

Stress Management: The Aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Latino Families

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Presenter: National Hispanic & Latino Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

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Danita currently works at UT Health Houston with the Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHAT) Program as a Supervisor, provides school mental health evaluations, care coordination and therapy.

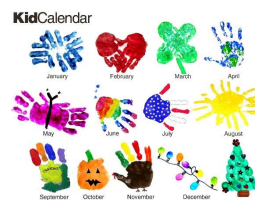


Learning Objectives

- Discuss and identify how 2020 stressors have impacted youth and family mental health.
- Identify basic cultural considerations for Hispanic and Latino youth and families.
- Learn brief stress management tools that can be utilized to manage stress.

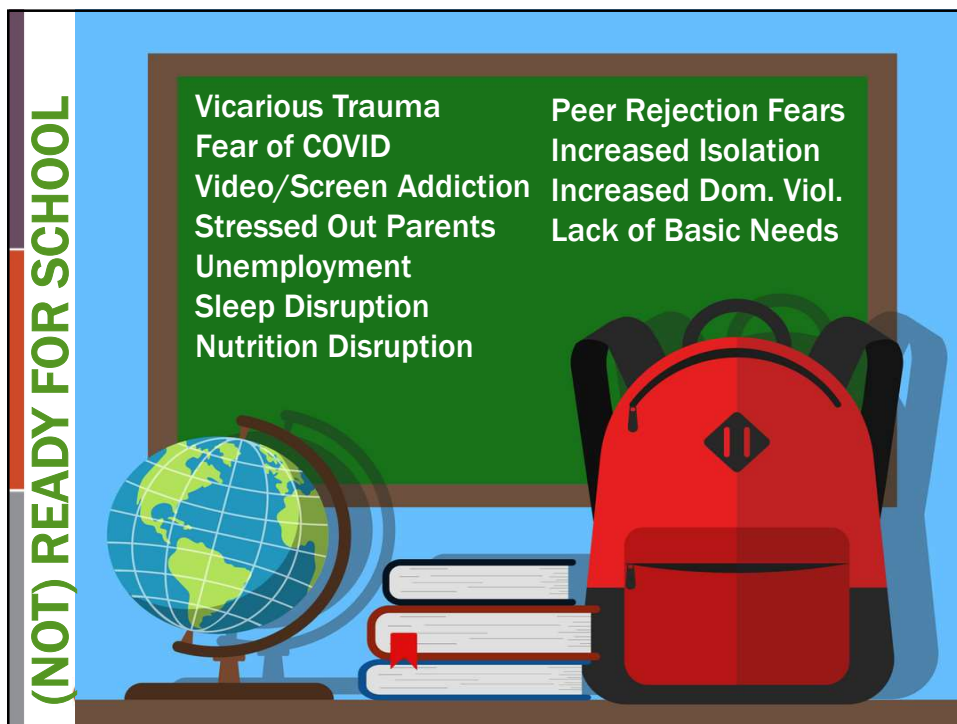


2020 Highlights



- January – Start of a new year, Kobe Bryant dies
- February – Talks of a new virus, Ahmaud Arbery
- March – School disrupted, Breonna Taylor, toilet paper craze
- April – Schools and workplaces closed or on hold
- May – George Floyd, televised protests, unemployment
- June – Isolation, lockdowns, Rayshard Brooks
- July – Isolation and lockdowns
- August – No clear plan of start of school, CA wildfires, Kenosha protests and killings
- September – School begins with little plans, families units stressed
- October – Continued virtual school and transition to in-person begins
- November and December – Lack of holiday normalcy, grief revisited, unemployment rates still high





COVID and Hispanic/Latino families



The Hispanic/Latino/Latinx Population

What does this population in the United States of America look like?

According to the recent Census:

- U.S. total : 328,239,523 (2019 population estimate);
- 59.9 million (18.3%)
self identify as Hispanics and Latinos
- Expected to be 30% by 2060



Cultural Considerations

- Literature has documented some sets of characteristics shared by most Latinos, including:
 - Spanish language;
 - *Personalismo* (personal contact, positive rapport, formal friendliness)
 - *Familismo* (familialism or collectivism, unified support)
 - *Respecto* (respect given to professions, authority figures)
 - *Machismo* (manliness/protector/provider)
 - *Marianismo* (womanliness/nurturer/"sainthood")

(Falicov, 2014; Dana, 1998; Rivera-Ramos & Buki, 2011)



