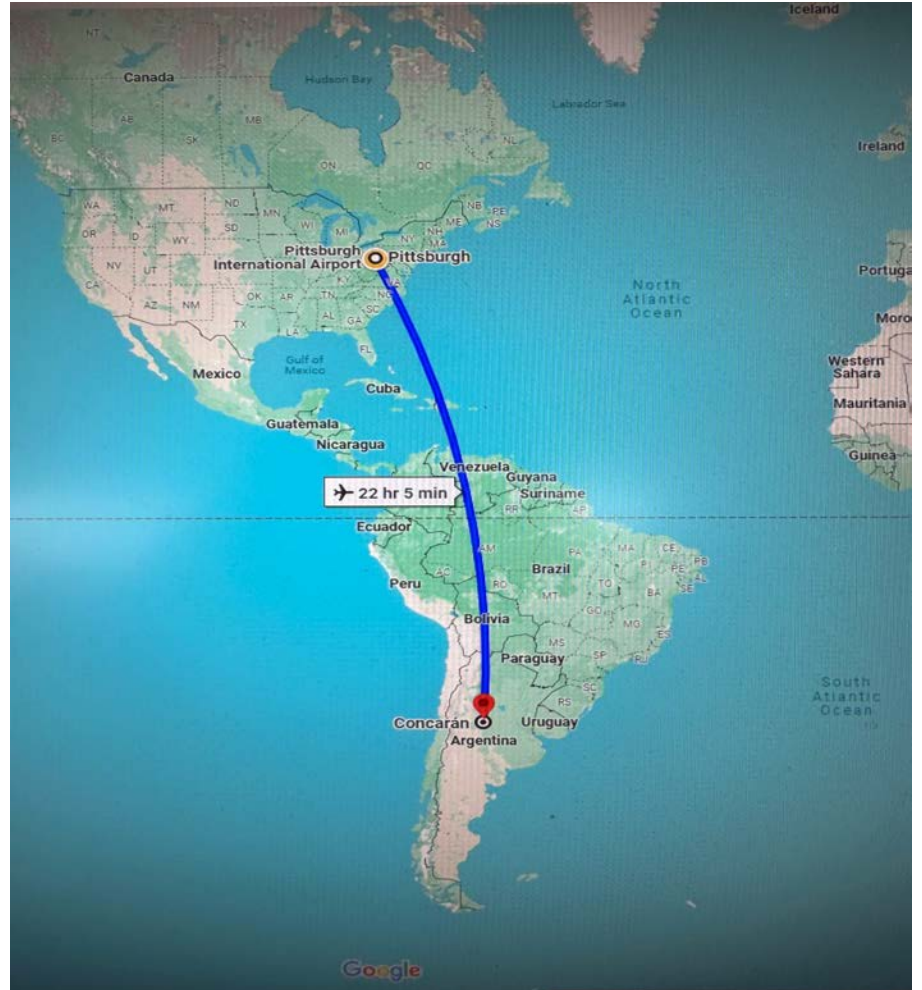


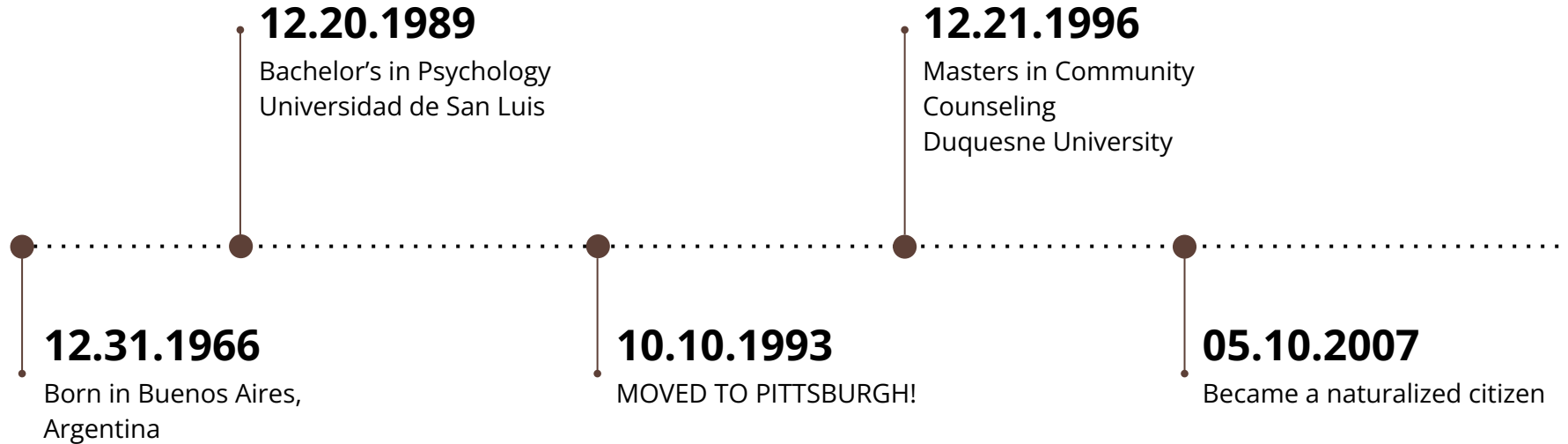
“Livin’ La Vida Loca”?
Mental Health
Challenges in the lives
of Hispanic Teens

Claudia Melendez Ardiles, LPC, NBCC
STAR conference-May 10, 2024

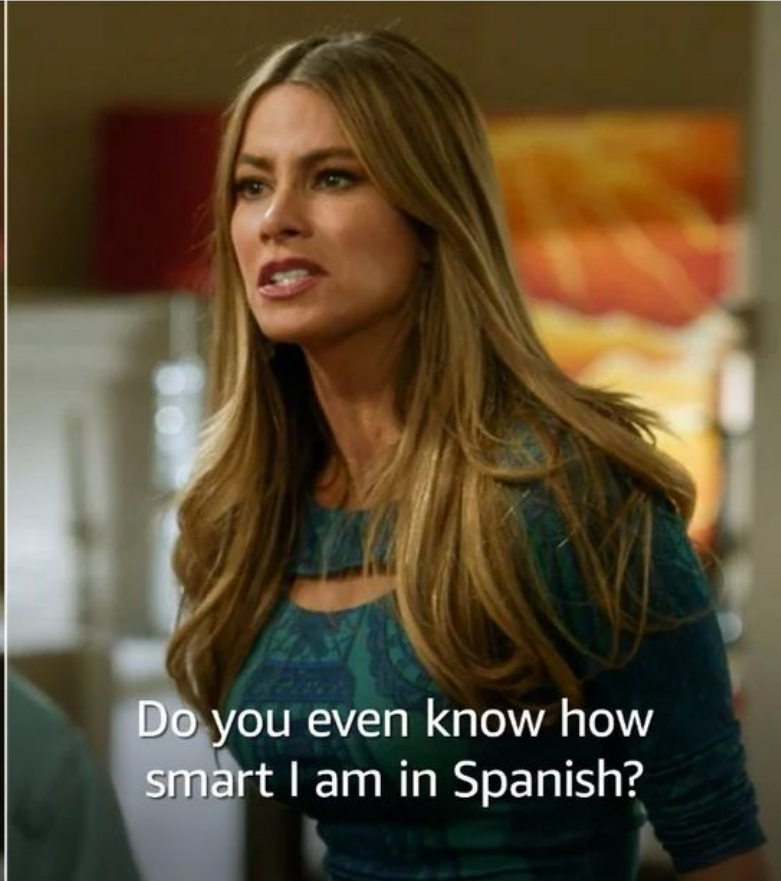




My immigration story



Me when I have the inability to translate any word correctly in English:



Why does it matter to talk about Hispanic teens?

The bottom line:

Untreated or undertreated mental health in any minority group affects us all.

“If you have a chance to accomplish something that will make things better for people behind you, and you don’t do that, you are wasting your time on this earth”

Roberto Clemente- MLB Hall of Famer,
Philanthropist

Today's objectives

Goal #1

To understand the challenges occurring during the acculturation process for both immigrant parents and children that in turn affect their mental health.

