



PROMOTORES AND PSYCHOLOGISTS ADDRESS STIGMA AND BARRIERS TO MENTAL HEALTH

Ruth Zúñiga, PhD., Delfina Hernández-Morales, Claudia Ramírez & Alejandra Ferris

Pacific University, Providence Community Health Division &
Promotores de Salud de la Iglesia



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Explore how community organizations can work together with community health workers and mental health experts to promote emotional health and wellness within the Latinx community.

Discuss the application of cultural and linguistic appropriate techniques to promote community's emotional wellbeing in partnership with *promotores de salud*.

Discuss how the program has empowered *promotores de salud* in multiple levels and how similar programs can engage *promotores de salud* in tearing down barriers, reaching and supporting mental health and behavioral interventions within underserved communities



Carolina Ekonomo, MBA,
MA



Natalia Figueroa, MA



Bonnie Lernder, MPH



Alejandra Ferris, MA

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Antonio Gómez, MBA
Health Promotion Program Manager

Marisa Luengas Salazar, BA Program
Specialist, Community Health Promotion

*Promotores de salud de la iglesia de
Providence*

New Partner: Lines for Life

Other community partners

Who are *Promotores de Salud* and their roles in health care?

The need for clearing the path for mental health for our community

An example of collaboration between *Promotores de Salud* and mental health providers

Promotores role in mental and emotional health of communities

Recommendations for how to work with *promotores* and create similar collaborations

PROMOTORES DE SALUD? WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND?



Community health workers



Lay health workers



Health promotor



Health advisor



Traditional workers-peer advocates



Patient navigators



Promotores de salud is a Spanish term that translates to health promotor

WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF PROMOTORES?

“Frontline public health workers who are trusted members and/or have an unusually close understanding of the community served...”

“A link between health/social services and the community”

“Facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competency of service delivery”

Public health workers whose roles respond to the disparities and exclusions that exist within health care systems

EN SUS PROPIAS PALABRAS...

¿Qué significa ser promotor de salud?



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PROMOTOR?

- ❖ Flexible
- ❖ Empathic
- ❖ Resourceful
- ❖ Persistent
- ❖ Creative
- ❖ Can adapt to the needs of their community
- ❖ Employ multiple roles
- ❖ Provide education
- ❖ Bridges to care
- ❖ Assist in the navigation of health systems
- ❖ Advocates for both individuals and the community at large
- ❖ Incorporated into the national health system of some countries
- ❖ Have a strong desire to help others and to improve patient-provider relationship and interaction
- ❖ Recognized as natural helpers and leaders within their communities
- ❖ Oftentimes women

PROMOTORES IN HEALTHCARE

Stress

Cardiovascular disease

Obesity

Hypertension

Pesticide exposure

Diabetes

Cancer screenings

Prenatal care

Managing chronic disease through

Monitoring adherence to treatment

Depression



PROMOTORES DE SALUD SERVING LATINX
MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH
NEEDS

Language

Stigma

Lack of
information

Lack of culturally
informed
providers of
treatment

Lack of health
Insurance

Low literacy

Mistrust of
providers

Documentation
status

LATINX ARE LESS LIKELY TO ACCESS MENTAL HEALTH
CARE AND ADDRESS THEIR MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Stigma/Taboo
about seeking
mental health
services: *“Es que
yo no estoy loco”*

Understanding
dynamics amongst
Latinxs plus
systemic,
structural and
institutional
barriers

Overlapping of
somatic
complaints and
mental illness

Culturally
accepted
resources

CLINICAL
CONSIDERATIONS:
ACCESS AND
UNDERUTILIZATION

A POTENTIAL BRIDGE

Promotores de Salud/Community health workers are in a unique position to increase mental health service capacity & reduce barriers for access

However *promotores* may not have the training or may not always feel comfortable, confident or knowledgeable regarding the mental health needs of their community

Create
a
program
to

- increase mental health support to the community
- support *promotores*' knowledge, confidence and skills about mental health
- support *promotores* wellbeing
- Collaborate in bringing mental health to the people

