



National Hispanic and Latino

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# Webinar: Hispanic Stress and Resilience During the Holidays

**Presented by Dr. Richard Cervantes**

This event is supported by Cooperative Agreement 1U79SP023012 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, National Hispanic and Latino Prevention Technology Transfer Center or NLBHA; nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government, NHL PTTC or NLBHA.

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## NLBHA' Mission

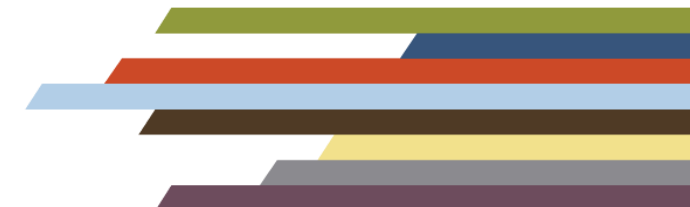
The Mission and Goal of The National Latino Behavioral Health Association is to influence national behavioral health policy, eliminate disparities in funding and access to services, and improve the quality of services and treatment outcomes for Latino populations.



Fredrick Sandoval, MPA  
NLBHA Executive Director

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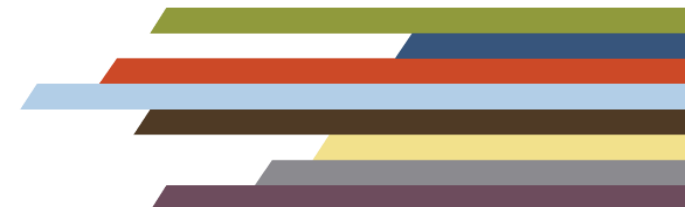
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## NLBHA's Priorities

1. Targeted Capacity Expansion of Mental Health Services for Latinos
2. Latino Behavioral Health Evidenced Based Practices
3. Legislation to increase the number of Counselors/Therapists/Other Behavioral Health Practitioners
4. Funding for Co-Occurring Disorders of Alcohol and Substance Abuse
5. Opioid Crisis in the Latino Community
6. Suicide Prevention

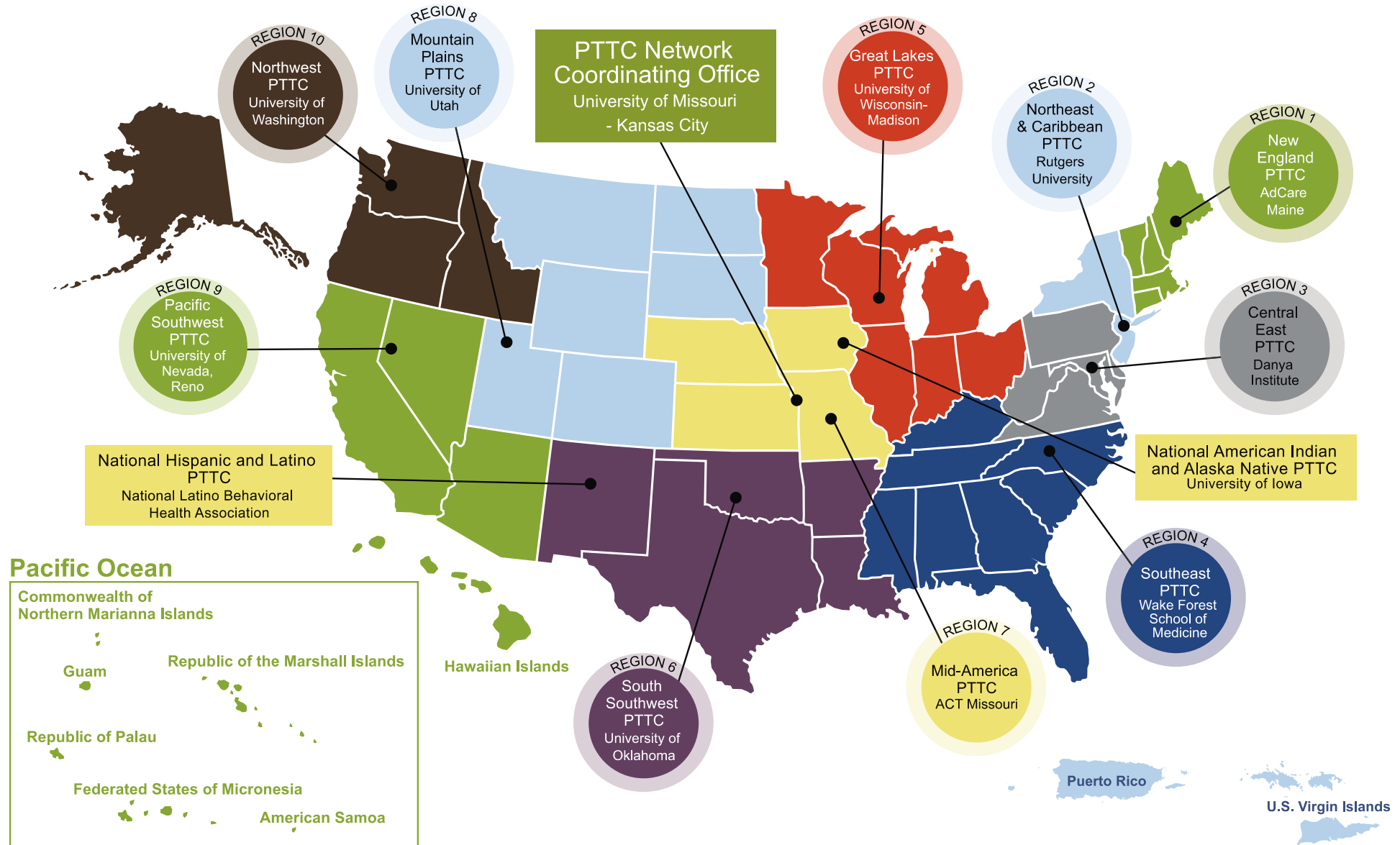




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# National Hispanic and Latino Prevention Technology Transfer Center



