



Increasing Cultural Connection with Hispanic and Latinx Clients

Incorporating Strategies to Effectively Engage Hispanic and Latinx Clients

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MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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At the time of this publication, Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D, served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

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

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AND HOPEFUL

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

HEALING-CENTERED AND
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





**Our goal:
Help reduce health
disparities among
Hispanic and Latino
experiencing mental
disorders**

The National Hispanic and Latino MHTTC serves as a key subject matter expert and resource for the mental health and school mental health workforce across the U.S. and its territories to ensure:

- High-quality services;
- Effective mental health treatment;
- Recovery support services; and
- Implementation of evidence-based and promising practices



We offer free:



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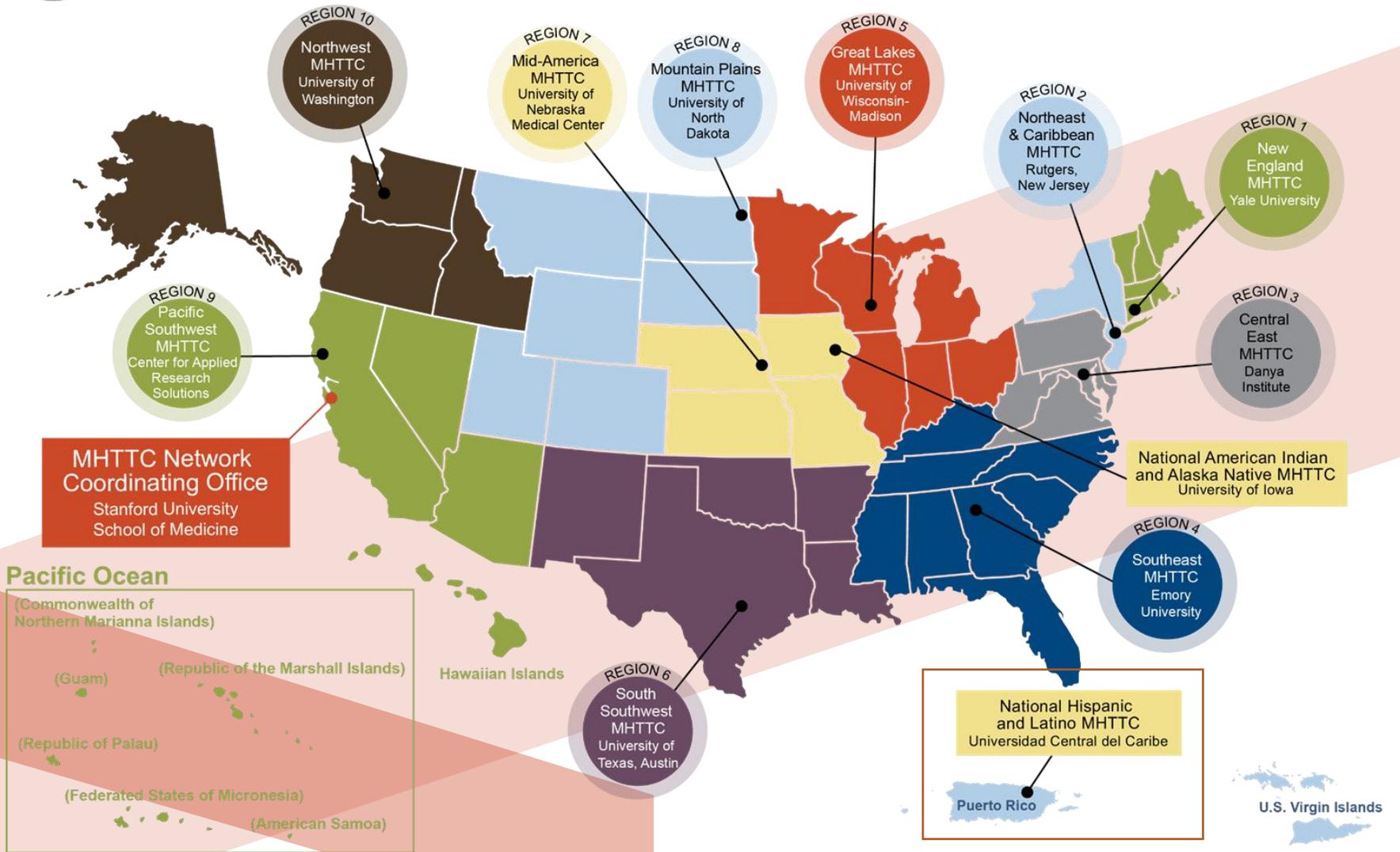
To learn more about services visit: <https://mhttcnetwork.org/hispaniclatino>



