



Dropout Prevention with Latino Families: Juntos Program

Dr. Andrew Behnke and Cintia Aguilar



The Dropout Problem



- School dropout has been called “**the silent epidemic**” due to the relative lack of attention this pervasive issue has garnered from scholars, policymakers, and the public (*Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006*).
- Graduation rates in the U.S. rank near the bottom of industrialized world.
- In **2012** the U.S. will have an estimated deficit of **7 million** college educated workers (*Levin, 2005*).

The Dropout Problem



- Studies estimate that approximately **7,000** students become dropouts every school day or about **1.2 million** dropping out every year (*Balfanz & Legters, 2007*).
- Without a high school diploma, these individuals are at increased risk for:
 - low-paying employment,
 - dependence on government assistance,
 - cycling in and out of the prison system,
 - divorce and other relationship problems, and
 - mental and physical health issues.

Cost of Dropouts



- Estimated 13 million dropouts over the next decade will cost the nation **\$3 trillion** in lost taxes, incarceration expenses, and social services (*Rouse, 2005*).
- By some estimates, improving HS graduation rates would save more lives than would advances in medical care during the next few years (*Woolf et al., 2007*).

Cost of Dropouts

- Had Black and Latino student performance reached the level of White student performance by 1998,
 - The 2009 GDP would have increased by **\$310 billion** to **\$525 billion** or 2 to 4% of GDP
 - The achievement gaps in U.S. are the same as a permanent recession (*McKinsey Report, 2009*)





Why focus on Latinos?

- Latinos are the fastest growing group in U.S.
- Change 2000 – 2010
 - *White (alone)* 5.7% ↑
 - *African-American (alone)* 12.3% ↑
 - *Latinos/Hispanics* 43.6% ↑

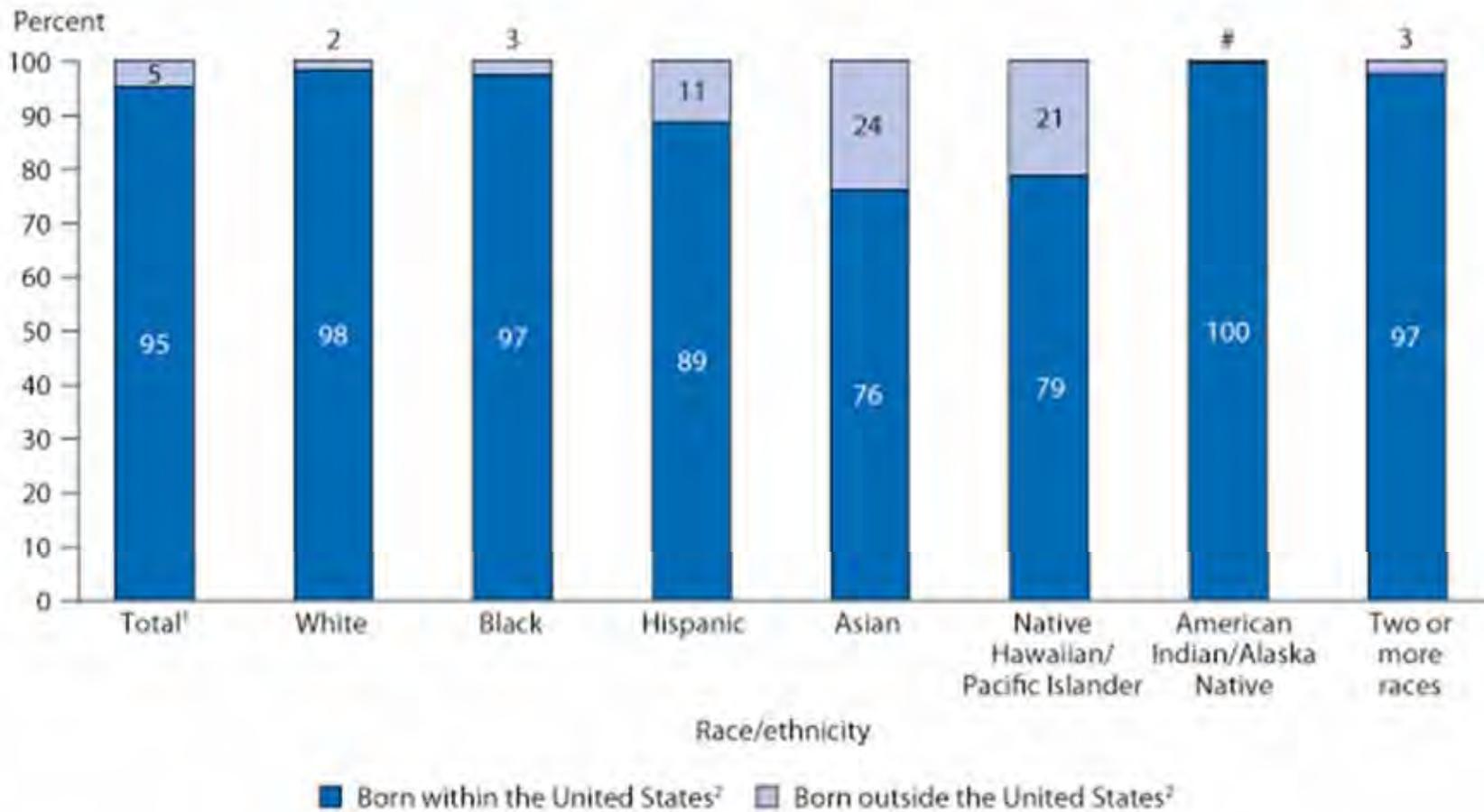
Data source: U.S. Census Bureau



Why focus on Latinos?