DINÁMICA



PROMOTORES, PSYCHOLOGIST AND COMMUNITY HEALTH DIVISION COLLABORATION

A pilot project to meet the mental and
emotional health needs of Latinx community
members in Oregon

THE PARTNERS: A PERFECT MATCH

Promotores de Salud (*promotores*)

- Trusted members of their community-by the community for the community
- Respond to the disparities and exclusions that exist within health care systems

Sabiduría: Latinx Psychology Emphasis

- School of Graduate Psychology Pacific University
- One of only 10 Latinx Psychology trainings programs.
- Training emphasis on cultural and linguistic skills to work with the Latinx community

Providence *Promotores de Salud de la Iglesia*

- Has a 12-year track record of partnership and building trust with parishes in the region
- Delivering community health promotion
- Bridging access to care
- Empowering Latinx community members

2016

Community Health Needs Assessment informs need for increased access to mental health services for the community

2018

Listening sessions with parishes and promotores de salud: need for cultural specific program

2019 Charlas in CHC, CBOs, others

Previous to charlas-promotores received closed to 30 hrs of training related to mental health

Promotores de Salud formed an emotional health advisory committee to address mental and emotional health needs of their communities

2017

2018 Formed collaboration (academia, CHC and community)

Work informed by advisory board
Created curriculum
Started trainings

2020 Charlas via Facebook

Adapted program training and charlas to meet current need related to the pandemic

PROJECT HISTORY

COLLABORATION AT EVERY STEP

Meetings

- *Sabiduría* faculty and students, Providence Community Health Division, Parishes and *Promotores de Salud*
- Deciding what is most culturally and linguistically appropriate

First Steps

- Train *promotores* on the basics of mental health, empower them to reach out to the community and teach self-help skills
- Phase 1: *Promotores* trainings, Phase 2: *Charlas* (community conversations)

Ongoing feedback

- Ongoing meetings and feedback from *promotores* throughout the project
- Mental health sub-committee formed by *promotores'* experience and input on the community's needs and skills needed to address them
- Supported by advisory board
- Adapted based on community needs

ROADMAP

Trainings to increase the knowledge, comfort and skills of *promotores* to address Latinx community emotional needs

So, *promotores* are empowered to take care of themselves, their families and educate their communities

Ultimately reduce the stigma associated with mental health



**STEP 1: *PROMOTORES
DE SALUD DE LA
IGLESIA* EMOTIONAL
HEALTH AND
WELLNESS
TRAININGS**



PHASE I: TRAININGS

Trainings for *Promotores de Salud* (Initial Curriculum)

1. Stress Management
2. Depression & Anxiety
3. Crisis and Suicidality
4. Healthy Relationships and Domestic Violence
5. Substance Use and Abuse
6. How to talk to the community about emotional health

PHASE I ADAPTED: TRAININGS RELATED TO COVID

Trainings for *Promotores de Salud* (COVID-19)

1. COVID and mental health
2. Trauma, Stress and COVID (PART I and PART II)
3. Anxiety, Stress and COVID
4. Grief and loss related to COVID
5. Fear and misinformation

TRAINING OBJECTIVES FOR THE PROMOTORES DE SALUD



Increase knowledge of topics



Develop comfort and confidence to talk about emotional health



Learn about tools and resources and prepare them to talk to the Latinx community



Learn about self-help tools, referrals and resources to share with community

ABOUT THE TRAININGS

Facilitated in Spanish by bilingual and bicultural doctoral level students and faculty with specialized training in Latinx Psychology

Offered continued education credits for *promotores*

Focused on strong spirituality component

Used popular education methods: Empowering, interactive, reflective, dynamic, engaged and fun

Cultural and linguistic specific informed by best practices and the community-adapted to current needs

Significant amount of time for *promotores* to ask questions, provide comments, and discuss their own experiences with the topic (*tiempo de desahogo*)

Emphasized applicable skills, self-care, community empowerment and information about resources

Practice how to support the community and how to engage in formal or informal conversations about the topic

