


# Looking at Trauma Through Culturally Diverse Lenses

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## Trauma Definition

- Experiencing a serious injury to yourself
- Witnessing a serious injury to or death of someone else
- Facing imminent threats of serious injury or death
- Experiencing a violation of personal physical integrity
- An emotional wound or shock often having long-lasting effects


(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



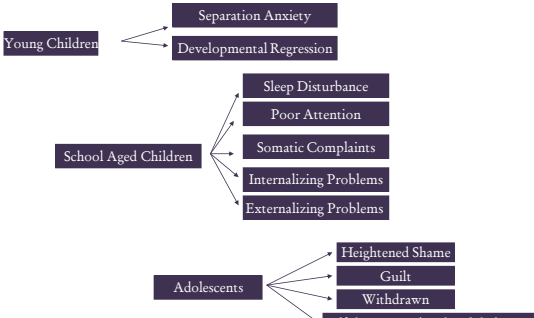
## Responses to Trauma

- Immediate Responses to trauma:
  - + Terror    + Shock    + Fear
  - + Horror                    + Helplessness
- Post-traumatic symptoms:
  - Intrusive thoughts
  - Hyperarousal reactions
  - Avoidance and withdrawn reactions

(Cook, Blaustein, Spinazzola, and Van Dr Kolk, 2003)



## Children's Responses to Trauma




The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008

## Children's Responses to Trauma

### Long Term Health and Social Problems

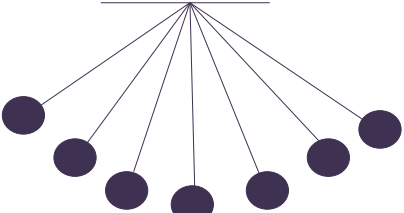
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Depression
- Heart Disease
- Domestic Violence
- Suicide Attempts
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



## Cultural Differences in Dealing with Trauma

### Pendulum



Trauma occurs across the full spectrum of racial, ethnic, and cultural groups and greatly varies between and within ethnicities and cultures

## Common Values among Latino Groups

Familismo

Simpatía

Respeto

Personalismo

Religion/ Spirituality

Machismo/Marianismo

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2007)



## Common Risk Factors for the Latino Population

### Environmental Factors

- Poverty
- Inadequate housing
- Single-parent families
- Substance abuse problems
- Stress related to acculturation and discrimination
- Lower levels of education
- Cultural history of oppression

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



## Additional Risk Factors

Immigration Experience

Anti-Immigration Discrimination

History of Civil War or Oppressive Dictatorship

Culture-Related Intergenerational Conflicts

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



## Issues in Utilizing Services

- Lack of health insurance
- Transportation issues
- Lack of bilingual service providers
- Lack of culturally appropriate information
- Unfamiliar with mental health treatment
- Self-consciousness
- Distrust of the system
- Shame and stigma

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



## Cultural Competence

- Cultural Knowledge
- Cultural Awareness
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Cultural Competence
- Linguistically Competent

(Ford, 2008; The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



## Treatment Recommendations

- Make a good first impression
- Take acculturation into account
- Conduct a thorough, culturally modified assessment
- Integrate cultural values into the therapeutic process
- Engage families
- Incorporate Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) to fit the cultural context

(National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2007)



## Cultural Values: Recommendations

- Become familiar with Latino specific values and the moderating factors that may lead to value differences
- Conduct a Latino value focused assessment and feedback session of the values
- Assist families in understanding how their Latino values shape their perceptions
- Assist families in reframing their perceptions that might hinder them

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



## Cultural Values: Recommendations

- Provide assurance to undocumented families
- Ask specific questions to the client's immigration, acculturation, or assimilation process and/or stressors
- Assess for acculturation differences within the same family
- Familiarize yourself with immigration laws, policies, and resources

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008)



## Culturally Sensitive Service Needs for the Future

- Bilingual and Bicultural Therapists and services
- Additional training for working with Latino clients
- Increased resources
- Increased culturally sensitive assessments, policies, and evidence based practices

(The Workgroup on Adapting Latino Services, 2008; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2007)



## References

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