- Today Latinos are 15.1% of the general population and 20% of the K-12 enrollment in schools
- By 2050 it is estimated that students of Hispanic descent will account for half of all school-age youth. (Fry & Gonzales, 2008)

Distribution of Population under 18 in the United States: 2007



Median Age of U.S. Population by Race, Hispanic Origin & Gender, 2009

Race	Total	Male	Female
United States	36.8	35.4	38.2
White Alone	38.3	37.0	39.6
White, Non-Hispanic	41.2	39.9	42.6
Black Alone	31.3	29.4	33.3
AIAN Alone	29.5	29.0	30.2
Asian Alone	33.6	32.6	34.6
NHPI Alone	29.9	29.5	30.3
Two or More Races	19.7	18.9	20.5
Hispanic	27.4	27.4	27.5

High School Graduation in the US and NC

Race/Ethnicity	AFGR* US	NC
Asian/Pacific Islander	91.4%	86.9%
White, non-Hispanic	81.0%	77.3%
AIAN	64.2%	60.7%
Hispanic	63.5%	63.7%
Black, non-Hispanic	61.5%	61.9%

* Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate.

National Center for Education Statistics, 2010. Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data:
School Year 2007–08

Dropouts in the US and NC

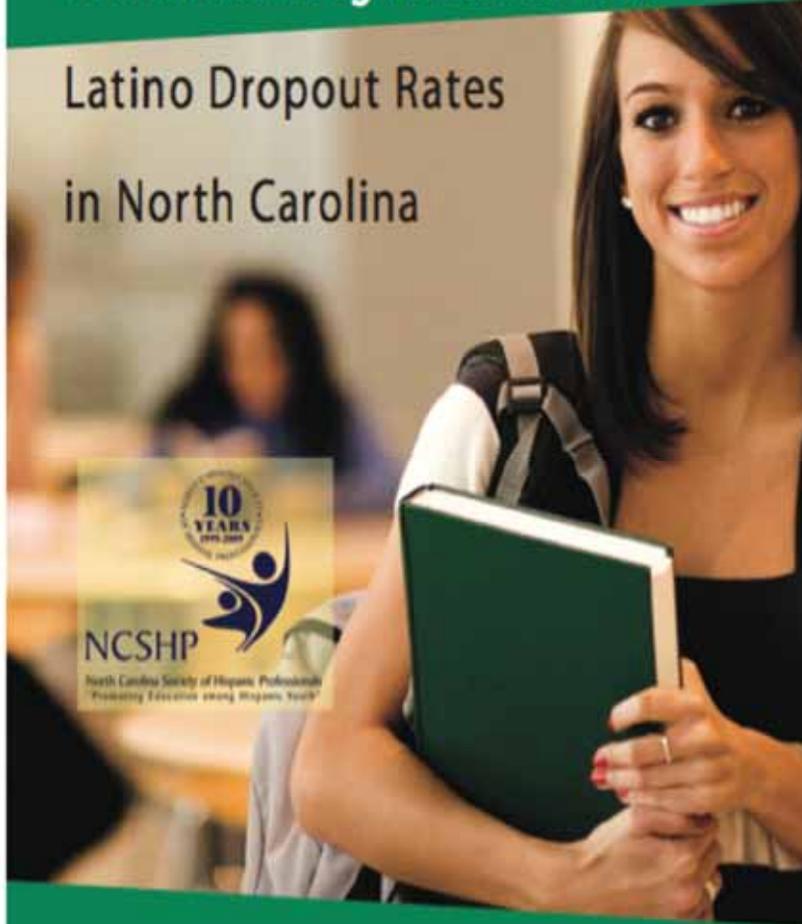
Race/Ethnicity	US	NC
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.4%	2.0%
White, non-Hispanic	2.8%	4.4%
AIAN	7.3%	7.7%
Hispanic	6.0%	7.6%
Black, non-Hispanic	6.7%	6.2%

* Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate.

National Center for Education Statistics, 2010. Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data:
School Year 2007–08

Understanding What Affects

Latino Dropout Rates in North Carolina



Andrew O. Behnke, PhD
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Laura M. Gonzalez, PhD
North Carolina State University

***WHY ARE
LATINO
STUDENTS
DROPPING
OUT?***

“I thought I was preparing for a professional career”*

“In my school in Colombia,” says Pati, a recent graduate, “everyone studies what they need for college; there are not separate honors classes and AP classes and vocational classes in high school. Everyone was getting the same degree.” Not knowing this difference, she accepted the courses she was assigned each year, graduating from a “pathway” that made her ineligible to apply to a pre-med program she has planned on attending.

* Taken from Rev. María Teresa Unger Palmer 2003 Dissertation at UNC Chapel Hill.



Challenges

- What are some of the challenges students like Pati are facing to succeed in school and be prepared for higher education?

✓ ...

✓ ...

✓ ...

✓ ...



Challenges ↔ Expectations



“... my teacher, and I in Graphics, he goes up to [an] Asian student, looks at his work and says, “You could do better.” With me, however, he simply says . . . “It’s all right.” But he never says I can do better, right? He is like telling me, for me [as a Mexican], it is all right. Like if I cannot do better than that, that is the best I can do. And I do not like that.”



“...it is not education that these Latino students reject; it is the stress and alienating experiences of minority status associated with schooling.”



