

# Mental Health Issues in Hispanics: A New Concern for Our Region

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# Background Information

- Information is Based on:
  - Reseach- PsyInfo data base
  - Clinical- Titleson Clinic
  - Social- Centro Latino

# Hispanics in the United States: Overview

- United States Trends
  - *Is the largest ethnic minority group in US*
  - *Is the fastest growing ethnic group in US*
  - Approximating 15% of the population
  - Will represent the majority group in 2040
  - Probably undercounted (hence projections are probably off with a wide margin of error)

# Demographics: Hispanics in the United States

- United States Statistics
  - Overall = 12.5% (vs 12.1% for AA)
  - *Before 18* = 35%
  - 18-65 = 60%
  - 65 + = 5%
  - *Less Educated than counterparts*
  - *More Fertile than counterparts*

# Demographics: Hispanics in North Carolina

- North Carolina Statistics
  - Overall = 4.7%
  - Migration for Foreign Born = 50%
    - Primarily from California (also from the NE)
    - Comparison (ND = 282% decrease)
  - From 1990 to 2000 = **394%** increase

# Demographics: Hispanics in New Hanover County

- New Hanover Statistics Estimates
  - Total Population = 147,642 (22.7% increase)
  - 1980 = 788;
  - 1990 = 747;
  - 2000 = 1,828
  - *Estimate = severe undercounting*



# Additional Hispanic Statistics

- Percentage of Population
  - In US = 12.5%
  - In NC = 4.7%
    - 36% are from Latin America
    - 30% are from Mexico
- Anticipated Growth
  - *In US = Births will outpace immigration*
  - *In NC = Over 500% growth*

# Glance (continued)

- High School Students
  - *One third of all high school graduates by the year 2013 will be Hispanic*
  - Graduation rate for Hispanics nationally = 54%
  - Graduation rate for Hispanics in North Carolina = 38%

# Glance (continued)

- **Language Ability** (about 30 million speak Spanish)
  - US = 22% speak English “poorly”
  - NC = 34% speak English “poorly”
- **Governmental Representation**
  - Two Elected Officials
  - No High Ranking Judges
  - One Executive Level Office

# Glance (continued)

## ■ Health Insurance

- 37% lack insurance nationally
- 54% lack insurance in North Carolina
  - Increases to 64% if non-documented

## ■ Income

- 27% live in poverty
- Median family income = \$30,529
  - National MFI = \$ 44,468
- MFI for whites = \$51,951
  - National MFI = \$61,587

# What Does Being “Hispanic” Mean?

- Speaking Spanish
- Being Catholic (or Christian)
- Family above all (and extended family)
- Children are highly desired and valued
- Friends and social groups are critical
- Time to be enjoyed not conquered
- Cooperation versus competition
- Modesty
- Religion as source of support and socialization
- Keep one’s problems to themselves or family
- Less material & consumer focused
- More emotional
- Personalismo
- Fatalismo (chance and God explain just about everything)
- Respect and formality
- The important use and knowledge of a name (and title)
- Hospitality through gifts, food, and drink
- Smooth interpersonal relations are critical (amabilidad)

# Sources of Mental Health Problems

- Culture and Acculturation Issues
- Language Limitations
- Family Dysfunction
- Ineffective Social Support
- Low Self Esteem
- Limited Education
- Financial Limitations
- Religious Affiliation
- Documentation
- Health Status
- Gender Issues
- Interpretation of Efficiency

# Cultural Issues

- Misunderstanding of the Majority Culture's Unwritten Social Rules and Agendas
- Isolation to Mainstreaming

# Language Limitations

- English
- Variations of Spanish
- Spanish as a Second Language
- Anxiety Associated with Learning English and Losing Your Culture
- Non-Verbal Communication is Important
- Children as Translators
- Children Choosing English over Spanish



# Family

- Defining Family
  - Nuclear
  - Extended
  - Double (US and abroad)
- Divided Families
  - Economics
  - Geography
  - Politics

# Limited Social Support

- Familial
- Social
- Medical
- Religious
- Educational
- Financial

# Low Self Esteem

- Productivity and Materialism = Success in the US
- Limited Connectivity & Personal Isolation
- Self-Effacing Presentation
- Loss of Respect From Others
- Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

# Education

- Typical Educational Background
  - Often Limited
  - Usually in Spanish
- What it Means to be “Educated”-
  - the difference between schooling and education

# Financial & Related Limitations

- The Limits and Hazards of Being Undocumented
- Type of Vocational Opportunities & Corresponding Pay
- Banking Issues
- Driver's Licenses

# Religion

- Predominantly Catholic, but not Exclusively (about 25%)
- Importance of Religion and Related Social Support
- Always Hoping for a “Milagro”
- Church and Related Services in Spanish

# Documentation

- Education
- Medical
- Legal
  - Tax ID Numbers
  - Social Security Numbers
  - Driver's Licenses
- Aliases

# Health Status

- Increased and Disproportionate Health Problems
- Higher Low Birth Weights & Infant Mortality
- Increased Morbidity
- Under-Utilization of Health Services
- Health Viewed as Absence of Pain
- Women as Primary Care Providers in Family
- Disability is a Family Affair
- Hospitals as Last Place for Health Care or Possibly a Place One Goes to Die



# Gender Issues

- **Males vs Female**
  - Males 27%
  - Females 17%
- **Machismo**
  - False = loss of dignity and respect
  - True = Protector, supporter
- **Heterosexual issues**
  - Clashing of cultures
  - Availability of partners
  - Prostitution
  - STDs
- **Sexual Identity Issues**
- **Childhood Sexuality & Abuse**

# Interpretation of Efficiency

- Time (enjoyment vs. completion)
- Cooperation (vs. competition)
- Process (vs. outcome)

# Outcome of Problems

- Anxiety 13%
  - Substance abuse 8%
  - Depression 5%
  - Violence ?%
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- Ethnic identity issues
  - Poverty and marginalization

# A Simple Model for Addressing Mental Health Concerns

- Communication, Rapport & Trust
- Resource Information
- Empowerment
- Solution Focus

# Model for Integration: Helping People Fit into the Bigger Picture

1. Isolation
2. Acculturation
3. Assimilation
4. Mainstream

# In Three Generations

(from Hispanic Business, 2003)

	<i>Isolation</i>	<i>Acculturation</i>	<i>Assimilation</i>
<b>Income</b>	\$20,500	\$36,100	\$37,000
<b>Size</b>	3.9	3.6	3.1
<b>Time in US</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> gen.	US born	4 <sup>th</sup> Gen.
<b>Locale</b>	Inner City	Suburbs ?	Suburbs
<b>Values</b>	Hispanic	Partial Hispanic	Anglo
<b>Language</b>	Spanish	Bilingual	English

# The Future

- Clashing Demographics and Cultures
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Economic "Slavery"
- Address the Problem Now or Major Problems Later
- What is North Carolina and the Cape Fear Region Going to Do Especially with the Changes in the Public Mental Health System?

# Future?

- Demographic Shifts Are Obvious
- Socio-political Shifts Are Not
- The Lack of Integration of These Two Shifts Will Result in Social Misunderstanding & Unrest