

Conference Poster Abstract

Domestic violence intervention for Latino families: Baseline program evaluation data

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Background: In the United States, Latino families affected by domestic violence (DV) often face unique challenges influenced by changing ecologies and personal/political histories. *Caminar Latino* is Georgia's first and only comprehensive DV intervention program for Latino families. The program is geared towards helping family members begin their journey towards non-violence. The purpose of this evaluation is to better understand how *Caminar Latino* is benefiting families within the program. Baseline data of interest included perceptions of power in the relationship among family members and whether mothers and/or youth had safety plans.

Methods: A longitudinal, quasi-experimental research design was utilized to collect quantitative and qualitative data. This study was approved by Georgia State University's Institutional Review Board. Study participants (N = 82) were men, women, and youth (8 – 17 years old only) selected from families that started the program between August 2014 and August 2015. Members of the research team read the survey questions in English or Spanish to all participants. A univariate analysis was utilized to assess baseline data.

Results: There were major inconsistencies found regarding power distribution in the relationships. Half of women (50%) reported their partner having more power in the current relationship, while majority of men (77%) reported their partner and themselves sharing equal power. All men and women felt power should be equal in an ideal relationship. Only 13% of mothers and 44% of youth had a safety plan pertaining to violence.

Conclusions: By examining DV in a manner consistent with the needs and preferences of families, and offering support directly within communities, community practitioners have the opportunity to capitalize on existing strengths and abilities of Latina women and families. Findings from this program evaluation provide *Caminar Latino* with a better understanding of the ways in which they can promote wellness and non-violence in Latino communities.

doi: 10.21633/jgpha.6.015

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