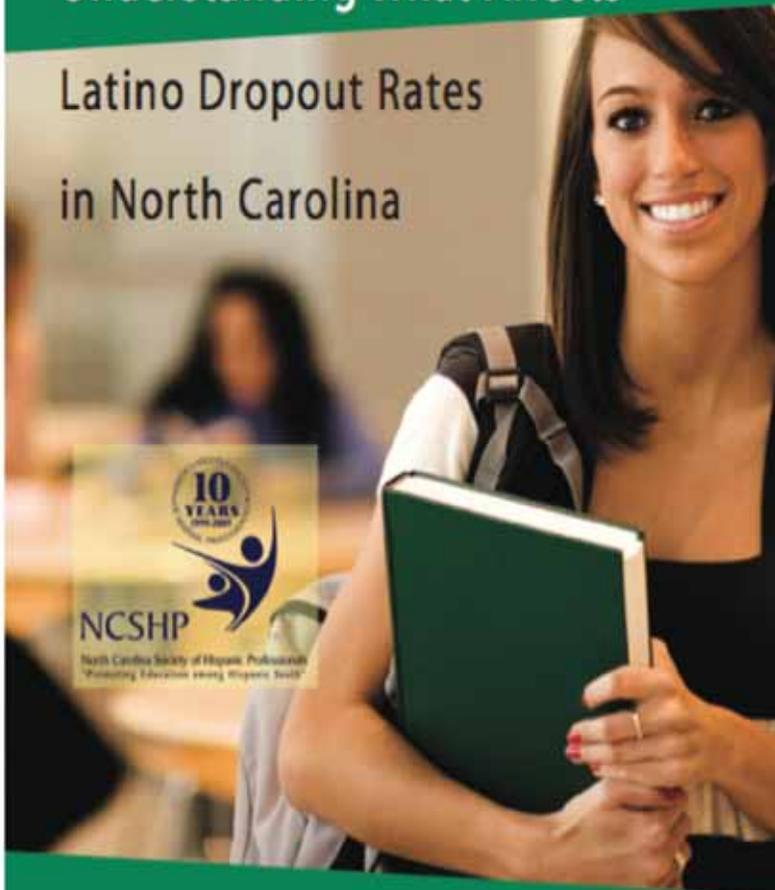
Conchas, G. 2001. Harvard Educational Review Vol. 71 No. 3 Fall

Quiroz, P.A. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 32(3)326-3

Why are they dropping out?

Understanding What Affects

Latino Dropout Rates in North Carolina



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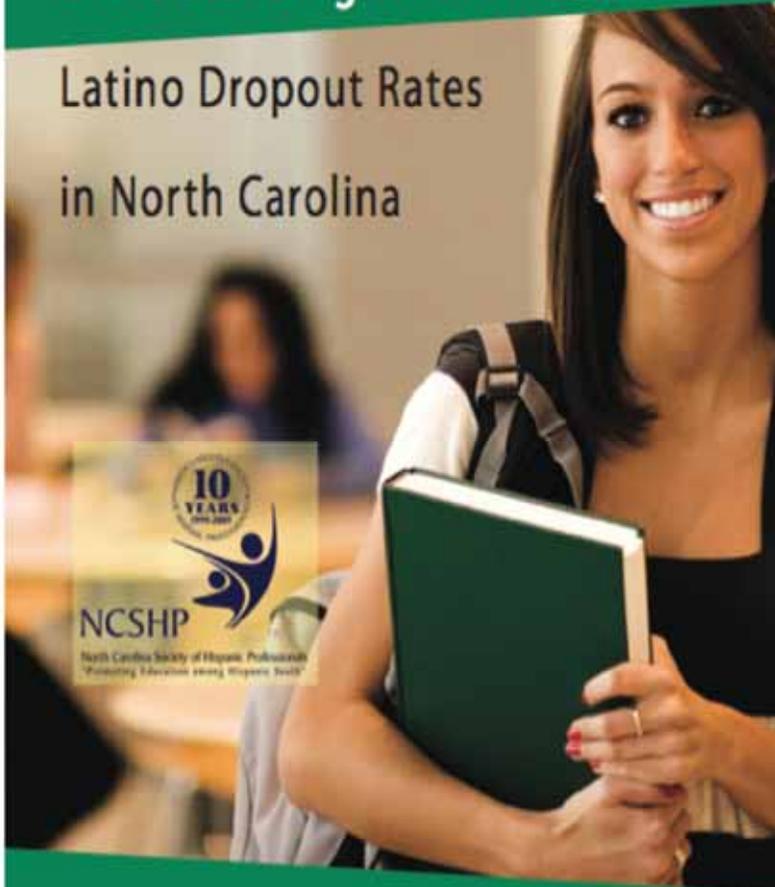
- Pregnancy & problems at home
 - teen pregnancy / birth rate
- Family Economic Issues
 - “need to pay bills, we need to make money to help are families”
- Struggle with English
 - “have trouble with English, can’t understand, the teachers go to fast”

(Behnke, Gonzalez, & Cox, 2010)

Why are they dropping out?

