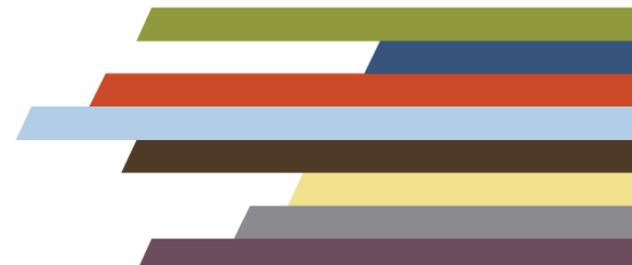


**3-PART WEBINAR SERIES**

**Supporting Latinx Students and  
Caregivers Emotional and Mental  
Health Well-being during the  
COVID-19 Pandemic  
Part 1**



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED/  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

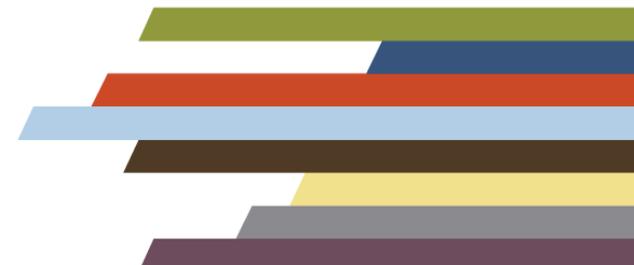
PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

Adapted from: [https://mhcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Recovery-Oriented-Language-Guide\\_2019ed\\_v1\\_20190809-Web.pdf](https://mhcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Recovery-Oriented-Language-Guide_2019ed_v1_20190809-Web.pdf)





National Hispanic and Latino

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# **Social distancing: Dealing with the emotional aftermath of being away from others**

Patricia L. Landers Santiago, MEd, PsyD

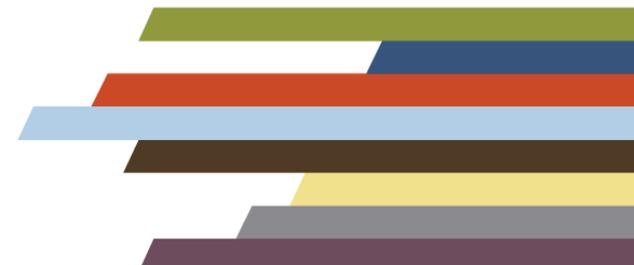
September 15, 2020

1:00 PM

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

**UCC**  
UNIVERSIDAD CENTRAL DEL CARIBE

**IRESA**  
INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH,  
EDUCATION  
AND SERVICES IN ADDICTION



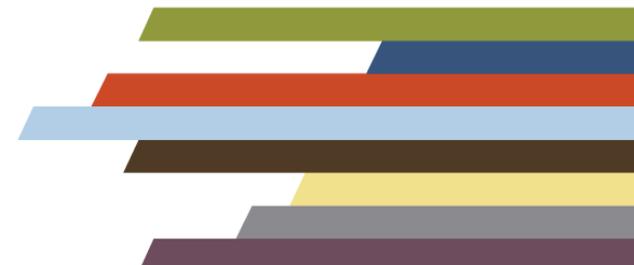


## **Patricia L. Landers Santiago, MEd, PsyD**

Dr. Patricia L. Landers Santiago has a Bachelor of Arts with a concentration in General Social Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus. She completed courses leading to certification as a Teacher of Elementary English. She obtained a Master of Education with a concentration in School Psychology from the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico and completed a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the Ponce Health Sciences University. She worked for 16 years as an elementary English teacher for the Puerto Rico Department of Education. Currently, she is an Associate Professor of the School Psychology Program at the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. She also has her private practice as a School and Clinical Psychologist in Ponce, Puerto Rico. She is the former president of the School Psychology Association of Puerto Rico and General Coordinator of the 2020 Convention of the Puerto Rico Psychology Association.

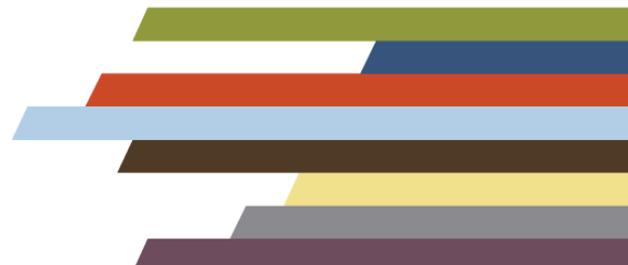
# Authors Disclose Conflicts of Interest

I declare no conflict of interest in this presentation.



