

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules Facilitator Handbook



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Dear friends and colleagues,

As the National Director of the Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative (HHMI), I have the honor and privilege of working with a number of healthy marriage programs and educators throughout the country. I have witnessed the hard work and dedication to Hispanic communities from all of you, and it is both inspiring and greatly appreciated. However, while there are many efforts to strengthen Hispanic families, there is still much work to be done.



The Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative strives to assist Hispanic-serving marriage programs by developing guidance tools as well as offering opportunities to share challenges and successful strategies with the HHMI and other service providers. Through these efforts, program directors and healthy marriage educators have expressed the need for curriculum content specific to the cultural experience of Hispanics living in the United States. While many of you have adapted existing curricula or have developed your own activities addressing gaps in content, there has been an overwhelming cry for culturally specific material that can be incorporated into healthy marriage programs which serve Hispanic families.

The HHMI heard your requests and has worked diligently to develop three supplemental curriculum modules that address issues specific to the Hispanic culture. Our hope is that these modules will expand healthy marriage programs by addressing particular needs and experiences of your Hispanic community. The HHMI understands that curriculum delivery is only one part of a culturally appropriate and responsive healthy marriage education program, and we hope to continue to be a resource for you in the future.

I am pleased to offer these supplemental curriculum modules as a resource, and commend you for your commitment to providing quality healthy marriage services to Hispanic families. I am truly honored to call you colleagues and look forward to the work that lies ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Fuentes".

Frank Fuentes  
Deputy Director, Office of Head Start  
National Director, Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative  
Administration for Children and Families

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative Overview & Curriculum Module Background

The Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative (HHMI) is a targeted strategy led by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to engage the Hispanic community and deliver effective, culturally appropriate marriage and relationship education programs. It developed from the federal Healthy Marriage Initiative, but concentrates on the unique cultural, linguistic, demographic and socio-economic needs of Hispanic children and families. HHMI began in 2004 with a roundtable held in Washington, D.C.; since then, the HHMI has taken a leadership role in numerous events with community leaders and service providers across the United States. The initiative continues to grow and support marriage education efforts for Hispanic families. Some of the events hosted by the HHMI over the last five years include:

- ❖ Hispanic Roundtables
- ❖ National Conferences & Research Meetings
- ❖ Marriage Showcases
- ❖ Improving Outcomes/Technical Assistance Events
- ❖ Peer-to-Peer Forums

The various HHMI events help encourage community-based healthy marriage activities, increase awareness of the initiative, and support on-going research of this demographic.

Local and national partnerships have been formed to support the goals of the HHMI. One such partnership is with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, an organization committed to building a better future for at-risk children and families. This handbook, and the related healthy marriage curriculum modules, grew out of a shared commitment with the Foundation to improve services provided to Hispanic communities throughout the country.

These modules are based on research conducted with Hispanic populations in Mexico and the United States, and includes insight and guidance from Hispanic healthy marriage educators. The goal of these modules is twofold:

1. Respond to the needs of service providers adapting “mainstream” marriage education curricula for Hispanic couples living in the United States.
2. Provide resources addressing the unique needs of Hispanic couples facing shifting cultural norms and expectations, including the positive and negative influences of both the U.S. and Hispanic cultures.

The three modules address various issues relevant to Hispanics living in the United States:

**Module One: Hispanic Culture and Relationships.** This module is designed to help couples understand what culture is, and how the process of blending Hispanic and American cultures can place pressure on a family.

**Module Two: Gender: What Makes Us Different?** This module looks at the influences culture has on who we are as men and women, and how these attitudes and stereotypes affect couples’ expectations about marriage.

**Module Three: Talking Together.** Unlike most marriage education curricula, the third module teaches couples how culture and gender roles influence the way we communicate. This is a great addition to “mainstream” curricula and emphasizes verbal communication between spouses.

The supplemental curriculum modules are a part of the many resource and guidance tools developed by the HHMI to enhance healthy marriage services delivered to Hispanic families. Additional tools and resources can be found on the HHMI website at: [www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/Hispanic\\_hm\\_initiative.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/about/Hispanic_hm_initiative.html).

# Special Thanks

The Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative would like to extend special thanks to the **Annie E. Casey Foundation** for its continued support of healthy marriage education and specifically for its commitment to building better futures for children and families from ethnically diverse backgrounds. The Foundation's confidence in HHMI to produce such an important product is an honor, and HHMI looks forward to a continued partnership on future endeavors.

A special thank you also goes to the **Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance (OFA)** for its ongoing support of the HHMI, and its efforts to develop resources and learning opportunities for healthy marriage programs serving Hispanic couples and families. The HHMI is grateful for OFA's support and looks forward to future collaborations.

Additionally, the HHMI would like to thank **Rolando Diaz-Loving, PhD**, for his contribution to the development of the curriculum modules. Dr. Diaz-Loving is a Professor of Psychology and Head of the Psychosocial Research Unit at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. As one of the most eminent social psychologists in Mexico and Latin America, Dr. Diaz-Loving served as the Senior Research Advisor to the Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative. Dr. Diaz-Loving's research has been focused in the areas of couple and family relations, psychosocial factors related to HIV-AIDS, and culture and personality.

HHMI would also like to recognize Public Strategies, Inc., staff members Leah Rubio, Scott Roby and Ervin Lucero, for their contributions to these modules.

Additionally, a number of healthy marriage practitioners and researchers provided guidance and insight during the development of the curriculum modules. The following individuals have extensive experience relating to healthy marriage work with Hispanics, and their participation in the process was invaluable.

Since 2006, **Nestor Delgado and his wife Consuelo Rozo**, have been working together as healthy marriage educators with various programs in the Latino community, including *Family Expectations* in Oklahoma. Originally from Columbia, Delgado is an experienced Social Psychologist, and he and Rozo have used their knowledge as educators to establish *Aligning Our Dreams (AOD)*, a company that promotes the importance of healthy relationships within the workplace. Both Delgado and Rozo have guest lectured for a number of organizations throughout the U.S.

**Mirta Flores-Galaz, PhD**, is a professor at the Autonomous University of Yucatan and holds a PhD in Social Psychology from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. She has published multiple research articles, chapters and books related to assertiveness, and has developed a multi-factorial assertiveness inventory for adults (and children) that is widely used in the area of coping styles. Dr. Flores-Galaz has been an officer and past president of the Mexican Association of Social Psychology.

**Lorena Gonzalez, PhD**, is the Associate Director of AVANCE, a nonprofit organization that supports Latino families with programs focusing on parent education and early childhood development. Dr. Gonzalez holds a master's degree in Bicultural Bilingual Studies from the University of Texas at San Antonio, and a PhD in Leadership Studies from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio. She is a national speaker and consultant.

**Alicia La Hoz, PhD**, is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and the Director of the Family Bridges Chicagoland Healthy Marriage Initiative. Dr. La Hoz collaborates with the Latino community in the Chicago area on a number of community efforts, including the development and coordination of the Chicago Alliance for Latino Marriages (CALMA), which offers multiple preventative marriage and relationship programs.

**Roque Mendez, PhD**, is an associate professor of Psychology at Texas State University. He received a master's degree in Public Health from Harvard University, and a PhD in Social Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Mendez is nationally recognized for his research on social psychology and health in the Latino community.

**Sofia Rivera-Aragon, PhD**, is a professor in the Social Psychology Graduate Program at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where she also earned her master's degree and PhD. She received the Award for Teaching Excellence in the Social Sciences, and is past president of the Mexican Association of Social Psychology. Dr. Rivera-Aragon has been published extensively on couple relationships specifically relating to issues of conflict and power.

**Tania Rocha-Sanchez, PhD**, is an associate professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where she also received her bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees with honors. She has published two books and several articles regarding gender, health and gender identity. Dr. Rocha-Sanchez is currently the Latin American representative for the International Association of Cross Cultural Psychology.

**Carlos Salgado and his wife, Rocio Tarfur-Salgado**, are the founders of EnFamilia, a nonprofit organization that provides marriage education and parenting services to Latino immigrants in the Miami area. Mr. Salgado is an educator and facilitator for fatherhood, couples and parenting workshops. Mrs. Tarfur-Salgado is a mental health therapist and a prevention programs trainer with experience in domestic violence, sexual assault, as well as couples and parenting workshops.

