

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **When Monsters Live with Us: Reflections on the Impact of the Intersection of Structural Inequities, COVID-19, Intimate Partner Violence and Young Children in Latin American Families: October 30, 2020**

Presenters: Carmen Rosa Noroña, LICSW, MEd, IECMH-E, Boston Medical Center/ETTN  
Wanda Vargas-Haskins, PhD, NY Presbyterian Hospital FPTTC

The following are several frequently asked questions from the webinar. See the webinar recording and slide deck for more information.

#### Participant Questions and Presenters' Responses

##### **Q1** *What measures can be used to provide Telehealth interventions safely and sensitively?*

**A1** It is necessary to implement universal precautions in all Telehealth interventions. These precautions include:

- Assuming that clients are not alone, even if they say they are and ensuring that family members do not serve as interpreters. Encounters with clients should be made under the assumption that abuse may exist even if it is not disclosed.
- When asking questions, the issues of abuse or safety should not be addressed directly. Questions such as the following may be asked: How are you and the children doing? How are you and your partner handling the current situation/difficulties related to COVID-19?
- Follow the person's cues regarding information they feel they can or cannot share. If the person indicates safety concerns, carefully explore by asking if they can provide more information about the main concerns, or the type of help they need. Be prepared to change the subject at any time.

##### **Q2** *What measures can be taken to protect children during incidents of domestic violence?*

**A2** A safety plan should include ways to keep children safe when there is violence in the home. You must remember that if your violence escalates you should not run to where the children are because the abuser could harm them too. The following are strategies for safety:

- **Inside the home:** Children can be taught when and how to call 9-1-1. Choose a room where they can go if they feel scared and teach them to think of something that helps them to calm down when they start to feel scared. Similarly, teach them to stay out of the kitchen, bathroom, or any other area in the home where there are objects that the abusive person can use as weapons. Children cannot intervene, even if they want to try to protect their mother or father. They can be assisted in preparing a list of people with whom they feel comfortable talking to and with whom they can share their feelings. If you observe that children show symptoms of fear, worry, anxiety, discouragement, or aggressiveness, it is recommended to seek therapy or counseling.
- **Outside the home:** Teach them to get out of the house (if this is an option) as soon as the violence escalates. Develop a plan that includes a place where they can go in case a situation escalates. Similarly, come up with an emergency word or password to tell them to leave the house (parents must make sure they are not going to tell anyone what the secret word means). Identifying people, they can call or go to for help (e.g., neighbors or relatives) should also be explored.

##### **Q3** *How can survivors protect themselves during incidents of domestic violence?*

**A3** Identify when and with what intensity the partner uses violence to assess the risks of violence and danger. Also, identify places in the home that are safe, such as weapon-free places (e.g., the kitchen where there could be access to knives) and places where children can easily escape. It would help if you did not run to look for the children during an incident of violence to avoid further risk for children. If



Network Coordinating Office

**MHTTC**

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

**NCTSN**



The National Child  
Traumatic Stress Network

violence becomes unavoidable, protect the body, head, and face. Always try to have a phone that you can access quickly and memorize any phone number of agencies that could help. If your life is in danger, immediately call 9-1-1. You must remember to lock up any weapons and keep them out of children's reach as much as possible. Get used to leaving the car parked facing the street and with a full tank of gasoline in case you have to leave in an emergency. Whenever possible, try not to wear long scarves or necklaces that the abusive person could use to strangle you. Regarding leaving home as fast as you can, it is recommended to have various credible justifications beforehand that you can use at different times of the day or night.

**Q4** *What strategies can be shared with families to promote wellness during this pandemic?*

**R4** It is important for families to explore and identify sources of hope (traditions, rituals, cultural practices, stories of survival and bravery) as well as to recognize their strengths in the children and adults, as a family and /or a cultural group. It is necessary to emphasize the centrality of maintaining and fostering a physical bond (e.g., hugs, caresses, smiles) and of keeping daily routines for parents and children. Similarly, identify activities that children and parents enjoy and that allow them to connect with each other. Involving children in household chores can also be a strategy to promote well-being. Playful relaxation and deep breathing exercises can also help children.

**Q5** *What resources can we use to bring information and provide psychoeducation to children?*

**R5** Here are some resources that can both bring information and provide psychoeducation to children:

- Tengo Miedo - Las Emociones de Gaston (I'm Afraid - Gaston's Emotions): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1VB\\_Ehtg3I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1VB_Ehtg3I)
- When We Are Scared: <https://youtu.be/DcAPbDpgoso>
- Una Vez Tuve Mucho Mucho Miedo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUSTA84xFj0>
- When I'm Feeling Sad: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYkiZdKU5hk>
- Cuando Estoy Triste: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYkiZdKU5hk>

**Disclaimer**

This presentation was prepared for the MHTTC Network under a cooperative agreement from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). All material appearing in this presentation, except that taken directly from copyrighted sources, is in the public domain and may be reproduced or copied without permission from SAMHSA or the authors. Citation of the source is appreciated. Do not reproduce or distribute this presentation for a fee without specific, written authorization from the MHTTC Network Coordinating Office. For more information on obtaining copies of this presentation, please email [networkoffice@mhttcnetwork.org](mailto:networkoffice@mhttcnetwork.org). At the time of this presentation, Elinore F. McCance-Katz served as SAMHSA Assistant Secretary. The opinions expressed herein are the views of the speakers, and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this presentation is intended or should be inferred.



South Southwest (HHS Region 6)

**MHTTC**

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



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

**MHTTC**

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



National Hispanic & Latino

**MHTTC**

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



Network Coordinating Office

**MHTTC**

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