Goal #2

To identify obstacles in accessing care for mental health problems both locally and regionally.

Goal #3

To learn how to transfer participants' skills and strengths to the treatment of special populations.

Numbers per census.gov (2023)



US: 63.700.000

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19.1 %



PA: 1.116.000

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8.6 %



Allegheny Co:

31.264

2.5 %

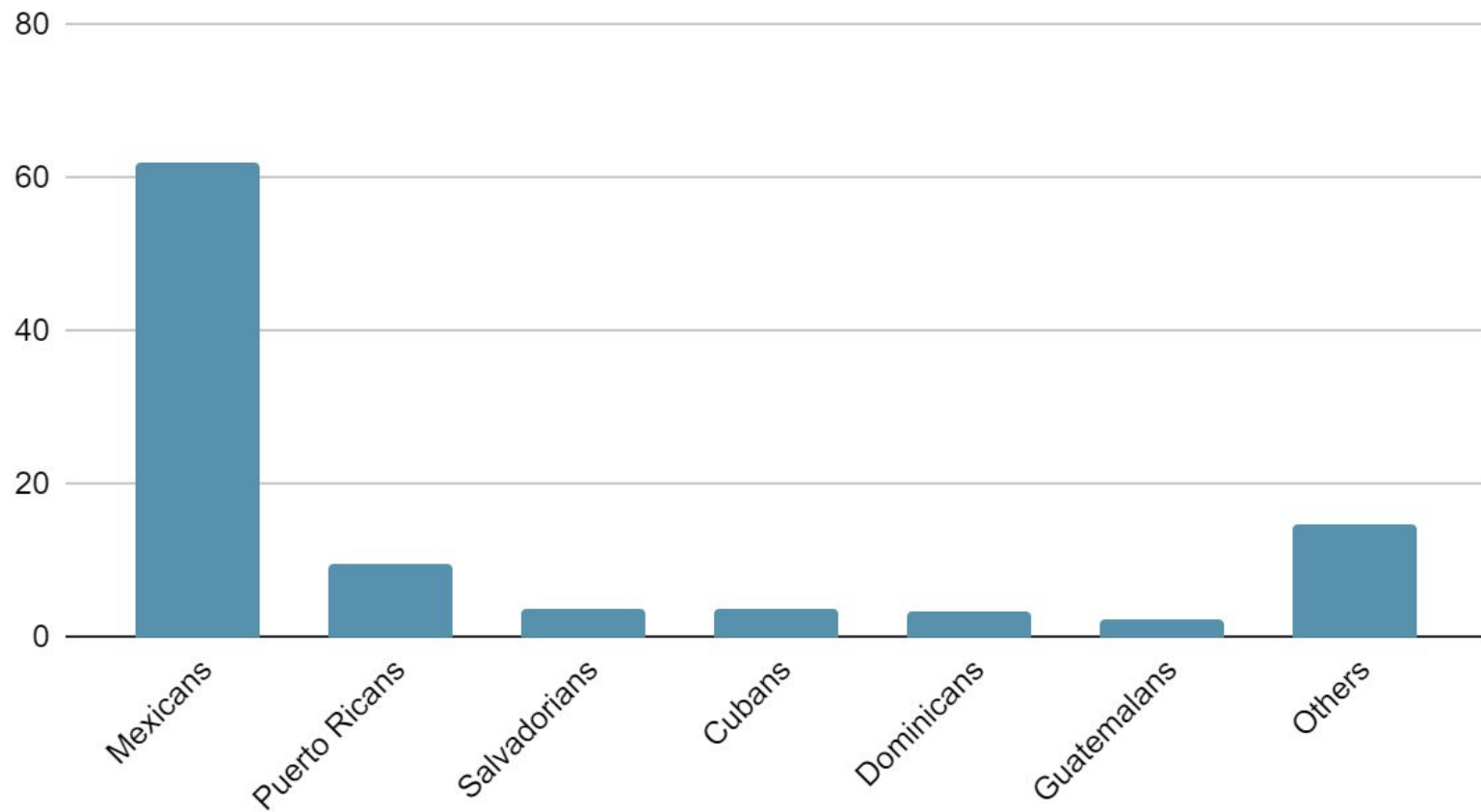


City of Pittsburgh:

9100

3.5 %

Percentage by country of origin



Myths about Hispanics



- All undocumented immigrants come from Mexico
 - All Latinxs are immigrants
 - All Latinxs speak Spanish
 - All Latinxs look the same
-

Demands of Latino culture:

- Familism
- Religiosity
- Respect
- Traditional gender roles

VS American culture values

- Materialism
- Personal Achievement
- Self-reliance

Concept of **FAMILY** might include:

- Close and extended blood relatives
 - Elders within their various circles
 - Co-workers (especially for migrant workers)
 - Neighbors of related ethnicity
 - Unrelated co-inhabitants of the same domicile
 - Members of spiritual families
-

Research shortcomings

- Research on depression is based on white populations with a focus on intra-individual perspective rather than a contextual approach
- Little consideration is given to the role of acculturation in psychological functioning
- Research samples are predominantly of Mexican origin
- Intervention and clinical studies fail to consider the youths' sociocultural contexts
- Lack of intra group difference (country of origin, generation status, socioeconomic status)
- Limited longitudinal research designs

“The Kids are not Alright”

Anxiety about parents’ detention

Problems accessing Mental health help

Mental health issues as Taboo

Need/Want to fit in dominant culture

Acceptance of Who they are

Bottling up Feelings

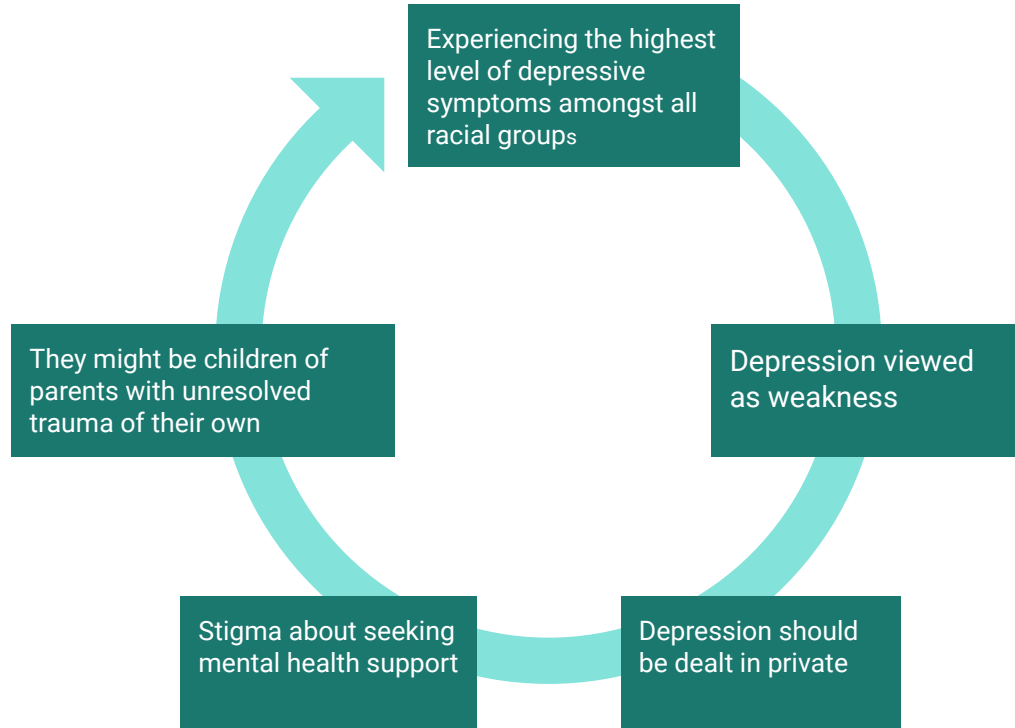
Cultural “stress”