**Rozzana Sanchez-Aragon, PhD**, is a professor in the undergraduate Social Psychology program at the National Autonomous University in Mexico. She has written several books on the role of 'passion' in relationships, as well as multiple articles and chapters on self-regulation. Dr. Sanchez-Aragon co-authored the bio-psycho-socio-cultural theory of couple relationships with Dr. Diaz-Loving. She received the Distinguished Young Social Science Researcher Award from her university and is a past president of the Mexican Association of Social Psychology.

**Guille Sastre** is the Executive Director of Creciendos Unidos/Growing Together, a non-profit organization providing culturally competent services to the Hispanic community of Phoenix. Ms. Sastre directs the agency's healthy marriage program for couples, which developed a Hispanic-specific curriculum based on the strong family concept. Ms. Sastre has been an active supporter of the Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative and has presented at HHMI conferences on various topics related to implementing healthy marriage programs and enhancing Hispanic services.

**Luis Zayas, PhD**, is the Shanti K. Khinduka Distinguished Professor of Social Work and a Professor of Psychiatry at the Washington University School of Medicine. A native of Coamo, Puerto Rico, Dr. Zayas' research examines child and adolescent mental health, maternal mental health during pregnancy, parent-child relations, cross-cultural factors in child-rearing behavior and family functioning. He is an active participant in various research symposiums related to healthy marriage work with Hispanics, and is on the research team conducting the Hispanic Healthy Marriage Initiative Grantee Implementation Evaluation funded by the Administration for Children and Families.

# GUIDE TO USING CURRICULUM MODULES

The handbook and modules have been developed in response to requests by healthy marriage educators seeking culturally relevant content specific to Hispanic couples and families. It captures guidance and insight from Hispanic marriage educators throughout the United States as well as years of research on the psychology of couple dynamics.

These presentations (modules) are *not* intended to replace healthy marriage and relationship curricula already in use; but are designed to help facilitators and couples explore the unique influences that culture, gender roles and communication have in Hispanic relationships. It is recommended that each of the three modules be used as an introduction to marriage education for Hispanic-serving organizations interested in implementing healthy marriage programming.

The modules provide appropriate background for couples to understand the influence of Hispanic culture on relationships. While delivering any marriage education curriculum (i.e. PREP®, PAIRS®, Relationship Enhancement®, Couple Communication®, etc.) the facilitator can refer to these modules' core concepts including acculturation, familismo, machismo and marianismo.

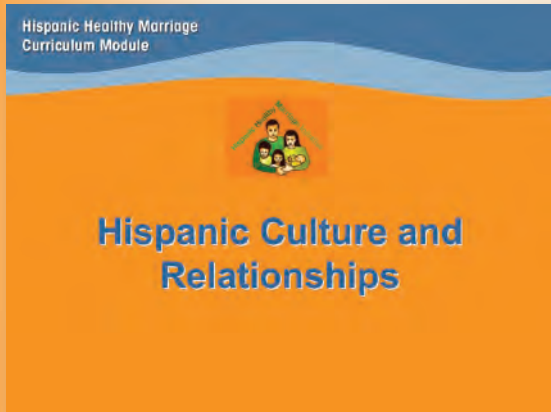
Things to consider:

1. Although the modules can be used as a series, facilitators are encouraged to present them in the order that best corresponds with the sequence of their specific healthy marriage program.
2. The authors encourage marriage educators to find opportunities to add the HHMI materials into their program as they become comfortable with core curriculums and the supplemental materials.
3. Facilitators should feel secure presenting portions of the modules to emphasize concepts or issues that are most relevant to their local Hispanic community. For example, Module Two addresses how the family influences who we are as men and women; this topic can be incorporated in a marriage education lesson on family of origin.

Each module contains presentation slides that are educational in content. The modules also include small group or couple-based activities to highlight main points and encourage discussion about particular topics. Facilitators should check with couples from time-to-time to ensure the material presented is clearly understood. Marriage educators should also ask for examples or stories regarding how the lessons can be applied.

With respect to the activities, facilitators should feel free to modify the format to suit the dynamics of an audience. For example, if couples do not feel comfortable sharing with a small group, the facilitator may ask couples to talk one-on-one and then request volunteers to share with the rest of the group. Similarly, facilitators should keep in mind the literacy levels of participants (both Spanish- and English-speaking). Verbally introduce each activity and provide alternatives for activities involving reading and writing. Each module, (including activities) takes one to two hours to complete.

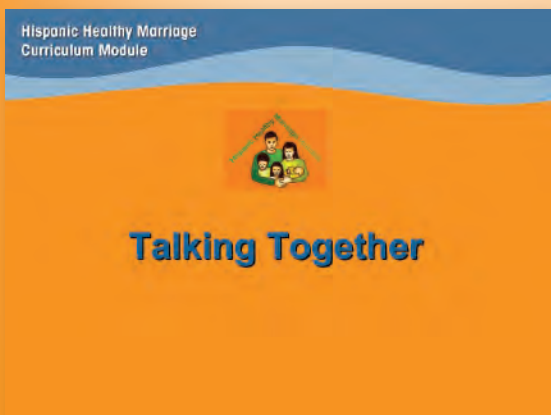
# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules



**Module One: *Hispanic Culture and Relationships.*** Module One is ideal for use as an introduction to marriage education programs for Hispanic couples. It provides a framework regarding how beliefs and expectations of marriage and family are shaped by culture. This module also serves as a useful staff-training tool for programs that have recently begun serving the Hispanic community.



**Module Two: *Gender: What Makes Us Different?*** This module can be incorporated before or after other curriculum content relating to expectations, particularly in regard to partner roles and interaction with extended family. Module Two provides specific information about the influence of Hispanic culture on gender role expectations and how these expectations impact the couple relationship. It is recommended that this module be presented following a lesson on communication techniques, as it will likely inspire discussion about sensitive issues.



**Module Three: *Talking Together.*** The final module complements any discussion focusing on communication and couple interaction. This module provides an opportunity for individuals to identify their personal interaction style while practicing skills to become better communicators within the context of their marriage or couple relationship.



## The facilitator handbook is formatted to include the following for each module

- ❖ *Overview* – background information relating to the topic; gives facilitators context and foundation about the subject.
- ❖ *Key Objective and Overall Goals* – outlines the intent and important components of the module.
- ❖ *Presentation Guide* – includes each slide and corresponding facilitator notes. These notes are intended to identify and elaborate on the main points for each slide. The notes will help prompt group discussion and engage the group.

**NOTE:** *The actual module (or presentation) is a separate PowerPoint document and will need to be accessed separately.*

## Because of the diversity within the Hispanic population, facilitators are encouraged to:

- ❖ Review the presentation slides and add additional examples and/or activities that are specific to their local Hispanic community.
- ❖ Use music, video clips, comic strips, photos, etc., to illustrate the various concepts presented and allow participants to identify with their Hispanic community.
- ❖ Incorporate local Hispanic culture as much as possible throughout the presentation (i.e. type of refreshments served, environment/setting, music played during breaks, etc.)

Realizing that some facilitators may choose not to use PowerPoint (and some facilities may not have access to a computer and projector), module presentations may be printed as overhead projector slides or as handouts for participants to follow as the facilitator leads the discussion. Similarly, facilitators may find it helpful to list the main points from the presentation on a flip chart as a guide instead of using PowerPoint. Each facilitator is encouraged to use a presentation format that is comfortable for him or her.

It is the hope of HHMI that these modules will assist healthy marriage educators by prompting discussions with participants, helping them understand the impact that culture, gender roles and communication styles have on relationships of Hispanics living in the United States.

# Module 1

## Hispanic Culture & Relationships

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT...

The discussion that revolves around culture and its influence on personal values, attitudes and behavior is complex. This module attempts to bring this issue to light within the Hispanic culture and provides opportunities for discussion and reflection.