CONTENT OF TRAININGS: EXAMPLE

Topic	Example of concepts covered
Topic: Strategies and tools for stress management (Pre-covid)	Sources and manifestations of stress within the Latinx community; tools, strategies, and basic coping mechanisms that promotores can teach Latinx patients to deal with stress, strategies to talk with the community
Topic: Dealing with crisis and suicide in the Latino community (Pre-covid)	Common risk factors of suicidality in the Latinx community; tools to identify and support Latinx at risk of suicide (i.e., signs), culturally appropriate community interventions; safety plans, strategies for community conversations and tools for self-care.
Topic: Trauma, stress and COVID	Effects of COVID-19 on mental and emotional health, COVID and preconditions related to trauma, coping skills during disasters (self, family, community), resources and referrals, ways to support the community

Opening activities

Breakfast/Dinner

Prayer/*bendición*

Agenda discussion

Agreements & norms

Basic information on the topic: e.g., stress

What is stress?

What are the signs of stress?

How can we manage stress?

Culture specific discussions: How to support the Latinx community

How to help community members who are dealing with stress?

How does stress affect the Latinx community?

How are sources of stress different in the Latinx community?

Applied and experiential activities and skills (including self-care)

Culturally adapted relaxation activities to deal with stress

Role plays, action plans (SMART goals), visualizations

Discussing on incorporating skill in their own life

Closing activities

Specific Community Resources

Fun Activities & *rifas*

How to discuss the topic with the community

Q & A

Evaluation & suggestions

**PROMOTORES'
IMPRESSIONS
AND
EXPERIENCES:
TRAININGS**

Improvements in *promotores'* mental health knowledge

82% of the attendees strongly agree that the trainings helped them feel more comfortable about the topics

88% reported feeling more confident in addressing community behavioral needs (e.g., depression, domestic violence)

85% stated they plan to use the skills learned to talk with the community about mental health and also for themselves

Promotores have reported great satisfaction with the trainings and reported a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy

IN THEIR WORDS...

*“These trainings are very helpful for all the promotores de salud, so we can implement them in our parishes and support our community. **Personally, these trainings have provided a positive impact in my life, and I am making changes thanks to them**”*

*“...Through the trainings I learned a new reality... **the trainings have helped me because I am learning how to confront the issues and how to help others.** The knowledge I have gained has helped me to help others”*

EN SUS PROPIAS PALABRAS...

¿What the trainings mean for the *promotores*?



**STEP 2: CHARLAS
COMUNITARIAS
DE BIENESTAR Y
SALUD
EMOCIONAL**



PHASE 2: *CHARLAS*

Goals for the emotional health *charlas*

- Start the conversation
- Stir interest around the topics
- Reduce or remove stigma/taboo regarding mental health
- Validate and normalize experiences
- Increase basic knowledge regarding topic
- Offer and practice culturally adapted coping skills tools
- Increase comfort and access to resources
- Motivate and help the community to seek help for self or others-support with referrals when appropriate

ABOUT THE CHARLAS: BEFORE COVID

Taught in Spanish and facilitated by *promotores de salud* and graduate students

Last about 1.5 hrs

Uses popular education methods and activities that are culturally adapted to the community (E.g. chicken example to discuss fight/flight response, glass full of water to discuss chronic stress and the importance of self-care)

Collaboration and equity between mental health professionals and *promotores* in leading the conversation (a *plática*)|Co-lead by *promotores* and graduate psychology students

Designated time from psychologists to answer community questions

Promotores support with referrals and follow-ups

Food, child-care, raffle prizes, and support with transportation

CHARLAS FORMAT

Opening activities

Welcome & Blessing

Introduction & Icebreaker

Discussion of group norms



Basic information on the topic: e.g., stress

What is stress?

What are the signs of stress?

How does stress affect health?

What to do to deal with stress? (tools & skills)



Tools for self care for helping others

How to help someone who is experiencing stress?

Culturally adapted diaphragmatic breathing

Information about community resources to deal with stress



Closing activities

Q & A

Fun Activities- bingo, snowball surveys, & rivas

How to get help/referrals

Evaluation & suggestions

ABOUT THE *CHARLAS*: DURING COVID

Taught in Spanish and facilitated by *promotores de salud* and graduate students. Focused on community requested topics related to the pandemics

Last about 30 minutes (started with 60 minutes).

Uses popular education methods and activities that are culturally adapted to the community (Eg, includes saludos, raffles, dinamicas, practice an skill.

