

Block Three: Meeting the Needs of Hispanic Families - Video

(link for viewing at end of transcript)

CG: Home Visit Caseworker “I recruit my families on the street, in the clinics or any place that when I see a mom or pregnant mom or mom with a child or parent with a child that is how I start the process. I give my information, if they’re interested they call me. If not, I’ll always get their name, their number and address so that way I can mail an application or I can get in contact with the parent and explain a little bit more of the program.” “I have a case of 11 families that I see once a week for an hour and a half to two hours.” “Our main goal is to educate parents on how to interact with the children, what kind of activities that they can do in their home environment. We use their home as a setting of educational activities.” “With this family I start working with Angeline. I did home visits for two years. Then when mommy was ready to place Angeline in a center, I recommended that she would like to come here. She are very familiar with the program because we have socialization twice a month.” “The most important thing I think is to educate them about the system, and how two cultures sometimes they are so different and we have to accommodate our self to become part of this society.” “My end of the day usually is like three o’clock. I come here and take my notes and put them in the individual files that I have. And I start reflecting on what else can I do better, or what else can I do to help this family.” “When I am walking down the hall they just go Maria, Maria and they give me a hug. So that gives me the satisfaction that I really did make a difference in their life.” CG Maria Diaz

CG: Meeting the Needs of Hispanic Families Building Block 3 Narrator: Nat sound ... “We’re going to draw pictures about our feelings, how we feel, what makes us happy...” One of the best ways to meet the needs of a Hispanic child, is to meet the needs of the family. Nat sound teacher speaking to child... “Tell me about your happy face here.... Uh, my daddy is going to come home.” “Because, whatever is happening to the family is going to have a major impact on a child’s ability to learn. CG: Debbie Justice, Family Support Specialist “There’s the whole culture shock issue and trying to integrate into a new culture, that can cause some real problems.” CG: “What things in the home environment do not stimulate a child....” Narrator: Adjusting your mental health program to accommodate the needs of Hispanic families may be a change you need to make. In the next few minutes, we will also take a look at how some of your other services can accommodate these new families. CG: Mental Health Nat sound.... How is Asvaldo doing? How is he acting at home these days? A good mental health program begins with an understanding of the stress facing today’s Hispanic families. Much of this stress can be traced to culture shock--- when Hispanic family values differ from mainstream contemporary culture. CG: Elena Cohen, Social Worker “It is highly difficult to generalize Hispanic families because each Hispanic family is going to be individual and you need to focus on what the strengths are and what are some of the areas they need to improve. But there are factors that may increase the stress of families.” CG: Cultural Comparison of Values

Traditional:	Contemporary:
Family/Group	Individual
Collaboration	On your own
Process	Result
Relationships	Skills
Leisure	Work

Narrator: Hispanic families tend to be family and group oriented, everyone works together as a team, compared to the mainstream “toot your own horn” focus on the individual. Hispanic interactions are collaborative and cooperative by nature. For example, Hispanics tend to have their friends and family provide child care, rather than seeking it themselves. Spending time together and enjoying the experience are more important than ‘is this a productive use of my time right now.’ At work, the focus may be on group interaction and teamwork rather than measuring a person’s technical competence. And, leisure time is important. CG: Hector Campos, Education Consultant “For the parents, the challenge is understanding that it’s important to maintain their culture, their traditions and their customs and their values but at the same time, try to adapt the American way or new values or new attitudes or new behaviors that will help their families and their children.” Narrator: Often it helps to know where in the process of acculturation the family is and how they feel about what is happening around them. CG: Elena Cohen, Social Worker “Head Start provides you with a set of performance standards that makes your job easier. It gives you many tools to really do the job with Latino families of supporting them where they are, of providing them with an environment where they feel welcome, with making them feel like what they’re going through is something that you understand.” CG: Mental Health Nat sound Michaela Rivera... “I want to introduce you to the family that we will, the fictitious family that we will be working with...” Narrator: Psychologist Miquela Rivera and Social Workers Kelly Young and Myrna Calvert travel their region teaching Head Starts how to help Hispanic families in crisis. Nat sound... “When Juan heard Maria’s news of her new job he became very upset and angry, criticizing her and shouting in front of the children. Maria and the