COVID Statistics

COVID-19



MENU >

Risk for COVID-19 Infection, Hospitalization, and Death By Race/Ethnicity

Updated Mar. 12, 2021 Print

Rate ratios compared to White, Non-Hispanic persons	American Indian or Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic persons	Asian, Non-Hispanic persons	Black or African American, Non-Hispanic persons	Hispanic or Latino persons
Cases ¹	1.7x	0.7x	1.1x	1.3x
Hospitalization ²	3.7x	1.0x	2.9x	3.1x
Death ³	2.4x	1.0x	1.9x	2.3x

Race and ethnicity are risk markers for other underlying conditions that affect health including socioeconomic status, access to health care, and exposure to the virus related to occupation, e.g., frontline, essential, and critical infrastructure workers.



CDC, 2021

Contributions to Increase Rate

- According to the CDC, the following impact rates for exposure to COVID-19.
 - Discrimination
 - Healthcare access and utilization
 - Occupation
 - Educational, income and wealth gaps
 - And Housing.



CDC, 2021



Concerns and Fears for Undocumented Families

- Financial instability
 - Example: domestic and restaurant workers
 - No stimulus support or unemployment benefits.
- Unsafe work environment
 - Employers directing workers to leave after curfew.
- Fear of driving during citywide/countywide shutdowns
- Communal restrictions
 - Lack of spiritual support for families
 - Families who are caregivers for elders
- Decrease in college/university motivation of undocumented students
 - Entering workforce earlier to assist with family finances



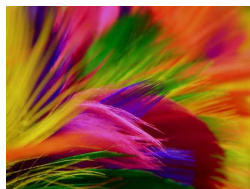
Distrust of Medical Resources

- Community Resource Hesitancy
 - Undocumented populations
- Medical Experimentation in Communities of Color
 - Tuskegee Project
 - Sterilization of Women
 - Most recently, Georgia detention center



Beliefs and Experiences with Mental Illness

- Stress & depression as body pains - backaches, headaches, or stomach aches
- *Fatalismo* - Troubles may be attributed to moral conflicts, guilt and shame over poor judgment, punishment from God for one's ancestors' indiscretions, or simply fate/fatalism.
- May seek spiritual or other healers as a first step.



Beliefs and Experiences with Mental Illness

- More likely to seek help from a medical professional than a psychologist or psychiatrist due to the stigma.
- Most likely to do so from someone they know and respect, such as a school-teacher or long-time family doctor.



Commonly Overlooked Mental Health Barriers for the Hispanic/Latino Population

- Lack of mental health providers who are clinicians of color (11%, 5%)
- Lack of culturally tailored services and culturally competent mental health professionals
- Shortage of bilingual or linguistically trained mental health professionals
- Lack of access or fear of care if undocumented
- Cultural Stigma

Book suggestion: In the Country We Love by Diane Guerrero



Latina Teen Suicide Concerns

According to the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey which was administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to people ages 10 to 24:

- 1 out of 10 Latinas has attempted suicide in the past year;
- 2 out of 10 have made a suicide plan;
- Half have said they felt hopeless.
- Depression, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts have remained above Latino male youths, and white males and females.

Source: 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey



Suicidal ideation among students in grades 9–12, 2017 Percent of students who seriously considered suicide			
	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic/ Non-Hispanic White Ratio
Men	10.8	13.0	0.8
Women	22.2	21.2	1.0
Total	16.4	17.3	0.9

Source: CDC 2019, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data.
Available at <https://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline>. [Accessed 08/02/2019]



Suicidal ideation among students in grades 9–12, 2017 Percent of students who attempted suicide			
	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic/ Non-Hispanic White Ratio
Men	5.8	4.6	1.3
Women	10.5	7.3	1.4
Total	8.2	6.1	1.3

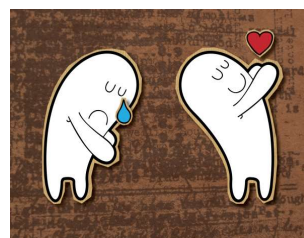
Source: CDC 2019, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data.
Available at <https://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline>. [Accessed 08/02/2019]



Privilege Can Create Conflict in Mixed Status Families

Mixed Status = Documented vs. Undocumented

- Documentation status
- Transportation– access to a car and DL
- Language barriers
 - Dependent on translation
- Financial access - credit access, cash pay
- Qualifying for academic aid
- Employment
- Sense of safety/deportation fears



Emotional Backpack

What are we all carrying?