Module One can be used as an introduction to a healthy marriage program for Hispanic participants. The intent of the **Hispanic Culture and Relationships** module is to provide cultural context for Hispanics and how they approach relationships, identity, interaction, love and marriage. This module will encourage participants to think about how we are influenced by culture and how this affects the way we interact with one another.

This module not only provides information about how culture shapes our values, but it also explores “acculturation” and how it impacts the expectations we all have regarding marriage and family.

***Acculturation:*** The behavior, attitudes and psychological changes that occur when individuals from different cultures come into continuous contact with each other. (*Synonyms: adapt, blend in, adjust*)

Many researchers disagree about why people in different cultural groups behave in certain ways. There seems to be agreement that there are basic universal principles, but *how* they are expressed (i.e. personal characteristics, behavioral patterns, attitudes and values) tends to occur on a more local level. The local development of these characteristics is what is commonly called “culture.” Studies among Hispanics show that personal behavior is guided by how much an individual embraces and believes in specific cultural rules.

For Hispanics living in the United States, the cultural rules embraced from their Hispanic heritage will be different based on their level of acculturation (or adaptation). How adapted an individual is has a direct effect on how they interact with spouses and other family members. For example, if the husband has been living and working in the U.S. for several months (or even years), he is probably more acculturated than his wife and as such has adopted values and customs of the mainstream culture. This difference may result in conflict if the wife has not adopted the same values.

Similarly, parenting children who are highly acculturated into the U.S. culture can cause added stress for couples who maintain certain traditional customs and beliefs.

# Module 1

## Hispanic Culture & Relationships

### KEY OBJECTIVES

1. The goal for **Module One: Hispanic Culture and Relationships** is to provide facilitators and participants with a cultural framework for lessons and skills presented in healthy marriage educational settings. It is hoped that Hispanic participants will apply these ideas in a way that is culturally meaningful.
2. Another use for Module One is as a staff training tool for organizations that may not have a long history working with the Hispanic community. The module can be used to introduce the Hispanic culture to staff members in order to provide context regarding cultural beliefs and behaviors in the Hispanic community.

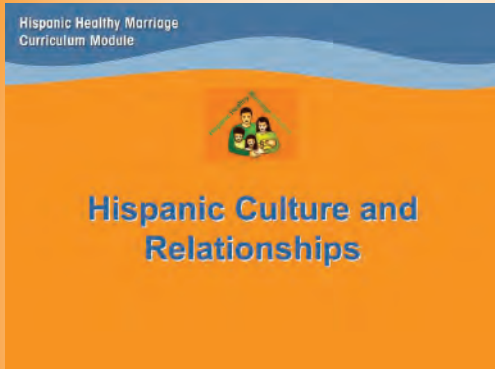
### OVERALL GOALS

- Increase awareness of the influence of culture on individual behavior.
- Increase understanding of Hispanic cultural values and beliefs, and how they influence relationships between spouses and among family members.
- Increase knowledge regarding cultural values and beliefs and how they vary due to the acculturation process.
- Increase participants' awareness of their level of acculturation and consider its effect on their relationships.
- Increase participants' ability to:
  - Identify cultural influences (both traditional and mainstream) that affect their relationships.
  - Determine the traditional Hispanic values and beliefs that they feel are important to maintain.
  - Engage spouses and partners in discussion about the family values that they feel are important to keep and pass down to their children, and how these values may be maintained while living in the United States.

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

- The *Hispanic Culture and Relationships* module can be utilized in conjunction with modules two and three, but can also be a stand-alone teaching tool for staff members of organizations that many not have a long history serving the Hispanic community.
- Some of the terms used in this module will be unfamiliar to participants. For example, “enculturation” and “acculturation” are complex words that refer to the process of adapting to a new culture. While we don’t expect facilitators to use these terms throughout the presentation (you can use more conversational terms like blending in or adapting to the new culture), we do think it’s important to identify the ‘research/academic’ terms at least once because it validates the process that participants have experienced.
- Utilize active learning techniques – don’t just lecture. We have included in this module several activities that should encourage communication between couples regarding the Hispanic culture and how it influences relationships. Take advantage of these activities, but make sure that the main objective and goals of the curriculum are addressed.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules



## Module Introduction: Hispanic Culture and Relationships

**Note to Facilitator:** In this module, a suggested facilitator's script is provided for each slide. Comments and/or notes to the facilitator are italicized.

*After welcoming each participant, start your class by giving them an idea of what to expect, as well as what you expect their role to be.*

### **Lessons to learn from this module:**

- How we learn what is expected of us as men and women from the people who teach and shape us.
- What culture is and how it influences our beliefs, our values, and even our behaviors; and what this means in regard to how each of us interacts with our spouse and family.
- How the acculturation process (adapting to a new culture) may influence relationships between spouses and among family members.

### **Expectations of participants:**

- *Both spouses are expected to get involved in the discussion and activities.*

### **Hispanic Culture and Relationships**

#### *Suggested Facilitator Script:*

- Culture is an interesting thing. There are drastic cultural differences in countries around the world, but there are also subtle cultural differences within a single city depending on what part of town you are in.
- If we stop and think about it, we can all identify elements of our culture, but sometimes realizing how culture influences us can be more difficult.
- We're going to spend some time during this session talking about culture.
  - ♦ We'll discuss what culture is and how it influences our beliefs, our values, and even our behaviors; and what this means in regard to how spouses and family members interact with each other.

*(Advance slide)*



### **What is Culture?**

#### *Suggested facilitator script:*

- As human beings we can't help but create and communicate culture in our everyday lives. This includes our belief system such as morals, laws, customs, and even our knowledge base.
- So, what is culture?
  - ♦ *Allow time for participants to provide some examples of what makes up culture. The facilitator may need to provide one or two examples to help start the discussion. Examples might be:*
    - *Food, music, art, poetry, literature, holiday/seasonal traditions*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## What is Culture?

- \*Music
- \*Food
- \*Customs
- \*Traditions
- \*Values and Beliefs

## What is Culture? Music, Food, Customs, Traditions, Values and Beliefs

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- We reflect our culture through what we know, what we believe, our laws, our customs, and other ways of thinking and behaving that we learn as members of a society. It seems like culture is all around us. In fact, we create and communicate culture in our daily lives.
- So what does culture look like for Hispanics? How does it impact relationships between husbands/wives/boyfriends/girlfriends/children?
- We are going to talk about some traditional beliefs commonly connected to the Hispanic culture over the next four slides.

- *Facilitator, please stress the following point:* **You might agree with some of these cultural beliefs, but you might disagree with others. We're not promoting any one belief as good or bad. These are general beliefs and individual family beliefs may not be described here.**
- Also, you might already know some of the terms mentioned, but some of them might be new to you. We're going to get to see what social researchers spend a lot of time studying and then talk about these as they relate to our own lives.

*(Advance slide)*



## Cultural Beliefs – Familismo

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- The first cultural belief that we're going to discuss is familismo. Have any of you ever heard this term before?
- Familismo is the belief that doing something for the good of the family is the most important thing, even more important than doing something that might be good for just one person.

- ♦ What do you think about this? Do you think this is true for the Hispanic culture?

▪ *Briefly allow responses to these questions.*

- An example of familismo might be an entire family (including the extended family) working together so that a child might go to college. Another example might be an adult child choosing to take a job in the same community as his family (instead of a different state) so he can live near home and contribute to his family's needs.
  - ♦ What are some other examples that you can think of that might illustrate familismo?
    - *Allow one or two examples from participants.*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Cultural Beliefs

**Benevolent Machismo** – the belief that the man is the head of the family and is responsible for protecting and providing for the needs of the family



*(Advance slide)*

## Cultural Beliefs – Machismo

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Another belief commonly connected to the Hispanic culture is benevolent machismo. This is the belief that the man is the head of the family and is responsible for protecting and providing for the family's needs.
  - ♦ What do you think about this? Do you think this is true for the Hispanic culture?
    - *Briefly allow responses to these questions.*
- Remember, some of you may agree with these general beliefs, and others may not. Or, you might agree with some and disagree with others. We're just highlighting **cultural beliefs** associated with the Hispanic culture.
- Later, we'll talk about how these beliefs may have shaped our expectations about marriage and family.