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TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE MODEL FOR IMMIGRANT HISPANIC AND LATINO CLIENTS



Delay in Latinx with First Episode Psychosis



Many Latinx with serious mental illness (SMI) and their family members fail to recognize the signs of a first episode of psychosis symptoms. In general, they have poor psychosis literacy which may lead to longer delays in treatment and longer Duration of Untreated Psychosis (DUP).¹ López and colleagues developed a psychoeducational tool known as *La CLAVE* to reduce DUP among Latinx.^{1,2} *La CLAVE* was informed by conceptual models of health literacy.³

La CLAVE is a tool in Spanish that represents the symptoms of psychosis.²

- C - false beliefs or delusions (*Creencias falsas*)
- L - disordered speech or thought disorder (*Lenguaje desorganizado*)
- A - hallucinations (*Alucinaciones*)
- v - seeing things that others do not see (*Ver cosas que otros no ven*)
- e - hearing sounds or voices that others do not hear (*Escuchar voces que no existen*)

La CLAVE uses plain language to guide individuals and caregivers to recognize the three domains of psychosis literacy (i.e., knowledge of psychosis, attributions

COVID-19 and the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence in Latinx Communities



Latinx communities have been emotionally affected by the quarantine and isolation measures implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. Increased stress and anxiety, job losses, school closings, disconnection from community resources and services, and a growth in intimate partner violence (IPV) have been observed. IPV refers to violence experienced by a partner, including spouses, ex-spouses, other intimate relationships [1, 2]. Statistics have shown that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men in the United States have faced IPV in its different manifestations, including sexual violence, physical violence, and stalking at some point in their lives [3, 4]. In Latinx, these rates are similar. However, there are cultural factors that differentiate Latinx's IPV experiences.

Staying home it's not always safe

Home is where people often experience physical, psychological, economic, and sexual abuse. During the COVID-19 pandemic, some regions observed an increase in hotline calls pointing to a spike risk of facing gender violence, child abuse, stress and family conflicts during lockdown [5].

Considerations for Hispanics and Latinx Experiencing IPV

For Latinx and other immigrants, trauma associated with interpersonal violence can be compounded by immigration and acculturation issues. Clinicians should consider the following [6,7]:

- Cultural background can shape how women experience and respond to violence. For example, "Los trapos sucios se lavan en casa" a saying used by Hispanics and Latinx, may depict how culture can impact help-seeking behaviors.
- Latinx and other immigrant women may be harassed or abused in ways that are demeaning to their

Perinatal Mental Health Disorders (PMHDs): Supporting Latinxs

We would like to acknowledge Mariela Rodríguez, PhD, PMH-C, Coordinator at Postpartum Support International (PSI), PR and Co-founder of *Centro de Salud Mental en Puerto Rico*, at the University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus (UPR-MSC), for her contribution to the development of this product.



One in five women will experience symptoms of mood and anxiety disorders during pregnancy or the postpartum period. Perinatal Mental Health Disorders (PMHDs) includes various disorders that can affect individuals during pregnancy and postpartum. PMHDs have adverse effects on gestational and non-gestational parents, caregivers, and mother-infant interactions, and infant development. Making early detection and treatment are essential for the overall well-being of families [1]. Latinxs seem to be at a higher risk of developing postpartum depression than non-Hispanic women and are less likely to be diagnosed [2]. Cultural values (such as familism and *marianismo*), stigma, accessibility, and language may present as barriers to identify risks and seek help during this period. Mental health care providers should identify risk factors, screen and treat people with PMHDs [3].

