CULTURAL COMPETENCY: UNDERSTANDING HISPANIC CULTURE

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AGENDA

Introduction
Hispanics
Hispanic Culture
Barriers to Accessing Services
Providers
Recommendations
Resources
Q&A
**Hispanic**

Hispanic (Hispano) is not a race but an ethnic distinction. Hispanics come from all races and physical traits. Hispanic describes cultures or countries that were once under Spanish rule (Mexico, Central America, and most South America where Spanish is the primary language).
Hispanics in America

- Hispanics are the nation's largest ethnic minority. Hispanics constitutes the 16% of the nation's total population. According to the 2010 Census there are 50.5 million Hispanics in United States.

- 23% of all American Children are Hispanic or Latino.
### Table 1

**U.S. Population, by Race and Ethnicity, 2010 and 2000**

*(thousands)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Population</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>50,478</td>
<td>35,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>196,818</td>
<td>194,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>37,686</td>
<td>33,948</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>14,465</td>
<td>10,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>2,247</td>
<td>2,069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>5,966</td>
<td>4,602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Racial groups include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

**Source:** Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of U.S. Census Bureau Redistricting_Files-PL_94-171 for states

**PEW HISPANIC CENTER**
Hispanic heritage
Hispanics and Latinos come from many backgrounds. Here’s a statewide breakdown for Michigan’s estimated 420,000 Hispanics.

- 9% Puerto Rican
- 4.1% Central American
- 3.3% South American
- 1.9% Cuban
- 0.6% Dominican
- 6% Other Hispanic/Latino

Mexican 75%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2009 American Community Survey.
Hispanics in America

More than just a demographic...

Hispanics share a common language, but their cultures, values, and beliefs, are very unique.

To assume that all Hispanic cultures are the same, or lumping all Hispanic cultures into one demographic is a critical mistake.
FALLACY OF HOMOGENEITY

- Despite bonds of a common language, religion, and culture, Hispanics are separated by different origins, customs, and traditions.

- They don’t eat the same foods, dress the same, talk the same or view the world the same.

- They are a melting pot in progress.
Melting Pot

- Traditional ethnic segmentation doesn’t apply to Hispanics. Among this group, all possible ethnic segmentation are present.

- When the Spanish colonized the New World, the Aztecs, Mayans and the Incas made up the largest percentage of indigenous populations in the subcontinent.

- Therefore, by definition, three large distinct cultures with thousands of years of history and accomplishments clashed with an alien fourth.
However, the Spanish were not a monolithic racial, ethnic or cultural group.

The Iberian Peninsula was conquered and occupied by the Moors for roughly eight centuries.

For over 500 years, Italians, Germans, British, Dutch, French, Portuguese, Swiss, Japanese, Chinese, African and many others, have added to the cultural and ethnic diversity in Latin America.
Hispanic Groups

Argentine
Bolivian
Chilean
Colombian
Costa Rican
Cuban
Dominican
Ecuadorian
Guatemalan
Honduran
Mexican
Nicaraguian
Panamanian
Paraguayan
Peruvian
Puerto Ricans
Salvadoran
Spanish
Uruguayan
Venezuelan
MAP VIEW
PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Strong belief in fate
- Tolerant and sympathetic toward others
- Speech and hand gestures are one in the same
- Eating accompanies all types of entertainment
- Acculturates, but never assimilates
PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Close family ties
- Strong belief in extended family
- There is never an “empty nest”
- Group-oriented

- Hispanics tend to be more relaxed and flexible about time and punctuality than U.S. people.
TRADITIONAL FAMILY ROLES

• The traditional Hispanic Family is patriarchal.
• The father usually has final say in making decisions.
• The father is traditionally the sole provider for the household.
• In Americanized Hispanic families, the approach to decision making and earning a living is modernized.
LA FAMILIA

- Latino families are larger, younger, and live in extended family systems.
- At times, more than one family lives together, or families live in close proximity to one another.
- Men are taught to be responsible for the needs, concerns, and the financial well being of a large and far-flung family system, which may include family members in another state or country.
LA FAMILIA

- However, these responsibilities can also complicate and extend a man’s ability to provide for family in unexpected ways, since a man’s personal responsibility extends well beyond his own nuclear family, a notion that often does not correlate with American expectations of individual self-sufficiency.

- Hispanic dignity and pride also cause men to believe it is better to work every day, even for very little money, rather than enter a program with the chance they may not complete it and no guarantee they will be better off in the end.
Parenting Style

• Hispanic parents tend to exhibit both greater intimacy and more protective behaviors and strictness.
• At home, adolescents live in a traditional cultural environment where, although children, they face economic demands that often force them to take on adult roles.
PARENTING STYLE

• Everyone is entitled to discipline within the extended family structure.