## Cultural Beliefs

**Marianismo** – the belief that women are expected to wait until after marriage to have sex and that they are expected to focus on becoming good mothers and faithful wives.



*(Advance slide)*

## Cultural Beliefs – Marianismo

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Similar to the term machismo for men, marianismo is the term used for the traditional view of women in the Hispanic culture.
- Marianismo is the belief that women are expected to wait until marriage to have sex and are expected to focus on becoming good mothers and faithful wives.
  - ♦ As with the previous slides, marianismo is a traditional belief connected with the Hispanic culture, but it may not apply to all Hispanic families.
  - ♦ What do you think? Do you think that this is a good description for the expectations of women?
    - *Briefly allow responses to these questions.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Cultural Beliefs

**Affiliation obedience** – the belief that children are expected to obey their parents in response to receiving their love and care.



## Cultural Beliefs – Affiliation Obedience/Obedient Children

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- This is the belief that children are expected to obey their parents in order to receive their love and care. The word “affiliation” means that there is a connection, and in this case there is a connection between a child being obedient and the love and care that parents provide.
- So, the expectation for parents is that their children will obey what they say, and the expectation for children is that they should obey their parents in order to continue being loved by them.
- What do you think? Do you agree that there is an expectation for children to obey their parents? Do you think this contributes to the familismo idea in that children are expected to obey their parents (or elders) 1) to receive their love, 2) because it is good for the family, and 3) because it keeps the peace?

♦ *Briefly allow responses to these questions*

*(Advance slide)*

## Two Types of Culture

## Two Types of Cultures

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- We’ve talked about some commonly held beliefs related to the Hispanic culture. Now we’re going to look at two different ways we look at relationships.
- We will talk about a “we” culture and a “me” culture.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## 'We' and 'Me'

A **"we"** culture is best described as: **cooperative, group oriented, mutual**



*(Advance slide)*

## 'We' and 'Me'

A **"me"** culture is best described as: **independent, secure and competitive**



*(Advance slide)*

## 'We' and 'Me' – We

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- A "we" culture is a combination of cultural beliefs about protecting the family unit. It is designed to promote health and security in family members.
- *Review the slide:* A "we" culture can be described as cooperative, group oriented and mutual.
- Do you think the beliefs we just discussed (familismo, benevolent machismo, marianismo and child obedience) fit into a "we" culture?
  - ♦ *Allow time for participants to respond.*
- In the "we" culture, the family's overall well-being is more important than any one individual's (including the marriage relationship).

## 'We' and 'Me' – Me

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- A "me" culture is a combination of beliefs that favor an independent, secure and competitive lifestyle.
- A "me" culture views marriage as a way to achieve personal satisfaction.
- The "me" culture also views the relationship between the husband and wife as the foundation of the family - and as the most important relationship.



# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## 'We' and 'Me'

How are “we” and “me” cultures reflected in:

- ❖ Relationships
- ❖ How we see ourselves
- ❖ How we act toward other people
- ❖ Love and marriage

- We need to remember that we’re just talking about differences. **We’re not promoting either culture as good or bad.** We’ll just highlight some of the distinctions between the “we” and “me” points of view. Both have positive and negative aspects.

(Advance slide)

## 'We' and 'Me' – Continued

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- There are always exceptions, but we’re going to look at and compare the characteristics of each of these cultures - “we” and “me” - as they relate to our relationships and how we interact with others.
- *Review points on slide:* We’ll talk about how the “we” and “me” cultures are reflected in:
  - ♦ Relationships
  - ♦ How we see ourselves
  - ♦ How we act toward other people
  - ♦ Love and marriage

## 'We and 'Me' – Chart

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Let’s review.
  - ♦ In a “we” culture, the **relationship** between parents and children is most important. Parents are responsible for proper upbringing of children based on intimate relationships and on values of love, respect and obedience.
  - ♦ In a “me” culture, the husband-wife **relationship** is viewed as the most important. The family focuses on individual rules and satisfying personal emotional needs.
  - ♦ Regarding **how we see ourselves**, in a “we” culture, identity is based on strict social rules, an obligation to give in return, and commitment to the group, family and community.

We	Me
<b>Relationship</b> between parents and children is most important	<b>Relationship</b> between husband and wife is most important
<b>How we see ourselves</b> is based on rules and family commitments	<b>How we see ourselves</b> is based on personal interests
<b>People</b> seek happiness in others	<b>People</b> talk more about their own personal interests
<b>Love</b> is viewed in the context of family	<b>Love</b> is more connected to meeting personal needs

- ♦ In a “me” culture, identity is based on independent and secure individuals whose primary focus is on personal interests, individualism, competition and personal growth and goals.
- ♦ In a “we” culture, **people** tend to be more sensitive to others and focus on making other people happy. They adapt to the needs and values of others.
- ♦ In a “me” culture, **people** are more likely to tell others about their own needs and desires.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

- ♦ In a “we” culture, **love and marriage** is viewed in the context of family (children, parents and siblings). Love and marriage go hand-in-hand, and there are strong gender differences in expectations and roles. There is a strong social pressure to not consider divorce as an option.
- ♦ In a “me” culture, **love and marriage** are connected to meeting personal needs. A relationship is satisfying if both partners’ needs are met. There is an emphasis on feelings, which determine the level of satisfaction. “Me” couples are more likely to consider divorce as an option.
- What do you think about each of these cultures in relation to the topics discussed here?
- What are the strengths of each point of view?
- How might these beliefs be a challenge or a barrier for each of the cultures?
- Do you identify with either of these cultures? Do any of you see yourself in both?
- *Allow some time for participants to discuss these questions.*

*(Advance slide)*

## How does culture become part of us?

### How does culture become a part of us?

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- How does culture become part of us?
  - ♦ *Facilitators may want to refer back to the previous questions if participants indicated that they identified with either the “we” or “me” culture.*
  - ♦ Some of you mentioned that you identify with either the “we” or “me” culture—or with both. So, how does culture become a part of us?
  - ♦ Researchers would say that people adopt culture (or apply culture to their own lives) in three different ways. These researchers would use the terms socialization, enculturation and acculturation.
    - These are very academic-sounding words, so we’re going to first break down these complicated terms into something that’s more common in everyday language.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## How does culture become part of us?

### **Socialization** –

how we are raised



## How does culture become a part of us? How we are raised: Socialization

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- People working in research talk about the way people are raised using the term “socialization”—this is, essentially, learning how to socialize and interact with others.
  - ♦ *The main point to make on this slide is that we learn what is expected of us as men and women from the people who teach and shape us.*
- Where do we learn how to interact with others? Where do these lessons come from?

♦ *Allow some time for participants to provide examples. Facilitators may need to provide a couple of examples to get the discussion started. Examples might include:*

- What we learn from our parents.
  - What we learn from our environment like family, school, community, state and country.
  - What we learn about acceptable or unacceptable behavior.
  - How we see ourselves based on the opinions of others.
- Basically, we learn what is expected of us from the people who teach and shape us.

*(Advance slide)*

## How does culture become part of us?

**Enculturation** – over time, growing familiar with and trying out a new culture’s beliefs and traditions

## How does culture become a part of us? Enculturation

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- The second way that cultural beliefs become a part of us is by trying them out. Researchers call this “enculturation” but we’re going to refer to this process as growing familiar with and trying out beliefs and traditions of the new culture.
  - ♦ Families who have moved to a new country may find themselves trying out the new culture.
  - ♦ Let’s think back to the “we” and “me” cultures for a minute, and let’s imagine that a “we” family is now living in a “me” culture. What might some examples be of the “we” family trying out a “me” culture?
    - *Allow participants to share some examples. See other examples on the next page.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

Examples of “we” family trying out a “me” culture (continued):

- How about parents attending a social event without the children? Remember that the “me” culture views the couple relationship as the family foundation; therefore, time spent alone as a couple is important.
  - Or, what about allowing children to participate in a sleepover? Again, the “me” culture is described as independent and secure, and places importance on personal interests and personal growth.
- ♦ Remember that **we are just talking about “we” families**, which over time, start trying out some of the traditions of the new culture that they are living in. The traditions and cultural beliefs of the “we” culture are just as valid and the family will continue to view them as important.
  - ♦ For many Hispanic families in the United States (and maybe even your family), trying out new ideas, experiencing customs, and adapting new traditions is a very real process that they have experienced over time.
  - ♦ The challenge for these families (and particularly the children) is finding a balance between family values that honor and recognize the richness of their heritage, while becoming familiar with and trying out the beliefs of a new culture.