Chaos & Disruption

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Ethno-racial Trauma

Toxic Stress

The Amygdala Hijack



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

FULFILLMENT

ESTEEM NEEDS

SUCCESS ♥
MASTERY

LOVE & BELONGING

FRIENDSHIP ♥ TRUST

SAFETY NEEDS

SAFETY ♥ SECURITY

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

FOOD ♥ WATER ♥ WARMTH ♥ REST



Disruption

Which levels were abruptly interrupted in 2020?



Racial Injustice

The Impact Of Racism On Mental Health:



#BlackLivesMatter

@RealDepressionProject



Ethno-racial Trauma

The individual and/or collective psychological distress and fear of danger that results from experiencing or witnessing discrimination, threats of harm, violence, and intimidation directed at ethno-racial minority groups.

This form of trauma stems from a legacy of oppressive laws, policies, and practices.

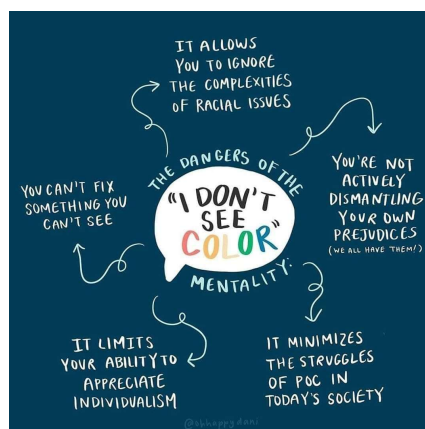
How has this effected our families in 2020?



Being Mindful

Conversations about racial injustice

- Not new for our children
 - Permission for conversations may have changed
- What does your school or agency do to support students/children of color?



Toxic Stress (Over active stress response)

- Stressful events that are chronic, uncontrollable, and/or experienced without support from caring adults. Strong, frequent, or prolonged activation of the body's stress management system.
- Two brain regions effected
 - Fear, anxiety, impulsive responses = overproduce neural connections
 - Reasoning, planning, behavioral control = produce fewer neural connections
 - *A lot of responses and not a lot of thinking!*
- Extreme exposure can **change the stress system.**
 - Responds at lower thresholds
 - Activates more frequently and for longer periods than is needed



TS and Intergenerational Trauma

- Male rat study - 2013
- Cherry blossoms – Electric current on foot – 10 days
- Bred with females
- Up to 3 generations
 - Sensitivity to the cherry blossom smell (jumpy/nervous)
- DNA gene encoding smell receptor (in olfactory bulb)
- Dissected brain
 - Greater number of neurons that detected scent

It is not that fear is being passed down the generations – it is that fear in one generation leads to sensitivity in the next

(Dias & Ressler, 2014)

Toxic Stress

- Increases stress hormones
- Increases inflammation
- Decreases neuroplasticity
- Increases cellular aging
- Increases cortisol



(Shonkoff, Boyce & McEwen, 2009)



Effects of Increase in Cortisol

- Disrupts sleep
- Stimulates fat accumulation
 - Triggers craving sugar and fatty foods
- Too much cortisol is toxic to the hippocampus
 - Results in a smaller hippocampus over time
 - Decreases the level of **learning and memory**

Book Suggestion:

The Deepest Well by Nadine Burk Harris, MD

(Brunson, Grigoriadis, Lorang & Baram, 2002)



Sleep Hygiene & the Amygdala Hijack



Sleep Hygiene

- 1 Cycle = 3 total **sleep stages**
 - NREM – Non rapid eye movement
 - Two additional stages
 - REM – Rapid eye movement
- 1-1.5 hours per cycle (uninterrupted)
- Need 4-5 Sleep Cycles
- Totals 8 hours



(Eugene & Masiak, 2015)

Important because...

- Sleep acts as a garbage collector that comes during the night and removes the waste product left by the brain.
- Eliminates toxins
- Flush out the cellular trash in the body
- Repairs brain cell damage
- Important for physical and brain growth



(Eugene & Masiak, 2015)



Effects of Lack of Sleep

- Temporal lobe – language processing
- Behavior, mood, cognitive performance
- Hippocampus - Long term memory cannot consolidate learned tasks from previous day
- Lapse in attention span
- Decreased reaction time
Depends more on the amygdala/emotional reaction



(Eugene & Masiak, 2015)



Roads Lead to the Amygdala

- FIRE ALARM SYSTEM
- There is a BEAR IN THE ROOM!
- Amygdala = Flip the lid
 - Blood/Oxygen push
 - Adrenaline rush
 - Fight/Flight/Freeze
 - Logic shuts down



Reversing the Amygdala

- Ventral Vagal Network
 - #1 Function – NOT to respond in an extreme way
 - Deep breathing – activates VVN
 - More blood directed to logic brain to enter back in to state of social engagement.
 - Tells the brain we are safe again
- Hippocampus – Files memory away as SAFE!

