



Latino Adolescent
Migration, Health,
and Adaptation

<http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/lamha>



Preliminary Findings from the Latino Adolescent Migration, Health, and Adaptation Project: Parent and Adolescent Views of Family Presence of Mental Health Symptoms

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LAMHA

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What is the Latino Adolescent Migration, Health, and Adaptation Project (LAMHA)?

- **Methods**
 - mixed-method, descriptive study
 - mental health status & needs of immigrant youth & their families
- **Participants**
 - statewide sample of 250 Latino immigrant youth & primary caretakers
- **Survey instrument**
 - mental health symptoms
 - family functioning
 - community and school variables.
- **Service use patterns**
 - approximately half the sample
 - Adapted from the CASA (Burns, et al.)
- **Two qualitative studies**
 - parents' beliefs about mental health problems
 - youth's migration experiences



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What Did We Ask?

- **Factual Areas**
 - age at entry
 - length of time in the U.S.
 - family structure
 - separation during migration
 - parent & child employment
 - school participation.
- **Mental Health Measures – Youth and Parents**
 - Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach)
 - Youth Self-Report (Achenbach)
 - Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (Briere)
 - Children's Depression Inventory (Kovacs)
 - MASC (anxiety) (March)
 - CESD (parent depression)
 - Trauma (parent)
- **Motivations for immigration**
- **Acculturation Measures for Youth and Parents (Tropp, Cortes, Scapoznick)**
- **Family Functioning: Familism (Vega), FACES (Olsen)**
- **Youth Reported Delinquency**
- **Views of School (SSP, Bowen & Richman)**

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Who is Included?

- 12 – 18 year olds and a primary caregiver
- Had to have been born out of the U.S. in a Latin-American Country.
- We sampled students from schools in urban and rural counties with high growth in the Latino population.
- We asked school systems to give us the names and contact information of students who identified as Hispanic or Latino.
- Recruited by phone.



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Who are our Participants?

- Mothers answered the survey
79%
- Boys interviewed 51%
- Girls interviewed 49%
- Average age 15 years
- Immigrated from Mexico 71 %
- Were living with two biological parents 59%
- Were working full- or part-time 73%
- Other represented countries include:
 - Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, El Salvador, Venezuela



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Immigration

- Age of Arrival
 - Between birth and five years 20%
 - Between six and ten years of age 30%
 - Eleven years old or above 41%
- Average Age at Arrival 9 years
- Average length of separation from one or both parents 2.5 years
- Crossed with a Smuggler/Coyote 63%



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Summit Purposes

- To share information
- To stimulate discussion which may result in program and policy changes
- To help us understand what our findings reflect in the real world.
- To learn what questions you might have that our data might speak to.



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Adolescents and Parents : Reasons for Migration

Why did the family come?	<u>Teen</u>	<u>Parent</u>
– Better Job	47%	59%
– Family Reunification	22%	7%
– Life Event that Precipitated the Move? (Job Loss)	14%	21%
– Were you concerned for your safety? (Yes)	52%	89%
• Robbed	4%	12%
• Attacked	2%	2%
• Injured	13%	9%
• Became Sick		
– Describe the mood as somewhat or very stressful	14%	7%



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And Now...

- **Moving to the U.S. was the best thing for my family.**
 - Yes = **79% (teen)** **91% (parent)**
- **Moving to the U.S. was the best thing for me.**
 - Yes = **77% (teen)** **89% (parent)**
- **I would like to return to live in my native country one day.**
 - Yes = **70% (teen)** **53% (parent)**
- **Life in the U.S. is much easier than life in my native country.**
 - Yes = **61% (teen)** **87% (parent)**
- **I am (my child is) happier in the U.S. than I would be in my native country.**
 - Yes = **38% (teen)** **77% (parent)**
 - No = **36% (teen)**



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Parents and Adolescents: Life in the U.S.

- Racial discrimination limits economic opportunity in the U.S. Yes = 56% (teen)
- The American way of life weakens the family. Yes = 39% (teen)
- There is much conflict between different racial & ethnic groups in the U.S. Yes = 58% (teen)
- There is no better country to live in than the United States. Yes = 51% (teen)
- Americans generally feel superior to foreigners. Yes = 65% (teen)



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Parents and Adolescents: Experiences with Discrimination

- I have been discriminated against in the U.S.
Yes = 41% (teen) 46% (parent)
- By:
 - Teacher/administrator 13% (teen)
 - Kids at school 31% (teen)
 - Someone at Work 2% (teen)
 - Someone at a doctor's office 0% (teen)
 - Police officer 3% (teen)
 - Someone at a store 11% (teen)
 - Someone else 3% (teen)



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Parents and Discrimination

- Compared to people of other races/nationalities, how many opportunities for advancement do you get at work?
 - 44% same
 - 37% fewer or a lot fewer
- Because of race/nationality you are treated:
 - Less competent weekly + = 5%
 - Hear negative comments weekly + = 5%
 - Receive poor service weekly + = 2%
 - Feel out of place/unwelcome weekly+ = 2%

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Views of Family

Note: Agree or Somewhat Agree (A/SA) indicated.

