

# ENTRE NOS...

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2024



HISPANIC/LATINO  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



CENTER SPOTLIGHT.....	2
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS.....	4
FEATURED PRODUCTS.....	5
WHAT ARE WE DOING?.....	6
SAVE THE DATE.....	8

September is  
**National Suicide Prevention  
Awareness Month and also  
National Recovery Month**

# CENTER SPOTLIGHT

## NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH



HISPANIC/LATINO  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

by Erick Senior Rogés, PhD, H/LBH CoE Training and Technical Assistance Manager

As we observe National Suicide Prevention Month, it is essential to recognize that cultural factors can influence how youth, families, parents, and communities talk—or remain silent—about suicide, highlighting the urgent need for more equitable care systems that foster open, supportive conversations about life and well-being. We recognized the importance of strengthening connections within families, schools, and communities among Latine populations as foundational for suicide prevention efforts. Engaging with cultural practices and traditions can help Latine youth and families alleviate feelings of marginalization, alienation, and acculturation-related stress, which offer a vital sense of continuity and connection to their community and personal development.

Through our efforts to advance behavioral health equity for Hispanic and Latine populations, we join a big prevention movement by fostering connection and care within the communities we serve. That is why it is so important to learn from them instead of bringing them the answers to equity without consulting them first.

### **Suicide prevention:**

<https://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/observances/suicide-prevention-month>

<https://988lifeline.org/promote-national-suicide-prevention-month/>

<https://www.nami.org/get-involved/awareness-events/suicide-prevention-month/>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/get-involved/digital-toolkit-for-suicide-prevention-month>



Additionally, in recognition of Recovery Month, the Hispanic/Latino Behavioral Health Center of Excellence honors the diverse paths taken by individuals, families, and communities to support recovery. Throughout September, our center is dedicated to sharing educational resources and informative sessions for providers who serve Hispanic and Latine communities as part of their recovery journeys. We will highlight the importance of incorporating Hispanic and Latine cultural experiences, and values. practices, and contexts into peer recovery community support, workforce efforts, and campaigns aimed at reducing stigma towards individuals in recovery who are so often marginalized when seeking care and want to offer support for others.

For Hispanic and Latine communities, recovery from mental health illness and substance use is deeply intertwined with life history and well-being, reflecting the diversity and uniqueness of their cultures, contexts, and worldviews. This is why different beliefs, narratives, and pathways can support and sustain recovery for Hispanic and Latine individuals and their communities. To enhance engagement in recovery processes, it is crucial to understand and address barriers such as traditional understandings of wellness in Latine communities.

One of our center's ongoing collaborations has been with The Latine Community Collaborative, an initiative focused on creating positive change within the Puerto Rican community by raising awareness of recovery efforts led by the peer community. This collaborative brings together diverse voices and experiences to foster a supportive environment where every unique perspective is valued and with the support of partners:

**Opioid Response Network (ORN)**

**Peer Recovery Center of Excellence (PR CoE)**

**ATTC Network Coordinating Office (NCO ATTC) Northeast & Caribbean ATTC (NeC ATTC)**

**Northeast & Caribbean PTTC (NeC PTTC)**

As part of the Latine Community Collaborative the peer recovery community formed “*La Coalición Puertorriqueña Anti-Estigma*”, which leads an anti-stigma campaign named “*Cuánto Pesa Tu Estigma*”, addressing the societal burden and costs associated with stigmatizing attitudes and practices toward those who use substances. It also seeks to educate the public and providers about common myths and misconceptions surrounding substance use, promoting empathetic practices and non-judgmental approaches to connect and relate to others who so often have been denied dignified care given their lived experiences with substance use.

**Recovery Month:**

<https://www.samhsa.gov/recovery-month>

<https://collaborativeforhealth.org/collaborative/cpte/cuantopesatuestigma.aspx>

<https://facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/advocate/recovery-month/>

<https://www.naadac.org/national-recovery-month>

# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

---



Serving the Houston community since its inception in 1946, The Council on Recovery is Houston's leading non-profit organization addressing alcoholism, other drugs and addictions, and co-occurring mental health disorders in individuals and families. The Council is at the forefront of providing prevention, education, treatment, and recovery services to anyone in need, offering vital support and solutions to individuals regardless of their ability to pay. Over the decades, The Council has significantly expanded its reach, going beyond just treating addiction to also addressing the root causes of substance use disorder, treating co-occurring health issues, and extending care to the entire family. In our last fiscal year, The Council on Recovery served 27,575 individuals whose lives have been impacted by alcohol and other drugs, and related issues.

