

## **Social Services & Mental Health—what have we accomplished in the last year?**

### Projects since last year

1. Increased access to services provided by DFS.
2. More culturally sensitive forms working with Firm for translation etc.
3. There is a language line in place.
4. Some services are being provided in person.
5. Making some progress but there is still a long way to go.
6. Have hired a bi-lingual social worker

### Issues Raised

1. Not enough mental health professionals available.
2. Many Latinos have post traumatic oppressive disorder (referring to the oppression they encounter while trying to live in this culture) and some are in real trouble. 26% of domestic violence cases are related to this phenomenon.
3. Lead poisoning in the St. Louis area
4. Latinos may not understand the few resources that are available to them.
5. There is a 2 to 3 year transitional period new immigrants go through
  - a. The system is not addressing the special needs
  - b. They may find themselves in a mental health facility where the workers can't help them understand their condition.
6. Lack of cultural competence leads to misdiagnosis and labeling.
7. Competence of mental health by interpreter in question.
8. Liability of physicians. Some cultures parents go with their daughters to the doctor. In some cultures a male doctor can only see a girl through a mirror.
9. Not utilizing bi-lingual skilled people and they are not paid appropriately for these skills.

10. There is not a good mechanism for bi-lingual people to market themselves.
11. Social workers are not considered professionals.
12. Need to improve access and outreach of community health centers.
13. Many working poor are not eligible for services, some are offered on a sliding fee but they are often overbooked.
14. Funding problems persist—many small communities are eliminating or losing their mental health services.
15. As part of an education program on campuses more training programs are needed to help professionals become bi-lingual. Responses may not work unless Latinos are recruited which is still a cultural issue.
16. Several Latinos who have been here for generations don't know the culture. They don't associate with the culture here.
17. There is a need to create diversity programs within the school of medicine and social work.
18. There was a feeling in this group that not much has changed since last year. We are still talking about the same issues.

## **Social Services & Mental Health—where do we go from here?**

### Action Areas

1. Create a statewide directory of Mental Health services/professionals that focus on Latino clients/community. (community connection.org, alianzas.org, united way, and La Lista)
2. Create alternative mental health services and modify the existing mental health structure to recognize/respond to the cultural needs of the Latino (identifying resources and organizations that will improvise).
3. Identify and utilize websites that offer employment opportunities for bi-lingual professionals (employment opportunities section on critical sites).
4. Enhance the general education of the Latino community on mental health issue utilizing the school structures as a vehicle to get information to Latino families. Another vehicle may be advocacy group that operate in different arenas. Media, health fairs, special events, and public service announcements may also help reach Latinos.

### Partners to Achieve Action Areas

1. Guadalupe Center
2. El Centro
3. Northeast family health clinic
4. Alianzas and partners
5. COHO
6. Community Connection and University of Missouri—Columbia
7. Mattie Rhodes
8. St. Michaels and St. Benedicts
9. SAMHSA Grant Projects

### What we will do

1. Maria Smith will involve outreach programs in Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa and Kansas to get resources.
2. Dennis Minzes will contact the Latino network through community connection.
3. Alicia Simmons will gather information for network development
4. Mattie Rhodes will be asked for help as well as other partners
5. Alianzas will be asked to add an “employment opportunities” section and develop a “situations wanted” location.