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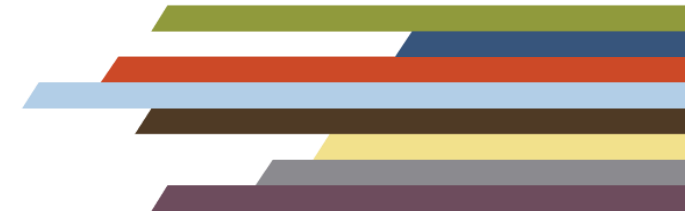


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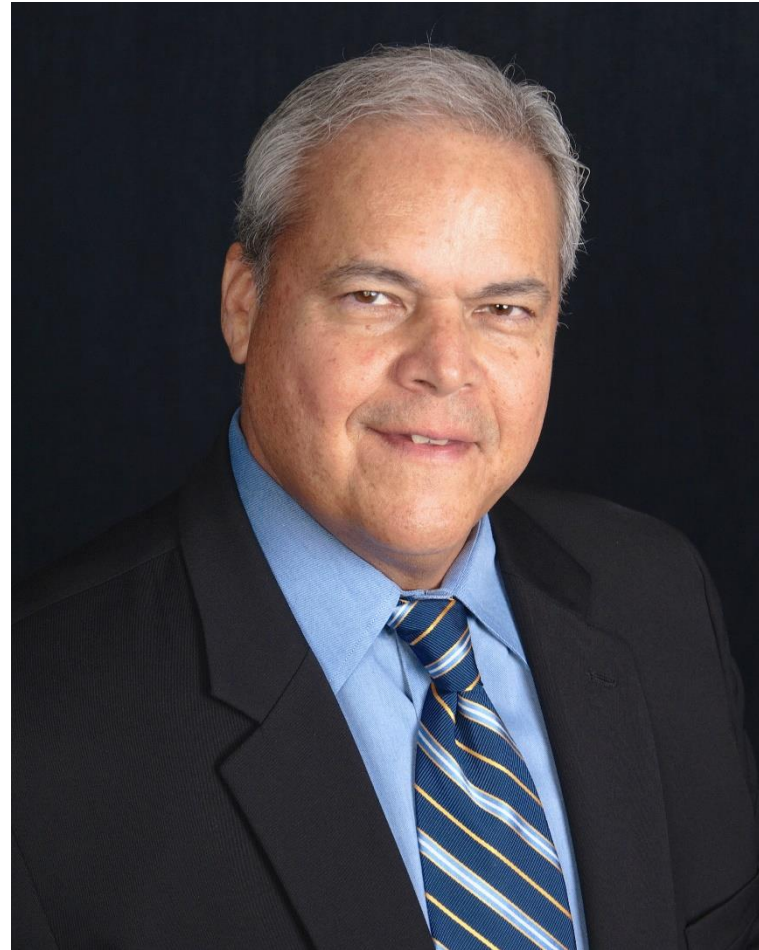
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# Today's presenter



**Dr. Richard Cervantes**

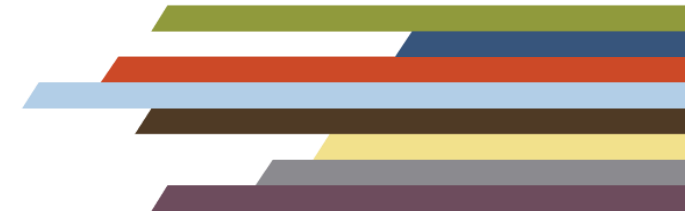


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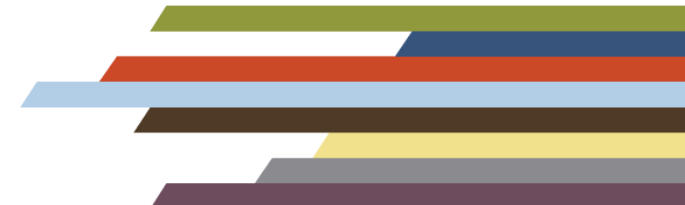
# Hispanic Stress and Resilience During the Holidays

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# What is Stress?



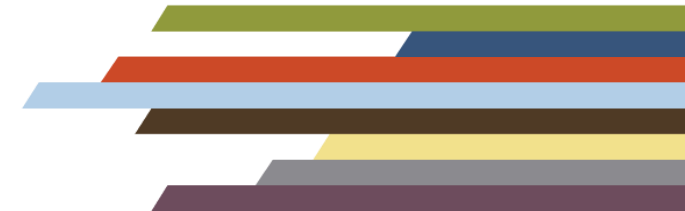
- *Stressors are demands made by the environment that upset balance or homeostasis, affecting physical and psychological well-being and requiring action to restore equilibrium.*
- *Stress is the perception that a situation exceeds the psychological, social, or material resources for coping (Cohen, Kessler, & Gordon, 1995).*
- Stress contributes to illness through its direct physiological effects or through indirect effects via maladaptive health behaviors (e.g., smoking or poor eating habits).
- Stress does not affect all people equally. See Pine, Padilla & Maldonado, 1981).



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# Early Conceptualizations of Stress

Walter B. Cannon (1932) first described the fight-or-flight reaction to stress.

- Conceptualizations of health, stress, coping, and resilience are derived from many disciplines, with the earliest work having been conducted by scientists in the fields of biology and psychophysiology (e.g., Cannon, 1932).
- Diverse health and behavioral science disciplines, including epidemiology; personality psychology; cognitive, clinical, and social psychology; sociology; and medicine have contributed to our understanding of stress and coping.