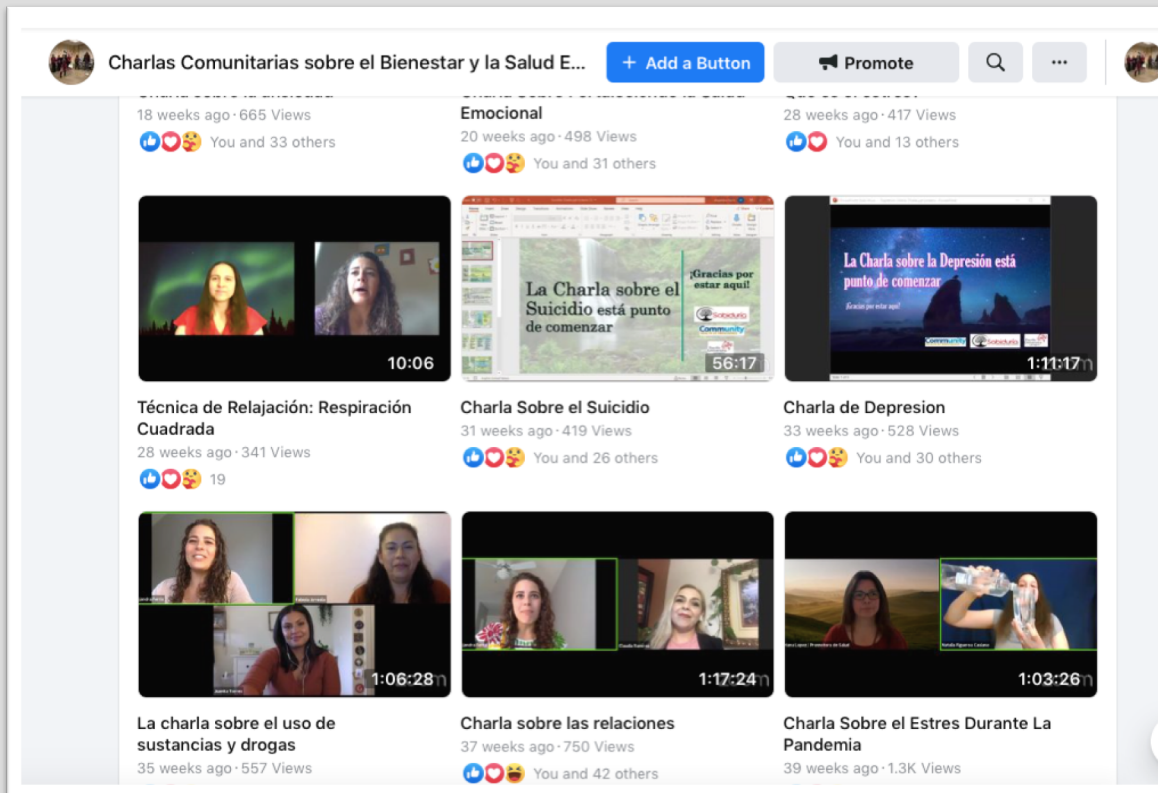
The conversation is mostly scripted-the promotora ask questions-students respond (4 people-2 behind the cameras and 2 doing the charla)

Designated time from psychologists to answer community questions (a session may include 120 comments and questions)

Support with referrals and follow-ups

Raffles, support from other promotores, engagement with family in USA and Latinx America.

FACEBOOK LIVE CHARLAS: TOPICS



1. Stress during the pandemic
2. Healthy relationships and intimate partner violence during the pandemic
3. Substance abuse during the pandemic: family involvement and prevention
4. Depression
5. Suicide prevention-family and community
6. Fostering emotional health during times of uncertainty
7. Anxiety
8. Fostering family "resiliency" and emotional health
9. Emotional health during the Holidays in the time of the pandemic
10. Fear and misinformation

COORDINATING CHARLAS

Team-work and collaboration

- Ongoing meetings between *promotores* and students prior to *charlas* to discuss logistics, organization, and execution
- Equity and equality of roles
- Time for empowering *promotores*
- Meetings after the *charlas* to do action plans. Ongoing meetings and coordination

Pre-covid Delivered in churches, community health centers and community-based agencies serving Latinx individuals. During COVID: FB Live

Increased significant interest from community and agencies

Generated new partnerships and collaborations

EN SUS PROPIAS PALABRAS...