• Extended family members and neighbors are often preferred for child care.
Disabilities or behavioral issues are often regarded as the work of “God’s hand” or fate. Usually this is a taboo subject.

Perceptions of depression are generally linked to social stressors and take the form of “headaches.”

There are folk defined diseases as “monga” and “empacho”.
Older generations still believe mental retardation or developmental disability is a punishment for the sins of the parents (Skinner, Bailey, Correa, & Rodriguez, 1999).

Usually mothers accept the child as a blessing or gift from God, feeling that they have been found worthy of such a child.
More serious mental illness—schizophrenia, delusions, and hallucinations—may be conceived as “part of life” or “God’s will.”

Cooperation in treatment comes from empowering the family and educating them in their role in the recovery of the family member.
Barriers to Accessing Services

- Language
- Culture (customs, beliefs)
- Lack of representation in the media
- Limited marketing on services for families of youth with disabilities
- Lack of familiarity with the School System and other agencies
- Citizenship Status
Cultural competence in providing services for all, despite culture, socio-economic status, educational background.

Cultural Competency means creating the practices and policies that will make services more accessible to diverse populations, and that provide for appropriate and effective services in cross-cultural situations.
RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROVIDING SERVICES

Use the family’s preferred language:

1. Find a fully bilingual interpreter.
2. Learn some Spanish yourself.
3. Put parents in touch with bilingual staff.
Recommendations to Providing Services

- Keep current on the demographics of the communities you serve, and build relationships with community partners so you can get feedback about the cultural appropriateness and respectfulness of your services.
RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROVIDING SERVICES

- Make sure your materials are not only in Spanish but culturally relevant, use artwork or pictures who reflect the Hispanic culture

- Remember that to understand different cultural beliefs and practices requires flexibility and a respect for others view points
RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROVIDING SERVICES

- If an organization is perceived as being insensitive, deceitful, or disrespectful of the needs of Hispanic families, the community will disassociate from the organization – even when services are desperately needed.
RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROVIDING SERVICES

- Documented or undocumented, immigrants will avoid agencies they believe work in collaboration with government agencies that will question or harass them, i.e., the INS, law enforcement, or child support.
**TIPS TO ENCOURAGE HISPANIC FAMILIES**

- Extend an invitation to participate in Spanish, but don’t use an interpreter (unless absolutely necessary).
- Be sincere and firm, but not condescending.
- “Invite” and encourage involvement from the very beginning.
- Be aware of a general distrust of American/ Anglo culture and outside influences.
TIPS FOR AN IEP MEETING

- Educate parents on the U.S. school system:
  - How the school operates
  - School curriculum, standards, benchmarks and materials
  - Teacher/school expectations
  - Parental rights
  - Language programs
  - Point out ways parents can help
  - Special Education services
**TIPS FOR AN IEP MEETING**

- Do meet with the family prior the IEP meeting to explain them the process and connect them some community resources.
- The day of the IEP meeting meet with the interpreter at least half an hour before the meeting and give him(or her) a list of acronyms and terms that are going to be used.
- Remind professionals involved in the meeting to pause after two or three sentences.
TIPS FOR A IEP MEETING

- Have one of the IEP team members and the interpreter escort the parents to the meeting.
- Always ask for the parents input (concerns, questions or comments)
- Make sure the parents understand what is going to happen after the IEP meeting and give them the meeting minutes in Spanish and the translated document in a timely manner.
CONCLUSIONS

- To reach out to Hispanic families is to understand the culture of the family as a whole.

- Honoring and validating the position of the father within the family is vital.

- Adaptation and acceptance will only occur when the family does not have to defend or justify the culture.
CONCLUSIONS

- Quite simply, Providers that are respectful of and responsive to the beliefs, practices, cultural and linguistic needs of diverse consumers can help bring more positive outcomes.

- “DIVERSITY IS NOT ABOUT HOW WE DIFFER. DIVERSITY IS ABOUT EMBRACING ONE ANOTHER’S UNIQUE NNESS. “- OLA JOSEPH
Q & A
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Patricia Foxen, pfoxen@nclr.org, The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and the Population Reference Bureau (PRB). Data book (April 28, 2010)

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2) Demystifying the IEP Process for Diverse Parents of Children With Disabilities

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4) Building collaboration between schools and parents of english language learners: Transcending barriers, creating Opportunities, Robin Waterman, Ed.D., Beth Harry, Ph.D., University of Miami 2008, National Institute for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems
RESOURCES

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- http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/
- http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources.html
- http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/index_espanol.cfm
- http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/cultural/families/hispanic.cfm
RESOURCES

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- http://www.kcusd.com/191420617195247800/lib/191420617195247800/Chapter_6_English_Language_Learners_and_Special_Education.pdf
- http://clas.uiuc.edu/techreports.html
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