*(Advance slide)*

## How does culture become part of us?

**Acculturation** – the blending of a new culture’s beliefs and traditions with our own

## How does culture become a part of us?

### Acculturation

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- The third way that culture becomes a part of us is by blending a new culture’s beliefs and traditions with our own. This is what researchers call acculturation. For our purposes today, we’ll refer to this process as ‘blending in’ or ‘adapting.’
  - ♦ There are three distinct levels of acculturation (adapting). Any individual that spends time in a different culture will experience these levels in different ways. In fact, it is common for members of the same family to be on different levels at any given time.
- ♦ It is also common for people to alternate between the various levels. They may go back and forth, or they may choose to stay where they are and not experience the other levels.
  - Everyone experiences acculturation differently and there is no right or wrong way to go about it.
- ♦ Now, we’re going to take a closer look at what this means on the next few slides by following Juanito Díaz, a Mexican immigrant now living in the United States. *(Note to facilitator: This example can also use Juanita Díaz if that is more appropriate for your group.)*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Levels of Acculturation

*The story of a Mexican immigrant*

### Juanito Díaz – “No Way”

- ❖ Speaks only Spanish
- ❖ Prefers to stay within his own community
- ❖ Only celebrates Sept. 16, and ignores July 4

*(Advance slide)*

## Levels of Acculturation, Level One: No Way

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- The first level of acculturation is “No Way.”
  - ♦ *Review the items on the slide:*
    - We can see here that at the “No Way” level, Juanito rejects the new culture where he is living. He continues to speak Spanish almost 100 percent of the time, he stays within his own community, and he only recognizes holidays and traditions from his country of origin.

## Levels of Acculturation

### Juanito Day – “Half Way”

- ❖ Speaks both Spanish and English
- ❖ Recognizes multi-cultural environments
- ❖ Celebrates Sept. 16 and July 4



*(Advance slide)*

## Levels of Acculturation, Level Two: Half Way

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- The second level is “Half Way.”
  - ♦ First you will notice that Juanito Díaz prefers to go by Juanito Day.
  - ♦ *Review the items on the slide:*
    - Juanito speaks both Spanish and English and feels comfortable in a multi-cultural environment. He likes to celebrate holidays and traditions of **both** his country of origin and the new culture that he is living in.
    - Juanito is “trying out” the new culture—he just might eat chile poblano on his hot dog!

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Phases of Acculturation

### Johnny Day – “New Way”

- ❖ Loses ethnic roots and accepts new culture
- ❖ Ignores ethnic holidays and will celebrate July 4



## Levels of Acculturation, Level Three: “New Way”

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- At this level we can see that Juanito Díaz has now changed his name to Johnny Day.
  - ♦ *Review the items on the slide:*
    - He loses his ethnic roots and fully accepts the customs and traditions of the new culture.
    - He ignores holidays and traditions from his heritage, and only celebrates and practices those of the new culture (such as the Fourth of July).
- At this point, Juanito Díaz (aka: Johnny Day) has fully adopted his new culture and has chosen it over his previous culture.
- Remember, each person living in a new culture will choose to blend customs and beliefs in their own way. None of the examples that we’ve talked about are good or bad, we’re just highlighting what this process might look like in everyday life.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## ACTIVITY 1:

### What Is Your Way?

#### ACTIVITY #1: What is Your Way?

- **TIME: 15-20 minutes**  
(depending on the number of participants)
- **Materials needed:**
  - ♦ Flip chart sheets (prepared in advance with graphic on Activity Instruction Sheet #1)
  - ♦ Thick markers
  - ♦ Masking tape

#### *Suggested facilitator script:*

- So, what is your way? Some people accept certain parts of a new culture more than others. For example, a person may celebrate U.S. holidays (such as Thanksgiving) but still prefer food from his or her country of origin.
- We're going to do an activity where each of you will think about the three levels of acculturation (adapting/blending in) that we just talked about – No Way, Half Way and New Way. You will decide which level generally describes you best. **REMEMBER:** this process often happens differently among partners and family members, so it is not unusual for a husband and wife (as well as other members of the family) to be at different levels.
- You might identify with each level depending on your situation, but for this activity you are asked to choose the level that best describes you most of the time.
- This activity is designed to help you:
  - ♦ See where you are in the process of acculturation (or adapting).
  - ♦ See and understand where your partner is in the acculturation process.
  - ♦ Discuss this process with other couples.

#### Activity Instructions:

- ♦ *Divide participants into small groups of two or three couples.*
- ♦ *Provide one flip chart sheet (prepared in advance) to each small group.*
  - *There should be three columns on each flip chart that read:*
    - ▶ *Juanito Diaz/ No Way*
    - ▶ *Juanito Day/ Half Way*
    - ▶ *Johnny Day/New Way*
- ♦ *Provide markers and masking tape to each group.*
- ♦ *Explain the steps of the activity*
  - Write your name in the column that best describes you.
  - Next, write your household family members' names where you believe each family member would place themselves.
  - Notice where family members are and discuss possible reasons for the differences.
- *After participants have done the activity ask for volunteers to share some observations then discuss the questions on the next slide.*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## What Is Your Way?

- ❖ How have these levels of acculturation affected your relationship?
- ❖ What effect has another culture had on your marriage?
- ❖ Share some examples of how you have seen families balance various cultures.

## ACTIVITY #1, Continued: What is Your Way?

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- *Questions to ask the group:*
  - ♦ How have these levels of acculturation (adapting) affected your relationship?
  - ♦ What effect has another culture had on your marriage?
  - ♦ Share some examples of how you have seen families balance various cultures.
- *Facilitators should allow some time for participants to discuss these questions and can spend time discussing other topics that might come up.*
  - ♦ *For example, children might be more likely to appear under the “New Way” category. Ask participants to comment on how this might affect their relationship.*
- *Encourage the participants to make the time to talk about them with each other.*
  - ♦ *If a couple finds that each person is at a different level, it is especially important that they acknowledge these differences and continue to talk about them.*

*(Advance slide)*



# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## ACTIVITY 2:

### Family Crest



### ACTIVITY #2: Family Crest

- **TIME:** 30-40 minutes  
(depending on the number of participants)
- **Materials needed:**
  - ♦ Thick markers in a variety of colors at each table
  - ♦ Pre-designed poster board (24" x 36") crests for each couple (fold out template provided)
  - ♦ Glue or glue sticks and scissors at each table
  - ♦ Various decorating materials (glitter, felt, fabric, buttons, images such as cap/gown or crosses, letters from the alphabet, various types of ribbon, magazines that can be cut up, etc.)
  - ♦ Color pencils or paints
  - ♦ A CD player to play culturally appropriate music during the activity
  - ♦ Copies of values list (provided)
  - ♦ Copies of crest template (provided)

#### *Suggested facilitator script:*

- We've talked about different cultures ("we" and "me"), the characteristics of cultures, and how people might blend cultures together. Now, think about your family and the discussion we just had about Juanito Díaz - and acculturation - and take the time to design a family crest which will represent your own family values.
  - ♦ These values are the beliefs that you (as a couple) want to be essential to your family, *and* that you want to pass along to your children. You might find that you combine values and traditions from your cultural heritage with new ideas and beliefs that you feel are important to include.
  - ♦ This is time for you and your spouse to have fun together as you make your family values come alive.
- **Activity instructions:**
  - ♦ *Distribute the pre-designed poster board crest to each couple.*
  - ♦ *Distribute the pre-printed list of values to each couple (also provided).*
  - ♦ *Ask the couples to write their family name in the top band of the poster board.*
    - *For example: The Vasquez Family or La Familia Vasquez*
  - ♦ *Have the couples discuss and identify four family values (valores) to be the foundation for family harmony. Boldly print one of the values in each of the four sections of the crest.*
  - ♦ *Then have each couple choose items from the decorating materials and/or draw pictures (or cut photos out of magazines) to bring each value to life according to what each value means to their relationship and family.*
  - ♦ *Encourage couples to add photographs from their purses or wallets as well as any other memorabilia.*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Family Crest

