



Healthy Marriage Resource List





The following resources are available to assist healthy marriage programs in delivering and enhancing services to Hispanic couples and families. This document is not an exhaustive list of available resources but provides general references that may be of interest to practitioners. Programs are encouraged to explore the websites below and contact healthy marriage experts for more information.

Available Resources

Administration for Children and Families Healthy Marriage Initiative

An overview of the federal Healthy Marriage Initiative goals and background on why healthy marriage matters; it provides resources on funding, marriage education, federal research studies, and upcoming events.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/index.html>

Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative (HHMI)

The HHMI is a focused strategy within the Healthy Marriage Initiative addressing the unique cultural, linguistic, demographic and socio-economic needs of children and families in Hispanic communities. The HHMI website contains tips sheets and practitioner briefs for program enhancement, demographic information and statistics about marriage in the Hispanic population, a list of healthy marriage curricula in Spanish and an invitation to join the HHMI listserv.

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/hispanic_hm_initiative.html

National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC)

NHMRC is a national resource and clearinghouse for information and research relating to healthy marriages. The NHMRC provides access to print and electronic publications, timely information on healthy marriage research, and targeted resources to support practitioners. It also provides essential information for federal grantees, couples, policymakers, and state and community stakeholders.

<http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org>

Smart Marriages (Coalition for Marriage, Family and Couples Education)

Serves as a clearinghouse to help couples locate marriage and relationship education courses; to help mental health professionals, clergy, mentor couples, and lay educators locate marriage education resources; to connect those with an interest in the continuing development of the field; to support community marriage education initiatives, legislation, and research; and, to promote the effectiveness of marriage education courses and increase their availability in the community.

http://www.smartmarriages.com/about_cmfce.html

The Lewin Group

The Lewin Group provides expertise and technical assistance specific to the implementation of healthy marriage initiatives. Visit the spotlight on Healthy Marriage Initiatives for resources and tools on how to build a healthy marriage coalition or develop a logic model as well as guidance on grant writing and strategic planning.

<http://www.lewin.com/Spotlights/LewinHP/Marriage.htm>





STATE AND LOCAL HEALTHY MARRIAGE INITIATIVES AND COALITIONS

AVANCE (Texas, multiple communities, and Los Angeles, Calif.)

AVANCE serves predominantly low-income Latino families in underserved communities and combines parenting and marriage education to strengthen families.

<http://www.avance.org>

California Healthy Marriages Coalition

The coalition supports a statewide network of healthy marriage coalitions, with the goal of helping couples understand the characteristics of healthy marriages and gain greater access to marriage education.

<http://www.californiamarriages.org>

Esperanza USA

A network of faith-based Hispanic organizations committed to raising awareness and identifying resources that strengthen the Hispanic community. Esperanza currently provides healthy marriage training sessions in New York and California.

<http://www.esperanza.us>

Families Northwest (Washington)

Families Northwest partners with communities to strengthen marriages and families, providing resources to young people, singles, premarital and married couples, parents, and stepfamilies.

<http://www.familiesnorthwest.org>

Family Bridges (Chicago, Ill.)

Family Bridges combines public education with marriage education to engage multi-sector stakeholders and make a difference in the lives of people in the low-income, underserved community.

<http://www.familybridgeschicago.org>

First Things First (Tennessee)

This not-for-profit organization is committed to identifying values-based solutions, including promoting healthy marriage and father involvement, to strengthen families in Hamilton County.

<http://www.firstthings.org>

FuturoNow (Los Angeles, CA)

A multi-dimensional strategy including training opportunities, customized technical assistance, and relationship skills classes, FuturoNow is designed to expand and enhance programs that address needs within the Latino community, specifically as they relate to two priority areas: at-risk youth and marriage strengthening through relationship skills development.

<http://www.futuronow.org>

Healthy Marriages Grand Rapids (Michigan)

Clergy and community leaders join together to encourage and enable couples to reach their potential as lifelong marriage partners.

<http://www.healthymarriagesgr.org>

Oklahoma Marriage Initiative

The largest statewide initiative in the country, this program model delivers marriage education services in a variety of settings and strives to strengthen families and reduce the divorce rate in Oklahoma.