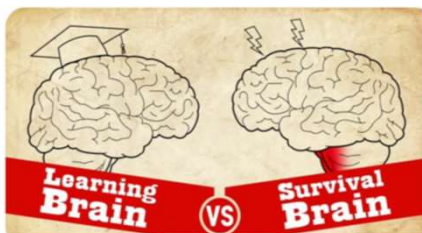


Learning stress management tools that can be utilized in a school setting

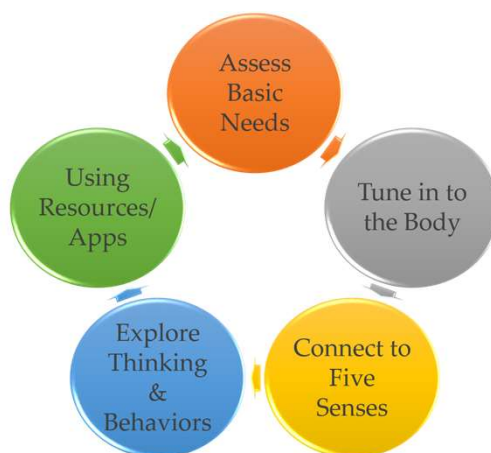


Time Matters

- ✓15 minutes to go from emotional/amygdala brain back to logic/learning brain
- ✓14-21 days to create a new habit
- ✓68 days to rewire the brain



Today's Take Home Toolkit



Tool 1: Assess for Basic Needs & Concerns

Start the conversation:

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
- GAD-7 Assessment
- PHQ-9 Assessment
- CFI: Cultural Formulation Interview
- Toxic Stress Buffer Checklist



Explore Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Each person must have most needs satisfied at the current stage before they go on to the next.

All resources a person has (money, energy, skills, etc.) are used to satisfy needs.

The theory tries to explain what motivates people to do certain things.

In each box below, fill in the key characteristics of each stage of the hierarchy. Include an example to help you remember each stage.

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Explore Worry: GAD-7

GAD-7

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	0	1	2	3

Total Score = Add Columns + + +

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult at all	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	Extremely difficult
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

© 2019 Early Adopters

Explore Concerns: PHQ-9

PHQ9P

PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE - 9				
Comments:				
Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way	0	1	2	3
<div style="text-align: right;"> 0 + + + + = Total Score: _____ </div>				
If you checked off <u>any</u> problems, how difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?				
Not difficult at all	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	Extremely difficult	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Explore Buffers

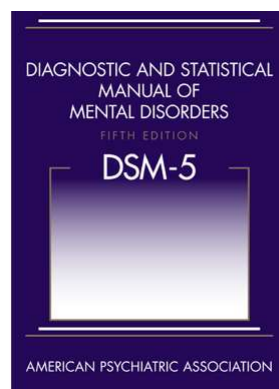
Checklist to reduce over active toxic stress response

- ✓Healthy Relationships
- ✓Nutrition
- ✓Sleep
- ✓Exercise
- ✓Mental Health
- ✓Meditation/Mindfulness



Use of the CFI: Cultural Formulation Interview

- DSM-5
- Evidenced Based
- Series of questions
- Person centered
- Cultural approach
- Informs treatment planning



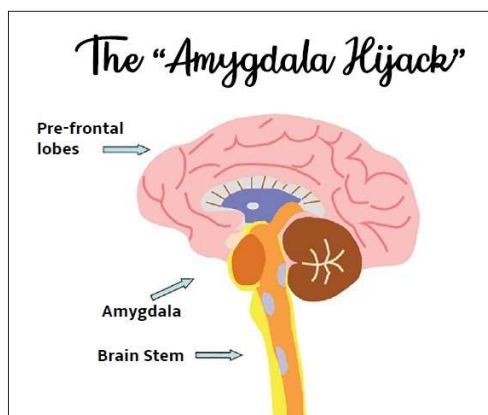
Use of the CFI: Cultural Formulation Interview

Four domains:

- Domain 1: Cultural definition of the problem
- Domain 2: Cultural perceptions of the cause, context and support.
- Domain 3: Cultural factors that affect self-coping and past help seeking.
- Domain 4: Cultural factors that affect current help seeking.



