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AHRQ's Videonovela "Aprende a Vivir" Helps Train Teen Community Health Workers in Texas

Comparative Effectiveness

2013

AHRQ's three-episode Spanish-language videonovela on diabetes management, "Aprende a Vivir (Learn to Live)," was incorporated in a 6-week training course, "Living la Vida Healthier," for the Texas Teen Promotores Program.

While most promotores, or community health workers, are adults, the concept of teen promotores was launched in 2011 with a focus on diabetes and obesity prevention. Health advocates and promotores receive training with culturally proficient resources on chronic diseases, infectious diseases, social diseases, and disaster preparedness—all health issues affecting the Latino/Hispanic community. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data show that from 2007 to 2009, after adjusting for population and age differences, nearly 12 percent of Latino/Hispanics age 20 years or older were diagnosed with diabetes.

Venus Ginés, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Día de la Mujer Latina and Chair of the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Minority Health National Promotores Steering Committee, created this opportunity for teens in Fort Worth, Houston, and McAllen with support from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas. She says, "The videonovela, 'Aprende a Vivir,' was an added incentive to this training because the focus was diabetes, centered on a family situation that resonates with our community and the struggles patients with diabetes face on a daily basis. The language used and the approach was culturally relevant. The teens not only liked it because it was entertaining but they learned important information about managing diabetes, taking medication as prescribed, and eating a special diet with the right portions."

Parents and their children worked together in promoting preventive care to their friends, neighbors, and community peers on serious health issues and conditions. This collaboration helped make the Teen Promotores Program initiative a success.

Ginés adds, "The relationships that are forged with the promotores have an incredible value because they are based on trust and combined with reliable scientific information. In the long run, we expect that this type of initiative will contribute greatly to the reduction of health disparities and improve health literacy among lower-income Hispanics. It makes so much sense to invest in our youth in addressing these health issues."

Forty-two teens completed the 6-week bilingual training program that included curriculum on diet, nutrition, and exercise, from Zumba to salsa aerobics. The students completed a pre- and post-test and an evaluation. Training on emergency preparedness was completed in 2013.

Since 1997, Día de la Mujer Latina, a nonprofit national Latino health and wellness community-based organization, has trained over 500 promotores/community health workers nationally and served nearly 85,000 clients. The organization celebrates its signature health fiestas annually in 39 States, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, with a complimentary training program for its communities at risk and health care providers.

Impact Case Study Identifier: OEREP-13-02**AHRQ Product(s):** Effective Health Care Program**Topic(s):** Chronic Care: Diabetes, Disparities, Health Literacy, Hispanic Health, Aging**Geographic Location:** Texas[Search Impact Case Studies](#)*Aprende a Vivir.* Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.<http://www.healthcare411.ahrq.gov/aprendeavivir.aspx>