

La Cultura Cura: A Process of Transformational Health and Healing

Sponsored by National Compadres Network and Reclaiming Futures



Jerry Tello and Juan Gomez
National Compadres Network &
The National Latino Fatherhood & Family Institute

National Compadres Network: History and Background

- The National Compadres Network (NCN) is a 501 c-3 nonprofit organization founded in 1988 that brings together a culturally based cadre of recognized leaders in the field of boys and men of color.
- This 20-year effort has dispelled the long held belief that Latino men cannot contribute to the health and well-being of their community.
- NCN works closely with national think tanks, systems and the social service sector to effectively respond to the underlying issues that impact marginalized communities.
- In addition, NCN partners with community leaders and decision makers locally and nationally to create sustainable systems change and a continuum of practice.



National Latino Fatherhood & Family Institute

- The NLFFI is an NCN sub division overseeing policy, advocacy, training and technical assistance.
- NCN/NLFFI assists national and community organizations in developing and implementing strategies and programs that resonate with Latino communities and are applicable across the board.
- NCN/NLFFI works with community and system leaders to assess, update, and when necessary develop policies and practices within systems of care that promote the health and well-being of Latinos and other populations of color.



National Latino Fatherhood & Family Institute

NCN/NLFFI works with organizations, staff and program leaders and offers culturally-based training and technical assistance in the following areas:

- Organizational Capacity Building and Strategic Planning Consultation.
- Community Engagement, Event Planning and Rites of Passage Retreats.
- Program Development and Inclusion of Healing and Trauma Informed Culturally-Based Practices.
- Culturally-Based Research and Evaluation Toolkits



What is La Cultura Cura?

Transformational Health and Healing

- **La Cultura Cura (LCC)** is a health framework that focuses on building up the natural opportunity factors that exist, and on what is healthy within an individual, family, community or culture.
- This indigenous based life view promotes what is right based on culturally-grounded physical, emotional, mental and spiritual principles and practices.
- The core tenet of the LCC is an acknowledgment that within individuals, families and communities exist cultural values, traditions and indigenous practices that promote natural pathways, towards healthy development, community safety and life-long well-being.
- The LCC approach shares core principles and philosophies that support multi-ethnic teachings, that are easily adaptable cross culturally as well.

“Within the collective dignity, love and respect of all people, exists the wisdom and resources for a beautiful, harmonious tomorrow.”

What is La Cultura Cura?

Transformational Health and Healing

The LCC has become a catalyst for healing and a marker for transformation using the following 5 point strategy P.R.I.D.E. as its theoretical framework:

- Purpose/Destino – Based on Individual, Family/Community Dignity (DIGNIDAD).
- Responsibility – Based on Respect (Respeto) for Family/Community Vision.
- Interdependence – Based on Individual, Family/ Community Trust (Confianza).
- Development – Circular Learning Based on Love (Carino) for life.
- Enthusiasm – Living Life with a Sense of Hope (Spirituality/Esperanza).

Why a Brown Paper?

- In response to the need for informed dialogue, NFLLI developed a brown paper, *Lifting up Latinos by Their Rootstraps* in the fall of 2012.
- Offers solutions and blue print to communities and experts across the country who indicated that something “more” is needed to better serve Latino youth, their families and communities.
- Theoretical and programmatic formulations and plans being developed without understanding, the totality of Latino experience i.e; acculturation related stress, immigration, indigenismo.
- National demographic shift is happening, compelling a serious examination of what we offer Latino youth, their families, and communities.
- The solutions are still deficit based. Most approaches don't draw on the expertise and "medicine" of Latino experts and culture.
- Responds to funders' increasing investments in “proven” or evidence-based programs by offering promising efforts that are asset-based and focused on cultural strengths.

The Browning of America: Latino Health, Educational and Socio-economic Inequities

- 50.5 million people living in the US in 2010 were Latino, up from 35.3 million in 2000 and 22.4 million in 1990.
- By 2035, one third of all American children and youth will be Latino, and it is projected that by 2050, one third of the overall population will be Latino.
- Poverty: More than one Latino child in three (35%) is poor, compared to one white child in eight.
- Educational Achievement: Latino teens are currently more than twice as likely to drop out of high school and 310,000 of 1.1 million students who did not graduate in 2012 were Latino. *
- School to “poverty” pipeline.
- Juvenile Justice System Involvement: Currently Latinos make up the majority population in juvenile detention centers and prisons.
- Access to Health Care: 46% of Latino males do not have health insurance compared to 17% of white males.

* California & Texas combine to produce half of the Latinos that “dropout”.

The Promise of Developing Healing Informed Approaches

- Move beyond trauma informed and integrate a healing informed approach in which providers, programs, services, and institutions operate from an asset orientation.
- Continue to challenge performance metrics and markers for change that are not addressing the “root cause” and overlook the pain, sadness, confusion.
- Adopting cultural humility vs. cultural competency.
- Merging the intersectionality of culture, health, and post-traumatic growth.
- Shifting the “binary”.
- Implemented in various jurisdictions and highlighted within philanthropic initiatives throughout the nation.