Physiologist, Walter Bradford Cannon (1871-1945)

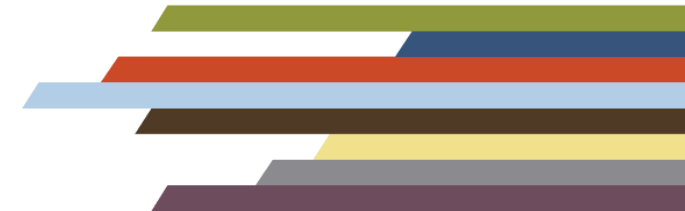


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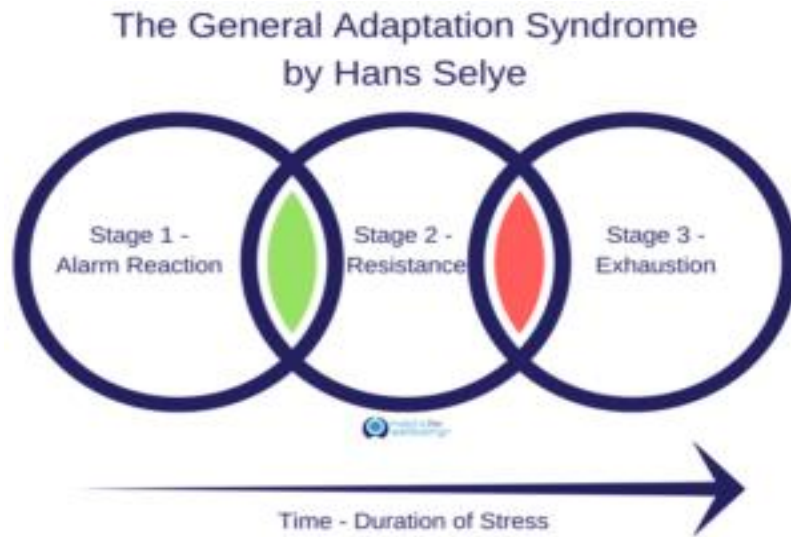
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# Physiological Reactions to Stress

Early work on stress focused on physiological reactions to stressors.



- Hans Selye (1956), the father of modern stress research, extended Cannon's studies with clinical observations and laboratory research.
- He hypothesized that all living organisms exhibited nonspecific changes in response to stressor, labeling these changes the three-stage general adaptation syndrome (GAS).
- This syndrome consists of an alarm reaction, resistance, and exhaustion (Selye, 1956). Each stage evokes both physiological and behavioral responses.
- Without curative measures, physical and/or psychological deterioration occurs.

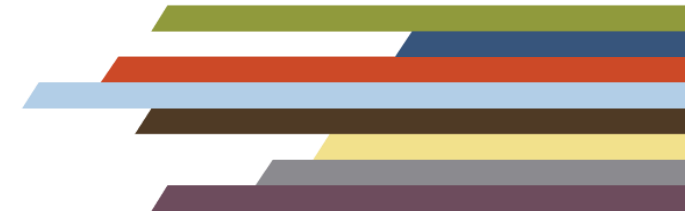


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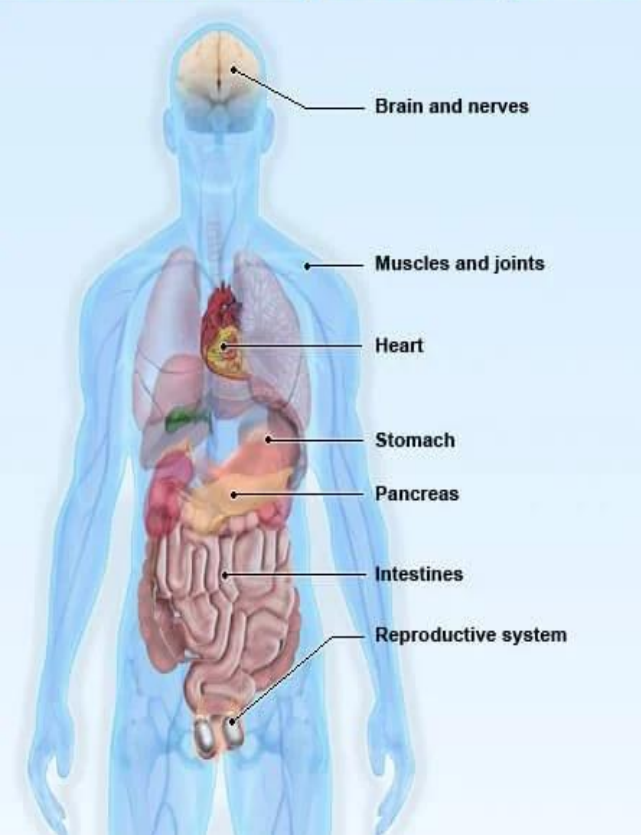
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# Current Conceptualization of Stress and Biological Factors

## Areas of the body affected by stress



- The body constantly reproduces healthy cells, and that process is directed by our DNA – our genetic code found in our 23 pairs of chromosomes.
- Allostatic load is the wear and tear of the body at the cellular level, in response to chronic stress over time (McEwen & Steller, 1993) and is a predictor of poor health outcomes, including all-causes of mortality (Borrell, Dallo & Nquyen, 2010).
- The body's **physiological response to stress** follows three stages of mediation:
  - 1) **Acute stress**- the activation of stress hormones and anti-inflammatory cytokines;
  - 2) **Secondary outcomes**- effects on metabolic, cardiovascular, and immune systems;
  - 3) **Tertiary outcomes**- cognitive decline, cellular aging and telomere atrophy, and diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

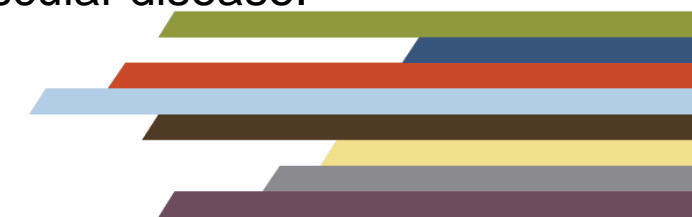


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# Acculturation and Stress



- Acculturation = Fitting into mainstream, American Culture can produce stressful life events associated with poor mental health, substance and alcohol use (Unger, et al 2010).
- Among Hispanic youth, acculturation gaps within the family have been thought to be a key in understanding mental health, behavioral problems and suicidality.
- Much of our previous NIH supported research (Cervantes, Fisher, Padilla & Napper, 2016) indicates that acculturative stressors are related to poor mental health.
- Acculturation stress can reflect cultural, familial and community level conflict following immigration and can continue into later generations.
- Acculturation gaps within the family have been implicated in increased depressive symptomology among youth, increased drug use and binge alcohol use (Cardoso, Goldbach, Cervantes, Swank, 2015).
- In the face of acculturation stressors, Hispanic families show a number of **resiliency** factors that moderates the effects of stress.