Perinatal Mental Health Disorders

- "Baby blues": This is not a disorder. Up to 80% of birthing parents may experience transient symptoms, such as feeling tearful, irritable, emotional lability, and reactive right after birth and up to two weeks after delivery. These should be resolved without the need for intervention, and do not interfere with daily living activities.
- **Perinatal Depression:** It affects 1 in 7 women. Latinxs are 37% more likely to experience Perinatal Depression than other groups [4]. The DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for Major Depressive Disorder diagnosis with peripartum onset require that 5 or more symptoms are present during a two week period: depressed



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¿Quiénes somos y de dónde venimos?

A Historical Context to Inform Mental Health
Services with Latinx Populations

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Culturally Sensitive Psychoeducational Services for Hispanic Unaccompanied Children

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May 20, 2021

Logos: National Hispanic & Latino MHTTC, SAMHSA, UCC, IRES

Culturally Sensitive Psychoeducational Services for Hispanic Unaccompanied Children Webinar Panel

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Overview of Training

Session 1: Introduction/Latinos in the US;
Assessing Risk and Protective Factors.

Session 2: Assess the cultural dynamic of the client-
clinician-supervisor relationship and
Assess the organizational environment to
identify cultural adaptation needs for the
Hispanic/Latinx population.

Session 3: Incorporate strategies to effectively
engage and intervene with Hispanic and
Latinx clients.

Objectives

- Apply culturally centered interventions when working with Hispanic and Latino individuals;
- Discuss the eight areas of culturally centered interventions, and will be able to identify specific elements of the Hispanic and Latino population which may need special attention;
- Demonstrate use of the eight culturally centered intervention modifications.

Consider:

What is your greatest barrier to being able to identify how to adapt interventions with the Hispanic and Latinx population?



Beliefs about the Origin of Illness

Beliefs about the Origin of Illness

There are three primary belief systems of the origin of illness:

- Personalistic
- Naturalistic
- Biomedical



Personalistic

- Within a personalistic system of beliefs, the individual may believe that their illness was caused by the intervention of a divine being with special powers.
- It may be caused by retaliation for sins or disrespect to an ancestor.
- It may be believed to be caused by bad luck or karma.
- Its recovery entails the use of ritual and symbolism, often by natural or spiritual healers.



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Naturalistic



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Harmony and balance is sought in maintaining health and well-being. When there is not balance, illness results.

Naturalistic treatments increase metabolic health through diet, exercise, and energy balancing treatments.

Biomedical Approach

Biomedicine is a system of beliefs that is summarized by a “body-as-machine” metaphor.

Is frequently used in western medicine.

Focuses on theory, knowledge, and the empirical research of illness in order to advance treatment options.



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- All cultures have their own combination of these beliefs, which influence their practices.
- Theories of health and illness help clients understand their experience of illness and is the foundation of the basis of their understanding of the need for change.
- Providers who are open and nonjudgmental will be better able to help clients formulate useable plans for treatment.





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Adapting Interventions

Ecological Validity Model

- The Ecological Validity Model was created in order to provide a holistic framework to provide treatment.
- Research shows that culturally adapted interventions have lowered rates of premature drop out.

Sources: Flaskerund & Liu, 1991; Takeuchi, Sue & Yeh, 1995, Bernal et al., 1995

Culturally Adapted Interventions

Meeting the client where they are requires an integration of the following concepts:

- Client's concept of health
- Client's concept of distress and suffering
- Client's and provider's cultural values
- Diagnosis and assessment of the provider

Language

Definition: includes the actual language (e.g., Spanish, English), but it also includes local colloquialisms and idioms that impact the expression and understanding of what is occurring.

- Provides the communication tool for the speaker to communicate concepts which are valued by that culture.
- Individuals are not likely to think of ideas which they cannot express within their culture.
- Knowledge of the language usually implies a greater cultural knowledge.