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### Time to Share

#### ACTIVITY #2, Continued: Time to Share

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- *After the activity, invite each couple (or ask for volunteers) to present their family crest.*
  - ♦ *Encourage all of the couples to take their artwork home, share it with their children and hang it in a special place.*
- *For groups with newly immigrated couples, you may want to ask about any differences they see in how their family values are lived out in the United States versus their country of origin along with any challenges that they may be encountering. Other participants may provide direction, insight and encouragement to these couples as they anticipate acculturation issues they may face.*

Acculturation happens differently for each individual, couple and family. It may be a fluid process where people find themselves more acculturated in some ways and less acculturated in others. In fact, it is not unusual for husbands, wives and family members to find themselves at different levels of acculturation. While individuals may identify with each level of acculturation depending on the situation, for this activity, participants are asked to choose the general level that most describes them.

This activity is designed to help individuals:

- See where they are in the acculturation process.
- See and understand where their partners are in the acculturation process.
- Discuss the acculturation experience openly with other couples.

### TIME

15-20 minutes depending on the number of participants.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Divide participants into small groups of two or three couples
- Provide one flip chart sheet (prepared in advance) to each small group. The three columns on each flip chart should read:

- ◆ **Juanito Díaz / No Way**
- ◆ **Juanito Day / Half Way**
- ◆ **Johnny Day / New Way**

- Provide markers and masking tape to each group.
- Have participants place their names in the column that best describes themselves.
- List family members living in the household where they believe they would place themselves.
- Notice where family members are.
- Discuss possible reasons for the differences.

Juanito Díaz No Way	Juanito Day Half Way	Johnny Day New Way

In larger group, ask for volunteers to share some observations from the activity. Then discuss the following questions (also on slide):

- How have these levels of acculturation affected your relationship?
- What effect has another culture had on your marriage?
- Share some examples of how you have seen families balance various cultures.

NOTE: The facilitator may also want to help identify some common themes across all small groups (i.e. children are more likely to appear under The New Way category) and ask the participants to comment on how these themes might affect their relationships.

# Module 1

## Hispanic Culture & Relationships

# Activity Instructions

## Activity 2 – Family Crest

Module 1 talks about different cultures, characteristics of cultures and how people blend cultures together. This activity is a time for participants to think about their own family and the discussion about *Juanito Díaz* and to design a family crest representing their own family values.

This interactive, hands-on activity is designed to help couples:

- Have fun together as they make their family values come alive.
- Discuss and identify values for their relationship and family.
- Illustrate how their family values may look different in the United States than in their country of origin.

### **TIME**

30-40 minutes depending on the number of participants.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

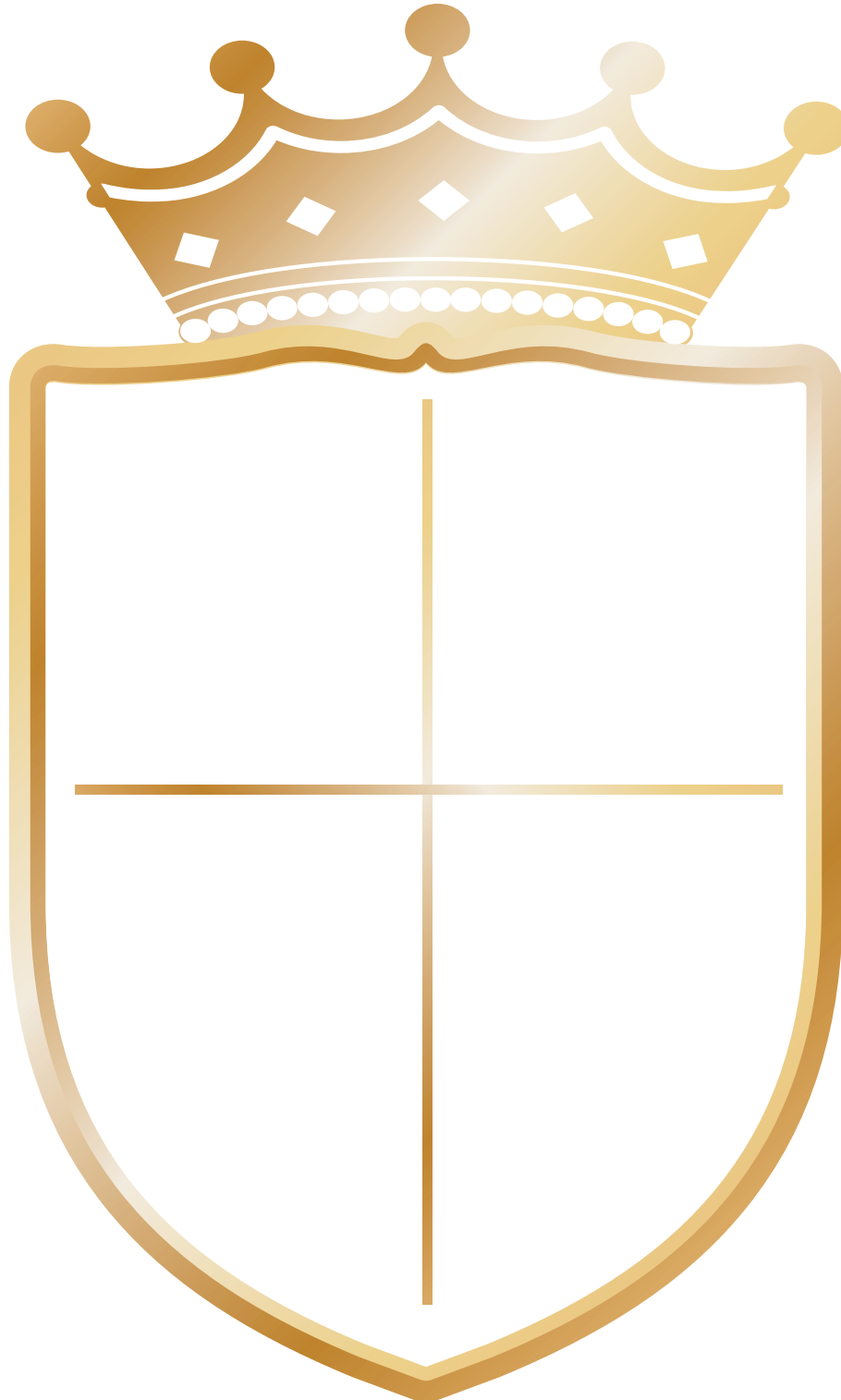
- Thick markers in a variety of colors at each table.
- Glue or glue sticks and scissors at each table.
- Various decorating materials (i.e. glitter, felt, fabric, buttons, popsicle sticks, images such as cap & gown or crosses and letters from the alphabet, various types of ribbon, pipe cleaners, etc.).
- Color pencils or paints.
- A CD player to play culturally appropriate music during the activity.
- Copies of values list.
- Copies of crest template.

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

- Distribute a crest to each couple (template provided).
- Distribute the pre-printed list of values to each couple (provided).
- Have the couples write their family name in the top band of the poster board.  
(i.e. *The Vasquez Family / La Familia Vasquez*)
- Have the couples discuss and identify four family values/*valores* to be the foundation for family harmony and boldy print one of the values in each of the four sections of the crest.
- Have each couple choose items from the decorating materials and/or draw to bring each value to life according to what each value means to their relationship and family.
- Encourage couples to add photographs from their purses or wallets or other memorabilia.

### **WRAP UP**

- Have couples present their family crests to the group and include what this activity has meant to them.
- Each couple is encouraged to take the family crest home and hang it in a special place so that the family's values can be viewed often and honored everyday.