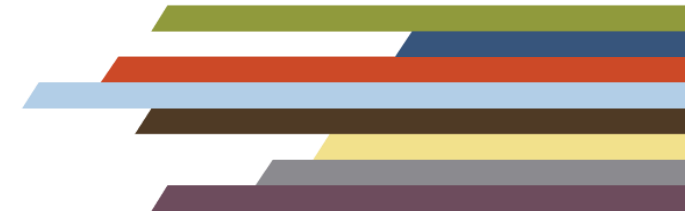


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# Cultural Stress and Risk Factors for Hispanic Adults

Through our research using the Hispanic Stress Inventory 2 for Adults (HSI2; NIMHD) we identified eight key domains of stress (Cervantes, et al., 2016)

- Family and Cultural Conflict
- Discrimination
- Health Related Stress
- Economic Stress
- Immigration Stress
- Pre-Migration Stress
- Parental Stress
- Marital Stress/Cultural Differences

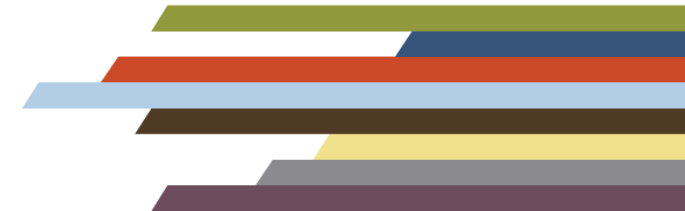


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# Cultural Stress and Risk Factors for Hispanic Adolescents

Through our research using the Hispanic Stress Inventory for Adolescents (HSI-A; NIMH) we identified eight key domains of stress (Cervantes, et al., 2011)

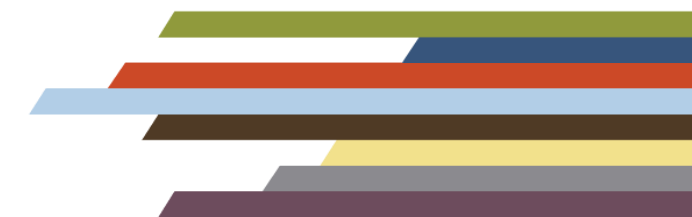
- Family Economic Stress
- Acculturation Gap Stress
- Cultural Conflict (Schools)
- Immigration Stress
- Discrimination Stress
- Family Immigration Stress
- Community/Gang Violence Stress
- Family Drug related stress



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# COVID-19 and Hispanics

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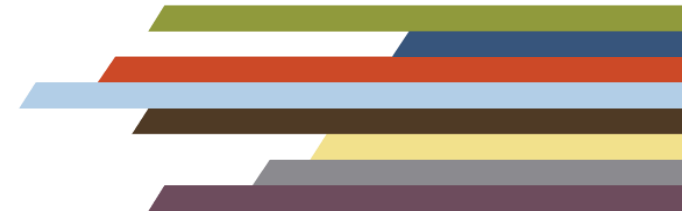
- The CDC reports that, as of November 2020—the most recent dataset—when compared to their white peers, Latinos are:
  - 8 times more likely to test positive for COVID-19
  - 6 times more likely to become hospitalized
  - 1 times more likely to die from COVID-19



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# COVID-19 Stress and Hispanics

Hispanics are [three times more](#) likely to become infected with the virus and nearly five times [more likely to be hospitalized](#) than non-Hispanic whites according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

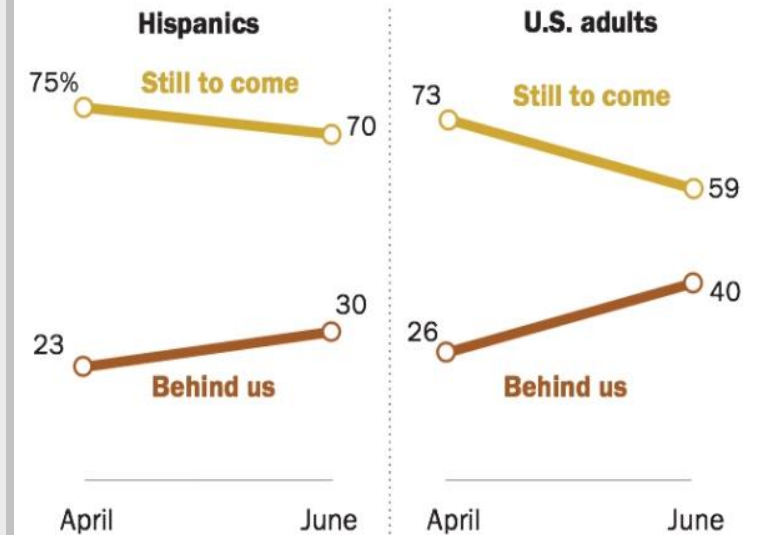
- **Higher rates** of COVID-19 incidence and death rates exist among Hispanics.
- **Testing & Healthcare:** 19% of Hispanics are uninsured.
- **Jobs on the Frontlines:** Majority of Hispanics have high contact jobs.
- **Poverty:** Hispanics represent 17% of the U.S. population that are in poverty (2019).
- **Housing & Rent:** Coronavirus is exacerbating housing instability. (57%) of Hispanics spend a third of income on housing.

- **Food Insecurity:** Sixteen percent of Hispanics suffer food insecurity and cannot stock up on food.
- **Unemployment:** Hispanic unemployment rate has spiked during COVID-19, with women seeing a bigger increase than men.
- **Mental Health:** Grief, depression, insomnia, loss of normalcy
- **Uncertainty** of the future –excessive worry when pandemic will end.