Tool 2: Tuning in to the Body

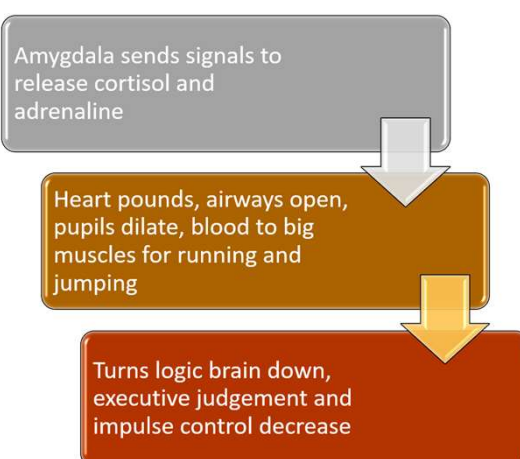


How can we identify when our amygdala (fire alarm) starts to hijack our thinking/logic brain?

Body Scan

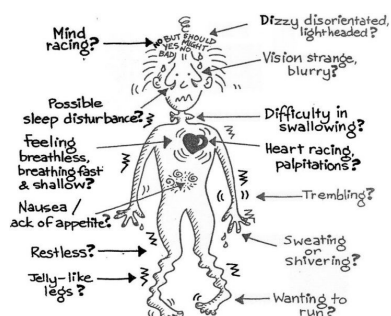
Belly Breathing

What is going on with my body?

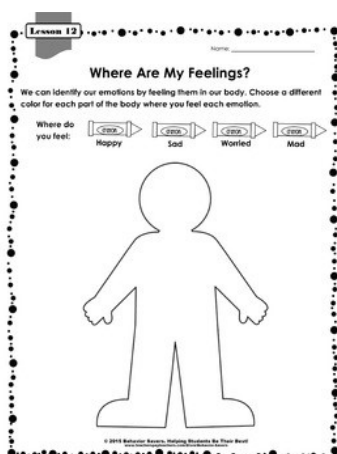


Body Scan Activity

- Imagine a BEAR comes in to your office/room RIGHT NOW!
- What areas of the body do you feel it in and what symptoms do you notice?



Body Scan Activity



- Used as a teaching tool
- Common signals in children
 - Heart races
 - Stomach hurts
 - Legs/hands shaking

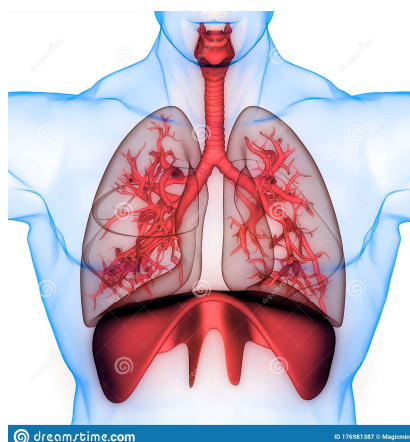
What do we do with this?

- Safely engage in energy depletion
- Fight/Flight = Hands/Feet



Belly Breathing

- To reverse the amygdala switch
 - Activate the Ventral Vagal Network
- Deep Diaphragm Belly Breathing
 - Place one hand on the belly
 - 4-5 seconds in – Nose
 - Stomach pushes up against hand
 - Chest remains still
 - 5-6 seconds out – Mouth O shape
 - Pursed lips
 - Tighten ab muscles
 - Stomach falls downward



Birthday Cake Activity

- Image your favorite birthday cake flavor
- Writing/drawing activity
 - Five senses
 - Sight, touch, hear, taste, smell
- Practice Deep Belly Breathing while imagining this delicious birthday cake.
 - Close eyes
 - Inhale - SMELL THE CAKE
 - Exhale – SLOWLY BLOW OUT TONS OF CANDLES

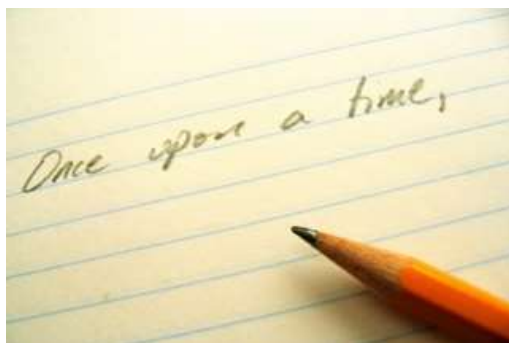


Tool 3: Connect to Five Senses Grounding



Tool 3: Connect to Five Senses Creative writing

- Creating my safe space by writing a story.