Feeling isolated in cultural experience

Low self-esteem



Contributing factors



Stressors

- Acculturation
- Cultural Identity
- Discrepancies between family and personal cultural values
- Gender role beliefs
- Learning a new language (pace, accent issues)
- Language barriers and new academic settings
- Immigration policies
- Socioeconomic status

Cultural differences between Anglo Americans and Latinos

ANGLO AMERICANS	LATINO (AS)
Nuclear family oriented	Extended family oriented
Do not emphasize supernatural forces	Importance on the spiritual domain
Autonomy from parental approval	Respect for parental authority
Direct communication	Indirect communication
Business like (task oriented)	Personalismo, emotive style, person oriented

Hispanic Culture-Bound Syndromes

- **Ataque de Nervios:** Out of consciousness state resulting from evil spirits
- **Colera:** Anger and rage disturbing body balances leading to headaches, stomach pain and fatigue
- **Mal de Ojo:** Medical and mental health problems resulting from mal de ojo (evil eye)
- **Susto, Miedo, Espanto:** Tiredness and weakness resulting from frightening experiences
- **Fear of Wind or Cold Illness:** Weakness and illness resulting from belief that natural elements are not balanced

Racial Trauma

- ❖ **Interpersonal Racism**
- ❖ **Systemic Racism**
- ❖ **Internalized Racism**
- ❖ **Vicarious Traumatization**

- Increased level of anxiety
- Avoidance of specific places and situations
- Low self-esteem
- Trouble concentrating
- Ongoing emotional distress
- Hypervigilance and heightened sensitivity to their surroundings
- Sleep disturbances

Being Culturally Aware and Sensitive is Crucial

Excuse: ... but I am not bilingual!



Culturally Sensitive Therapy with Latino clients

- Slower pace
- *Conocimiento* (knowledge)
- *Compromiso* (commitment)
- *Respeto* (respect)
- *Dignidad* (dignity)
- *Personalismo* (being personable)
- Ask: Do you have a *Dicho* (proverbs and sayings) for that?

Are you...?

- Bilingual? Bicultural? (preferred but not a must)
- Culturally competent?
- Knowledgeable about the immigration experience?
- Committed to decrease mental health stigma?
- Comfortable with including other members of the family system in treatment? (even if they are not first line relatives?)

Best Practices



Use a bio-psycho-social-cultural model of evaluation and treatment.

Take the time to develop a cultural formulation: consideration for acculturation, community and family connection, immigration status/history, education.

Collaborative care is important for retention and success of care.



Local Resources

- CASA SAN JOSE
 - <https://www.casasanjose.org/>
- LATINO COMMUNITY CENTER
 - <https://www.latinocommunitycenter.org/>
- PITTSBURGH LATINO MAGAZINE
 - [Inicio - Pittsburgh Latino Magazine \(presentepgh.com\)](http://Inicio - Pittsburgh Latino Magazine (presentepgh.com))
- ALLEGHENY COUNTY, Immigrants and Internationals Initiatives (Spanish site)
 - [Servicios para inmigrantes e internacionales - Condado de Allegheny, PA \(alleghenycounty.us\)](http://Servicios para inmigrantes e internacionales - Condado de Allegheny, PA (alleghenycounty.us))

Websites for finding Latinx therapists

<https://www.therapyforlatinx.com/>

<https://latinxtherapy.com/>

<https://latinxtherapistsactionnetwork.org/>

<https://www.inclusivetherapists.com/> (includes multiple cultures and languages)

Mental health resources for Latino families

Mental Health America: <https://mhanational.org/recursos-en-espanol>

Su Familia National Hispanic Family Helpline:

<https://www.healthyamericas.org/help-line#:~:text=1%2D866%2DSu%20Familia&text=Staffed%20by%20bilingual%20health%20promotion,wide%20range%20of%20health%20topics>.

John Hopkins Centro Sol: <https://jhcentrosol.org/>

National Latino Behavioral Health Association: <https://nlbha.org/>



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GRACIAS!!!