# Objectives

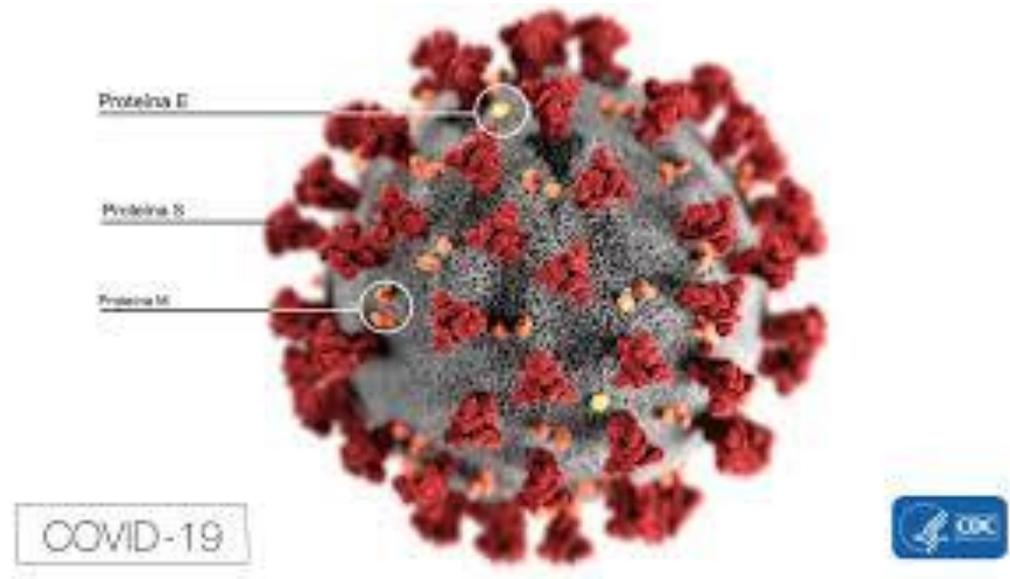
- Learn the meaning of social distancing and the importance of practicing it during present time.
- Learn the difference between social distancing and social disconnection.
- Provide strategies to deal with the emotional aftermath of being away from others.



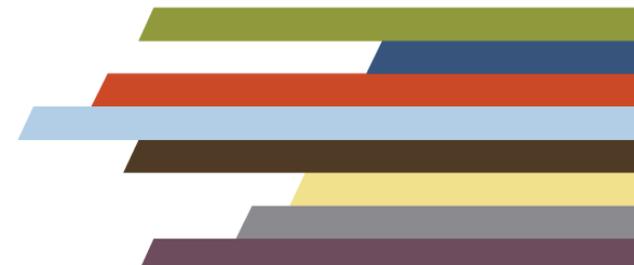
# In Context...

- “A disaster (which originally meant ‘ill-starred’, or ‘under a bad star’) changes the world and our view of it. Our focus shifts, and what matters shifts.”

(Solnit 2020)



[cnnespanol.com](http://cnnespanol.com)

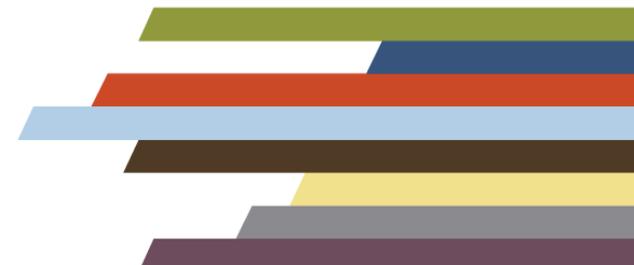


# COVID-19 and Latinx families in the U.S.

## Socioeconomic Barriers Place Latinx Families at Increased Risk

- Employment
- Housing
- Higher rates of transmission among Latinx ages 40-59
- Latinx children are being diagnosed at higher rates with multisystem inflammatory syndrome, a serious disease linked to COVID-19
- Limited access to health care.

Lopez, Barajas-Gonzalez, Diaz, Moreno & Garcia-Coll, 2020

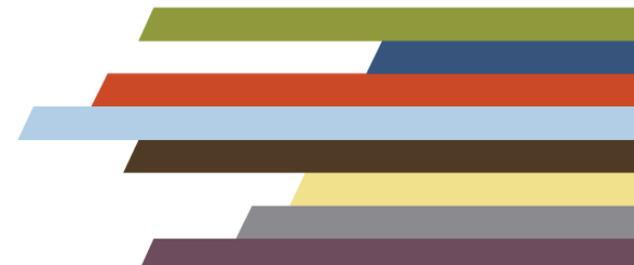


# COVID-19 and Latinx families in the U.S.

## Latinx Children and Families Experience Chronic Stressors

- Exposed to trauma and stress
- Assume greater responsibilities in their households which increases risk for anxiety and depression
- Poverty
- Higher food insecurity
- Disproportionately impacted by policing and deportations.

Lopez, Barajas-Gonzalez, Diaz, Moreno & Garcia-Coll, 2020

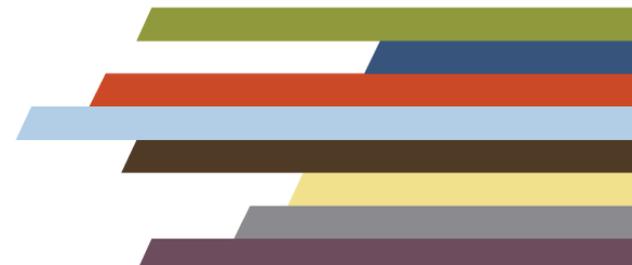


# COVID-19 and Latinx families in the U.S.

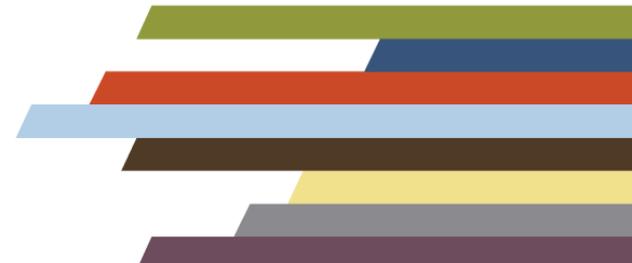
## Educational Barriers for Latinx Families Exacerbate Learning and Language Gaps

- 27% of students in U.S. schools are Latinx
- 75% in K-12 schools are English Learners
- Latinx caregivers have lower levels of education, may have limited knowledge of the U.S. educational system and may struggle reading English, and are unable to help children with their schoolwork.

