

A Brown Paper

Lifting Latinos Up



Lifting Latinos up by their “Rootstraps:” Moving Beyond Trauma Through A Healing-Informed Model to Engage Latino Boys and Men.



The National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute is a Division of the National Compadres Network, a not-for-profit organization responding to national requests to address the growing needs of the Latino community.

www.nlffi.org

www.nationalcompadresnetwork.org

Executive

Summary





The National Latino Fatherhood & Family Institute

The National Compadres Network is a national effort whose focus is the reinforcement of the positive involvement of Chicano, Latino and Native-American males in the lives of their families and community. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, the mission of the National Compadres Network (NCN) has been to strengthen, rebalance, and redevelop the traditional *Compadre* extended kinship network by encouraging, supporting and re-rooting the positive involvement of males in their families and community and preventing or reducing the incidence of family and community violence, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and other oppressive behaviors. As a result of the overwhelming need locally and nationally, NCN launched the National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute (NLFFI). NLFFI serves as NCN's training, technical assistance, policy, advocacy, research and evaluation arm to assist local and national organizations to develop and implement programs that are culturally competent and draw from the resiliency of Chicano/Latino families and communities. While NLFFI's primary focus is directed to the Chicano/Latino population, the organization has a long history of collaborating with organizations and communities of diverse ethnic backgrounds. It is committed to providing services to all boys and men, families and communities. Additional information about our organization, services and resources can be found on our websites at:

<http://www.nationalcompadresnetwork.org>

<http://www.nlffi.org>

Training and Technical Assistance Services

NLFFI brings together culturally competent, nationally recognized leaders in the fields of fatherhood, rites of passage, health, education, family violence, teen-pregnancy prevention, cultural competence, juvenile justice, social services, advocacy, trauma, healing and evidence-based research. NLFFI works in partnership with community leaders and decision makers to create strategic and sustainable systems of change. NLFFI also provides support in the areas of training, technical assistance, collective impact building, research, leadership development, and resource and material development.



Executive Summary

What We Know. The 16 million Latino children and youth currently in America represent a crucial segment of our country's future workers, taxpayers, parents, citizens, voters, and leaders (National Council of La Raza, 2010). More than one Latino child in three (35%) is poor, compared to one white child in eight, making them less likely to finish high school, more likely to be poor as young adults, and less likely to be working between the ages of 25 and 29. That Latino teens are currently more than twice as likely to drop out of high school (Chapman et al., 2010), coupled with risk resultant from exposure to protracted poverty, limits the life prospects of high school dropouts. In addition, currently Latinos make up the majority population in juvenile detention centers and prisons. Despite these profound health, educational and socio-economic inequities facing Latinos, targeted funding and culturally relevant programming for this significant population is sparse, and is failing to meet its unique needs. Furthermore, any innovation in addressing these disparities requires investments that move beyond merely "trauma-informed care" and generic wraparound service systems. In its place would be a "healing-informed," culturally specific approach for service delivery that is rooted in long-overlooked indigenous principles and practices, as well as funding that focuses specifically on the needs of Latino boys and men.

What We Have. Culturally relevant innovation and capacity currently exist, but require replication in order to fully inform the prevention field of the disparity impacting Latino and Native boys and men. At the programmatic level, *La Cultura Cura*, or Cultural-Based Healing, is a method for healing and healthy development which is inextricably linked to restoring one's true cultural identity as the foundation of well-being for individuals, families, communities and society alike. It employs a multigenerational process of learning and/or remembering one's true and positive cultural values, principles, customs, and traditions. To promulgate *La Cultura Cura* at the systems and institutional levels, the National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute (NLFFI), a division of the National Compadres Network, which has been a leader in the field, will expand the group's innovative, healing-informed program, known as *La Cultura Cura Healing Generations*. This effort provides a framework and process to transform the experiences of Latino and Native men and boys, their families and communities beyond the current model of identifying trauma, instead moving toward a prosperous and thriving community. This will be accomplished through:

- Culturally rooted and responsive programming;
- Provider network and capacity-building; and
- Transformation of systems from trauma- to healing-informed efforts



La Cultura Cura Healing Generations is a self-sustaining framework that taps into a resource-rich cadre of experts and elders who can transform the national dialogue, inform policy and systems development, and enrich community capacity. It aims to be part of the efforts to address longstanding issues through a culturally framed, asset-based approach. *La Cultural Cura Healing Generations* integrates this healing-informed approach into education; engagement; delivery of prevention and/or intervention services; and service aftercare, as a vital first step in reducing life-threatening outcomes for Latino and Native boys and men.

