Strengthening School-Family Partnerships with Latino Families

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About the presenter
Learning outcomes

After viewing this webinar, you should be able to:

- Identify ways to address the barriers Latino families face in school involvement
- List key strategies to improve family/school collaboration with Latino families through your school counseling program
- Discuss the importance of empowering Latino families to become advocates for their children's education

School counselors are the glue that binds stakeholders together to ensure all students are equipped to become thriving and productive adults in our ever-evolving world.

Dr. Desiré DeSoto
The Power of Parent Involvement

- Academic achievement
  - Grades
  - Test scores
  - Promotion
  - College & Career Readiness
- Attendance
- Behavior
- Social emotional well-being
  - Self-esteem
  - Resilience

Latinos in the U.S.
What's in the name?
Hispanic, Latino/a, Latinx

- **Hispanic** - a person of Spanish-speaking origin or ancestry
- **Latino/a** – short for latinoamericano; refers to a person born in a Latin American country or of Latin American ancestry
- **Latinx** - a gender-neutral alternative to Latino

Disclaimer:
Latinos are not a homogenous group!
Latinos are the nation’s largest and fastest growing minority group

Fast facts

58.9 million
The Hispanic population in the U.S as of 7/1/2017

Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York and Texas have a population of 1 million or more Hispanic residents

Source: US Census
Differing perspectives

Education

- The process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university.
- The theory and practice of teaching.
- A body of knowledge acquired while being educated.
- Information about or training in a particular subject.

Source: Oxford Dictionary
Educación

- *Educación* is a conceptually broader term than its English language equivalent.
- It refers to the family’s role in teaching children a sense of moral, social, and personal responsibility and serves as the foundation for all other learning.
- Though inclusive of formal academic training, *educación* additionally refers to the competence in the social world.

Source: Angela Valenzuela's *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*

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How do *educators* define “Parent Involvement?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Expectations of Parental Involvement by Teachers, Counselors, and School Administrators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Leadership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in school committees</td>
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<td>PTA membership</td>
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<td>Student advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community activism</td>
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- Monitoring the gate | Offering entertainment as a reward and incentive | Seeking tutoring for their children |
- Preparing food for events | “Staying on top” of academic progress |

Source: Tomas Rivera Policy Institute (2001)
How do *Latino families* define “Parent Involvement?”

### PARENTS’ DEFINITIONS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Involvement</th>
<th>Life Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sign homework as required by the teacher.</td>
<td>Be aware of and monitor child.</td>
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<td>Know when to expect report cards.</td>
<td>Be aware of child's peer group and interacting with peers' parents.</td>
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<td>Ask about homework daily.</td>
<td>Teach good morals and respect of others.</td>
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<td>Listen to the child read.</td>
<td>Communicate with child.</td>
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<td>Visit classroom during open houses.</td>
<td>Be aware of and encourage child's abilities and career aspirations.</td>
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<td>Ask questions about homework.</td>
<td>Provide general encouragement.</td>
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<td>Ask friends, siblings, and other family members for homework help for child.</td>
<td>Discuss future planning.</td>
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<td>Have high standards for academic performance.</td>
<td>Monitor school attendance.</td>
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<td>Purchase materials required for class.</td>
<td>Exercise discipline and provide behavioral outing.</td>
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<td>Drive them to tutoring and school activities.</td>
<td>Establish trust with child.</td>
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<td>Go to the library with them.</td>
<td>Provide information on life issues.</td>
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<td>Be present when required to pick up report cards at school.</td>
<td>Warn of dangers outside the home, such as illegal drugs.</td>
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<td>Get to know teachers to assess student safety.</td>
<td>Volunteer to observe school environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage siblings to look out for each other.</td>
<td>Source: Tomas Rivera Policy Institute</td>
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Understanding the barriers for Latino families
Language

For many parents, language was an insurmountable barrier to participation in their children’s academic tasks, especially as their children progressed through school and the material became increasingly difficult.