Lopez, Barajas-Gonzalez, Diaz, Moreno & Garcia-Coll, 2020

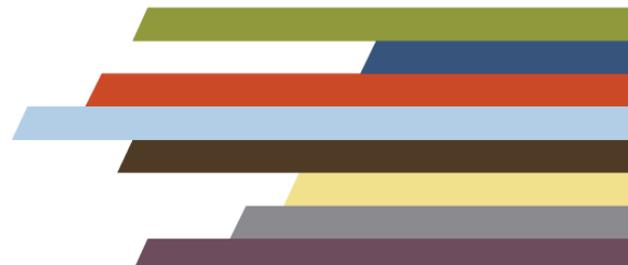


# What is Social Distancing?



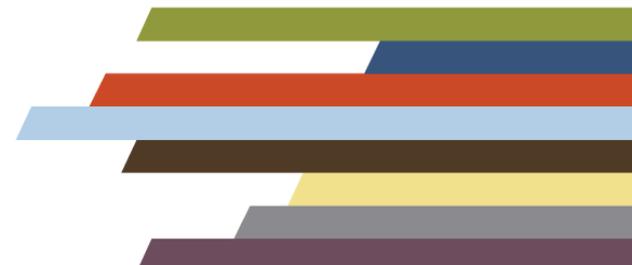
# Social distancing

- Social distance refers to the extent to which people experience a sense of familiarity (nearness and intimacy) or unfamiliarity (farness and difference) between themselves and people belonging to different social, ethnic, occupational, and religious groups from their own.



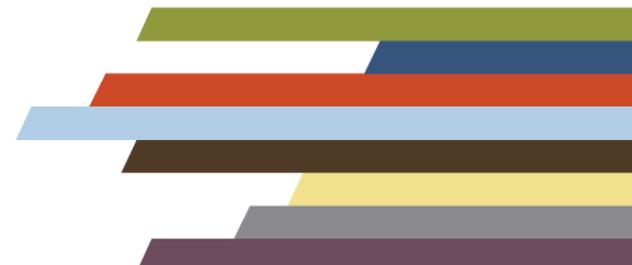
# Social distancing (CDC, 2020)

- Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household.
- To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces.



# Why practice social distancing?

- Avoid spread
- Staying safe
- Protecting the vulnerable
- Following rules

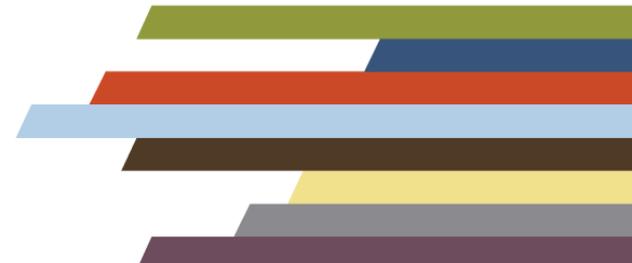


# Difference

**Social  
distancing**



**Disconnection**



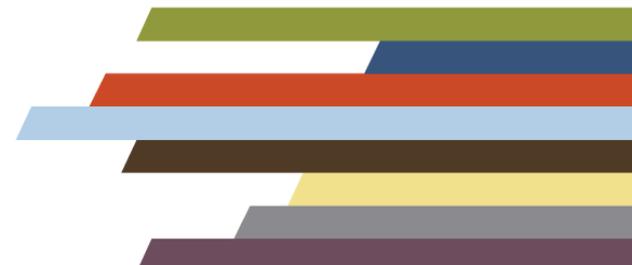
# Social distancing

## Don'ts

- Gatherings
- Hugs
- Gyms
- Movie theaters

## Do's

- Virtual
  - Meetings
  - Coffee breaks
  - Exercise sessions
  - Book clubs

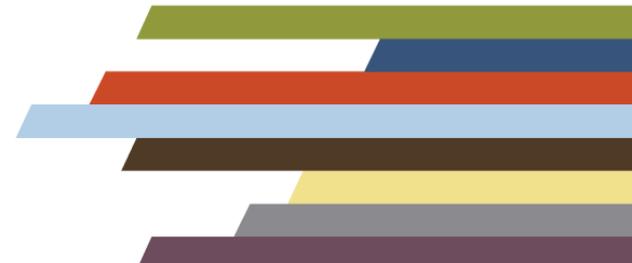


# Explaining social distancing to children

- “Children probably don’t fully understand why parents/guardians aren’t allowing them to be with friends. Tell your child that your family is following the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which include social distancing. Social distancing means staying away from others until the risk of contracting COVID-19 is under control. Showing older children the "flatten the curve" charts will help them grasp the significance of social distancing. Explain that while we don't know how long it will take to "flatten the curve" to reduce the number of those infected, we do know that this is a critical time—we must follow the guidelines of health experts to do our part”.

