TO SURVIVE AN ANTI-IMMIGRANT ERA: HOW LATINX IMMIGRANT STUDENTS DO IT & AT WHAT COST

Tania Calle, Class of 2020
Separating parents and children at the border is bad for health and violates fundamental human rights, say APHA and @HealthyAmerica1 #FamiliesBelongTogether #SpeakForHealth

Contact: Megan Lowry; 202-777-3913

Separating parents and children at US border is inhumane and sets the stage for a public health crisis

Statement from the American Public Health Association and Trust for America's Health

Washington, D.C., June 15, 2018 — "The Trump administration's policy of separating parents and children at the U.S.-Mexico border will have a dire impact on their health, both now and into the future.

"As public health professionals we know that children living without their parents face immediate and long term health consequences. Risks include the acute mental trauma of separation, the loss of critical health information that only parents would know about their children's health status, and in the case of breastfeeding children, the significant loss of maternal child bonding essential for normal development. Parents' health would also be affected by this unjust separation.

"More alarming is the interruption of these children's chance at achieving a stable childhood. Decades of public health research has shown that family structure, stability and environment are key social determinants of a child's and a community's health.

"Furthermore, this practice places children at heightened risk of experiencing adverse childhood events and trauma, which research has definitively linked to poorer long-term health. Negative outcomes associated with adverse childhood events include some of society's most intractable health issues: alcoholism, substance misuse, depression, suicide, poor physical health and obesity.

As psychologists, we have documented multiple harmful effects of parent-child separation on children's emotional and psychological development and wellbeing and urge that the current policy of family separation be reversed." #FamiliesBelongTogether

Read the full letter below:
How has the mental and physical health of Latinx immigrant students been influenced by the anti-immigrant agenda of the last two years?

**Step 1: Identifying Stressors**
- Interviews (4 Interviewees)
- Focus group (4 Participants)

**Step 2: Identifying Health Outcomes**
- Survey (25 completed responses, 27 partially completed responses)
  - Physical (Medical upkeep, sexual health, substance use)
  - Mental Health (AC-OK Measurement tool)

**Step 3: Determining the relationship of these stressors to health outcomes**
- Content-analysis
- Pathway proposition
Stressor: Academic Stressor

“I want to be successful. Going back to my parents, they didn’t go to school, so this is my one chance to be successful and help them. I have to start off strong so I can get further.”

“…every time we have a carne hasada, my tios get so drunk, they’re like, we’re so proud of you mija, so proud of where you are. And that’s so cool but it also feels like an immense pressure because they’re so proud of me so I need to perform like a superstudent… I just feel like I carry that with me everywhere.”
Root Stress: Family Deprivation

“I felt like I was lucky, I always think about like damn, I could have been... if I had been born certain miles away from home or like if my parents had been born here...I always think, where would have my parents have been like... **my parents would have killed it here, they would have been amazing.**”

“I carry my family with me wherever I go… there is a lot of **guilt** I feel for my mom especially...because she always says, if I could go to school, I would totally do it right now but I can’t...”
On a scale of 1-4, please indicate to what degree you relate to the following statement: You think that your parents and larger community could have achieved higher positions in employment, education, etc. if they had been born in this country.
On a scale of 1-4, please indicate to what degree you relate to the following statement: You feel a pressure to academically succeed in order to ensure the financial stability of your family.

- 27% moderately relate (3)
- 65% completely relate (4)
“The Trump Effect”

“At the moment [when TPS was being debated], I was particularly fueled by the uncertainty of what was gonna come in the next year and a half. How am I supposed to help my family to stay where they are? How am I gonna help my mom keep her visa? I have to make quick decisions that gear me towards doing something that I love but that is also profitable, that helps them out and my community. That uncertainty fueled me to be here, take the classes I take, and reevaluate what I wanna do with my life.”
Physical Health Outcomes

Medication Upkeep
- Average 6-7 hours of sleep
- 1-3 days of physical activity
- 21/26 attended a general check-up
- 23/26 went to regular dentist visits

Sexual Health
- 0 reports of no contraceptive method
- 0 reports of withdrawal
- Prevalence of students that didn’t engage in sexual activity
- All FGIS had engage in sexual activity while inebriated

Substance Use

[Bar chart showing substance use among first-generation and second-generation Latinx students]
Mental Health Outcomes
A proposed model for the development of stressors among Latinx first and second generation immigrant students

- Recognition of family's deprivation
- Need to "make family's investment worth it"
- Pressure to academically succeed
- Mental health struggles
Conclusion

Roots of stress are *not* created by the political or education environment Latinx first/second generation immigrant students are in.

BUT, their manifestations, mental illness, ARE exacerbated by these environments, bringing to light the administration’s responsibility to better serve these students it it seeks to truly be inclusive.

**Proposed solutions:**

1. Hire a more diverse faculty & staff
2. Provide more opportunities to highlight Latinx culture (dinners, performers, speakers)
3. Offer affinity housing
4. Increase funding for MinCo Groups
5. Create more forums to discuss immigrant related issues