Sources: SaludAmerica, UT Health/San Antonio (Oct 2020), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Strong majority of Latinos say 'the worst is yet to come' in coronavirus outbreak

*% who say, in thinking about the problems the country is facing from the coronavirus outbreak, the worst is ...*



Note: Hispanics are of any race. No answer responses not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 16-22, 2020.  
"Coronavirus Economic Downturn Has Hit Latinos Especially Hard"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



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# COVID-19 Affects Hispanic Children

Currently, almost 19 million Hispanic or Latino children live in the United States, and as of 2018, accounted for approximately one-quarter of all U.S. children under age 18.

1 in 4 of all U.S. children are Hispanic



Source: 2018 American Community Survey One-Year Data

Vast majority of Hispanic children are U.S.-born



Source: 2018 American Community Survey One-Year Data

1 in 4 Hispanic children live in poverty



Source: 2018 American Community Survey One-Year Data

1 in 4 Hispanic children has a parent who is an unauthorized immigrant



Source: Analysis by researchers at the National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families



Hispanic families have been especially hard hit by COVID-19. However, economic hardship has been a reality for many Latino children since before COVID-19; in 2018, approximately one-quarter of Latino children (25.9%) lived below poverty level.

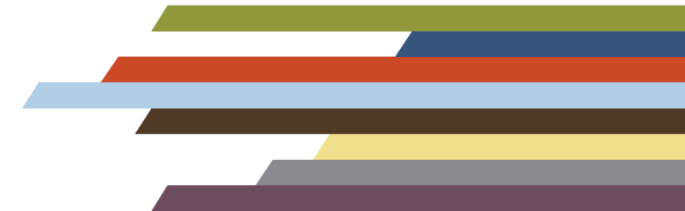


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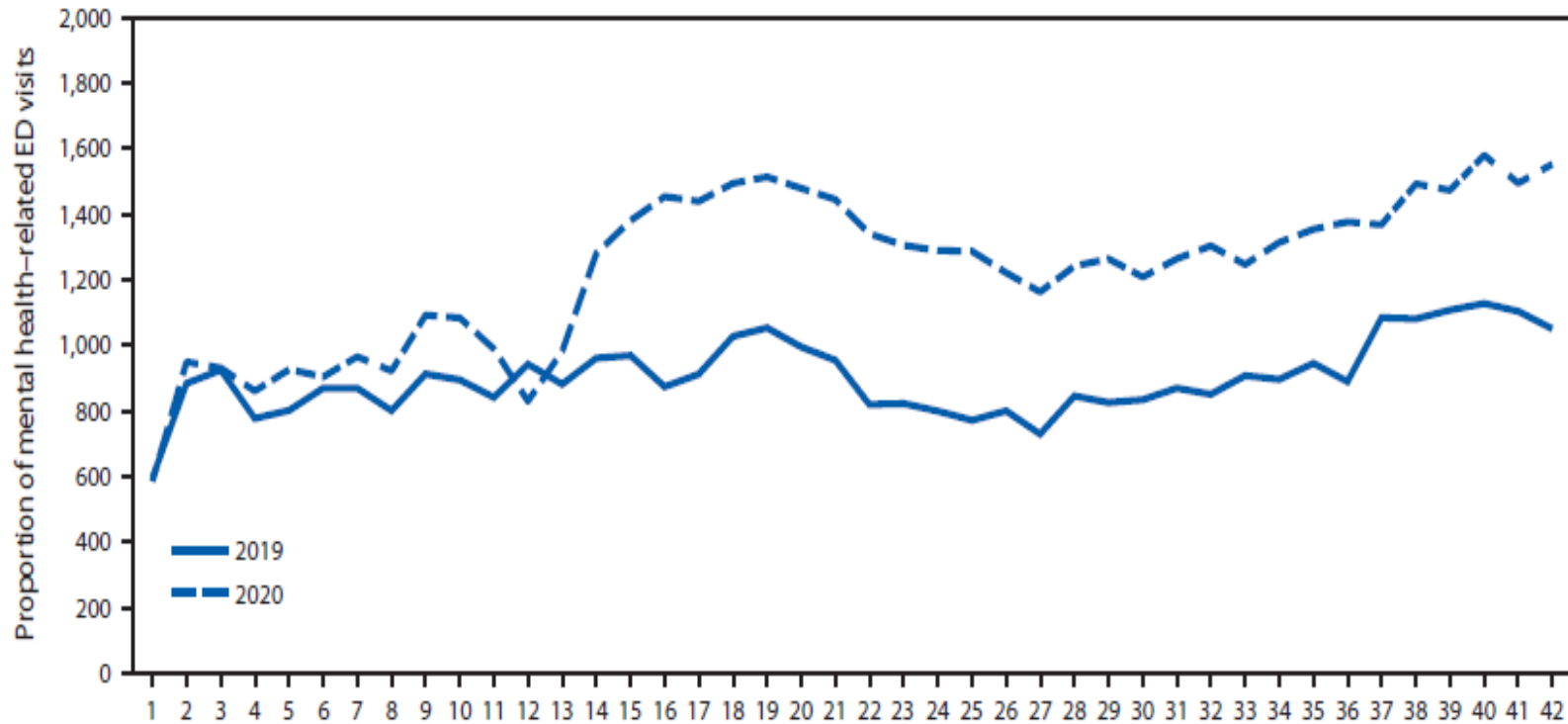
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# Children's Mental Health-related ER Visits per Week

B. Proportion of mental health-related ED visits per 100,000 pediatric ED visits per week



## What is added by this report?

Beginning in April 2020, the proportion of children's mental health-related ED visits among all pediatric ED visits increased and remained elevated through October. Compared with 2019, the proportion of mental health-related visits for children aged 5-11 and 12-17 years increased approximately 24% and 31%, respectively.