# Emotional Aftermath

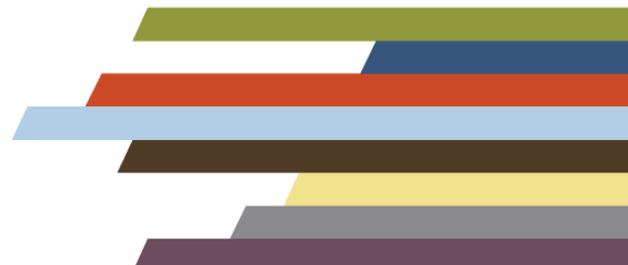
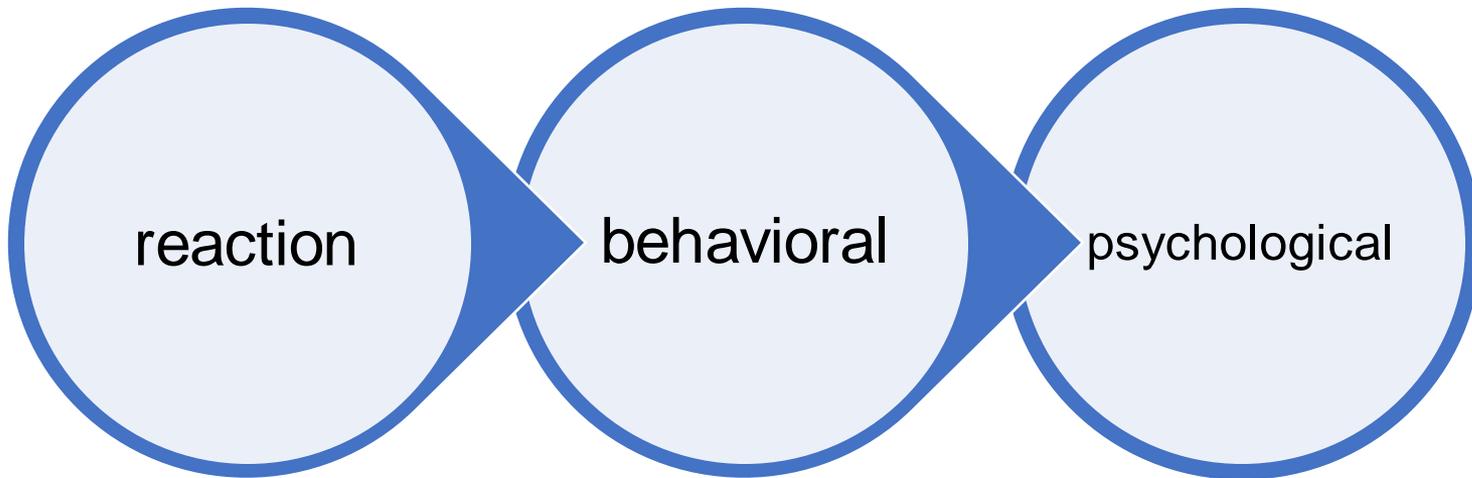
How does social distancing affect us emotionally?



