



# Culturally Responsive and Trauma-Informed Mental Health Care for Hispanic/Latino Communities in Ohio

[Ethno-racial trauma](#) describes the psychological distress and fear experienced by individuals of minority population(s) as a result of discrimination, violence, and intimidation inflicted upon them based on their race and/or ethnicity.

Latinx communities experience a high prevalence of ethno-racial trauma, especially as it relates to refugee or immigration-related discrimination and marginalization. Furthermore, the impact of –policies and practices such as deportation and family separation continue to disproportionately affect Latinx populations in the United States. The evidence-based approaches recommended for treating ethno-racial trauma are [trauma-informed care](#) (TIC) and [culturally responsive care](#).

## What are Culturally Responsive Care and Trauma-Informed Care?

Trauma-informed care and culturally responsive care are two important mental health service delivery approaches that are increasingly recognized as necessary for providing effective and equitable mental health care. [Ohio](#) has seen an increase in Hispanic and Latino communities, with a total population of 505,000, or 4.2% of the state population.

Disaggregated Hispanic/Latino Population in Ohio	
<b>Mexicans</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Puerto Ricans</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Dominicans</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Guatemalans</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Salvadorans</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>3%</b>

## Challenges Faced by Latino Communities in Ohio

Latino communities in Ohio face several challenges, including limited accessibility to healthcare services, particularly mental health care, and a lack of multicultural and multilingual clinicians. Connecting families to local services is also a significant challenge, given that most Latinos reside in rural regions while most licensed clinicians are in metropolitan areas. [The number of professionals in the healthcare field identifying as Hispanic/Latino in Ohio are as follows:](#)

Total Hispanic/Latino Healthcare Providers by Profession in Ohio	
<b>Counselors and Social Workers</b>	<b>835</b>
<b>Physicians</b>	<b>546</b>
<b>Chemical Dependency Professionals</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>Psychologists</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Peer Support Professionals</b>	<b>12</b>

## Considerations for Culturally Responsive and Trauma-Informed Care

A culturally responsive approach requires clinicians to:

- Understand how cultural differences can influence someone's mental health.
- Recognize and respect cultural norms, values, and traditions.
- Deliver services that are considerate of the ethnic diversity of clients.
- Tailor services to meet the specific cultural needs of clients.

Trauma-informed care acknowledges how trauma affects individuals on psychological, emotional, physical, and relational levels. Trauma-informed care also does the following:

- Utilizes a trauma lens to understand and respond to clients' experiences.
- Avoids re-traumatization of individuals.
- Considers the safety of both survivors and service providers.

## Addressing Disparities and Promoting Healing in Hispanic and Latino Populations

The [Healing Ethno and Racial Trauma \(HEART\) Framework](#), aims to reconnect Latinx communities with the strengths and values present in their culture. Clinicians can follow this framework to support Latinx at a community, family, and individual level.

### Phase 1: Establish Sanctuary Spaces

- Engage in *pláticas* (*small and informal conversations*) to provide psychoeducation about trauma, identification of emotions, and other mental health symptoms in their native language.
- Develop safety plans in the event of deportation.
- Connect families with free community resources.
- Connect with the client through the identification of traditions and assimilation challenges.

### Phase 2: Acknowledge, Reprocess, and Cope with Symptoms of Ethno-racial Trauma

- Create spaces designed to reprocess adverse events related to immigration and stigma about mental health.
- Deliver information using factsheets in various languages.
- Provide socio-emotional skills and culturally congruent coping skills (ex: spiritual guides and traditional healers)
- Offer affirmation, validation, and support.
- Be mindful of people's difficulties sharing their traumatic experiences.

### Phase 3: Strengthen and Connect Individuals, Families, and Communities to Survival Strategies and Cultural Traditions that Promote Healing

- Organize events to learn about experiences of ethno-racial trauma through:
  - Documentaries and movies (e.g., *Zoot Suit*, *The Head of Joaquin Murrieta*)
  - Reading books (e.g., *The Brief Wonderful Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Díaz, *Dying to Cross* by Jorge Ramos)
- Assess how the family system copes with stress.
- Promote cultural traditions (e.g., *quinceañeras*, *carnavales*, *Día de Los Reyes*, *Día de los Muertos*).
- Consider the client's stage/status of racial and ethnic identity.

## Phase 4: Liberation and Resistance

Engage in social justice by:

- Identifying ways to participate and contribute to systemic change,
- Volunteering with social agencies that advocate for the rights of immigrants,
- Becoming active on social media to raise awareness, and–
- Taking on leadership positions where you can be a voice for change.

Implementing culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches can effectively support mental health professionals to address the needs of Hispanic and Latino populations in Ohio. By providing accessible, sensitive, and tailored care, professionals can promote help-seeking behaviors, healing, resilience, and well-being within these communities.

## Resources

We encourage providers to learn more about the [Healing Ethno-Racial Framework](#) and how they can implement this approach in their practice.

Don't miss the Great Lakes MHTTC's [Checking In Podcast](#) where you can listen and learn about important topics related to providing culturally responsive services for Latino/Hispanic communities!

- [Checking In Podcast: PTSD Treatment Providers Series - A Conversation with Marco Torrez-Miranda](#)
- [Checking In Podcast: PTSD Treatment Providers Series - A Conversation with Gabriela Zapata-Alma](#)
- [Checking In Podcast: Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month & Discussing Culturally Appropriate Services for Hispanic/Latinx Communities \(PART 2, Adriana Alejandre - English\)](#)
- [Checking In Podcast: Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month & Discussing Culturally Appropriate Services for Hispanic/Latinx Communities \(PART 2, Adriana Alejandre - Español\)](#)

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