<http://www.okmarriage.org>





Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative WORKING PAPERS

The following are excerpts from various working papers developed by the Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative (HHMI). They are intended to provide support to program administrators as they expand or implement new marriage education services for Hispanic couples. These working papers contain the most current information available but are not intended to provide a comprehensive review of the issues. Additional documents will be added to the HHMI website as promising practices emerge and the field of marriage education in the Hispanic community continues to grow. To download copies of the entire papers visit http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/hispanic_hm_initiative.html

Summary of Issues to be Considered in Program Implementation

This memo summarizes themes and guidance on the topics of engaging Hispanic families, developing program structures, and establishing trust with program participants as it relates to marriage programs.

One strategy for program developers is to work with families in the community to create the program. Programs might ask what Latino couples need to make their couple and family life more satisfying. Involving couples from the community in program design and specifically asking what strong couple relationships look like will help in the development of a program that is culturally appropriate and specific to that particular community. Program developers should consider what venues are available for gathering community input into the initial program design to ensure it reflects actual community needs and concerns. Frequently obtaining feedback and incorporating participant input as the program evolves and matures should also be part of program implementation plans.

Building trust in a community is essential for Latino parents to access program services. This takes time and can be difficult to achieve, especially if a new program is being offered by an unknown provider. Some strategies to build trust between participants and the program include:

- Provide home visits, as opposed to office visits, to establish connections with Latino families.
- Use community-based resources such as churches, priests, workplaces, and housing developments to learn about the values and needs of the community.
- Hire Latino facilitators.
- Plan activities that are centered around sharing food (preferably not pizza and sandwiches): make it a fiesta!

To view entire document visit: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/hispanic_hm_initiative.html

Summary of Issues to be Considered in Curriculum Adaptation

An ever-present challenge in the delivery of marriage and relationship education services to the Hispanic population is identifying culturally relevant and culturally sensitive curricula. Culturally relevant curricula give attention to the values, language, and experiences of Latino couples. Most available curricula were developed with respect to the dominant culture. These curricula may need to be adapted to make them relevant to Hispanic couples. In some cases, the adaptation may be extensive, but many curricula will only need to be “tweaked.”





Tweaking a curriculum involves identifying which examples in the curriculum presentation materials or participant workbook may not resonate with the target population. Including examples of values, needs, and activities that are specific to the local Hispanic community will make the exercises more relevant to the participants. New approaches and additional resources may be required to address the unique needs of the Hispanic population, recognizing changing expectations, challenges to traditional gender roles, different methods of parenting, increased conflict in the household due to acculturation, and effective conflict-resolution techniques. Attention should also be devoted to additional stressors such as losses, hopes and disappointments, language acquisition, and immigration issues, including deportation.

To view entire document visit: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/hispanic_hm_initiative.html

Summary of Issues to be Considered in Program Recruitment

A primary challenge in the delivery of marriage and relationship education services is couple recruitment. Engaging couples to participate in a relationship education program is complex and can be especially challenging when working with Hispanic/Latino couples. Linguistic limitations and distinct cultural characteristics may pose challenges to practitioners and program developers when reaching out to Hispanic couples. An awareness and understanding of certain cultural nuances may assist programs in effectively recruiting and retaining Hispanic participants. Four factors contributing to the successful recruitment of Latino couples are outlined in this memo:

- Understanding the Hispanic Audience
- Preserving Public Image
- Building Trust
- Marketing Messages

To view entire document visit: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/hispanic_hm_initiative.html

Summary of Issues to be Considered When Working with Recent Immigrants

Immigrants residing in the United States are often motivated by an opportunity for their families to enjoy economic improvement. With this opportunity are challenges that impact a myriad of issues, including work, education, and marital relationships. Hispanic immigrants emanate from 26 nations, primarily those located in the Americas and Spain. While Spanish may be the primary language among Hispanics, each nationality maintains its own dialect and the same word may have different meanings from nation to nation. In addition to different countries of origin and dialects, economic resources, educational systems, and class structures further distinguish one group from another.

Key differences among Hispanic groups residing in the United States are often related to the circumstances of their migration. The impetus for moving from one country to another varies between ethnic groups, but once the process begins, patterns are established that are common across groups. Factors surrounding the decision to leave their country of origin and the unique challenges immigrant couples face may have implication on how couples perceive and receive marriage and relationship education services. It is important for practitioners and program developers to understand these implications.