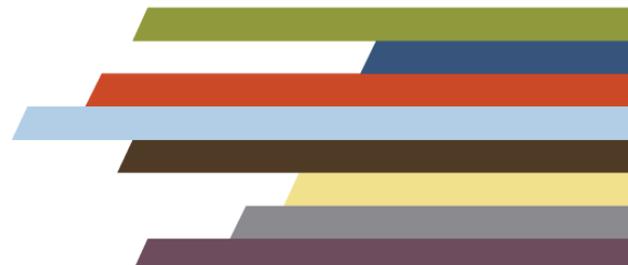
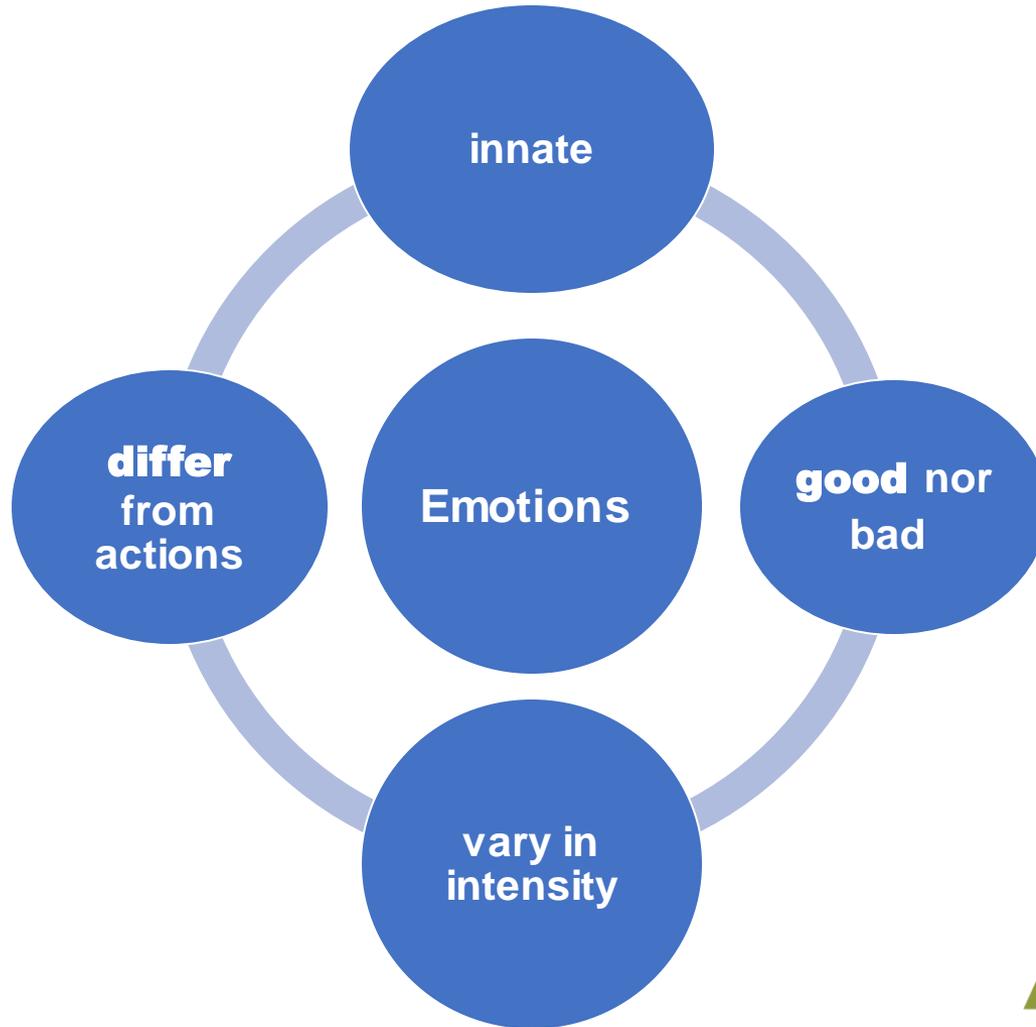
# Emotional aftermath

## Emotions

- “a complex reaction pattern, involving experiential, behavioral and physiological elements.” (APA)



# Emotional aftermath



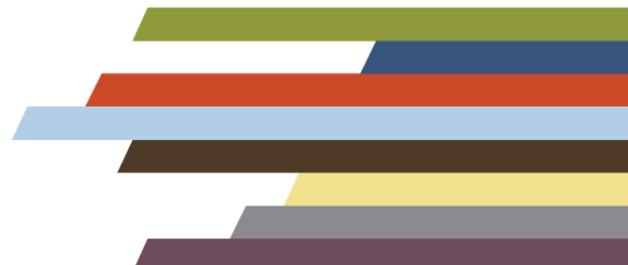
# Emotional aftermath

## Emotions

- Happy
- Sad
- Angry
- Worry
- Scared
- Excited

## Actions

- Laugh
- Cry
- Scream, throw things
- Bite nails, walk around
- Tremble, cry
- Jump, scream



# Emotional aftermath

- Most common symptoms

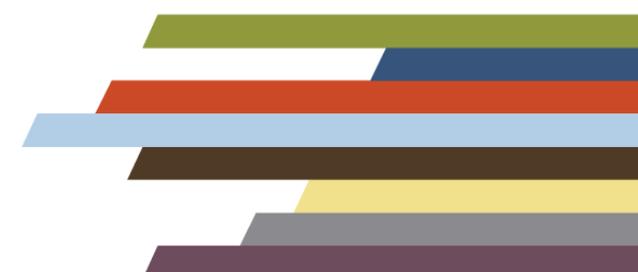
isolation/  
**lack of energy**

sadness

sensible

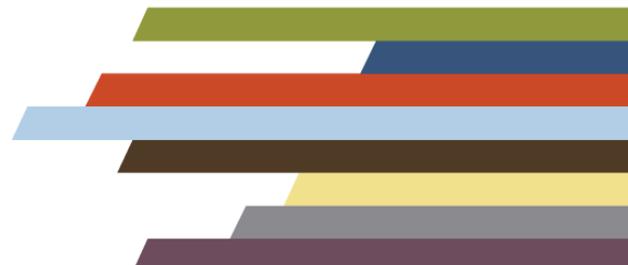
crankiness

anger



# Emotional aftermath

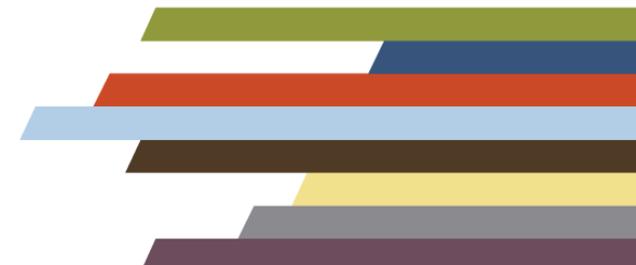
- Recognizing expected reactions
  - Important to understand that there are symptoms that are totally normal.
    - For example:
      - Being quarantined for a month can make someone sad or cranky.
- Focus more on actions
  - How do I or others respond to being quarantined?