Understanding What Affects

Latino Dropout Rates in North Carolina

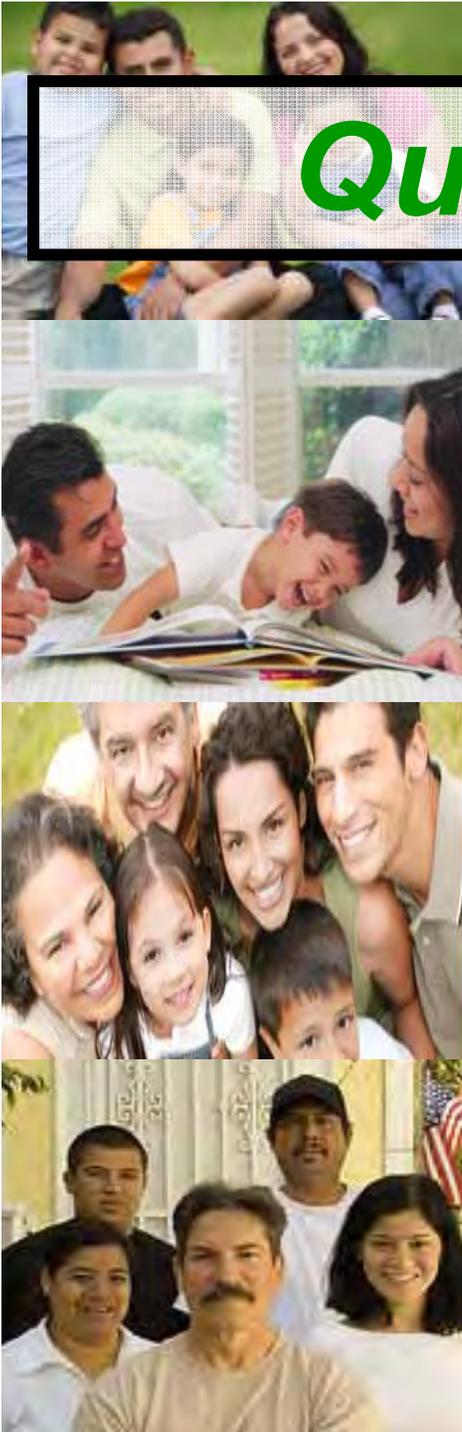


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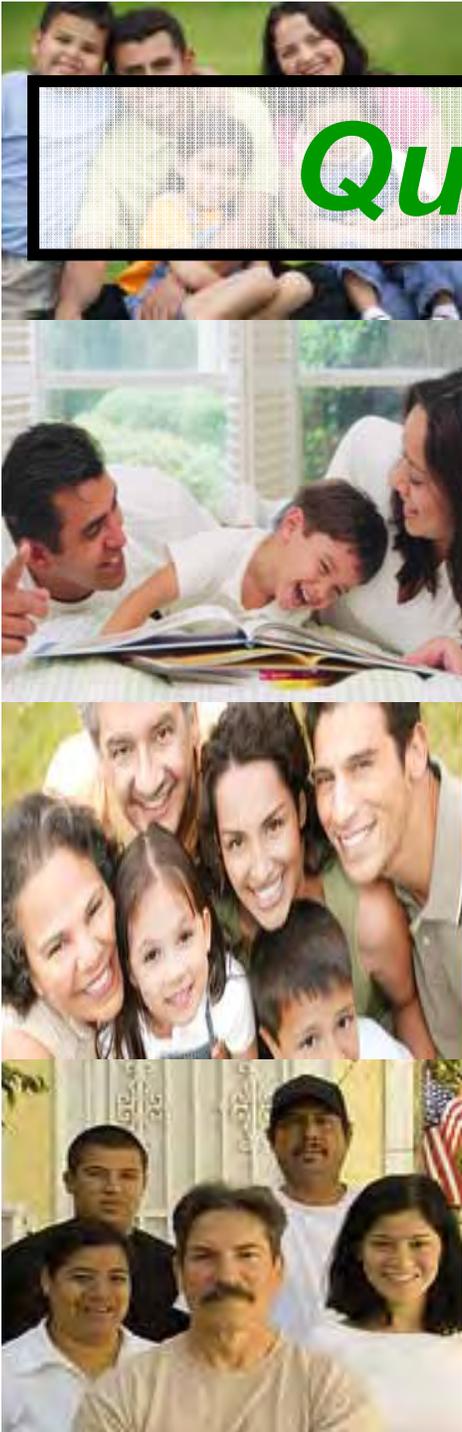
- Peer Influences
 - “not cool to be considered smart”
 - “why go [to school] when your other friends are skipping”
 - competition to be the most distracting student
- Discrimination
 - safe school climate especially important for girls

(Behnke, Gonzalez, & Cox, 2010)



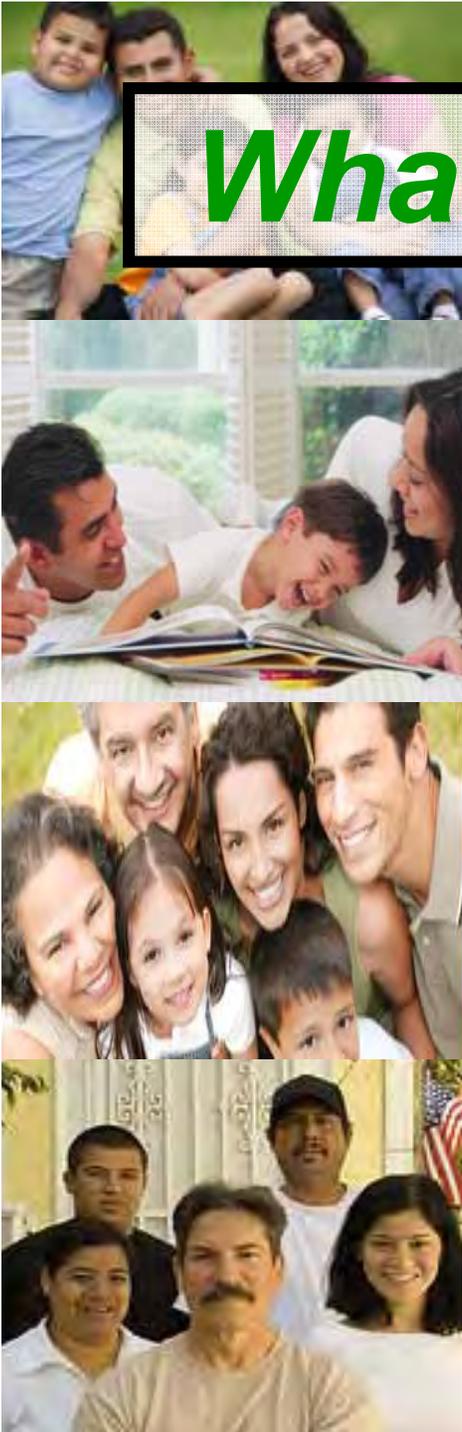
Quotes from Students

- “Some of my friends have or have tried to drop out due to lack of interest in their school work or because they want to work to support their families”
- “Us Hispanics we drop-of because are parents are not getting pay too much, they need to pay bills, we need to make money to help are families.”



