CHALLENGES FACED BY LATINO YOUTH

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Professional Latinas Alliance Network
Rutgers University, Camden, NJ
Population trends/tendencias de la población

Figure 1
Distribution of the U.S. Population Under Age 18 by Race/Ethnicity, 1990 and 2008

Map 1
Change in Latino Youth Population, 2000 to 2008

Outline

- Overview of Challenges
- Latina Suicide
- Trauma and Education
- Discrimination, Immigration
- Addressing the Challenges
Overview of Challenges

- Citizenship
- Family Structure & Income
- Education & Language
- Poverty & Unemployment
- Health

- Ciudadanía
- Estructura familiar & Sueldo
- Educación & Lenguaje
- Pobreza & Desempleo
- Salud
- Justicia Juvenil
In 2008, 70.4% of Latinos ages 15-24 were born in US and 3.9% were naturalized citizens.
However, 58% of Latino children lived in Immigrant families.

% 23% of Latino children age 18 lived in linguistically isolated households.
Family Structure and Income

- 24.2% Latinos 15-24 y/o lived below 100% Federal Poverty Level and 2 in 5 (38.8%) lived below 150% of FPL.

- Children living with one parent are more likely to be poor and less likely to graduate from high school.
In 2007, more than 1 in 5 Latinos 16-24 y/o were School dropouts.
- Status completion rate was 72.2% for Hispanics 18-24 compared to 88.8% Blacks and 93.5% whites.
- High school completion rates are highest in New Jersey (67%) and Maryland (65%) and lowest in Nevada (36%) and Georgia (41%).
62.3% Insured, 1 in 4 under Medicaid

Obesity

Teen pregnancy

4.9% Latinas 15-19 had given birth in the past 12 months
HIV

- Hispanics/Latinos accounted for 17% of the HIV/AIDS in the 34 states with long term confidential name-based HIV reporting.
- The rate of new HIV infections among Hispanics/Latinos was 2.5 times that of Whites.

Data from: US Census Bureau and,
Hall et al, JAMA 2008; 300:520-529.
Barriers to mental health services for the undocumented

- Low entry and retention in mental health services
- Psychosocial stressors far outnumber psychiatric disorders in Latino mental health clinic (Fortuna and Perez, 2005)
- Addressing psychosocial stressors is primary
- Other economic, language barriers in addition to legal status
Latina Adolescent Suicide

Epidemiology:

- Rates of suicide higher than for their non-Hispanic counterparts (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2000).
  - One in five Hispanic girls nationally attempts suicide (CDC, 1996, 2000, 2004), (2x counterparts)
  - The literature on the factors associated with suicide attempts by adolescent Hispanic females is sparse
  - primarily descriptive and does not explore empirically the dynamics of Hispanic suicide attempts.
The lifetime prevalence of suicidal ideation and attempts among Latinos was 10.2% and 4.4% respectively.

Puerto Ricans more likely to have suicidal ideation and attempt suicide than other Latinos.

Suicide attempts occurring under the age of 18 years.

Female gender, any DSM-IV diagnosis and dual diagnosis associated with an increased risk of lifetime suicidal ideation and attempt.

Latino Suicide in the US

- Family cultural conflict, English proficiency, English language of childhood and US nativity were correlated with suicidal behavior among Latinos.
- Family Cultural Conflict positively associated with lifetime suicide attempt even without any lifetime DSM-IV disorder
Expanding upon a Conceptual Model for Intervention

Culture & Cultural Tradition

Adolescent Development

Emotional Vulnerability & Psychosocial Functioning

Subjective Experience of Adolescent-Family Crisis

Suicide Attempt

Family Functioning
# Latina Suicide Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attempters N=47</th>
<th>Non-Attempters N=46</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean age</strong></td>
<td>14.1 years</td>
<td>13.8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>US Born</strong></td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Puerto Rican</strong></td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dominican</strong></td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mexican</strong></td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colombian</strong></td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>US Citizen</strong></td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undocumented</strong></td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Mutuality

- Adolescent MPDQ Scores – Evaluating Mutuality with Mothers

* Study showed Non attempters reported a better sense of mutuality with mothers than attempters.

Mutual Psychological Development Questionnaire (MPDQ; Genero, Miller, Surrey, & Baldwin, 1992).
# Results

**Adolescent Child Report of Parental Behavior (Schaefer, 1965) and t-tests – Evaluating Relationships with Mothers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Attempters (n=46)</th>
<th>Non-attempters (n=46)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>17.58 (5.18)</td>
<td>20.40 (3.93)</td>
<td>2.57*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>16.44 (5.42)</td>
<td>19.34 (4.19)</td>
<td>2.51*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrusiveness</td>
<td>11.78 (2.99)</td>
<td>10.74 (2.56)</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>25.44 (4.92)</td>
<td>27.54 (4.51)</td>
<td>1.87*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05
## Results

### Adolescent Youth Self-Report Subscale Means (SD) and t-tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Attempters (n=42)</th>
<th>Non-attempters (n=43/44)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxious/Depressed</td>
<td>11.03 (5.47)</td>
<td>6.40 (4.50)</td>
<td>-3.84****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn/Depressed</td>
<td>7.59 (3.05)</td>
<td>4.83 (2.97)</td>
<td>-3.81***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somatic</td>
<td>7.56 (4.33)</td>
<td>5.46 (3.55)</td>
<td>-2.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule Breaking</td>
<td>7.76 (5.33)</td>
<td>3.34 (2.95)</td>
<td>-4.25***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>14.50 (7.54)</td>
<td>8.29 (5.68)</td>
<td>-3.88***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05