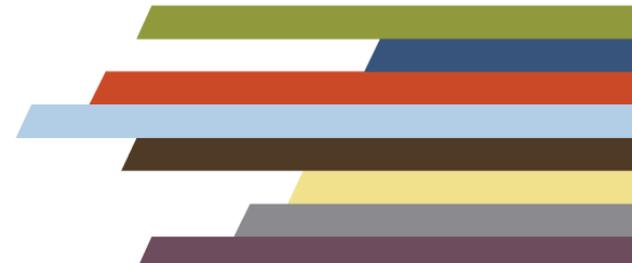
# Emotional aftermath

- **Warning signs**

- Change in eating habits
- Constant bad humor
- Isolation
- Lack of energy
- Low tolerance
- Negative or pessimist expressions
- Mood changes



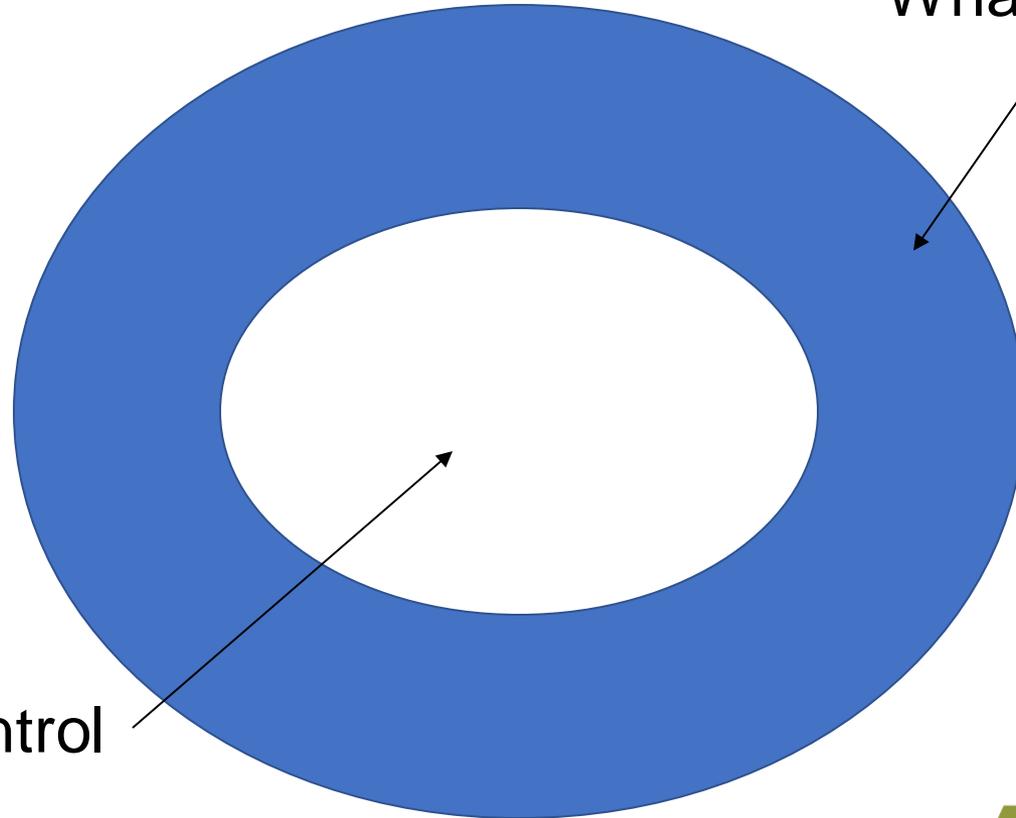
# Recommendations



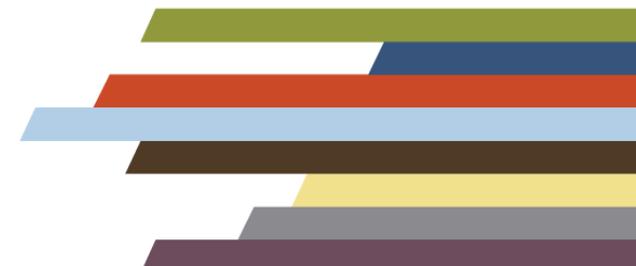
# Recommendations

- Control vs. no control

What I can't control



What I can control



# Control vs. No Control

## • I want to...

- Visit my parents/family/Friends
- Celebrate my friends' special moment
- Travel abroad

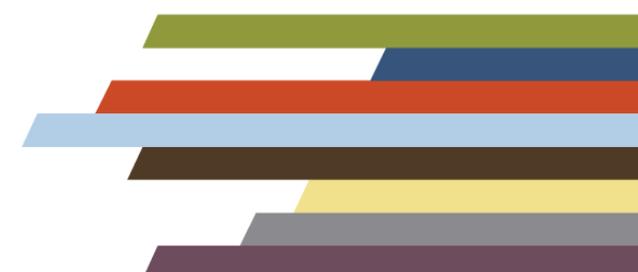
**Frustration**

## • I can't...

- Risk their well-being
- Participate in group gatherings
- Put myself at risk

**Acceptance**

**VS.**



# Follow a schedule

Identify “hours of operation”

Assign activities for each hour

Plan ahead

include variety of activities

Space for:

- Meals
- Resting/naps
- Fun
- Nothing or all

WEEK \_\_\_\_\_

## DAILY SCHEDULE

TIME	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
5:00 A.M.							
5:30 A.M.							
6:00 A.M.							
6:30 A.M.							
7:00 A.M.							
7:30 A.M.							
8:00 A.M.							
8:30 A.M.							
9:00 A.M.							
9:30 A.M.							
10:00 A.M.							
10:30 A.M.							
11:00 A.M.							
11:30 A.M.							
12:00 P.M.							
12:30 P.M.							
1:00 P.M.							
1:30 P.M.							
2:00 P.M.							