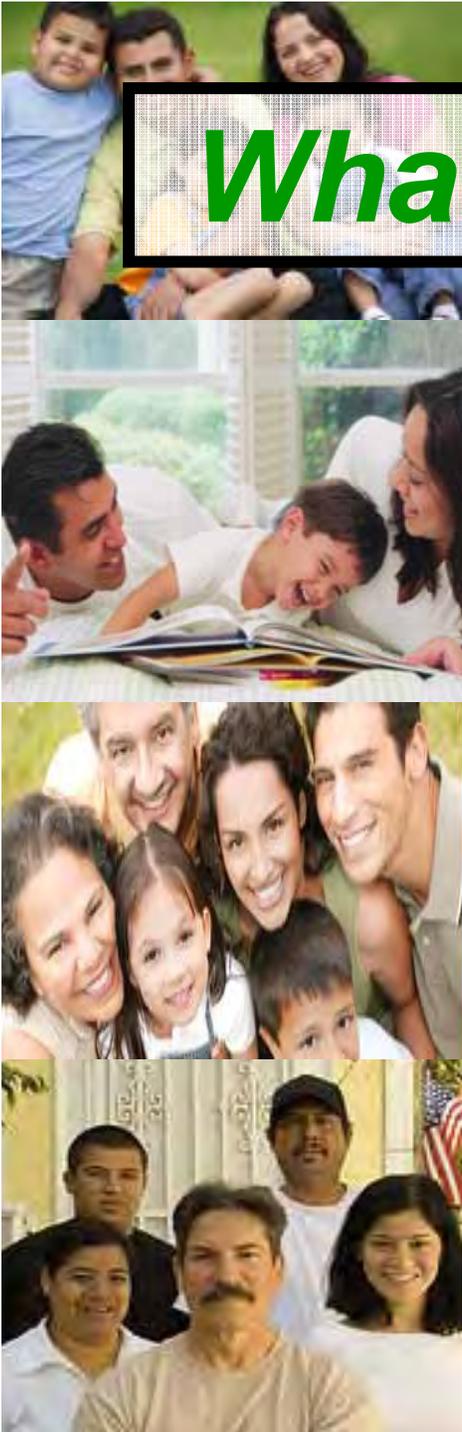
Quotes from Students

- “Its their friends that they see having fun and doing what they want.”
- “there’s just too much work, and you can’t understand, and nobody cares about school whether they pass or not.”
- They need to be made to “feel more welcome and part of school”



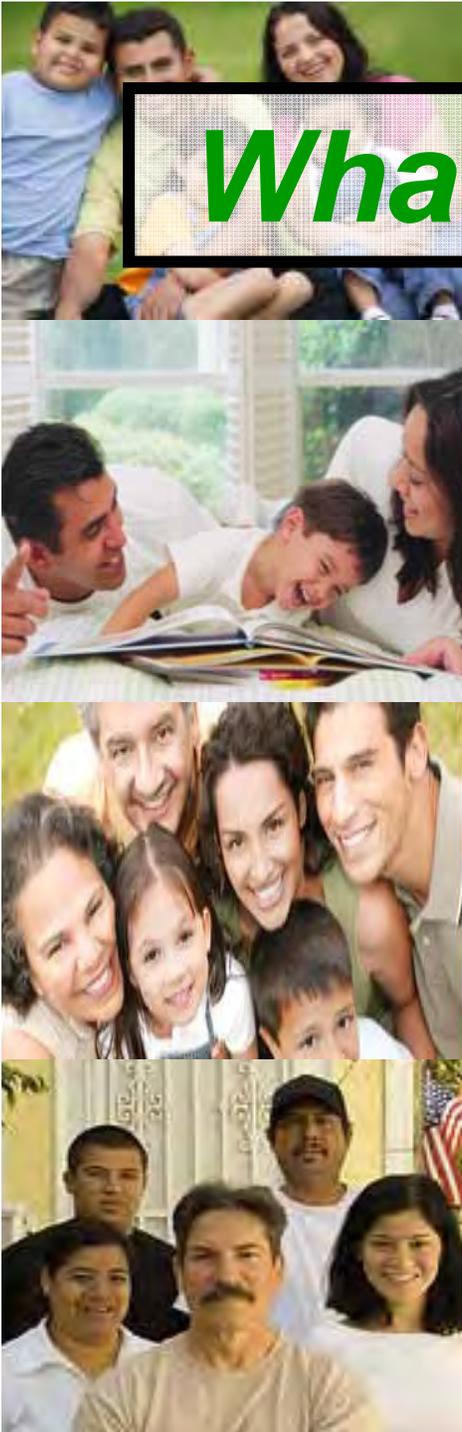
What would keep them in?

- Academic support
 - tutoring, mentoring, afterschool programs
 - knowing options for after high school, getting into college
- More Spanish-speaking staff
 - high touch- personalismo
 - understanding their culture
- Improved ESL classes



What would keep them in?

- Involvement of adult mentors
- Engage students in early college and alternative schools
- Parent involvement



What would keep them in?

- Parental involvement has consistently been shown to be related to these outcomes (e.g., Delgado-Gaitan, 1992, 1994; Flouri & Buchanan, 2004; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gómez, 2003)
- In fact, parent involvement was found the single strongest predictor of Latino academic performance (Zuniga, 2004)

A long, straight dirt road stretches into the distance through a green field under a blue sky. The road is reddish-brown and flanked by green crops. The sky is clear and blue.

“Families mainly
need to know the
path to get there.”

The Juntos program
shows that path

***Juntos para
un mejor educación***



***Together for
a better education***





What is Juntos?

