

# School-Based Mental Health



National Hispanic and Latino

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

## School-based Mental Health Services for Hispanic and Latino Children and Youth

*Training, technical assistance and capacity building assistance for school personnel on effective service provision.*

### Who We Are?

The National Hispanic and Latino Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (NHL-MHTTC), was established to develop and maintain a collaborative network to support resource development and dissemination, training and technical assistance, and workforce development for mental health professionals serving Hispanic and Latino populations and communities throughout the U.S. mainland and the Caribbean. The NHL-MHTTC is under the direction of the Institute for Research, Education and Services in Addiction (IRESA), and housed at the **Universidad Central del Caribe**, School of Medicine, in Puerto Rico, and supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

*The School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) Program for Hispanic and Latino Children and Youth*, a special focus of the NHL-MHTTC, is led by our multidisciplinary staff and advisory board with representation from across U.S. regions, different states and the Caribbean.

### What We Do?

The School-Based Mental Health Program (SBMH) works specifically with schools, organizations and professionals to strengthen their capacity for providing cultural and linguistically responsive mental health information and services to Hispanic and Latino children, youth and their families through training, technical assistance, and capacity building assistance. Our goal is to:

- ✓ **Increase awareness** on **SBMH** services that are culturally appropriate.
- ✓ **Promote** the use of promising and evidence-based practices for children, youth, families and communities.
- ✓ **Disseminate** information on effective strategies and implementation of mental health services responsive within a cultural context.

### Why Schools-Based Mental Health?

SBMH programs are ideal for Hispanic and Latino students because they reduce barriers to access due to stigma, lack of transportation, scheduling, parental work schedules, and lack of health insurance. School settings are ideal venues to deliver promising and evidence based mental health practices and services because:

- ✓ Schools are community-based settings and neutral environments.
- ✓ School personnel are often aware of the difficulties experienced by children, youth and families.
- ✓ SBMH personnel can offer culturally competent information addressing familial misconceptions and knowledge gaps about the causes of mental health problems and their treatments.

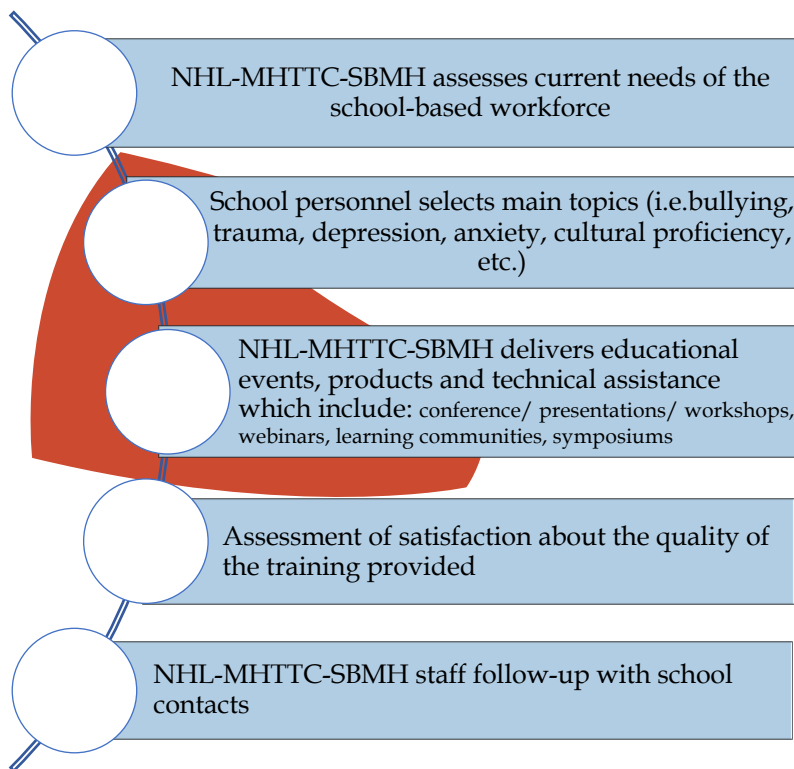
### Know the Facts

Hispanic and Latinos constitute the largest ethnic minority population in the U.S. at 61.2 million or 18.7 percent, while Latino children are the largest ethnic minority group at close to 26% and growing. Special considerations are needed to understand the diverse cultural, socioeconomic, environmental, and political factors that daily impact the lives of Hispanic Latino children and youth. These include:

- = Increase knowledge of risk and protective factors, interventions for social determinants of health and adverse childhood events – which may negatively impact socio-emotional, physical and cognitive development.

- = Social determinants of health include a lack of access to quality health and mental healthcare, food insecurity, housing instability, exposure to interpersonal violence, difficulty accessing affordable transportation and a toxin free environment.
- = Adverse childhood events include separation from parents, country and/or language; threats of deportation, discrimination and exposure to interpersonal and community violence.

## How NHL-MHTTC School-Based Mental Health Works?



## Benefits

School-Based capacity building efforts will help school personnel better support the mental health needs of Hispanic and Latino students through:

- ✓ Development *and implementation of culturally sensitive* approaches to evidence-based treatments.
- ✓ Breaking through *stigma* of mental health.
- ✓ Deployment of appropriate *safety responses* and services for students.
- ✓ Enhancement of the *level of competence* of the workforce; facilitating prevention, identifying signs and possible symptoms of serious emotional disturbances or mental health disorders.
- ✓ Establishment of an *effective* mechanism for mental health services and referral provision as needed.
- ✓ *Promotion* and *prevention* that thwart escalation of emotional deterioration and decompensation.

## Who is Involved?

Faculty from the Institute of Research Education and Services in Addiction (IRESA), Universidad Central del Caribe and nationwide mental health subject matter experts:

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