

Latinos & Trauma



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Learning Objectives

You will learn the following about Trauma in Latinos:

1. **Trauma Experience:** trauma events common to the Latino experience
2. **Trauma Expression:** how Latinos tend to express distress of trauma events
3. **Trauma Effect:** the impact of trauma on the Latino Family System
 - Caregiver
 - Child
 - PCIT Assessment
 - PCIT Treatment

NOTE: The *experience, expression, & effect* of trauma is individual and not uniform across cultural/ethnic, racial, or linguistic groups.

Video: What is Trauma?

Conference Only Video Demonstration

Trauma Experience in Latinos

- **17.8%** or 57 million Americans are Latino (2016, U.S. Census Estimate)
- **70%** of U.S. adults report a traumatic life event (2016, CDC)
- **67%** of adults report Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES): abuse, neglect, household challenges (CDC, 2017)
- **11%** of adults with ACES are Latino (CDC, 2017)
- **General Trauma Categories:** natural disasters, accidents, violence, abuse, terrorism, & war.
- **Latino-specific categories:**
 - Pre-resettlement Trauma
 - Resettlement Trauma
 - Post-resettlement Trauma

Trauma Experience in Latinos

- **Resettlement:** process of moving to a different place, by “**choice**” (e.g. financial, employment), **circumstance** (e.g. war), or **displacement** (e.g. not allowed to stay).
- **Pre-resettlement Trauma:** traumatic events occurring before moving.
 - violence
 - natural/human disaster
 - political unrest
 - war

Trauma Experience in Latinos

- **Resettlement Trauma:** traumatic events during the move.
 - physical abuse
 - rape/trafficking
 - gang violence
 - harsh weather
 - shelter/sleep conditions
 - neglect (food insufficiency)
 - death (of others in immigration journey)
 - Loss of family (non-resettlers)
- **Post-resettlement Trauma:** traumatic events occurring after moving.
 - mistreatment/rejection due to political, cultural/ethnic, religious, racial, linguistic, or other difference.
 - First generation trauma
 - Transgenerational trauma

Research: Latino Trauma Experience

- Latinos who resettle to U.S. & Canada are ten times more likely to develop PTSD compared to the general population (Kim, 2016).
- It is not the pre-settlement or resettlement trauma that most affects Latinos (Kim, 2016).
- Latino's distress is based on present psychosocial stressors (post-resettlement) that affect their immediate quality of life (Kim, 2016).

Research: Latino Trauma Experience

- **First Generation Trauma:** when a first generation immigrant experiences resettlement trauma.
 - **12%** of Latinos report ongoing post-resettlement experience of terror, which is operationally defined as mistreatment due to cultural/ethnic, linguistic, racial, religious, political factors (Kim, 2016)
- **Transgenerational or Intergenerational Trauma:** When the effects of resettlement trauma extend beyond the first generation person who experienced the trauma (Phipps & Degges-White, 2013)
 - **Familismo** (strong loyalty & collective experiences with immediate & extended family) makes Latinos more prone to transgenerational trauma (Phipps & Degges-White, 2013).

Trauma Expression in Latinos

Three Cultural Concepts of Distress

(APA, 2013; DeSilva et. al., 2015; Lewis-Fernandez, 2010; GLADP, 2004)

1. **Cultural Syndromes:** group of symptoms that tend to co-occur in people of the same cultural group or community.
2. **Cultural Idioms of distress:** shared ways of experiencing and expressing about personal or social problems.
3. **Cultural Explanations:** common cultural explanations about perceived causes, explanatory models that have cultural meaning or etiologies for the symptoms.

Video: Trauma Expression

Conference Only Video Demonstration

Trauma Expression in Latinos

Three Cultural Concepts of Distress (APA, 2013; Lewis-Fernandez, 2010; GLADP, 2004)

1. **Cultural Syndromes:** group of symptoms that tend to co-occur in people of the same cultural group or community.
 - **Ataque de Nervios** (“attack of nerves”): Following stressful life circumstances a person experiences a general sense of being out of control that can include the following symptoms.