- A program that helps youth and parents gain the knowledge and skills needed to bridge the gap from high school to higher education.
 - 2½ hour family workshop series of 6 sessions once a week
 - Mentoring, graduation coaching, and afterschool club



Program Background

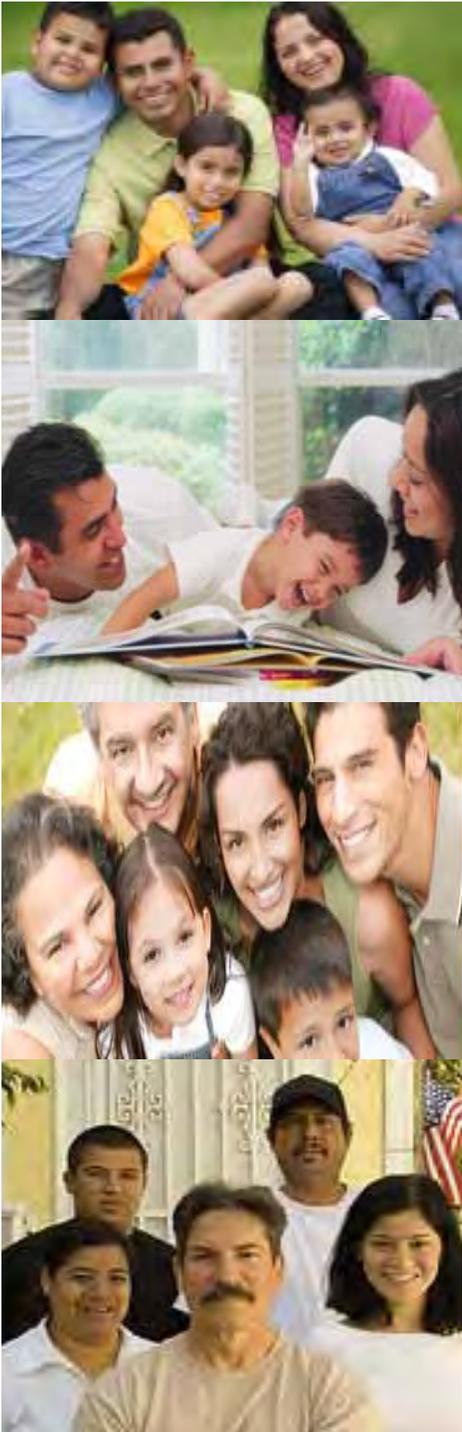
- Developed by Dr. Andrew Behnke and Cintia Aguilar at NCSU in 2007.
- Conducted 32 times in partnership with schools and community organizations.
- Served 587 individuals
- Respond to the need to unify schools, families and community efforts to prevent school dropouts and promote students access to higher education and parental involvement.

For English or Spanish-speaking parents and their teens in the 8th -12th grades.



Starts with a 6 workshop series focusing on a different topic each week





Sessions

- **Session 1:** Making Education a Family Goal
- **Session 2:** Family and School Communication
- **Session 3:** Requirements for Graduation and More
- **Session 4:** How to Finance Higher Education
- **Session 5:** Applying for College and More
- **Session 6:** Creating a Plan of Action

SESSIONS AT-A-GLANCE

<p>SESSION 1—MAKING EDUCATION A FAMILY GOAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Name Tag Activity • Group Discussion: Why Did You Come Tonight? • Program Overview • Ground Rules • Survey: What Do You Know Today? • Icebreaker: Building the Strongest Bridge • Activity: Mini Goals and Monster Goals • Monetary Impact of Higher Education • Group Discussion: Parental Involvement • Optional Activity: The Great Wall of China • Drive Home Chat • Feedback/Wrap-up 	<p>SESSION 2—FAMILY AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Name Tag Activity • Thought of the Week • Overview of Tonight’s Session • Icebreaker: Two Truths and A Lie • The Who’s Who of School Organization • Family and School Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth Breakout: Fridge Art Activity ○ Parent Breakout: School Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Successfully Meeting with Teachers and School Staff • Optional Activity: Discussion about ESL Classes • Drive Home Chat • Feedback/Wrap-up
<p>SESSION 3— REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION AND MORE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Name Tag Activity • Thought of the Week • Overview of Tonight’s Session • Icebreaker: The Family Feud • Goals and Graduation Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth Breakout: License Plates and Business Cards ○ Parent Breakout: Graduation Requirements • Optional Activity: True or False Trivia • Activity: Classes and Your Goals • Drive Home Chat • Feedback/Wrap-up 	<p>SESSION 4— HOW TO FINANCE HIGHER EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Name Tag Activity • Thought of the Week • Overview of Tonight’s Session • Myth Busting • College Options • How Can I Afford It? • Comparing Your Options • Drive Home Chat • Feedback/Wrap-up
<p>SESSION 5— APPLYING FOR COLLEGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Name Tag Activity • Thought of the Week • Overview of Tonight’s Session • Standardized Tests • Optional Activity: The Jeopardy Game or Entrance Exam Game • Essay Writing Tips • Volunteering and Community Service • The Quest for Success Game • Drive Home Chat • Feedback/Wrap-up 	<p>SESSION 6—CREATING A PLAN OF ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potluck Activity • Thought of the Week • Overview of Tonight’s Session • Optional Icebreaker: The Newly “Eds” Game • Building an Education Action Plan • Next Steps • Survey: Where Are We Now? • Closing & Graduation