¿What the *charlas* for emotional health and wellness mean for the *promotores* and the community?



December 16, 2020 · 🌐

Charla Sobre la Salud Emocional Durante las Fiestas
Gracias por asistir!

👍❤️👏 45 125 Comments

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Comments

Most Recent

 **Luby Hernandez** · 32:15
Muchas gracias 🙏

Like · Reply · Message · 12w

 **Lizzette Garcia M** · 43:02
Muy bonito ejercicio gracias gracias gracias 🙏🙏

SOME RELEVANT DATA

- Over 90 *promotores de salud* have trained in the emotional health and wellness curriculum
- Closed to 500 community members were reached in the in person charlas (previous COVID) and 10% sought out mental health services after their participation.
- Over 10,000 people were reached in 2020 during the Facebook Live charlas, top audience from 8 different countries
- Preliminary results have shown improvements in program outcomes and an increase in mental health service utilization within the local Latinx community

WHY IS THIS PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL?

Promotores can be a conduit to support the emotional wellbeing. Living by example and truly engagement in the program

They are trusted pillars of health education and advocates in their communities.

Promotores now can initiate conversation and support their participants on mental health. They can be collaborators in bringing mental health to our communities

They can then build bridges to referrals and culturally appropriate clinical care as needed in the community.

WHY IS THIS PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL CONTINUED...

Bilingual-bicultural mental health providers-with specialize training. Having graduate students make the program more affordable.

True collaboration between academia (expertise), community health division (resources), and promotores (community trust)

Ability to adapt program-flexibility. Continued community engagement and participation.

Trust and relationships with other partners and organizations

CHALLENGES

- High demand for services and charlas with not full capacity to meet the demand
- Significant time preparing-specially supporting promotores to do the work
- Increased number of programs and activities in social media (over-information)
- Difficulties with accessibility for some community members
- Not every promotor who does the trainings feel comfortable to do the charlas
- Issues with referrals and access to services for many, after participation in the charlas

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL INVOLVED

New opportunities to learn about and from our communities

Sense of empowerment

Improve connection and community

Creative ways to address the mental health of our community

Increased confidence and knowledge base level-creativity and new ideas

Innovated opportunity to apply mental health and behavioral health skills

Improved community trust, reach and outcomes

Opportunities to address new challenges

New collaboration with Lines for Life

RECOMMENDATIONS: EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COLLABORATION

Collaboration began 7 years ago

Similar programs should dedicate time learning about the community, possible collaborators and community-based organizations.

Mental health advisory committee of *Promotores* has been critical in community mobilization and authentic community participation

Emphasize flexibility and the importance of cultural matching between providers, *promotores* and community members.

Ongoing evaluation and feedback is needed for ongoing program improvement

CONCLUSIONS



A strong collaboration between mental health providers and *promotores de salud* is possible



Mental health providers learning from *promotores* about the unique needs and experience of the Latinx community



Promotores as a conduit to support the emotional wellbeing of Latinx community



Bridge mental health providers to the community and viceversa

CHECK US ON FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/charlascomunitarias>



Charlas Comunitarias sobre el Bienestar y la Salud Emocional

@charlascomunitarias · Community

DISCUSSION

What are your current collaborations with *promotores de salud* in your community?

How community based organizations and/or community health centers can work together with *promotores de salud* and mental health experts to promote emotional health and wellness within the Latinx community?

How can you tap into collaboration with *promotores de salud* to further your organization's or community's causes regarding mental and emotional health of our communities

What would you need to create a similar program in your organization?

¡GRACIAS!

For more information about this program and/or partnership please
contact:

Dr. Ruth Zúñiga, PhD, Licensed Psychologist.
Director of *Sabiduría*: Latinx Psychology Emphasis,
Associate Professor and Clinical Supervisor
School of Graduate Psychology
Pacific University
503-352-3615
rzuniga@pacificu.edu

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