The National Boys and Men of Color Institute

La Cultura Cura: Healing Generations Project

With the support from The W.K. Kellogg Foundation and The California Endowment NCN will facilitate and convene an ongoing dialogue between African American, Latino, and Native elders, experts, and stakeholders vested in improving the lives of BMoC.

- The National Boys and Men of Color Institute (NBMCI) analyzes issues impacting BMoC and provides leadership, mentorship, advocacy and healing support on related issues to boys and men of color in their respective communities.
- Develop a Healing-Informed Implementation and Best Practices Brief for systems highlighting impactful BMoC promising and evidenced models.
- Develop culturally informed fatherhood and male involvement policies/programs locally and nationally that build on cultural strengths.
- Train a cadre of Maestros(as) in 5 regions nationally who will convene circulos where participants gain access to caring adults (mentorship and familismo).
- Maestros(as) will identify and engage members from public and community organizations to implement two 3-day annual regional trainings addressing community cultural asset/resource mapping, systemic implementation, and methods for culturally specific evaluation.

Elders Speak Up....

Fathers Stand Up...

Young Men Show up...

with

Honor, Respect, Trust, and Dignity

Communities Pulling Themselves Up From
Their ROOTSTRAPS

Healing Generations Project

The National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute

The National Latino Fatherhood and
Family Institute is a Division of
The National Compadres Network



"Men Taking Responsibility"

www.nlffi.org

La Cultura Cura within Systems and Place-Based Strategies

Tri County La Cultura Cura Network: Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties.

- A multi-tiered strategy informing a broader systems change agenda, with a cadre of 130 trained facilitators and advocates across disciplines and institutions.*

The Unity Council's Latino Men and Boys program (LMB) Oakland, CA

- Is a school-based, culturally competent, comprehensive educational support program for Latino male students ages 12-20 years old in the Oakland Unified School District.*

American Indians in Texas at Spanish Colonial Missions (AIT-SCM): San Antonio, TX

- Comprehensive Rites of Passage Youth Development programs.*

CeaseFire "Cure Violence" effort: Chicago, Illinois

- Technical assistance and capacity building of violence interrupter model.*

Merced County Juvenile Probation Department

- Training and culturally based leadership development of institutional staff (corrective medicine) and designing a behavioral court.*

Culturally Based Curriculum and Overviews

NCN has a strong history of successful program development and implementation, which has resulted in model programs that have received formal recognition in many communities across the nation.

- Cara y Corazón is a culturally based family strengthening/community mobilization program that assists parents and other extended family to raise and teach their children with a positive bicultural base.
- Xinachtli - Female Rites of Passage: Xinachtli is an indigenous, culturally based female rites of passage program that provides a supportive process for young girls to develop a positive identity, life skills and support system.
- Raising Children with P.R.I.D.E: Raising Children with PRIDE is a comprehensive multi-culturally based young fatherhood program that assists new or expectant fathers to be positive influences in the lives of children and family while assisting them in dealing with the multitude of challenges they face.
- Hombres Noble Buscando Balance – Nobel Men Looking for Balance: El Hombre Noble Buscando Balance is a Domestic Violence intervention process with the goal of guiding men towards Family Harmony and their Healing from Family Violence.

El Joven Noble: Evidenced Based Programming

El Joven Noble is a youth development, support, and leadership enhancement curriculum designed to strengthen protective factors among male Latino youth ages 10-24. *

- Is based on the philosophy that male youth need other men and women, their family, and community to care for, assist, heal, and guide them, and successfully prepare them for true manhood.
- The curriculum aims to promote the character development of young men and facilitate continued "rites of passage" development with the goals of reducing and preventing unwanted or unplanned pregnancies, substance abuse, community violence, and relationship violence.
- The curriculum also promotes responsible and respectful behavior in relationships with significant others.
- Delivered by facilitators in 10 weekly sessions.

*www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=272

Dando Gracias/Giving Thanks

We would like to acknowledge all of our relations:

- The generational teachings of the Elders especially for their wisdom and continued blessings.
- All the compadres and comadres doing good work and consciously practicing being honorable people.
- All the little children and youth who keep us honest and comfort our hearts.
- To all those who have lost themselves struggling to make a living and forgot to make a life. Your life is precious, and we appreciate your work.
- Special Thanks to Reclaiming Futures and staff Cora Crary and Liz Wu for their support and tenacious advocacy.

National Latino Fatherhood & Family Institute

1550 The Alameda, Suite 303
San Jose, CA 95126

Office: (408) 676-8215

www.nlffi.org

www.nationalcompadresnetwork.org