***Families coming “Together”
to learn and plan.***



Select activities for parent & youth to work on separately



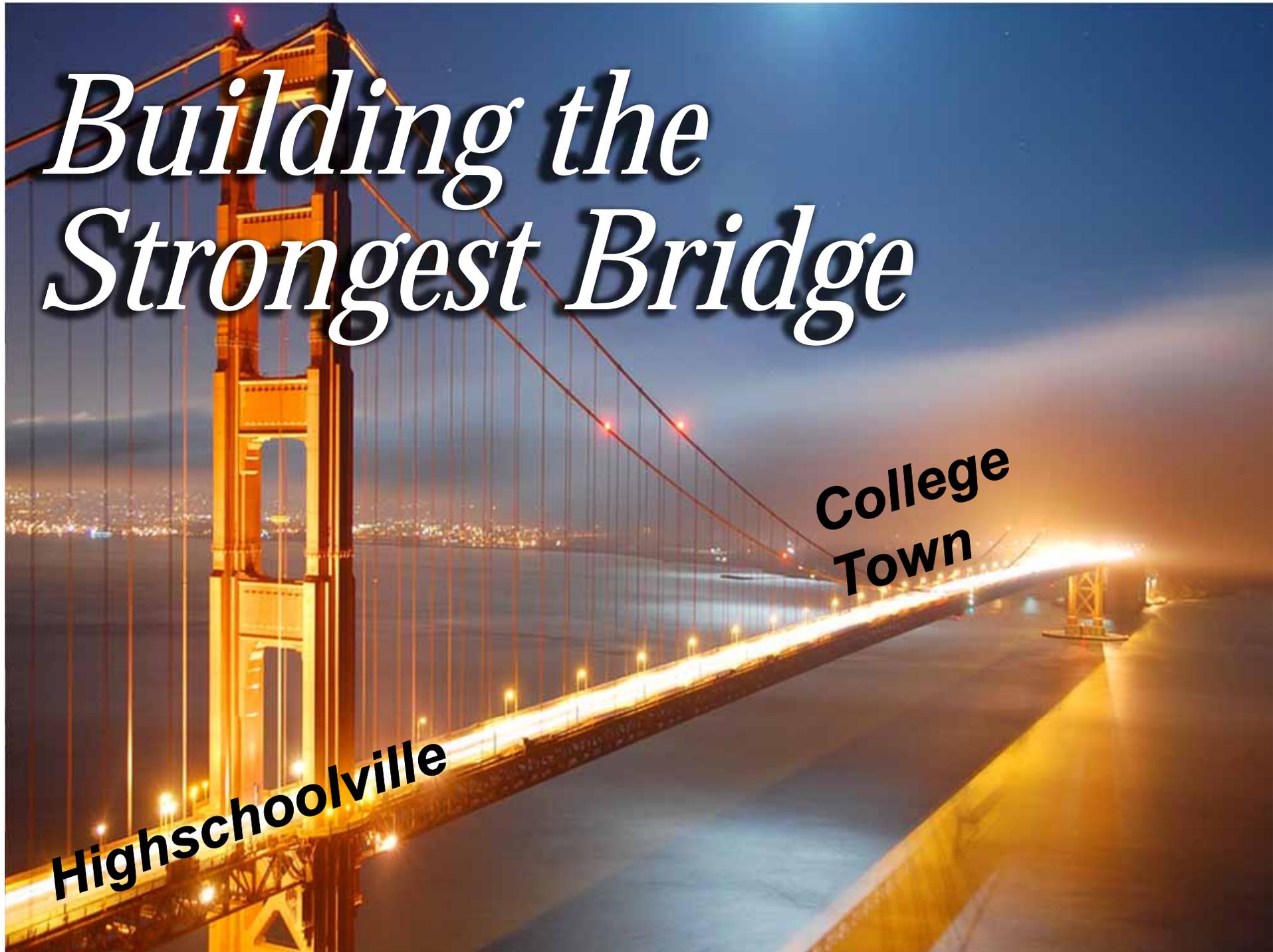
Activities Based Curriculum





Interactive Activities

- Building the Strongest Bridge
- Quest for Success Game
- The Newly “Ed” Game
- Entrance Exam Jeopardy
- Myth Busting: Going to College
- Juntos Family Feud



