
- **Transportation:** Local public transportation does not provide service to some Latino neighborhoods.



Barriers to Access & Latino Families

- **Discrimination:** 80% of Latinos living in the US have experienced some kind of discrimination based on the color of skin and language.

Values and Beliefs

- **Espiritismo:** In Latino/Hispanic culture spiritual healers play an important role in helping people with physical as well as mental concerns.
 - Curanderas, espiritistas, Santeria
- **Religion:** In general Latino/Hispanics are very religious.
 - The Church serves as a guide for perceptions and behaviors, influencing decisions and judgments.
 - The Church is often an important source for social support and interaction.



Values and Beliefs

- **Belief in Bewitching:** Some Latino/Hispanics believe that bewitching is often the cause of a change in behavior or illness.
 - **Bewitching** involves the use of magical acts and supernatural powers either by humans or supernatural beings.
 - This may simply involve the casting of a spell.



Stigma and Discrimination

- Avoid or delay seeking help
- “Loco”
- Words
- Religion
- Self-reliance
- Complicated



Barriers

- Fear
- Mistrust
- Language
- Poverty
- Lack of Transportation - Isolation



Cultural Differences

- Personal Space
- Touch
- Body Language
- Communication
- Gifts
- Mi Casa Es Tu Casa



Cultural Nuances

- Music
- Candles
- Family Organization
- Mother's Role
- Father's Role





Questions?

THANK YOU!