Language

Importance to Hispanic Clients:

- Clients can express themselves better in their native language.
- Local *dichos*, or idioms, can connect cultural metaphors with the client's experience to increase understanding of treatment concepts.
- Language may also indicate acculturation or assimilation levels.

Language

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture:

- Appropriate translation/interpretation of communicated information
- The provider should clarify any language imbedded meanings that are conveyed through sayings or metaphors
- Many theories encourage the naming of experiences of distress and suffering in order to reframe and retell these experiences.

Persons

Definition: This concept refers to the individuals that the client expects to be involved in their treatment, and the significance of each of the persons.

- Can mean the significance of the individuals involved in the client's care, including family members, holistic healers, and extended family.
- Refers to the client-provider relationship during the intervention.

Persons



Importance to Hispanic Clients:

- Clients may place a high value on *personalismo*, or friendliness.
- Clients may be more likely to place a high level of trust in one professional, instead of relying on multiple specialists.
- The client may not always express disagreement to individuals that are in positions of authority, but then may not follow treatment recommendations.

Persons

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture



The provider needs to focus on developing rapport with the patient.



Treatment may include multiple members of the patient-defined family.



Treatment should empower clients, with the provider as a guide.



Provider must remain mindful of the referent power they have.

Metaphors

Definition: This concept refers to the symbols and concepts shared by a particular group.

Help individuals make meanings of new situations based on previous experiences that they have had.

May connect seemingly unrelated situations together due to the similar meanings experienced by the client.

Metaphors

Importance to Hispanic Clients:

- Individuals of power may symbolize oppression or prejudice to the client, which may impact the therapeutic rapport.
- A provider that is attentive to these variables will be able to identify the positive symbols that are helpful for the individual and minimize symbols that negatively impact treatment.



Metaphors

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture:

- Treatment needs to explore the patient's story as understood by the patient, including the patient's perception of his or her experience.
- The provider must remain mindful of the differences in the personal involvement (meaning) of the provider and client as an individual or family goes through changes.

Content

Definition: refers to the cultural knowledge about values, customs, and traditions.

Each client may be influenced by cultural values, customs and traditions specific to their family, community, and race.



Content

Importance to Hispanic Clients:

- Clients may have unique values, customs and traditions that connect them to their native countries and to their families.
- Being conscious of the impact of cultural content can allow the provider to hear the specific problems and concerns that their clients have in order to address them efficiently.

Content

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture:

- Treatment needs to be holistic and may need to incorporate spiritual or other elements from the patient's culture.
- Treatment may incorporate values, customs, and traditions. It will increase the amount of comfort and familiarity that the clients have with therapy related tasks.

Concepts

Definition: refer to the constructs of the theoretical model that is to be used in treatment.

- Concepts incorporate the provider's understanding of the client's problem, and it involves the client's understanding of that same problem.
- If the provider's and client's understanding of the problem is not conveyed, there may not be an adequate partnership to complete treatment goals.

Concepts

Importance to Hispanic Clients:

- Theories should be used that allow for the integration of the individual's cultural values and beliefs so that they can understand and accept the framework of their problem.
- If the client's understanding of his illness is incongruent with the theory being used, he may not be able to fully participate in treatment.

Concepts

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture:

- When choosing a theoretical framework to use, ensure that it is consistent with the cultural concepts of the individual that is being served.
- The Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) of the DSM-5 may be helpful in identifying the cultural concepts that are meaningful for the client.

Goals

Definition: refer to the identified desired outcome of treatment.

- Should reflect the client's and provider's understanding of the problem and of the solution.
- Should be specific to the client's problem, attainable for the client by using his current supports and resources, relevant to the client's understanding of his problem, and offered at the right time, based on the client's schedule and needs.
- Must be congruent with the client's cultural values.



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Goals

Importance to Hispanic Clients:

- If a client does not feel that a goal is worthwhile, his motivation for participation will be less.
- Due to *respeto*, Hispanic clients may be less likely to express disagreement with individuals who hold positional power.