children were both upset. CG: Young “So what’s your instinct when someone’s in front of you crying? You want to help them, you want to fix it, you want to make it better. Well Miquela said this in the beginning and I’m going to say it again, your job is not to be a therapist and fix them, okay? Your job is to assess what’s going on and then get them appropriate referrals so that at the end of the day you can go home and feel good that you empowered that family with what they can do to help themselves...” Narrator: Psychologists say getting help is often easier back home, where the Hispanic family unit functions in more of a circular, mutualistic manner, with tight family bonds and “I help you, you help me” expectations that include extended family. CG: Paola Andrea Echeverry, Social Cultural Specialist “Latino Americans build networks around them in their own native countries. They have their family, their friends, the priest, the neighbor, when they come here they lose all that support.” Nat sound... “Have any of you heard of an ecomap?” Narrator: Social worker Myrna Calvert says Head Start can become that circle of support. Calvert has come up with an easy way to figure out a families needs as well as what resources they can call on in their circle of support. CG: Myrna Calvert, Social Worker “We’ll say Tony and Juan have a very close relationship so we’re going to put a solid line there, and we’re going to show arrows going both ways. That’s a strong relationship, that’s a support.” Narrator: The ecomap becomes part of mental health prevention by identifying potential problems and needs. Creating a circle of support quickly for new immigrants is important because problems they may have had before will likely get worse. Domestic violence is one such example. Half of immigrants with domestic violence problems report an increase in their partners violence against them after immigration. CG: Elena Cohen, Social Worker “Most women who are battered have a very hard time disclosing information about domestic violence because of the repercussions that it may have and Head Start may be the only place where they may be able to reach for help.” CG: Hispanic victims of domestic violence: Fear of jail Fear of deportation Fear of job loss Fear of emotional impact Fear of financial impact Narrator: Hispanic victims of domestic violence face additional pressure because they worry what will happen to their spouse if they seek help. Fear of deportation and how that would affect the family are common concerns that often prevent a victim from seeking help. -CG: “Generally every parent tries to do the best for their kids, many times the things they do may not be the most adequate and can bring about many errors...” Good mental health programs overcome these barriers with frequent workshops that allow families to openly talk and share concerns. Nat sound ... “Hi Marisol, My name is John McCann, nice to meet you...” And, many Head Starts have found partnering with an immigration attorney helpful. They also provide opportunities where problems can be discussed privately. It is important to realize that you cannot be an investigator, but you can respond to feelings, refer parents to resources and help them think through their options. Don’t deal with domestic violence alone. Maintain confidentiality but reach out to other members of your team, mental health consultants and child protective agencies. And most importantly, develop a sense of trust. Let the victim know that you are there for help on a consistent basis and that you will continue to be there. CG: Elena Cohen, Social Worker “Building trust is so important because the way that families relate to the staff and to the program is through relationship and the relationship with anyone of the staff members is going to be what’s going to motivate families to do the best they can for their children and themselves.” CG: Building Trust Narrator: Developing a relationship and building trust begin with your very first interaction. And it is so important it appears several times in the Program Performance Standards and competency goals. Conventional wisdom has it that it takes three to twenty seconds for you to make a first impression. A recent study gives you a little more time. Researchers report that college students decide if a new acquaintance will become a friend in three minutes. CG: Leo Lopez, Social Worker “How you define trust is when you feel confident enough to share information with someone who you may not necessarily know.” Narrator: Building trust does not happen overnight but you can practice techniques that will make your relationship building more successful. CG: Rapport building Techniques Body position Facial expressions Make eye contact Listen attentively Reflect Respond Show understanding These techniques include physical actions you can take as well as making sure you get across the message that you are knowledgeable, credible, and concerned about the person’s welfare. Because Hispanics so highly value family, the best conversation starter is to ask: “How are you doing? How are your kids, and how is your family?” That then leads to an opportunity for you to share information about services you can offer and you are on your way to the next step. CG: Trust Building Use positive and warm facial expressions Use friendly body language Listen, reflect and respond Show understanding and interest To build trust: be predictable, communicate openly, show up when you say you will and work together to create goals, which can create a “we are all in this together” feeling that strengthens a relationship. Lopez: “When working with families you should never interview families. You should actually start a conversation with families and the difference between an interview and a conversation is that an interview what you’re doing then is you’re putting that person on the receiving end in a spot where then they