## What are the implications for public health practice?

Monitoring indicators of children's mental health, promoting coping and resilience, and expanding access to services to support children's mental health are critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services /Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2020

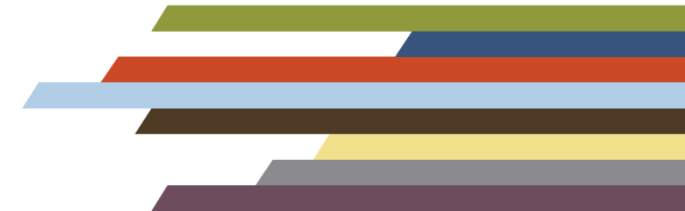


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# What is Resilience?

Psychologists define resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. As much as resilience involves “bouncing back” from these difficult experiences, it can also involve profound personal growth.

Source: American Psychological Association

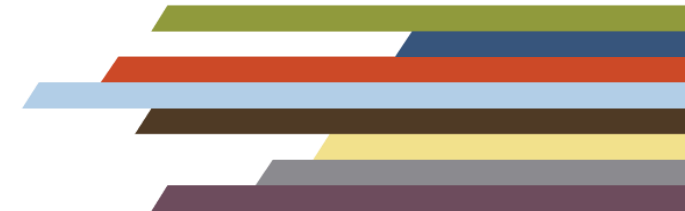


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# Resilient Families

**Walsh (2016) identified nine key processes of family functioning that promote family resilience:**



- Family Belief Systems including Meaning Making;
- Positive Outlook-Hope;
- Transcendence-Spirituality,
- Organizational Processes including Flexibility to Adapt;
- Connectedness and Mutual Support; Kin,
- Access Social, Economic Resources,
- Communication Processes including Clear Information;
- Emotional Sharing;
- Collaborative Problem Solving/Proaction.

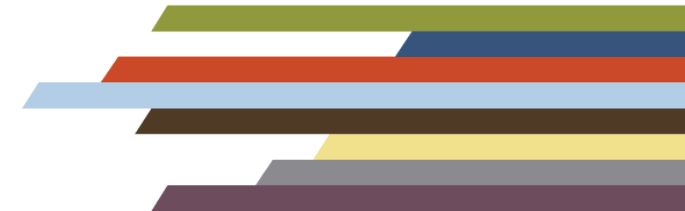


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# Familismo as a Protective Factor

- The concept of *familismo*/familism is a core value in the life of many Hispanics. It highlights family loyalty, interdependence over independence, and cooperation over competition.
- These values may impact health outcomes.
- Familismo as a value contributes to a familial stability, and is linked to better physical health behaviors, higher likelihood of seeking medical help, better psychological health, and lower perceived burden of stress.
- Familismo associated with highly involved parenting practices have been found to be related to fewer behavior problems in the children.

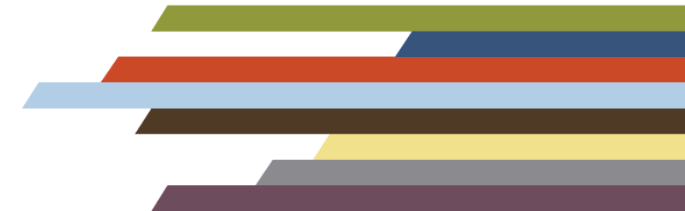


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# Mobilize Latino Family Resilience and Coping Strategies

In one study of family resilience, Cervantes & Santisteban (2016) reported specific, contextual resilience strategies mentioned by Hispanic/Latino families in confronting acculturation stressors. These are strategies that can be incorporated into culturally appropriate prevention services.

## For Discrimination Stress

- Maintaining a strong sense of identity and self confidence.
- Have a strong sense of cultural identity through culture bonds and unification.
- Religion and spirituality- looking towards God and religious texts to assist in emotions that arise from dealing with discrimination -the bible teaches equality.
- Finding resources and getting (legal) help; voting for measures and laws that benefit.

## For Marital Problems and Stress

- Learn from others; ask advice; Seeking assistance from other family members or clergy.

## For Parenting Stress

- Communicating with children; having good communication skills.
- Seeking help from extended family i.e. aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins;
- Seek professional assistance;
- Find consensus between both parents about childrearing

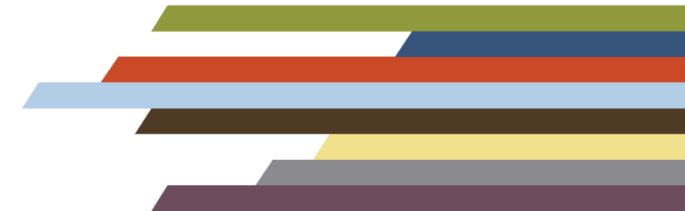


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# Latino Family Resilience and Coping Strategies - Continued...

## For Immigration Stress

- Becoming educated on the topic of immigration; ESL and gathering information and resources on American culture
- Maintaining hope towards the future and focusing on the positive aspects of immigration; keep internal motivation to have a better life; remember that bad things will pass; maintain spirituality and hope through bible study.
- Finding assistance through ESL and studying; easier to find jobs – English will make life easier.
- Rely on the bible to maintain hope.

## For Family Conflicts

- Seeking support from other family members who are not directly involved in conflict.
- Spirituality and seeking help from God and clergy.
- Increasing communication skills with family.

## For Health-Related Stress

- Seeking traditional remedies; treating yourself; getting advice from the pharmacist. Getting help from pharmacies that have meds from other countries (e.g. going to Mexico).
- Finding local clinics and low-income assistance clinics.
- Relying on family for emotional and monetary support.
- Develop healthier habits to prevent health problems.

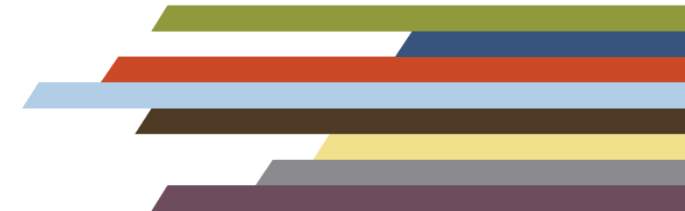


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# Holiday Stress



Holiday stress can affect anyone. There are a lot of expectations around the holidays. Many people associate the holidays with social gatherings, rituals, and happy memories. These expectations can lead to stress.