Practice

- Write a short story while incorporating the five senses.
 - Identify a character
 - Sight/See
 - Hear
 - Taste
 - Smell
 - Touch/Feel



Activity: Creating my safe space...

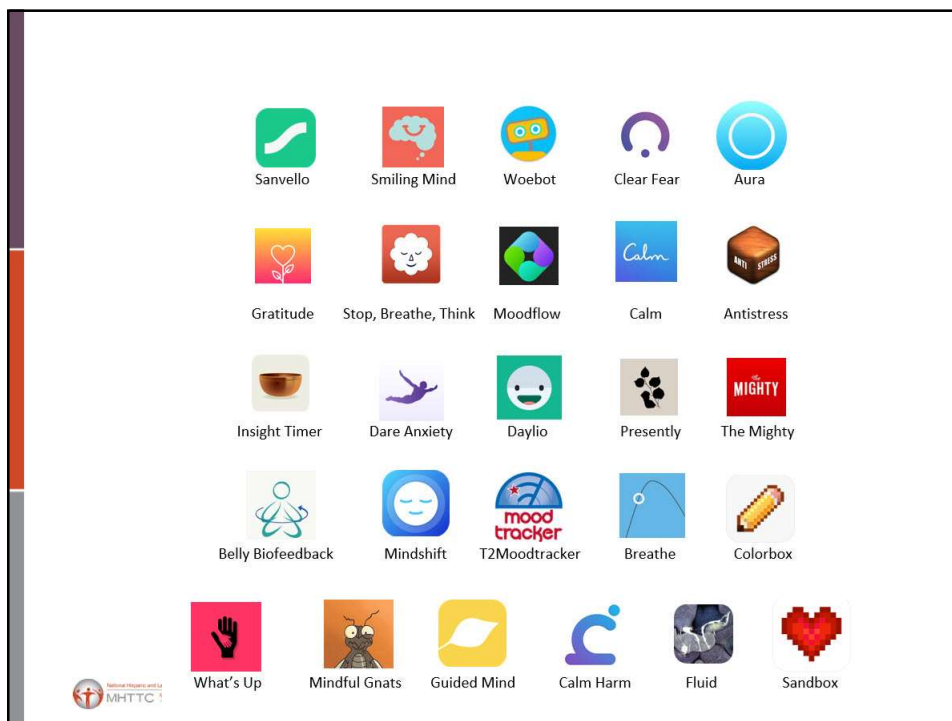
- Identify a character, pick a location and write a 5 senses story.
 - Mrs. Grapejuice was at home and lost her crayons.
 - She had purple hair, purple lipstick and a purple dress.
 - She wanted to go to the store but she needed to find her crayons on the way to the store. The crayon colors were yellow, blue, green and red.
 - As she walked to the store she heard birds chirping. The birds were chirping and singing happy songs.
 - When Mrs. Grapejuice walked by a bakery she smelled delicious cookies. Her favorite cookie is chocolate chip.
 - She went inside and tasted the chocolate chip cookie.
 - It felt warm and gooey as she tasted it.
 - It made her feel happy and calm.



Tool 4: Using Technology

- Mindfulness Coach – Practice Daily
- Colorbox
- Insight Timer
- Mood Trackers – Daylio
- Favorite App – List in the chat box
- Look for local virtual support groups





Additional Considerations

Language Considerations for Schools

- When doing these activities, it's okay for the student to do it in their preferred language.
- Language assistance when parents/caregivers call for information.
- Coping, mental health and crisis communication offered on sites in multiple languages
- Informed consent documents in various languages



School-based Telemental Health

Advantages:

- greater efficiency (decreased commute time, easier scheduling)
- capacity for higher volume
- increased access to care for students

Disadvantages:

- patient concerns about their own privacy
- concerns related to the ability to effectively engage families in care without being face to face with them in person



(Stephan S, Lever N, Bernstein L, Edwards S, Pruitt D., 2016)

