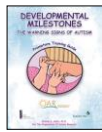


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A train-the-trainer project: Equipping *promotoras* to empower Hispanic families in South Texas to recognize developmental milestones and warning signs of autism



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Goals & Objectives

Goals

- Provide *promotoras* with **culturally sensitive** educational tools for their community outreach
- **Increase knowledge** about childhood developmental milestones
- **Decrease barriers** to autism diagnosis among Hispanic families

Objectives


- Describe the disparity in autism diagnoses among Hispanic children
- Identify the strengths of using community health workers to raise awareness about specific health issues in target populations

Numbers

- In 2010 **1 in 68** children were diagnosed with autism³
- Between 2000 to 2006 there was a **3-fold** increase in diagnoses among Hispanic children⁶
- Hispanic children are diagnosed with autism **2.5 years** later than non-Hispanic white children⁴
- There are **fewer** autism diagnoses in Hispanic children versus non-Hispanic white children in South Texas schools⁵

Community Health Workers


- There are approximately 3000 certified *promotoras* (community health workers) in Texas and over 500 certified *promotoras* in Region 11 (Rio Grande Valley)⁷
- The *promotora* model has proven to be effective in public health interventions resulting in better health outcomes among ethnic minorities^{1,2}



ORGANIZATION FOR AUTISM RESEARCH
OAR

Intervention

Learn the Signs. Act Early.



Materials

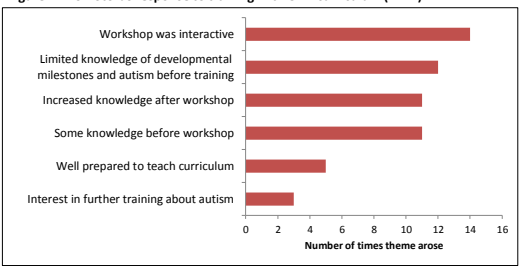
- Bilingual *promotora*-training curriculum developed by Organization of Autism Research (OAR)
- Educational materials from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) "Learn the signs. Act early." campaign

Methods

- Phase I: Training
 - 58 *promotoras* from Cameron and Hidalgo Counties trained with OAR curriculum
- Phase II: Intervention
 - 10 trained *promotoras* did home visits; distributed OAR and CDC materials
 - Follow up visits with families 2-3 months later
- Phase III: Focus Groups
 - 8 *promotoras* participated who did intervention
 - 19 *promotoras* participated who attended workshop only

Focus Group Results

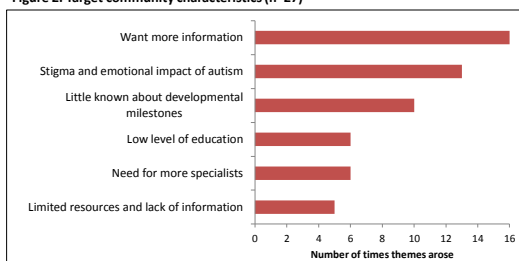
Figure 1. *Promotoras* response to training with OAR curriculum (n=27)



Response	Number of times these arose
Workshop was interactive	14
Limited knowledge of developmental milestones and autism before training	12
Increased knowledge after workshop	11
Some knowledge before workshop	11
Well prepared to teach curriculum	5
Interest in further training about autism	3

Focus Group Results

Figure 2. Target community characteristics (n=27)



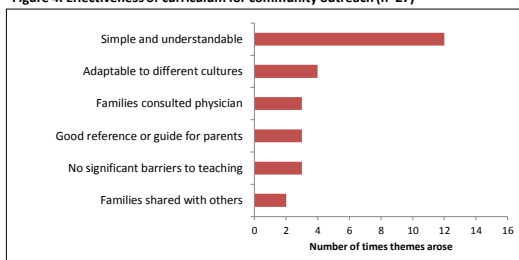
Focus Group Results

Figure 3. *Promotoras* self-perceived role in the community (n=27)



Focus Group Results

Figure 4. Effectiveness of curriculum for community outreach (n=27)



Focus Group Results

- Limitations of curriculum
 - Not enough time to master the material
 - Difficult to distinguish between similar developmental milestones
- Recommendations for curriculum modification
 - Health fair intervention
 - Cultural sensitivity – asking age of child is inappropriate
 - Adaptability – need flexibility for each individual encounter, following guidelines may not be applicable

Discussion Questions

- How can other **community partnerships** meet the needs of parents with children with developmental delays?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of using a **promotora model** to educate families about this topic?
- What methods can be used to decrease **stigmatization** of an autism diagnosis among Hispanics?

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