The Council's mission is to lead the community in creating a path to freedom from substance abuse and related issues. Our programs and services are provided across the full spectrum of substance use, with an evidence-based continuum of care that is tailored to our client's individual needs and experiences. Our clients are as diverse as Houston, with an estimated 41% of Latine origin and nearly 70% aged 18 and under.

With unwavering commitment and dedication, The Council works to reduce stigma, focus on prevention, increase access to effective, affordable treatment services, strengthen families, and build communities through the following programs: *Community Education and Training; Prevention; Intervention; Clinical Assessment and Therapeutic Counseling; Outpatient Treatment; Adolescent and Family Services; Aftercare and Recovery Support*. As the oldest and largest provider of recovery services in Greater Houston and surrounding counties, The Council remains a beacon of hope with a clear message: addiction is preventable, it is treatable, and the benefits of recovery are worth our best efforts.

[Click Here to visit The Council on Recovery Website](#)


# FEATURED PRODUCTS

## PRODUCTS

FACT SHEET | BACK TO SCHOOL 2024

### Back to School: Challenges and Opportunities for Hispanic and Latine Students

By Sarah K Howell, MSW, LCSW-S



**Overview**

Schools can play a pivotal role in fostering Hispanic and Latine student's wellbeing and the potential to serve as a safe haven in their development. In doing so it is crucial to recognize and sensibly address the numerous challenges that may impact Hispanic and Latine student's behavioral health. This factsheet highlights these challenges, including the effects of isolation, discrimination, and unattended needs which can exacerbate stress and trauma. By understanding and responding to their unique experiences, educators and communities can help empower Hispanic and Latine students to thrive.

**Challenges**

- Language Barriers:** Language other than English is the primary home language (Spanish, Portuguese, indigenous languages, ex K'iche'), returning to an English-dominated school environment can be a difficult transition.
- Access to academic and educational resources:** Potentially less access to educational enrichment programs, extracurricular activities, or mental health services resulting in learning loss or summer slide.
- Financial Strain:**
  - Absence of school-provided meals and other resources means increased household expenses and increased stress on students.
  - Some students may work to help their families, juggling school and work or shifting back to a student role may be difficult.
- Pressure to Succeed:** Pressure to excel academically to overcome stereotypes, meet family expectations and benefit from educational opportunities others haven't had access to.
- Isolation, Discrimination and Bias:**
  - Difficulty reintegrating into the school environment, feel disconnected from peers if they spent the summer isolated or adultified.
  - Face discrimination, bias or feel unwelcome at school. The current political climate, especially with the 2024 presidential election approaching, has introduced heightened polarization and anti-immigrant rhetoric.
- Trauma:** Immigration-related stress or exposure to violence can be re-triggered by the return to school, where they might not feel safe or supported.
- Unmet Mental Health Needs:** Mental health needs that are accessed through the school due to lack of culturally or linguistically competent care, accessibility and inadequate services in the neighborhood, stigma around accessing mental health.

The CDC reports that: **41%** of Latine high school students have felt sad or hopeless compared to **36%** of their white peers. This level of emotional distress can significantly impact their academic performance and overall well-being.

The suicide attempt rate for Latine high school students is **10.5%**, higher than the **7.3%** rate for their white peers.

**32%** of Latine high school students experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, **28%** compared to of non-Hispanic white students.

Mental health issues contribute to higher dropout rates among Latine students. The dropout rate for Latine students is **8.2%**, up from a national average of **5.7%**.

[DOWNLOAD](#)

### Substance Use in Hispanic and Latine Communities: Trends, Barriers, and Strategies to Improve Access and Services

August, 2024



[DOWNLOAD](#)

# WHAT ARE WE DOING?

por Paola Díaz, MS, H/LBH CoE Outreach and Engagement Manager  
Ibis S. Carrión González, PsyD, H/LBH CoE Program Director  
Jessenia D. Zayas-Ríos, DBH, MPHE, CHES® - H/LBH CoE Program Manager

August was an exceptionally eventful month for our team, marked by significant engagements in communities from Wisconsin, Washington, and Texas, each contributing to our ongoing mission of advancing mental health and health equity. Our journey began in Wisconsin Dells, where a roundtable discussion took place, organized by the Hispanic and Latino Behavioral Health CoE in collaboration with the Latino Children and Families Council. The event focused on addressing the behavioral health needs of Latine populations, exploring organizational needs, challenges, strengths, and strategies for advancing health equity. The day began with a meaningful Andean Indigenous blessing led by Matilde Cachiguango of the Kichwa-Otavalo Nation from Ecuador. Her introduction of the Chacana, or Andean cross, symbolizing the interconnection of nature through the elements of Fire, Earth, Water, and Wind, set a reflective and purposeful tone for the discussions.