COVID Era Concerns

- Students tired of zoom
- No internet
- Patient privacy – everyone is home
- Adjustments:
 - Hard of hearing
 - Vision of students
 - Language deficiencies
 - Need for physical action for some



Policies: Stay up to date

- Create a way to keep up with local policies regarding undocumented persons.
 - Helps connect when concerns arise.
 - Opportunity to find connections and resources.
 - Local Immigration Non-Profits – good resource



Partnering with the School Nurse

- Mental health comes out as somatic symptoms
- Latino families are more likely to seek help from a medical professional than a school social worker or counselor



Resource Specialists/Partnerships

Assign staff to help with basic needs, COVID needs and economic hardships

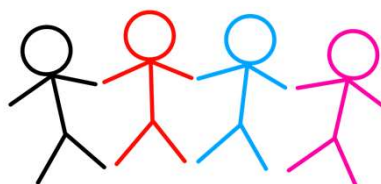
Partner with:

- Agencies who offer intervention that don't require additional information from undocumented people.



Last thought of the day:

- Building relationships
- Personalismo
- Therapeutic Rapport



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Mental Health Educational Resources

HISPANIC AND LATINO CULTURAL VALUES

Respeto - Respect

Confianza - Trust

Familismo - Familism

Personalismo - Formal Friendliness

Cultural Humility Fact Sheet

CULTURAL HUMILITY: WHERE BEING HUMAN MATTERS IN SERVING OTHERS

Key Points:

- Mental health providers that value cultural contributions recognize the importance of building relationships. Relationship matters in order for individuals who belong to diverse populations.
- It is not enough that the relationship often can be based on:
- social identity
- having the needs of individuals whose values are not heard and who are not in positions.

Key Points:

- "Cultural humility" is a process of learning and growing "willingness" on the part of the provider to learn, showing openness and humility to the culture, the individual and the community. It is a process of learning and growing "willingness" on the part of the provider to learn, showing openness and humility to the culture, the individual and the community.
- It is a process of learning and growing "willingness" on the part of the provider to learn, showing openness and humility to the culture, the individual and the community.
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DSM-5 Cultural Formulation Interview

Overview and Research Development

Key Points:

- The DSM-5 Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) is a structured clinical interview that assesses the cultural context of the patient's mental health concerns.
- It is designed to be used by mental health professionals to gather information about the patient's cultural background, beliefs, and values.
- The CFI is organized into four main sections: Cultural Definition of the Problem, Cultural Perceptions of the Problem, Cultural Context of the Problem, and Cultural Formulation.

GENDER VIOLENCE AMONG LATINAS: KEY CONCEPTS AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Key Points:

- Gender violence among Latinas is a complex issue that involves cultural, social, and economic factors.
- Key concepts include: cultural values, social norms, and economic factors.
- Cultural considerations include: family structure, gender roles, and community support.

School Mental Health Educational Resources

School as client: Mental Health Services for Diverse Population in the School Culture

Key Points:

- Schools play a critical role in providing mental health services to diverse populations.
- Key considerations include: cultural values, social norms, and economic factors.
- Schools should be seen as clients in the mental health system.

School-Based Mental Health Services for Hispanic and Latino Children and Youth

CHALLENGING FACTS

Children are more vulnerable to the effects of stress originating from multiple adverse childhood experiences, including the family and school environment. These factors are especially for Hispanic and Latino youth who may also experience:

EFFECTS OF HEALTH CARE DISPARITIES IN ACCESS TO CARE

Statistic	Value
26% of children currently in the U.S. are Latino	26%
88% of Hispanic and Latino children's mental health needs are not being met due to limited access to quality care	88%
44% of Hispanic and Latino children are threatened by deportation policies	44%

Key Points:

- Hispanic and Latino children reported feeling sad and hopeless at a rate 2.5 times higher than White children.
- Hispanic and Latino adolescents reported suicidal thoughts and suicide risk at a rate 2.5 times higher than White adolescents.
- Prevalence of depression symptoms among Hispanic and Latino adolescents is higher than for any minority group besides Native American youth.

Complicated Grief: Cultural Considerations When Working with Loss in Hispanic and Latino Students and Their Families

Key Points:

- Complicated grief is a common experience for Hispanic and Latino students and their families.
- Cultural considerations include: family structure, gender roles, and community support.
- Key concepts include: cultural values, social norms, and economic factors.



Educational Resources
<https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/national-hispanic-and-latino-mhttc/product/stressors-hispanic-and-latino-communities>



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