COVID19 related stress will likely add to individual and family stress

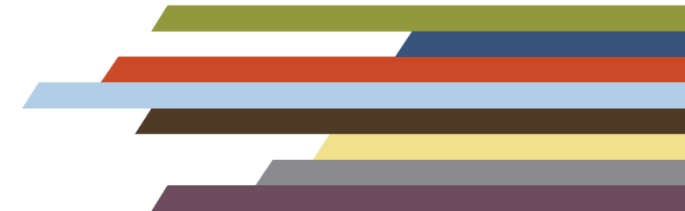


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# Factors that can Bring Holiday Stress to Hispanics

- Financial stress
- Limited domestic or international travel
- Loneliness and isolation – no contact with extended family
- Cancelled Las Posadas and other events
- No worship or faith-based holiday events
- Limited gatherings with families and friends
- High expectations to give gifts or host meals



*Holiday Stress overlapped with COVID creates extra panic among Hispanic elderly females or mothers who try to be superwomen and help everyone all the time. "Everyone's problem is their problem."*

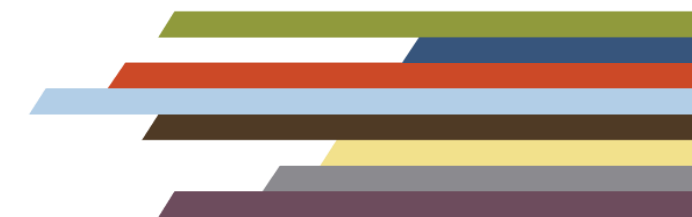


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# Consequence of Holiday Stress Due to COVID-19



- Anxiety / Depression
- Social Isolation
- Substance Use
- Physical symptoms of stress (headaches, shortness of breath, etc.)
- Increased ER visits
- Domestic violence
- Relapse
- Fear of acquiring the virus
- Guilt / no presents

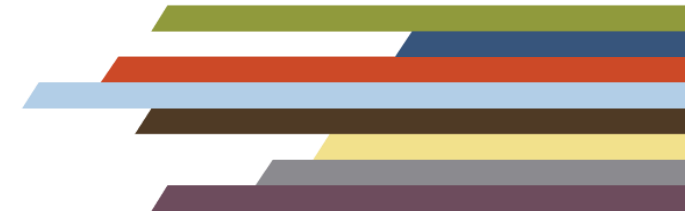


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# Tips for Providers to Prevent Holiday Stress



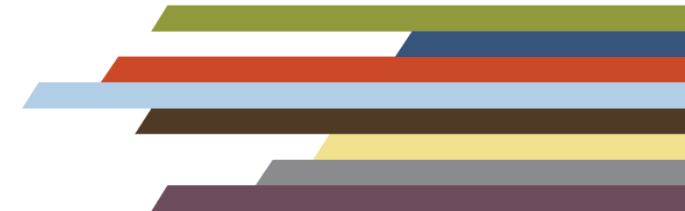
- **Acknowledge your feelings:** If grieving or lonely, it's okay to express your feelings.
- **Reach out:** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events.
- **Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect
- **Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, and other activities.
- **Attend virtual church services and holiday events**
- **Practice self care:** Get enough sleep, exercise, eat well, set aside time for yourself.
- **Practice mindfulness:** keep attention on the present, not past or future
- **Learn to say No:** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling overwhelmed.



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# Tips for Providers to Get Clients Through the Holidays



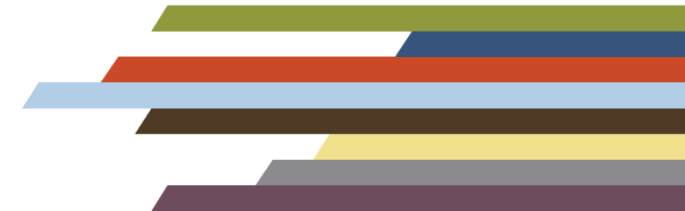
- Reaffirm client's cultural identities
- Encourage virtual Cultural celebrations
- Direct Contact with Clients (past and present) to Identify Needs
- Identify and provide information for community food pantries
- Offer virtual stress related exercises
- Encourage virtual church services
- Increase client appointments
- Explore low-risk holiday themed events



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# Tips for Providers to Get Clients Through the Holidays (Cont'd)



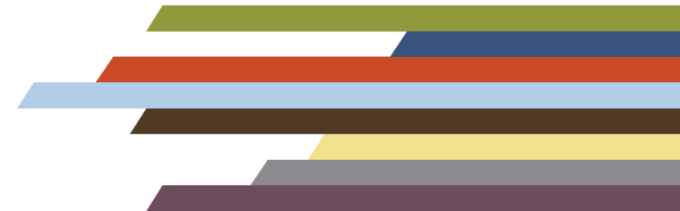
- Partner with local grocers to help with food giveaways
- Food Drive for especially needy families
- Have a COVID fact sheet available in Spanish
- For youth who are out of school, find ways to provide student lunches
- Toy Drive with partner agencies (Toys for Tots, Festival for Children)



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# Tips for Hispanic Stress Management



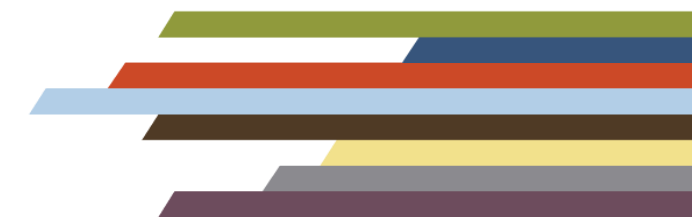
- **Be aware of Cultural Stressors, both Chronic and Recent** – Chronic stressors can be coped with through the **use of reframing**: This is a mental activity that involves looking at a stressor or negative situation and explaining it (realistically and honestly) in a positive or neutral way. Many times, when something bad happens to us, we get emotionally wrapped up in the negative. But this is a bit dishonest as it's usually not the whole picture. There's usually another vantage point.
- **Improve your planning**: Stress [management](#) research by Robert Epstein has made it clear that stress can be managed through planning. Start making your daily checklists, dust off your planners, and take action by organizing your weekly activities.  
**Learn relaxation**: Scores of studies have showed an important link to relaxation tools such as progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing, guided imagery, clinical [hypnosis](#), and [biofeedback](#) are all useful for managing stress.
- **Affirm your values**: Research studies have shown that those who think about their highest values before a [stressful](#) event actually experience less stress and show a substantial decrease in the stress [hormone](#), cortisol, compared to control groups.  
*Strength tip*: Prior to an upcoming stressor, reflect on how much you value one of your character strengths. (I value my strong sense of 'cultura' or I know I can always count on 'Familia' to get me through this stress.