To view entire document visit: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/hispanic_hm_initiative.html



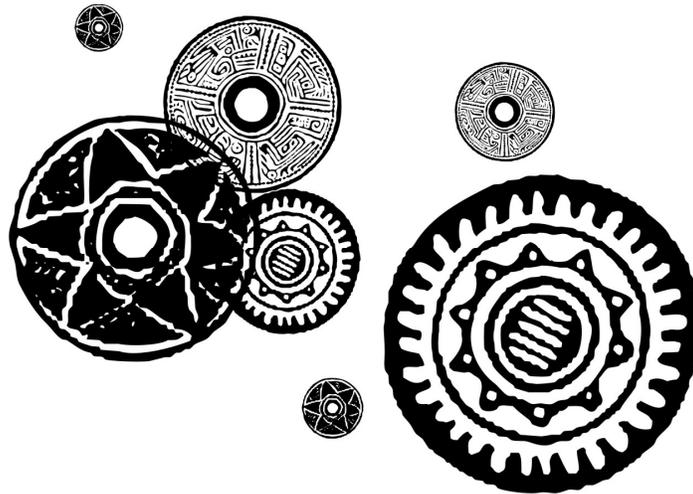


Gender Norms and the Role of the Extended Family

It is important to examine traditional gender roles and family systems in different populations to understand their impact on couple dynamics. These roles and expectations play a significant part in the way couples interact, family decision-making, and even how one might define marital satisfaction. Hispanic culture is traditionally associated with distinct gender roles for men and women, known as “machismo” and “marianismo,” which dictate certain behavioral expectations for members of that community. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on family and community (“familismo”) that interacts with the couple’s expectations and decision-making while reinforcing the importance of cultural and societal norms.

These cultural values differ significantly from European/Caucasian norms, which have influenced U.S. culture, and can serve as both a protective factor and as a challenge to successful couple relationships. Curriculum developers and program operators need to consider what parts of these traditional roles marriage education programs should try to preserve and what parts might be an obstacle to healthy couple relationships.

To view entire document visit: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/hispanic_hm_initiative.html





RESEARCH PAPERS / PUBLICATIONS

Marriage and Family

Fein, D., *Married and Poor: Basic Characteristics of Economically Disadvantaged Couples in the U.S.*, MDRC (2004). <http://www.supportinghealthymarriage.org/publications/6/workpaper.pdf>

Lloyd, K., *Latina's Transition to First Marriage: An Examination of Four Theoretical Perspectives* (2006).

Negy, C., and Snyder, D., *Relationship Satisfaction of Mexican American and Non-Hispanic White Americans Interethnic Couples: Issues of Acculturation and Clinical Intervention*, Journal of Marital and Family Therapy (2000).

Ooms, T., *Adapting Healthy Marriage Programs for Disadvantaged and Culturally Diverse Populations: What are the issues?* Center for Law and Social Policy (2007).
http://www.clasp.org/publications/couplesmarriage_brief_10.pdf

Oropresa, R.S., and Landale, N., *The Future of Marriage and Hispanics*, Journal of Marriage and the Family: Vol. 66, Is. 4 (2004).

Building Real Solutions for Real People
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/pdf/healthmarrbk.pdf>

Implementing Healthy Marriage Program for Unmarried Couples with Children: Early Lessons from the Building Strong Families Project
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/healthymarriageprogram.pdf>

The Fragile Families Study (a variety of working papers and research briefs that examine marriage in the context of family structure, poverty, fatherhood and other social characteristics)
<http://www.fragilefamilies.princeton.edu>

The Future of Children: Marriage and Child Well-Being (journal containing various articles on marriage, family structure, barriers to marriage, program strategies and child well-being)
http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/Marriage_vol15_no2__fall05.pdf

Population Demographics and Trends

Lee, S., and Edmonston, B., *New Marriages, New Families: U.S. Racial and Hispanic Intermarriage*, Population Reference Bureau: Vol. 60, No. 2 (2005).

Sado, S., and Bayer, A., *The Changing American Family: Executive Summary*, Population Resource Center (2001).

Saenz, R., *Latinos and the Changing Face of America*, The American People: Census 2000, Population Reference Bureau (2004).

Tulane Hispanic Health Initiative, *The term Hispanic Latino controversy: Hispanic, Latino, Latin American, Mexican, Central and South American, Caribbean*. New Orleans, LA: THHI (2002).

U.S. Department of Commerce, *Overview of Race and Hispanic origin*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce (2003).