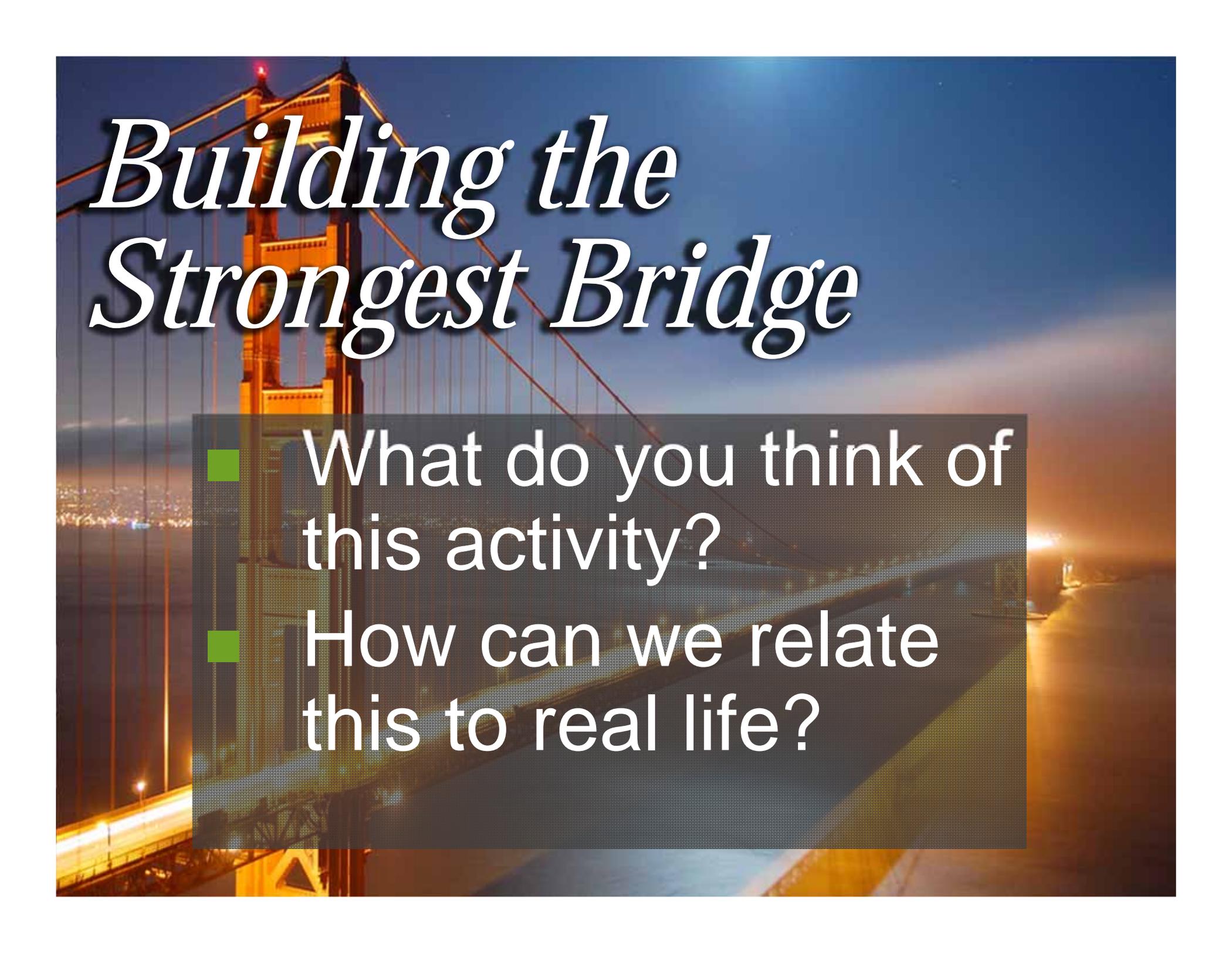
Building the Strongest Bridge

**College
Town**

Highschoolville

You have 7 minutes to construct a bridge.



A photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge at night, illuminated with warm lights. The bridge's towers and suspension cables are visible against a dark blue sky. The city lights of San Francisco are visible in the background.

Building the Strongest Bridge

- What do you think of this activity?
- How can we relate this to real life?

FAMILY FEUD

What is required to graduate from High School?

Study and Complete HW 30

Pass your classes 9

Take the Right Classes 24

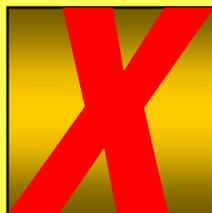
Go to School 5

Pass the EOC exams 20

Don't cause problems 12

Team 1

0



Team 2

0

Educational Games Created for the Program





Juntos: Phase 2

Building Community Sustainability

- Director, coordinators, and graduation coaches.
- Extracurricular activities: clubs, videography, and community service projects.
- Follow up meetings with parents

COMMUNITY SERVICE



Clubs and Activities

- Before and after the 6 week program, afterschool clubs, summer programs, and mentoring

B





1st Recruit Partners



- Identify potential partners: school counselors, ESL teacher, parent-teacher liaisons, churches, Latino organizations, etc.
- Have a potential partners meeting to introduce the program.
- Determine partners' roles.
- Who can do what best?



2nd Recruit Youth



- Have fun activities and opportunities to serve others
- Gain trust of youth and youth leaders
- Work with youth to establish their wants and to know what they see as the things they struggle with
- Use the 5 Ps of personalismo



3rd Recruit Families



- Identify local Latino leaders and programs to pass on information about the program: word of mouth.
- Extend invitations through visits or phone calls rather than relying on fliers or invitation letters.
- Plan a kick-off meeting to introduce the program to families.



3rd Recruit Families



- ConnectEd calls and scripts
- Talk to churches
- Have a “telethon”
- BUT REMEMBER:
 - Phone Calls or Visits are # 1
 - Might need to make regular reminder calls



Resources

- *Alliance for Excellent Education: www.all4ed.org*
- *America's Promise Alliance: www.americaspromise.org*
- *American Diploma Project Network: www.achieve.org*
- *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation: www.gatesfoundation.org*
- *Communities in Schools: www.cisnet.org*
- *Editorial Projects in Education Research Center: www.edweek.org/rc*
- *Educational Policy Institute: www.educationalpolicy.org*
- *Jobs for the Future: www.jff.org*
- *John Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools: <http://web.jhu.edu/CSOS/index.html>*
- *National Dropout Prevention Center: www.dropoutprevention.org*
- *Nevada Public Education Foundation: www.nvpef.org*
- *Silent Epidemic: www.silentepidemic.org*
- *University of California Los Angeles Civil Rights Project: www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu*



Resources

- [*CA Dropout Research Project: Rumberger: Why Students Drop Out of School: A Review of 25 Years of Research \(pdf\)*](#)
- [*Dropout Prevention: Recent Research and State Policy Responses \(pdf\)*](#)
- [*Ed Week: Diplomas Count 2008*](#)
- [*LV Sun: Clark County School District: Overview*](#)
- [*MSNBC: 1 in 10 U.S. high schools is a 'dropout factory'*](#)
- [*NVPEF*](#)
- [*PEW Hispanic Center: Hispanic Youth Dropping Out of U.S. Schools*](#)
- [*PEW Hispanic Center: Latino Youth Lag White Peers In Completing College*](#)
- [*PEW Hispanic Center: The Higher Drop-Out Rate of Foreign-Born Teens*](#)
- [*UCSB: Russell Rumberger*](#)
- [*USA Today: 'Crisis' graduation gap found between cities, suburbs*](#)
- [*Yakima Herald: Granger's Very Inspiring Principal; Hard work and high expectations raise academic achievement at high school*](#)

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The Juntos Program



The "Juntos" program (pronounced: Who-n-tos) provides Latino parents and youth with knowledge and resources to prevent 8-12th grade students from dropping out and to encourage families to work together to gain access to college. This experiential program is taught in either English or Spanish and meets for 2½ hours once a week for six weeks in the evenings. Juntos also uses success coaches and college age-mentors to provide weekly afterschool clubs and activities with the target students before and after the 6-week

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Implementing Juntos

These are resources to help you conduct the Juntos program. All of these resources are free to use but please include the Juntos logo when you use them to keep that “Juntos” identity.

Links to:

- [Our New Curriculum](#)
- [Brief Description of the Program in English for Schools](#)



- [Spanish Flyers for Parents](#)
- [Spanish Flyers for Parents -glossy](#)
- [English Flyers for Parents](#)
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Thank You!!!





Questions, comments, recommendations?