Goals

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture:

- Treatment must incorporate values, customs, and traditions that are integrated into the client's understanding of the problem and continue the integration of these concepts through the goal setting process.
- This approach will provide the client with an opportunity to integrate new goal behaviors into existing beliefs.

Methods

Definition: Methods are the procedures to follow in order to achieve therapeutic goals.

Methods incorporate the theory used, but it also incorporates the provision of the assessment, the use of transference and countertransference in the relationship, and the use of specific interventions, such as group or individual treatment.

Methods



Importance to Hispanic Clients:

- In treatment, the experience, expression, and explanation of symptomatology is bound to the provider's and client's intersubjective perspective, which is impacted by each person's culture.
- If the method to achieving the goal is not consistent with the client's understanding of his or her symptoms, the client will not follow through with recommendations.

Source: Hardy, Cahill, & Barkham, 2007

Methods

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture:

- Hispanic and Latino clients may feel more comfortable participating in treatment methods that they are already accustomed to.
- The provider may encourage the client to express their culturally bound behaviors and feelings by way of methods that they are most comfortable with in order to resolve internal and external conflicts.
- Including trusted individuals and offering services in the preferred language can increase client's comfort.

Context

Definition: considers the client's broader social, economic, and political circumstances.

The context of the intervention impact the client's priorities in completing tasks and in if and how they follow treatment recommendations.

High Context vs. Low Context Culture

Factor	High-context culture	Low-context culture
Overtness of messages	Many covert and implicit messages, with use of metaphor and reading between the lines.	Many overt and explicit messages that are simple and clear.
Locus of control and attribution for failure	Inner locus of control and personal acceptance for failure	Outer locus of control and blame of others for failure
Use of non-verbal communication	Much nonverbal communication	More focus on verbal communication than body language
Expression of reaction	Reserved, inward reactions	Visible, external, outward reaction
Cohesion and separation of groups	Strong distinction between ingroup and outgroup. Strong sense of family.	Flexible and open grouping patterns, changing as needed
People bonds	Strong people bonds with affiliation to family and community	Fragile bonds between people with little sense of loyalty.
Level of commitment to relationships	High commitment to long-term relationships. Relationship more important than task.	Low commitment to relationship. Task more important than relationships.
Flexibility of time	Time is open and flexible. Process is more important than product	Time is highly organized. Product is more important than process

Context



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Importance to Hispanic and Latino Clients

- Impacts their understanding of the subliminal meanings that are communicated in everyday interactions in the behavioral health setting.
- If the provider does not understand the social, environmental, and economic situations of the client, the intervention may not be feasible for the client.

Context

Specific Modifications for the Hispanic and Latino Culture

- Context is made up of the client's experience of acculturation, immigration, the client's stage of development, their social supports, and their relationship with their country of origin.
- Treatment needs to focus on developing rapport with the client to create an accepting and supportive environment.



Application

A report was received by the state Child Protective Services department regarding Gabriela and John. Gabriela is a 24-year-old Spanish speaking Mexican woman who immigrated to the United States 6 months ago after she married John. John is a 43-year-old bilingual Mexican man who has lived in the United States for over 25 years, and who is a United States citizen. A report was made by police reporting that John had slapped Gabriela in front of her 4-year-old son, Samuel. Samuel is Gabriela's son from a previous relationship; she is also four months pregnant.

John and Gabriela met when John went to visit family in Mexico, where he was introduced to Gabriela. He reports that he went to Mexico specifically to find a wife. John was previously married and has two teenage children. John owns a construction business, and his house. John has a history of depression and alcohol use, but the specifics of his current use are unknown.

Gabriela reports that she is currently in the United States on a VISA, and she cannot work. Gabriela's family lives in Mexico, however, she has developed a strong relationship with her neighbors, and helps them out by cooking for them on a regular basis, which they pay her for. She has also developed relationships at the church and is on friendly terms with John's ex-wife.

Your thoughts?

1. What cultural elements would you consider for adaptation?
2. How might you adapt your work with this family?

Thank you!

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