- Support During Difficult Times

A/SA = 84% (teen) 87% (parent)

- Easy to Express Opinions

A/SA= 61% (teen) 78% (parent)

- Easier to Discuss Problems Outside of the Family

A/SA= 14% (teen) 13% (parent)

- Each member has input into big decisions

A/SA= 60% (teen) 83% (parent)

- Children have say in discipline

A/SA = 24% (teen) 60% (parent)

- We do things together.

A/SA = 63% (teen) 85% (parent)

- We shift household responsibilities.

A/SA= 51% (teen) 76% (parent)

- Know each other's close friends.

A/SA = 53% (teen) 89% (parent)



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More Views of Family

- Everyone goes his or her own way

A/SA = 11% (teen) 9% (parent)

- Hard to know what the rules are.

A/SA = 14% (teen) 5% (parent)

- Family members say what they want

A/SA = 56% (teen) 85% (parent)

- Difficult to think of things to do as a family

A/SA = 22% (teen) 6% (parent)

- Family members feel very close.

A/SA = 73% (teen) 93% (parent)

- Discipline is fair.

A/SA = 70% (teen) 87% (parent)

- Feel closer to people outside of the family.

A/SA = 13% (teen) 9% (parent)

- We try new ways to deal with problems.

A/SA = 45% (teen) 53% (parent)



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Changes in Family Life

R: my family? We've always been very united, living all together. The house is really small, just two rooms, kitchen and living room, and a bathroom. That was the whole house. Next door was my grandma's house and in front my uncle's house. That's what my house was like in Mexico?

R: with my parents? We went out to eat, we went out to visit my dad's family, on a ranch! We went to other towns, just to go shopping or just look at the stores. And we always sat together at the table to chat about any little thing.

I: so here with your family, what do you do?

R: well here, with my dad working, well he's almost never at home. The rest of us we stay here, my mom, my brothers and I and sometimes I go out with my sister to dance, and sometimes with my parents we go to the mall just to walk around a bit, that's all we do. Nothing else here.



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Missing Extended Family

Yeah, now it's like, we gotta stick together because we're the only people we got. You can't trust too many people out there but I know I got my family. I mean when I have a problem I know I can come to this house, to my family, and I can talk to them. Yeah, it's harder now cause just gotta like stay together, try to stay together. It hurts sometimes, not knowing that, or not seeing my grandparents or my other family, cause I hear my other friends "oh, I'm gonna go over to my grandma's house and we're gonna eat dinner there" or "I'm gonna go to my uncle's, I'm gonna get cousins and we gonna go hang out" and you know I can't say that. Unless I got some private jet that can fly over there and come right back. Yeah, it hurts sometimes when I hear that, I can't go to my grandma's.



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Family Changes Because of Adolescence

Yeah, we try to stay together as much as we can. Sometimes we have a, like out here now we have a little grill outside so we try to bring my sister to come and her husband and the kids. They come over here and we have a little cookout and we try to keep the family as close as we can. My sister's movin' in next door. My dad just bought all that land over there, my sister's buyin' a trailer and moving onto that land over there. And I go out on the weekends sometimes. We get older and my brother goes out with his friends or I go out with my friends. So it's changed now, because back then most of the time it was just our family together going out everywhere but now my brother's got friends so he goes out on the weekends with them and I've got a girlfriend so I go out with her. That's about it. Or my girlfriend comes over and that's about it.



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Loneliness

well, I feel really, you know like, it's really different since we are really alone here. We're just three and my mom is always working and my sister, you know, it's just my little sister and me and we play on the computer and we, well I mean I don't help her with her homework 'cause she doesn't need help 'cause she thinks she's so smart and everything. So I just do my homework. I mean there's not a lot we do, we don't, sometimes we go and buy a pizza and we eat it together. I mean it's not like we are, we spend too much time together. But we do, I mean we live together! I guess that counts. But no, I think mostly um, that's one of the things that I miss a lot is that sometimes I feel alone here and like I feel like if something would happen we are alone, we're just three women alone. And I mean, there's nobody close, just my aunt and she's in New York. And my other uncle and he's like in Pennsylvania. So I just, I guess 'cause I was always with a lot of people when I was there, it was really hard for me to adapt to just live with my mom and my sister and that's it.



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