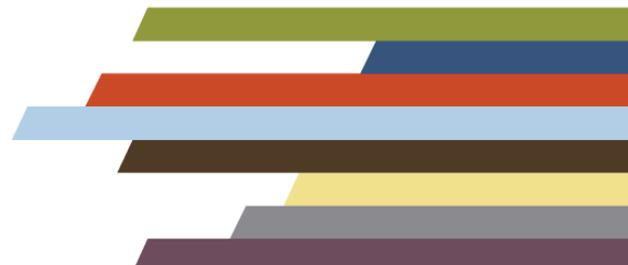
# Connect with others

## Children

- Virtual breaks between classes.
- Chats (supervised)
- Watch movies (virtually)
- Play games (virtually)
- Write letters/emails
- Video calls
- Drive-thru

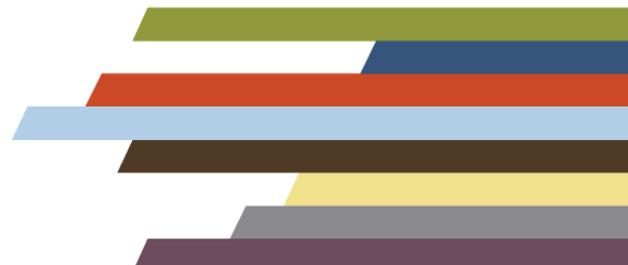
## Adults

- Virtual weekly meetings
- Virtual book clubs
- Video calls
- Conference calls
- Phone calls
- Themed meetings



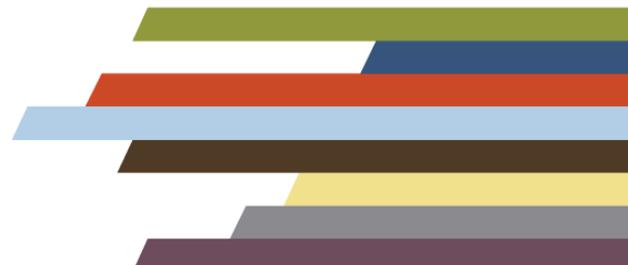
# Recognize and validate emotions

- Emotions are natural responses and totally expected according to the situations.
- Recognize your emotions:
  - “I am angry”
  - “I feel sad”
- Validate your emotions
  - “It’s ok to feel this way”
  - “Anyone can feel sad sometime”
- Separate emotions from actions
  - “I am sad, but I’m going to connect with my friends”
  - “I am angry, but I’m going to fix a nice dinner”



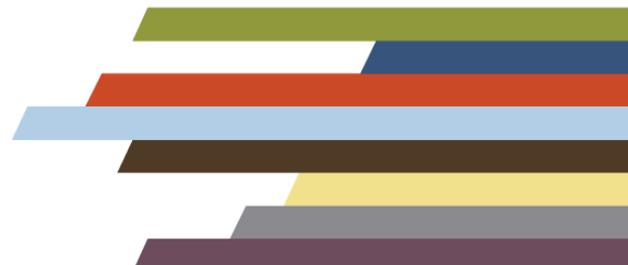
# Focus on the positive

- Difficult moments always bring learning experiences:
  - Know yourself better
  - Things you're good at
  - Time to explore new hobbies
- Focus on what you have vs what you need or don't have.
- Give yourself some credit for what you're doing.



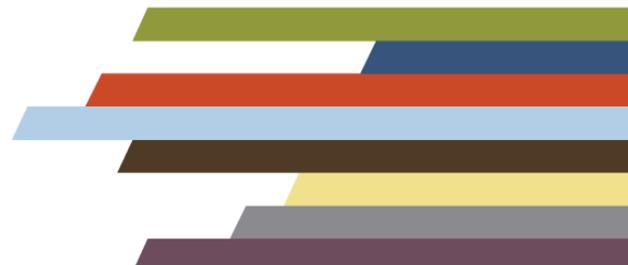
# Identify time for yourself

- Include a time slot in schedule for “me time”
- Disconnect from phones, social media, other people, regular chores.
- Be consistent (days & times)
- It’s okay to be quiet and do nothing at all
- Reflect on accomplishments
- Do something you love/enjoy



# Ask for HELP

- It's okay to seek for help
- Identify available resources
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Coworkers
  - Other parents
  - Peers
  - Support groups
- Mental health professionals
- Main physician
- Crisis hotline