***p<.001

****p<.0001
Results

- **No differences** between attempters and nonattempters in:
  - mother’s evaluation of relationship with daughter
  - Adolescent or maternal orientation towards *familismo* overall

- **Differences** between parents and daughter:
  - In acculturation
  - Feelings of family interconnectedness
  - Mutuality and parental affection
  - Communication and support
Preliminary Themes

- Attempts appear to be a means of coping with intense emotional distress

- Attempts related to conflict with parents
  - Girls are reluctant to share how they feel with parents
  - Girls don’t think parents will understand them or their situation
  - Difficulties in resolving conflicts

- Dating, sexuality and relationships with boyfriends appear emblematic of the acculturative rift between these girls and their parents.
As opportunities for documented and undocumented employment for women have increased, larger numbers of women have initiated their family’s “stepwise” migration to the United States (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992).

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) data show that in 1991, the male: female immigrants ratio was 66:34, whereas in 1996, it was 46:54 (U.S. INS, 2000).
Immigration Separation: Overall themes

- Separation of the children from loved ones left behind
- Immigration/acculturation processes
- Relational effects of family separation and reconstitution
- Normative changes of adolescence
- Posttraumatic stress from neglect/abuse or traumatic migration
- Challenges of simultaneously reuniting and blending a family.
ENGAGEMENT, RETENTION & OUTCOMES FOR LATINO ADOLESCENTS IN A COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING THERAPY FOR POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

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Stanley D. Rosenberg, PhD
Objectives

- Become familiar with:
  - CBT for adolescents exposed to complex and violent traumatic experiences with PTSD.
  - Socio-cultural and other factors related to engagement and outcomes in therapy.
  - Recommendations for psychosocial therapies for Latino and other adolescents with chronic violence and stress exposure.
Background

- Few intervention/psychosocial therapies for:
  - PTSD in older adolescents and minority youth
  - PTSD symptoms related to violence and complex traumatic experiences
  - Chronic stressful environments
  - Co-occurring disorders
# Latino Youth Trauma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Trauma</th>
<th>Prevalence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complex Trauma</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to Domestic Violence</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired Caregiver</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic Loss</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Violence</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NCTSN National Survey (2005)
Trauma and educational attainment

- Latinos with the highest rate of school drop-out
- Trauma as a strong correlate of school drop-out
- Low use of mental health services and other supports for youth and families

(Porche, Fortuna, & Alegria, In Press)
Perceived Discrimination

- U.S.-born Latinos and Latinos arriving to the U.S. at younger ages were more likely to perceive discrimination compared to immigrants arriving at older ages. (Peres, Fortuna & Alegria, 2008)
- Experiences of discrimination are related to mental health and educational attainment
Treatment and building resiliency

- **Self-regulation:**
  - Enhancing an adolescent's capacity to modulate arousal and restore equilibrium following disregulation of affect, cognition, interpersonal relatedness and self-attribution.

- **Self-reflective information processing**
  - Helping the adolescent develop skills in planning and decision making within current environment.

- **Traumatic experiences integration:**
  - Enabling the adolescent to transform or resolve traumatic reminders and memories and cultivation of present-oriented thinking and behavior.

- **Positive affect enhancement:**
  - Enhancing an adolescent's sense of self-worth, esteem and positive self-appraisal
Therapy Considerations

- Psychosocial issues are big piece of this!
- Legal protection is a big issue!
  - You can imagine why not a lot of research
- Trauma and Stress
- Resiliency over real social and political stressors and barriers
- Family support
- Instilling hope and ameliorating anxiety and fear
Stressors/The problems

- immigration authorities
- unresolved asylum/Immigration
- financial hardship
- unemployment
- inadequate housing
- frequent moves
- language BARRIERs
- social isolation
- racial discrimination
- stress of adapting to a new culture
Parenting

- Honest
- Adaptability
- Consistency
- Positive Reinforcement
- Communication
- Supported

- Honestidad
- Adaptabilidad
- Consistencia
- Refuerzo Positivo
- Comunicación
- Apoyo
Identity and Action
Identity and Stress

- Cognitive Behavioral (PTSD, Anxiety, Depression)
- Narrative Therapy
- Peer and Social Support
- Action Planning and Involvement
“The person is not the problem, the problem is the problem”.

A "Narrative Therapist“ assists persons to resolve problems by enabling them to deconstruct the meaning of the reality of their lives and relationships to show the difference between the reality and the internalized stories of self.
ACADEMICS and MOTIVATION

- Academic supports
- Connection and support with teachers
- Assisting parents in communicating with schools
- Assisting parents in understanding academic issues
Opportunities for Success
Is the glass half empty or half full?
Initial Implications for Interventions

- Prevention for adolescent girls
  - Navigating family integrity and acculturation
  - Parent child mutuality and mirroring
  - Social environments
  - Sexuality
  - Expectations

- Assisting immigrant parents to understand daughter’s environment and developmental needs and to respond to these with competence (remembering that they are stressed too)
Maternal Education

- In 2008, more than 2/5 of Latino children under age 18 lived with mothers who did not graduate from high school.

- However, maternal education levels have increased sharply among Latina mothers.

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**Figure 7**

Children Living with Mothers Who Did Not Graduate from High School, 2000 and 2008

With access to health...
What we can do...

Figure 9
Eighth-Grade Student Achievement in Reading by Race/Ethnicity, 2009

Future Orientation