Recommendations for What We Need to Thrive. Through *La Cultura Cura Healing Generations*, funders, practitioners and the communities impacted by historical racial oppression possess a framework to translate culturally grounded tenets into systems transformation. To bring this framework to scale, a comprehensive approach is necessary that includes policy and systems change, best achieved through the following recommended actions:



Programmatic Recommendations

1. Increase programmatic support for integrating a healing-informed framework that focuses on fostering natural opportunity factors and building resilience;
2. Develop pathways to health and well-being for Latino and Native males through culturally grounded and responsive physical, emotional, mental and spiritual development;



3. Support NLFFI and other community-acknowledged Latino and indigenous organizations to develop and evaluate best practices, comprehensive community strategies, and program models that directly address what we call "Chronic Traumatic Stress Disorder (CTSD)," while encircling the individual, families, and entire community in healing, restorative, and development processes;
4. Train all personnel working in all levels of educational, criminal justice, mental health, health and social services in the culturally based, healing-informed approach for serving Latino and Native men and boys, so those systems can recognize and adapt their efforts to be more responsive to the Latino and Native males they are charged to serve;
5. Support programs which promote the involvement of Latino and Native mothers and fathers in the schools. Education is the foundation for economic mobility in the U.S., as well as an important and healthy pathway for the integration of immigrants into society;
6. Support the development of NLFFI's generational "*Compadre*" extended-kinship networks and "*Circulo*" healing, support groups to provide positive indigenous male support for young men in all communities.
7. Inform mental-health and social-service providers including practitioners, supervisors, agencies and funding sources of the benefits of using this framework to better serve the needs of their clientele, by utilizing cultural assets that Latino and Native families and communities possess.

Systems Recommendations

1. Acknowledge within the Boys and Men of Color (BMoC) field that, for Latino and Native males, the path to healing (*La Cultura Cura*/Culture Heals) and healthy development is inextricably linked to restoring one's true cultural identity and recognizing the origins of unhealthy and maladapted behaviors.
2. Shift the BMoC field from the present deficit-based paradigm that is dominant in the field, to one which is healing-informed, through strategies that place the individual, family, and community as the priority in the implementation of healing and restorative strategies.
3. Promote intercultural exchange and learning across the BMoC field to establish culturally based best practices that foster comprehensive responses and/or



frameworks, while recognizing the legitimacy of diverse tenets of culture, distinct experiences, and world perspectives of different racial and cultural groups.

4. Review and reinforce the development of cultural-proficiency standards that lead to practices and professional standards and policies in service delivery systems that reach and engage Latino and Native boys and men. The goal of this effort is to identify and eliminate discriminatory standards that impede the serving of vulnerable groups in education, shelters, hospitals and clinics, and other similar settings.
5. Shift social services and the helping field to understand that developing cultural proficiency in any profession requires ongoing education and introspection in order to fully address the power imbalance between providers and the populations they serve. Additionally, introduce the concept of cultural humility as a way for providers to better serve Latino and Native males (Tervalon and Murray-Garcia, 1998).
6. Prioritize policy and systems change that improves cultural humility of K-12 education.

Funder Recommendations

1. Target public and private funds for investigation, research, and demonstration directed at unearthing the unique needs and cultural capital of Latino and Native males.
2. Increase public and private investment support for schools and other community-based educational models that teach cultural humility with academic rigor and prepare students for participation in the workforce and vocational training.
3. Increase public and private investment support for schools and other community-based strategies that promote the civic and economic advancement of immigrants within the U.S.
4. Leverage philanthropic support of NLFFI to cultivate the collective impact that can be achieved through community-based organization partnerships that align comprehensive community-building strategies among public agencies, safety net providers, local schools, adult schools, community colleges, businesses, and labor.



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Please visit our websites for resources and event listings:

www.nationalcompadresnetwork.org

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www.nationalboysandmenofcolorinstitute.org



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