# Module 1

## Hispanic Culture & Relationships

# Activity Instructions

## Activity 2 – Family Crest Values List - Getting Started

Below is a list of common traits and values that many people embrace in their own families. This is not a complete list and there may be other values you would like to add. Feel free to use these examples (as well as your own) to build your family crest.

### **I want my family to be:**

- polite
- friendly
- obedient
- cooperative
- neat or tidy
- independent
- respectful
- calm
- well-behaved
- caring
- creative
- nurturing
- affectionate
- reserved
- hard working
- courageous
- flexible
- helpful
- education
- religious
- honest
- ambitious
- driven
- trust
- humble
- team player
- loyalty
- careful with money
- discipline
- responsible
- protective
- faithful
- cooperative
- competitive
- loving
- sociable
- opinionated
- open-minded

## Module 2

# Gender – What Makes Us Different?

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT...

The Hispanic culture may sometimes define male and female gender roles and behaviors through the traditional terms “machismo” and “marianismo.” In general, each of these terms can be considered positive and a strength of Hispanic culture; however, when taken to the extreme, they may become a barrier to a healthy and satisfying relationship.

- **Machismo** characterizes a man's virility, independence and strength as well as the expectation that he protects and provides for the family.
- **Marianismo** on the other hand, characterizes women as fragile, submissive, nurturing, chaste and dependent, and women define themselves as mother and caregiver - placing greater value on being a mother than a wife.

The characteristics of these gender roles serve as both a protective factor and a challenge to Hispanic couples. Healthy marriage programs are in a unique position to help Hispanic couples measure their own expectations related to gender roles and how these expectations 1) influence the way partners interact with each other, and 2) may change over time.

Changes in gender role expectations are common among couples who have recently immigrated to the United States. The process of adapting to a new culture is called “acculturation” and may affect couple interaction and expectations. As couples begin to adopt the customs of a new culture, conflict may arise as these new mainstream customs may be different than the roles typically held by either the man or the woman.

It is also important to pay attention to how fast each partner acculturates (adapts). Men tend to adapt more quickly because many have lived in the U.S. longer than their spouses and generally have more exposure to mainstream culture through the workplace. However, the long-term affect of acculturation on gender role expectations may be the most obvious in women. Working outside of the home may not have been a role of women in their country of origin, but many immigrant couples find it necessary for both husband and wife to work and support the family. As women begin to work and contribute to the household income, expectations about decision-making power and division of household labor may change. This can create conflict and marital dissatisfaction if one or both partners are unwilling to make adjustments.

### KEY OBJECTIVE

The key objective for the *Gender - What Makes Us Different?* module is to help couples decide for themselves which gender roles should be supported in their relationship, and which may become obstacles to a healthy and satisfying relationship. Instructors are encouraged to engage the participants in discussions about gender role assignments and how these may be affecting their own relationship as well as what - if any - role they have in shaping their own children's gender identity.

## Module 2

# Gender – What Makes Us Different?

### OVERALL GOALS

- Increase participant understanding of gender roles and how they are developed.
- Help couples recognize their individual gender role expectations, how these expectations were formed, and how they affect their relationship.
- Increase participant awareness in regard to how different cultures may influence gender roles and have an effect on relationships and family.
- Have couples identify specific messages and experiences that they would like to pass on to their children about gender roles.

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

- The *Gender - What Makes Us Different?* module can be utilized before or after other curriculum content related to expectations - particularly as it relates to partner roles and interaction with extended family.
- It is recommended that this module be presented after couples have learned a communication technique because it is likely to spark discussion between couples about sensitive issues.
- Some of the terms used in this module will be unfamiliar to participants. For example, the word “acculturation” is a complex word that refers to the process of adapting to a new culture. After identifying this term (and its meaning) to couples in your class, you can simply say, “but for the purpose of our class, we'll just call it blending in.”

It's our belief that identifying an actual 'research' term is important, because it can validate to participants that the process of adapting (acculturation) is normal and common. However, referring to it once, and then shifting to a more common term is perfectly acceptable.

- Utilize active learning techniques - don't just lecture. We have included in this module several activities that should encourage communication between couples regarding gender issues. Take advantage of these activities, but make sure that the main objective and goals of the curriculum are addressed.



# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

Hispanic Healthy Marriage  
Curriculum Module



## Gender: What Makes Us Different

### Module Introduction:

#### Gender - What Makes Us Different?

**Note to Facilitator:** In this module, a suggested facilitator's script is provided for each slide. Comments and/or notes to the facilitator are italicized.

*After welcoming each participant, start your class by giving them an idea of what to expect from this module, as well as what you expect their role to be.*

#### **Lessons to learn from this module:**

- *The purpose of this module is to get participants thinking about what lessons they learned growing up about how a man and woman are expected to act and identify with people, as well events and stereotypes that influenced their own perceptions/expectations for men and women.*
- *Information about some common traditional values and beliefs of the Hispanic culture will be shared during the module to help participants understand how (over time) these beliefs about men and women might be passed down from generation to generation.*
- *These more traditional ways of thinking about men and women - what we learn from our family, and what we are exposed to through the media (television, movies, music, internet) - all impact our own thoughts, beliefs and expectations for how men and women interact with each other.*

#### **Expectations of participants:**

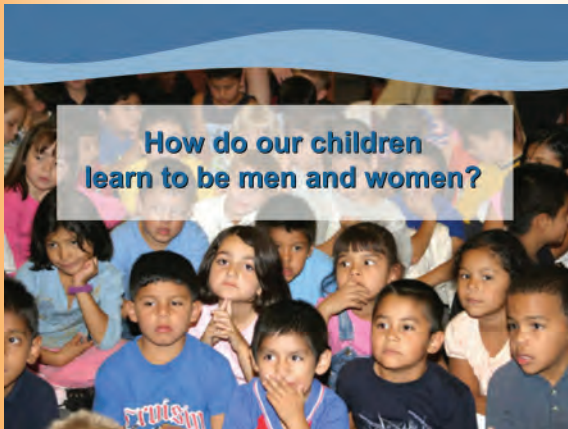
- *Both spouses are expected to get involved in the discussion and activities.*

#### **Gender: What Makes Us Different?**

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- **So, what makes boys/girls, men/women different?**
  - ♦ Most of us will agree that men and women are different.
  - ♦ But beyond the obvious physical differences, have you ever stopped to think about how we are different in the way we think about ourselves, interact with others and the things that others expect of us?
  - ♦ Some of us may even think that these differences determine how we are expected to act as men or women and what types of activities we should do.
  - ♦ The expectations we place on each other as men and women have a lot to do with the culture we are raised in and what we learned from the people around us.
  - ♦ We're going to spend some time during this session talking about what shapes us as men and women and how what we learned about becoming a man or woman impacts our relationships as husbands/wives, boyfriends/girlfriends, sons/daughters, etc.
  - ♦ We'll also talk about what you (as parents) want to teach your children about what it means to be a man or woman.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules



## How do our children learn to be men and women?

- What teaches our kids what is expected of them?  
*Ask participants to comment on how they think this process occurs and what role they may play as parents.*
  - ♦ What do boys and girls act like? Where do children get information about how to behave like a boy or girl?
- *Ask the participants to respond to the question on the slide.*
- Expand upon the responses from the participants, but be sure to cover these key points to during the discussion about how children learn to be men and women such as:
  - ♦ What our parents tell us and the example they provide influences how we become men and women.
  - ♦ What we see in the movies or on TV (media in general) tells us something about how men behave and how women behave.
  - ♦ Traditions that we practice: for example, what happens at family gatherings? What roles do the men and women play at these functions?
  - ♦ The influence of schools, teachers, coaches, etc.
  - ♦ All of these factors are a part of our culture, and they shape our beliefs and expectations about how each gender thinks, feels and behaves.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## How does this happen?

The way we were raised:

### **Socialization**



## How does this happen?

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- We just talked about how culture can affect us (*refer back to all of the things pointed out by participants during the discussion and the key points above*). So, basically, we can all agree that culture influences how we are raised. But even within the same culture, each person is raised some what differently.
- As we've already said, kids learn some of the most powerful lessons by how they are raised, what they observe, how they are treated and what family members expect of them. We will call this 'home training' - socialization.