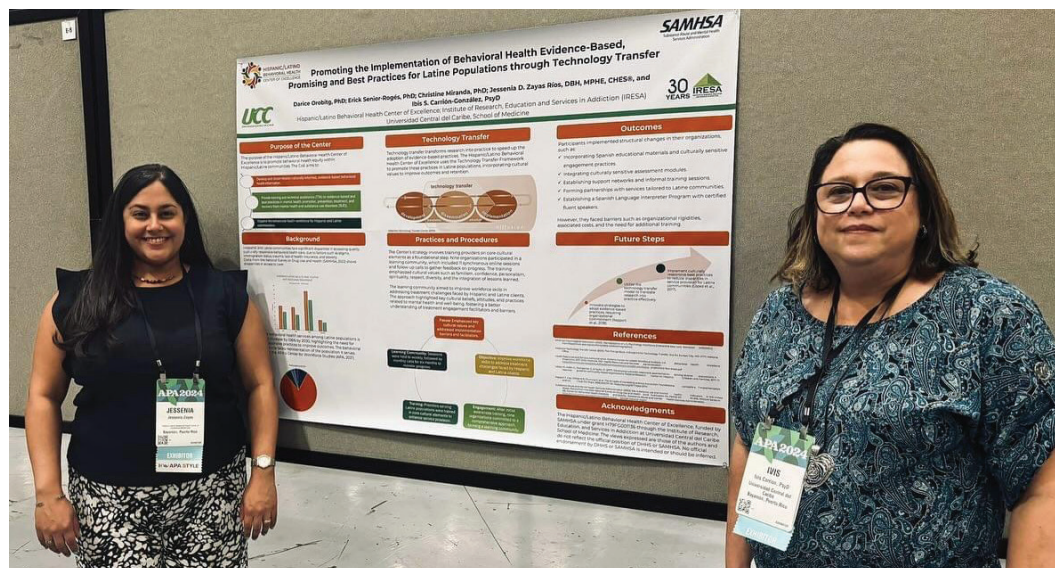
Then, Dr. Susana Salgado and Dr. Marina Valdez conducted a session on self-care for mental health providers. They addressed critical issues such as work fatigue, compassion fatigue, and workplace trauma, emphasizing the importance of self-care and providing practical strategies tailored to the cultural contexts of mental health professionals. This session highlighted the necessity for providers to maintain their well-being to effectively support their clients, which present complicated situations and many due to basic needs related to their immigration process.



Dr. Christine Miranda facilitated the roundtable, engaging community leaders to make a comprehensive assessment of the behavioral health services landscape. The conversation focused on recognizing specific organizational needs, understanding systemic challenges, leveraging existing strengths, and developing strategies more effective in achieving health equity. The community identified technical assistance that helps to improve workforce skills development to enable Latine communities in Wisconsin to meet their equity needs.

Our next stop was Seattle, Washington, to attend the American Psychological Association (APA) Convention, Community, Impact, Learning, which took place August 8-10. The convention gave us direct access to conversations and influencers in psychology that impact Latino populations.

From the Main Stage, we heard from leading figures who shared their groundbreaking ideas and integrated minorities into their speeches. Emerging trends were identified in the field, which gave us hope that the intersectionality between health disparities and the structural and systemic barriers that remain and affect, among others, the Hispanic and Latine populations is beginning to be understood.



The Hispanic/Latino Behavioral Health CoE had a booth and presented a poster at the convention. The poster presented how our Center uses the Technology Transfer Model to impact the communities and workforce that serve Latines. We connected with colleagues and discussed research with favorable results for the Latine population.

We wrapped up the month by participating in the 2024 National Latino Behavioral Health Conference in San Antonio, Texas. The

Center participated in the pre-conference symposium with a presentation based on the curriculum of youth gang prevention in school systems, created when we were the National Hispanic and Latino MHTTC team through our colleague and curriculum developer, Dr. Kristin Scardamalia.

The conference also provided valuable networking opportunities, fostering connections with peers nationwide. At our booth, managed by Paola Díaz, Outreach, and Engagement Manager, and our esteemed colleague Dr. Diane Arms, we offered a range of behavioral health resources in Spanish and English, enhancing accessibility and support for the Hispanic and Latino communities. These experiences have strengthened our commitment to promoting linguistically and culturally appropriate behavioral health services.