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# Tips for Hispanic Stress Management Continued...



- **Use one of your signature strengths:** Many studies, across cultures, now show that using one top strength in a new way leads to greater [happiness](#) and less distress. The challenge is to consider how you will use your best quality in a *new* way. For a list of ideas, see [this post](#). This strategy helps you widen how you think about and how you act from your strengths.
- **Develop a forgiving style:** The strength of [forgiveness](#) has been shown to have a powerful buffering effect on stress. Those who are highly forgiving of themselves and others have a far less chance of having a mental illness.
- **Practice [mindfulness](#):** Thanks to the last two decades of research on mindfulness, there is now an impressive amount of research showing mindfulness approaches help with stress management, in many ways.
- **Unleash your [gratitude](#):** The practice of gratitude — both “[spiritual](#) gratitude” as well as counting daily blessings — has a big impact on stress. Studies have also shown that it’s helpful to keep up with gratitude when facing troubling emotions.
- **Use positive self-or Family affirmations :** Individuals felt better when they say or write positive self-affirmations.

*Strength tip:* For whichever group you fall into, use character strengths as your topic — write about how you used a character strength in doing an enjoyable activity or write positive affirmations using your strengths (e.g., I am a kind and fair-minded person when I go out of my way to help my work colleagues when they are struggling).

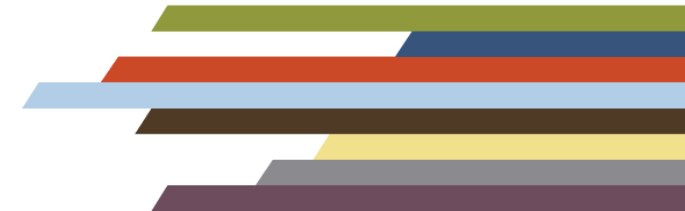


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# Additional Resources for Providers

## Resources for Health Care Providers (General)

- [Responding to COVID-19](#)  
Resources from within and beyond the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) Network. Updated regularly.
- [Resources for Providers: COVID-19 Pandemic Response Resources](#)  
Variety of fact sheets from the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress.
- [Self-care advice for health-care providers during COVID-19](#)  
Concrete strategies to help manage stress (American Psychological Association).
- [Communities Respond to COVID-19 with Innovative High-Impact Strategies](#)  
Roundtable discussion facilitated by the National Network to Eliminate Disparities in Behavioral Health (NNED) on serving diverse communities.
- [Addressing Abuse and Neglect During COVID-19: The Role of Clinicians](#)  
Webinar from Zero to Three for pediatricians, mental health providers or directors, and others who work with families.

## Resources for Psychologists, Psychiatrists, and Counselors

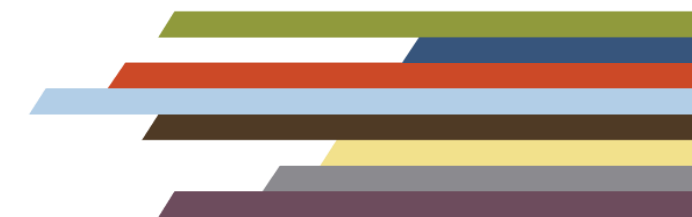
- [American Psychological Association \(APA\) Resources on COVID-19](#)  
Continually updated list of articles, webinars, and podcasts from the APA.
- [FAQs practicing psychologists have about COVID-19](#)  
Answers to recent COVID-19-inspired questions (APA).
- [For psychological scientists: COVID-19 FAQ](#)  
Guidance for researchers, faculty, and students (APA).



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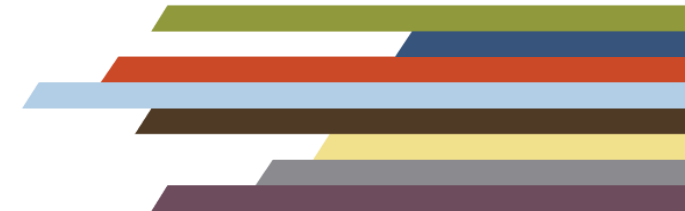


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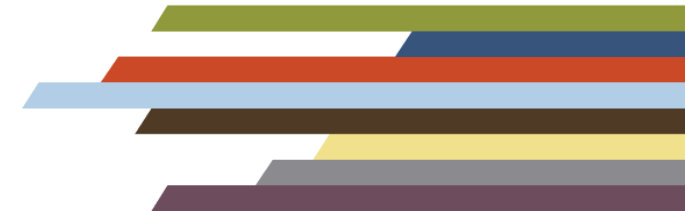


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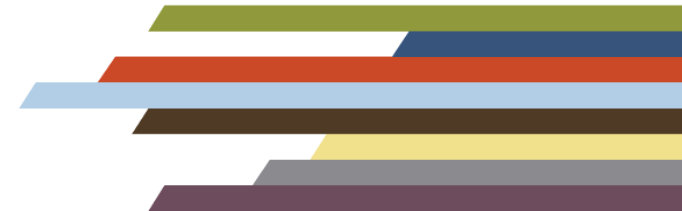
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**Thank you!**  
**¡Gracias!**  
**Obrigado!**

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Behavioral Health Association **NLBHA**

**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