Intense emotional upset	Acute anger	Anxiety
Grief	Screaming/yelling uncontrollable	Crying
Trembling	Heat in chest rising to head	Verbal aggression
Physical aggression	Seizures	
Fainting	Dissociative symptoms (de-realization, de-personalization)	

Trauma Expression in Latinos

Three Cultural Concepts of Distress (APA, 2013; Lewis-Fernandez, 2010; GLADP, 2004)

1. **Cultural Syndromes *continued*:** group of symptoms that tend to co-occur in people of the same cultural group or community.
 - **Susto or Espanto** (“fright”): A frightening event that causes the soul to leave the body resulting in unhappiness and sickness. In extreme cases susto can end in death. Common symptoms:

Appetite disturbance	Sleep disturbance	Problematic dreams
Sadness	Low self-worth	Interpersonal sensitivity
Limited/no motivation	Somatic symptoms	Suicide ideation

- **Mal de Aire or Malos Vientos:** A malady caused by suddenly encountering bad air. This can involve a change in air temperature or a spiritual encounter that is felt through a change in the air.
- **List of all syndromes compiled by apal:** Guía Latinoamericana de Diagnóstico Psiquiátrico (GLADP):
http://www.wpanet.org/uploads/Sections/Classification_Diagnostic/gladp.pdf

Trauma Expression in Latinos

Three Cultural Concepts of Distress (APA, 2013; Lewis-Fernandez, 2010; GLADP, 2004)

2. **Cultural Idioms of distress:** shared ways of experiencing and expressing about personal or social problems.
 - Nervios ("nerves"): adjustment anxiety, depression, dissociative experiences, somatic disturbances such as headaches & stomachaches, sleep problems, irritability, difficulty concentrating, psychosis, general loss of control.
 - Mareos ("dizziness"): experience of dizziness, vertigo, nausea, headache
 - Aires or Vientos: reporting that you have encountered "bad air" that is responsible for your malady.
 - (malas vibras): negative vibes or vibrations

Trauma Expression in Latinos

Three Cultural Concepts of Distress (APA, 2013; Lewis-Fernandez, 2010; GLADP, 2004)

3. **Cultural Explanations:** common cultural explanations about perceived causes, explanatory models that have cultural meaning or etiologies for the symptoms.
 - These explanations influence *coping strategies* used and *help seeking behaviors*.
 - Mal De Ojo ("evil eye"): belief that interpersonal jealousy and malice cause illness and even death with one look.
 - Mal por Envidia ("malady by envy"): belief that maladies are the result of envy
 - Any person can give "**mal de ojo**" or cause "**ojamiento**"
 - Previously **Brujas** ("witches") were believed to use "mal de ojo" on their victims.
 - Brujeria/hechicería : belief that maladies are the result of witchcraft or spells

Trauma **Effect** in Latinos

Effect on **Caregivers**

- **Emotional Availability** : parent's unresolved grief, depression, anxiety, & hypervigilance hinders their availability for bonding & attainment of healthy attachment (Phipps & Degges-White, 2013).
- **Impaired Parenting Effectiveness**: Caregivers with their own psychological distress due to resettlement trauma may have significantly impaired parenting effectiveness (Phipps & Degges-White, 2013).

Trauma **Effect** in Latinos

Effect on **Children**

- **Transgenerational or Intergenerational Trauma:** Effects of resettlement trauma on later generations (e.g. children, grandchildren) including anxiety/hypervigilance & increased physical & psychological arousal in response to trauma reminders (Phipps & Degges-White, 2013).
- **Attachment:** Parenting inconsistency makes it difficult for children to feel sure of their parent's ability to meet their needs (Phipps & Degges-White, 2013).

Trauma **Effect** in Latinos

Effect on **PCIT Assessment** (Scores & Responses)

- **PSI-SF 4** (parenting stress index – short form, 4th ed.)
 - Parental Distress (PD), Parent-Child Dysfunctional Interaction (P-CDI)
- **TSCYC** (trauma symptom checklist young children)
 - Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) intrusion, avoidance, arousal, total
- **Achenbach** (e.g. CBCL 1.5/6-18, TRF)
 - emotional reactivity, anxious/depressed, somatic complaints withdrawn
- **DSM-5 Cultural Formulation Interview** (CFI & CFI Informant, 4 domains)
 - Cultural definition of the problem
 - Cultural perceptions of cause, context, & support
 - Cultural factors affecting self-coping & past help seeking
 - Cultural factors affecting current help seeking

Trauma **Effect** in Latinos

Effect on **PCIT Treatment** for Caregiver & Child

➤ **Coaching:**

- Re-experiencing, reactivity to reminders affecting ability to listen & follow directions.
- Dissociation, affect focusing on the present moment

➤ **Teaching/Learning:**

- May struggle to grasp concepts & meet mastery.
- May need extra rehearsal.

➤ **Home Practice/Daily Care (AKA: homework):**

- May struggle to complete homework/Daily Care on a regular basis.

Summary: Latinos & Trauma

1. **Trauma Experience:** trauma events common to the Latino experience
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References

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