# SAVE THE DATE



## CLAS Matters!

### Introduction to the National Enhanced CLAS Standards: Understanding Disparities and Building Health Equity

CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services)  
Session 4

[REGISTER HERE](#)

**September 24 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Webinar**

This event is the last session of a series of CLAS webinars hosted by the the Central East ATTC in collaboration with the Hispanic Latino Behavioral Health Center of Excellence. It will explore the development of disparities in the US and their impacts on marginalized and racialized communities. Utilizing a social justice framework the participants will learn about building health equity, cultural humility, and community engagement. This training will center on the Enhanced CLAS Standards, Cultural Self-Assessments and other tools designed to improve services and eliminate health disparities. This session will focus on the incorporation of CLAS within professional organizations and settings.

**Guest expert:** Haner Hernández- Ph.D., CPS, CADCI, LADC



## The Role of Peer Support in Hispanic and Latine Recovery Communities

[REGISTER HERE](#)

**September 24 | 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. | Webinar**

The panel, composed of Hispanic and Latine individuals from the peer recovery community, aims to inform the public and practitioners about the effectiveness of peer recovery support services. It will address common misconceptions and stigma surrounding addiction and recovery and showcase stories that highlight the transformative power of long-term peer support. Panelists will also discuss capacity-building strategies that emphasize culturally relevant, person-centered care for Hispanic and Latine communities. They will share recommendations on policies and practices that can enhance the involvement of peers in treatment settings, ensuring that care is not only effective but also resonates with the cultural and linguistic needs of these communities.

**Panelists:** Haner Hernández, Carolina Ayala, Glory McDaniel and Angelo Lagares



# Entre colegas...

Dialogue among Behavioral Health providers for Latine Communities



[REGISTER HERE](#)

**September 25 | 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. | Webinar**

Do you provide behavioral health services to Latine populations as part of a community-based organization? Participating in these dialogues gives you the opportunity to listen, converse, and learn more about effective and culturally informed practices with Latine populations. Along with colleagues and a guest specialist, you will discuss aspects that influence the behavioral health of Latine people as well as service models applicable to their well-being.

**Resource:** Aida Jiménez, Ph.D

## El Futuro's 2024 Virtual Conference

### Nunca Caminamos Solos: Supporting Latine Families Across the Lifespan

[REGISTER HERE](#)

**September 26-27 | 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. | Webinar**

Mental health professionals working with the Latine community may find themselves engaging with more than just the individual in the room, often including a clients' social systems into treatment. However, providers typically operate within a health-care framework that focuses on treating individuals, or their symptoms, in isolation. El Futuro's 2024 Conference, Nunca Caminamos Solos: Supporting Latine Families Across the Lifespan, centers on exploring the nuanced ways in which families and social contexts can connect to the mental health and well-being of our Latine clients.

Using a developmental approach, national speakers invited to participate in this 2-day virtual conference will guide participants through life's developmental stages, discussing the interplay of family systems and social context within each, and their role in mental health treatment. Each 90-minute session will offer practical tools and evidence-based approaches to support family systems integration to client care, all with the goal of moving us towards El Futuro's mission: Nurturing stronger familias to live out their dreams.



**“You are not lucky to be here. The world needs your perspective.  
They are lucky to have you.”**

**- Antonio Tijerino**

## **OUR TEAM**

### **Hispanic/Latino Behavioral Health Center of Excellence Team**

**Ibis Carrión-González, PsyD, Director**

**Christine Miranda, PhD, Evaluator**

**Jessenia D. Zayas-Ríos, DBH, MPHE, CHES®, Program Manager**

**Erick Senior-Rogés, PhD, Training and Technical Assistance Manager**

**Darice Orobítg, PhD, Training and Technical Assistance Consultant**

**Carmen Andújar, BA, Logistics Specialist**

**Paola Díaz-Arce, MHS, Outreach and Engagement Manager**

**Briseida Navarro-Sierra, MBA, MS. Ed, Coordinator Assistant**

## **CONTACT US**

For more information on the H/LBH CoE, visit:

[www.hispaniclatinobehavioralhealth.org](http://www.hispaniclatinobehavioralhealth.org)

You can also contact the center directly by email at:

[info@hispaniclatinobehavioralhealth.org](mailto:info@hispaniclatinobehavioralhealth.org)



**REQUEST TA**

\*The Hispanic/Latino Behavioral Health Center of Excellence recognizes the complexities associated with gender and ethnic identification as well as the right of all individuals to self-identify. The Center uses the term Latine with the intention of both facilitating fluent reading and pronunciation and supporting an inclusive and respectful language. Latine is a gender-neutral form of the word Latino that uses the letter e at the end, an idea native to the Spanish language.

The Hispanic/Latino Behavioral Health Center of Excellence is led by the Institute of Research, Education, and Services in Addiction at the Universidad Central del Caribe School of Medicine and is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration under grant number H79FG001136.