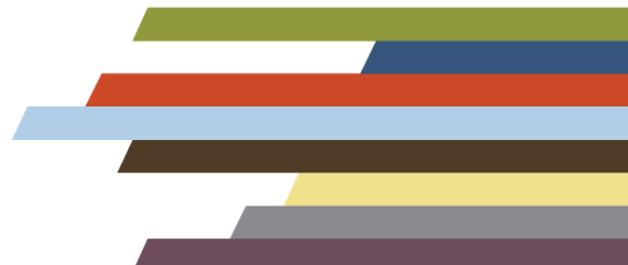


# Policy and Practice Implications

## What schools can do to lower the impact of COVID-19 pandemic?

- Plan opening of schools serving Latinx children for in-person learning.
- Seek funding to provide stable high-speed internet and necessary technology.
- Provide access to personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Prioritize sanitation.
- Maintain low student-teacher ratios.
- Provide sufficient materials for individual student access.
- Offer flexible work and attendance options.

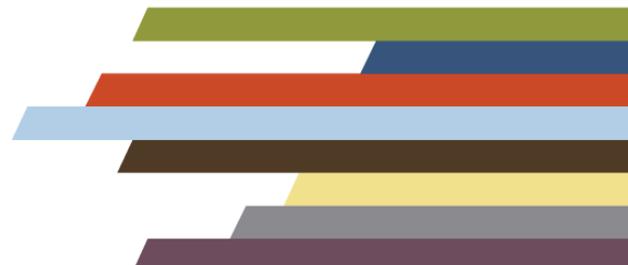
Lopez, Barajas-Gonzalez, Diaz, Moreno & Garcia-Coll, 2020



# Policy and Practice Implications

- Provide training on high quality in-person and online learning instructional practices to support Latinx children's language and academic needs.
- Implement and expand dual language education.
- Ensure that teachers/staff proactively assess Latinx students' and families' technology access.
- Support student's socio-emotional needs via regular online or phone check-ins.
- Employ bilingual/bicultural social workers and school psychologists.

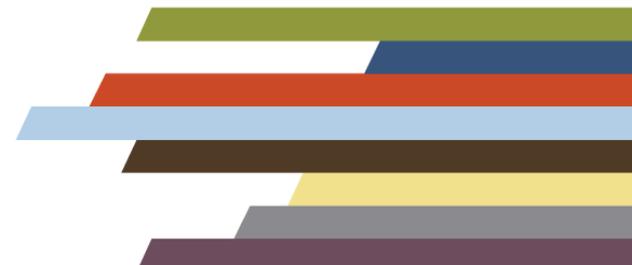
Lopez, Barajas-Gonzalez, Diaz, Moreno & Garcia-Coll, 2020



# Policy and Practice Implications

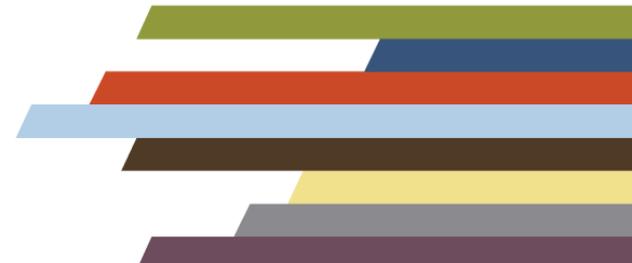
- Provide evidence-based, culturally and linguistically appropriate, trauma-informed school-based mental health services for students and teachers.
- Ensure children have access to free meal programs during school closures.

Lopez, Barajas-Gonzalez, Diaz, Moreno & Garcia-Coll, 2020



# QUESTIONS?

Thank you!!!



# References

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# Next in the series



## Part 2

**Strategies for managing emotions in children, adolescents, and caregivers during COVID-19 pandemic**

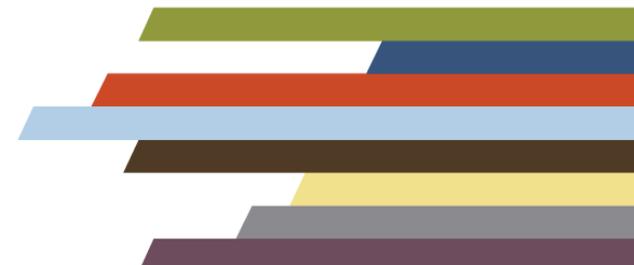
**September 22nd  
1:00-2:30 PM Eastern Time**



## Part 3

**Grieving process: Dealing with loss during the Pandemic**

**September 29th  
1:00-2:30 PM Eastern Time**





National Hispanic and Latino  
MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Promoting culturally responsive  
mental health services for  
Latino agricultural workers who  
bring food to our table.

*Hispanic Heritage Month*

*September 15 - October 15, 2020*

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

**September 17th - The Intersection of Racism, Discrimination, and  
Mental Health in Communities of Color**

**October 2nd - The Evolution of Latino Identities and Mental Health  
1:00-2:30 PM Eastern Time**



National Hispanic and Latino  
MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Promoviendo servicios de salud  
mental culturalmente sensitivos  
dirigidos a trabajadores  
agrícolas latinos que llevan la  
comida a nuestra mesa.

*Hispanic Heritage Month*

*septiembre 15 - octubre 15 de 2020*



National Hispanic and Latino

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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We encourage you to participate of the 3-part webinar series to obtain a certificate of participation after completing the evaluation form.

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