“My children do their homework well, and I ask them questions about it—even if I don’t understand [the material].” – Latino parent
Language

Although language was frequently cited as a barrier to helping students with homework, parents did not feel that language was a hindrance to communicating with teachers and school administrators.

Latino parents felt it was not a good idea to rely on children for translating or disseminating information from the school or teacher.

Communication with School

Parents reported that communication with schools were impersonal, infrequent, and without adequate notice.

Oftentimes, personal parent contact is initiated only to report negative behavior/concerns or declining academic progress.
Work Demands

Many Latino parents are hourly workers.

Attending parent-teacher meetings or school events means *foregoing wages* of at least one parent.

Many Latino parents work irregular hours.

Source: Tomas Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI)
“What is the most underused resource in education today? *Parents.*”

Lauren Tripp Barls

Latino Parents as Partners

Assumption that parents value education, want their child to be successful, and want to be involved.

Parental involvement needs to be a school-wide expectation if stakeholders are interested in increasing parental involvement.
Parenting

Workshops to support learning at home and address common behavioral, social, & emotional concerns

– Possible topics:
  - Child rearing at each age/grade-level
  - Family literacy
  - Health/nutrition
  - Social media safety
  - Drug trends & prevention
  - Non-suicidal self-injury
  - Healthy relationships
Parenting

Given the work demands of Latino families, workshops should be made available in a variety of forms:

- Can they be viewed, read or heard anywhere or at any time?
- Tools: webinar, YouTube, Screencastify, Loom

When planning in-person workshops, consider location and time. If possible, providing food, incentives, raffle prizes, child-care, and translation.

Communication

- How does your school counseling department promote your activities, opportunities, programs and resources?
  - Latino families appreciate several modalities
- Personalized, two-way communication- phone calls and face-to-face
- Promote the practice of positive communication
- Consider flexibility when it comes to drop-ins (before, during, after-school); open-door policy?
- Have readily available handout materials listing educational expectations and school resources
Communication

- **Utilize school-wide events**, such as kick-off days, back-to-school nights, open houses to include a table/station for Latino families to provide important information
  - Logging-in to school information system to monitor students’ progress
  - List of school and community resources
  - School calendar
  - Upcoming workshops

Volunteering

While there might not be many opportunities for Latino families to volunteer within the counseling department, school counselors can promote a variety of volunteer opportunities for Latino families that share their hobbies, talents, skills.

*Volunteering should not be limited to the school day or the school building.*
Learning at home

- Provide information and ideas to families about how to help with homework and curriculum-related activities
  - Skills required by grade-level – both academic and soft-skills
  - Homework policies
  - Monitoring schoolwork and grades
  - Learning resources, such as Khan Academy, YouTube channels
- Plan family math, science, or reading nights

"Help" at home can mean encouraging, listening, praising, guiding, monitoring, and discussing -- not just re-teaching

Decision Making

- Include parents in school decision-making groups, such as school counseling advisory council
- Develop and share a needs assessments/parent interest survey with Latino families to gain feedback on topics of interest

*Parent-leadership committees and organizations should be representative of the diversity of the student population and accommodations should be made to ensure participation from all parents.
Collaborating with Community

- Develop a **community resource map/list** that address general needs of low-income Latinos, such as housing, job training, transportation, food assistance, legal assistance, health insurance & wellness resources
- Share information about recreational programs available to students during the school-year and summer
- Identify volunteer opportunities within the community
- Seek out alumni participation in school programs
- Connect families with other families
  - Parent mentor programs

Additional strategies

- Use your school-specific data to support intentional interventions and supports
- Know your community and the issues affecting the Latino community
Additional strategies

- Advocacy– speak up against negative assumptions about students and parents

Motivation = belief × value

Expectancy Value Theory

Source: David Geurin

Source: John William Atkinson
Additional tools

- Ikigai

Source: Jewy Clarke “Ikigai for All”

Additional tools

- Search Institutes Developmental Assets
- 10 Education Commandments for Parents
Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.
- John F Kennedy

Thank you! Gracias!

This presentation and additional resources can be found here: https://bit.ly/2SVQDoB

Please don’t hesitate to reach out 😊

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