feel like they have to answer the specific questions where they may not necessarily feel comfortable enough to share some of that information that you're requesting." Narrator: While the ultimate goal is to enroll children in the program, some Head Starts have had success building trust with reluctant parents by starting them in a home visit program. CG: Loudell Robb, Family Partnership Manager "What the home visitor does is talk to the parent. They get comfortable with their home visitor, they invite them to the center for socialization activities where the parent and the child participate, then they gain some confidence and they said well, I think this would be fine for my child." CG: Recruitment Narrator: While building trust is crucial to the success of any Head Start service. It's also a major component of recruitment. Echevvery "They don't trust institutions here. For me that is a huge, huge problem." Narrator: Paola Andrea Echevvery studies how different cultures think. CG: Paola Andrea Echevvery, Social Cultural Specialist "We have in Latin America a long history of distrust with the governments so when they come here and are going to ask for assistance from a program here, they are scared and they don't trust us." Narrator: Overcoming fear is difficult but many Head Starts have found success by asking enrolled parents for help. CG: Carol Bellamy "We use families that have been in our program to support new families, and talk with them and help them feel safe and comfortable." CG: Haley Silva, Head Start Parent "I'm always talking about Head Start, everywhere from work to family, friends, everyone. I'm telling them how great it is, how much they help the family, the community, just how involved they are with the whole picture, not just the child." CG: Key Messages Head Start: Welcomes you. Is interested in you and your child. Values your strengths and needs. Has many interesting things to do. Values your culture and language. Narrator: As a recruiter, there are key messages you want to get across to parents. Often, mentioning free ESL classes or a free computer lab in that initial conversation, will interest a reluctant parent enough to take a second look. And, be aware there may be unexpected obstacles to overcome to convey the message that Head Start values your culture and language. CG: Cultural Barriers CG: Carmen Rivera, Family Development Specialist "Sometimes among us Hispanics, we also have preconceived judgments within our own groups." Narrator: It is important to take a close look at how you view other cultures and make sure your approach and interactions are warm, accepting, non-judgmental, and convey the attitude that you don't know everything and you don't assume anything, but respect other cultures and are willing to learn. Narrator: Learning to respect and consider different cultures is not only important for recruitment but other interactions as well. Bellamy: "It is very important that if you are serving whatever culture, if it's Hispanic, African, you make sure that you represent that in your classroom and in your program. So our families feel like, oh, I'm comfortable here. This program respects my home language, my cultures, my celebrations." CG: Guadalupe Pasillas, Education Manager "It is very critical that there be bilingual staff available, but also staff that are bicultural because when we're talking about Hispanic families we are talking not only about Mexicans, but we are also talking about Cubans or families from Latin America and there are some differences in those different cultures." Narrator: Often Hispanic families are surprised at how involved parents in the U.S. are in the education of their children. CG: Marsha Riggio, Program Director "The culture often says that give the education to the teacher, they have the responsibility, they are the professional, they know what they are doing, let them take charge." Narrator: The idea of parent as educational partner will likely be a new one for many parents and they need to know that they have a right to ask questions, make suggestions and be assertive on behalf of their children. One thing is clear. With your help, Head Start can provide useful resources and services for parents. CG: Haley Silva, Head Start Parent "If my children hadn't come to Head Start, we would never be where we are now. They would never have gone into school with the education they're getting now. They went in there knowing how to read, knowing their letters, their colors, their numbers, even different languages (laughs) they went in there knowing and that was just amazing to me. Without Head Start, I would not be where I am, they would not be where they are. We would definitely not be the family we are today." Narrator: A parent who participates in Head Start will help get their child ready for school and they'll learn how to advocate for their child. In the next section, we will talk about what Hispanic children need to get a Head Start. CG: Next...Meeting the Needs of Hispanic Children CG scroll: To order these videos and other materials, call 1-866-763-6481 or visit, <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/resources/cinema>

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