- Socialization - the way we were raised
  - ♦ Some people, like researchers, talk about the way people are raised using the term “socialization.” This is, essentially, learning how to socialize or interact with those around us.
  - ♦ I imagine every person in this room had a unique experience growing up, right?
  - ♦ Because we all had a different experience growing up, what are some examples from your own childhood that taught you how to be a man or woman? What (or who) influenced you growing up?
  - ♦ *Some time can be spent allowing the participants to share examples and then briefly discuss how these examples influenced their perceptions of men and women.*
  - ♦ The main point to make on this slide is that we learn what is expected of us as men and women from the people who teach and shape us.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Family Influence

For young children ages 0-12, the **family** is the primary influence of how children learn to be men and women.

*(Advance slide)*

### Family influence

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- For young children (up until about age 12), the family has the biggest impact on what they learn about the world around them. Would you agree with that?
- So, when we talk about being men and women, we should know that in these early years the family is the primary influence of how children learn to be men and women.
- Do you think children learn more by what their parents tell them or by what they do - the example that they show?  
*(You can reference some of the examples that were given from the previous slide if any of the participants mention certain family members being influential for them, etc.)*
- Kids observe their parents and imitate what they see.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Messages From Our Family

- ❖ What parents do
- ❖ The messages we get from family
- ❖ Family traditions

*NOTE to facilitator: this slide initially appears with only the header "Messages from our family." Once participants provide examples, you can advance the slide to reveal additional examples of a family's influence on gender identity.*

### Messages from our family

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- We just learned that in the early years of childhood, the family is the most influential factor for teaching children what it means to be boys and girls, and later, men and a women.
- So, what are some of the messages that children get from their families? What kinds of things within the family might send messages to children about how boys/girls and men/women are expected to behave?

- *Allow time for the participants to provide some examples, then advance the slide to reveal some other general examples.*
- What do parents do?
- *Allow time for participants to provide some examples for the following questions and then add examples if they have not already been brought up, such as:*
  - ♦ What are some ways that parents send messages to children?
    - How they show their love to each other
    - The toys they buy us as children
    - The way they dress us as children
  - ♦ What are some of the messages we get from family?
    - How do older family members interact with one another?
    - Grandparents tell stories about how men and women behaved/interacted with each other in the past - as a lesson for how they should behave now.
  - ♦ Family traditions
    - Think about some traditions you have in your family. Are there any lessons that you learned from these traditions about how men and women are expected to behave?
    - Family celebrations/meals/etc.: Were there different roles for the men and women? Was there an expectation around who did the cooking/served the food? Did both men and women drink alcohol? Were there certain activities reserved for men or for women (i.e. smoking cigars, drinking alcohol, playing cards/dominos, dancing, looking after the children, etc.)?

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

- ♦ What other messages did we learn from our family about how men and women are expected to be?
  - Were there different chores for boys and girls?
  - What about sports? Did we receive any messages about who should play sports or what types of sports were okay for boys and for girls?
  - What about rules, curfews and boundaries? What do these tell us?
  - What about education and careers? Did we get any messages about jobs or professions that were okay for boys and others that were okay for girls?
- ♦ We've only talked about some of the examples of how the family sends messages to children regarding being men and women. I'm sure there are many more. But, outside of the family, and as a child grows older, there are other factors that influence their perceptions of what it means to be a man or a woman.
- ♦ What are some other factors that influence children?
- ♦ *Allow the participant's time to provide some examples. Then advance the slide to provide the examples on the next slide.*

## Other Influences

During adolescence, ages 13+, **friends, media** and **other influences** shape how teens think men and women should behave.

### Other influences

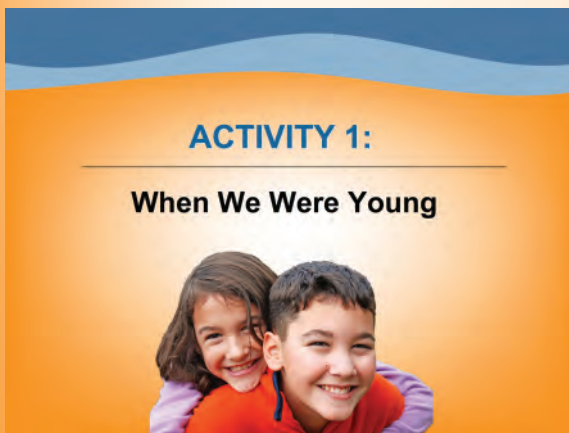
#### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- In addition to what we learn from our family, “gender identity” - or deciding how men and women are supposed to behave - is shaped by interactions with others in a culture and society. As kids get older, they begin to pay more attention to other things that will influence their views of what it means to be a man or woman.
  - What are some specific ways that friends and the media influence teens?
- ♦ Friends and peers influence teens by: how they behave and dress, what group the teen feels most accepted by (athletes, artists, musicians, scholars, etc.).
  - ♦ Media influences young people through magazines, music, TV videos, internet, text messaging, email, movies, MySpace, Facebook, cell phones, etc.
    - What kinds of things do you think young teens learn about what it means to be a man or woman from the media? How are these different from when we were kids?
    - *Briefly allow participants to comment on the questions above.*
- *Ask the participants for examples of two or three other factors besides friends and the media that influence “gender identity” - how men and women are expected to behave.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

- *Some other examples for the facilitator to reference include:*
  - ♦ The types of activities that sons and daughters are attracted to - Are there activities that are thought to be more appropriate for boys than for girls (i.e. sports, dancing, singing, painting, writing, cooking, etc.)?
  - ♦ People's attitudes toward a different culture. They might have dissimilar expectations for men and women.
  - ♦ Income level. The examples of the roles for men and women may be different depending on a family's income level. For example, do both parents need to work? If so, the message given might be that both men and women can/should work outside the home.
  - ♦ We've talked a bit about some of the influencing factors outside of the family that impact what children learn about what it means to be a man or a woman, and these other factors are important. But, the majority of this presentation, and our discussions and the activities we'll do are going to focus on the primary influence - the family.

*(Advance slide)*



## Activity #1: When We Were Young

- **TIME:** 10-15 minutes
- **Materials needed:** none

### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- During this activity, we're going to think back to when we were kids and try to remember what the expectations were for boys and girls and men and women.
- This activity is going to give us an opportunity to think about what might have shaped our views about men and women, identify areas where some of our expectations may have changed over time, and give us a better idea of how family members who are (were) important to us really made an impact on our views of men and women.

- *Break up the group into smaller groups of three or four couples each.*
  - ♦ This small group discussion is designed to:
    - Help you remember and share how things were when you were children.
    - Let you talk with others about how expectations have changed.
    - Help you see the important roles family members played in shaping your view of men and women.

*NOTE to facilitator: After the participants have broken into smaller groups of three to four couples, advance to the next slide and ask them to discuss the questions on the next slide.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## When We Were Young

- What were the roles like in my family when I was a little boy/girl?
- What work/chores did my mom and dad do when I was a little boy/girl?
- What were the children expected to do?

## When We Were Young

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

*Ask participants to discuss the following questions, but help couples get started by providing some examples for each discussion question, such as:*

- What were the roles like in my family when I was a little boy/girl?
  - ♦ Who in the family was in charge of disciplining children?
  - ♦ Who had the final say on big decisions?
  - ♦ Who was in charge of the finances for the family?
- What work/chores did my mom and dad do when I was a little boy/girl?
  - ♦ Who was in charge of chores around the house?
- ♦ Was there a difference in the type of chores that your mother and father did? (For example: taking out the trash, cooking and cleaning, making repairs).
- What were the children expected to do?
  - ♦ Were the expectations different for boys and girls?
  - ♦ Were the rules different for boys and girls? What about as you got older?
- *Ask participants to share a few examples of what was discussed with the larger group.*
- These are all great examples of how our experience as a child and how our family influenced our ideas about being men and women. We know that our family, friends, and the media continue to influence our views into adulthood. All of these elements combined shape how cultures develop common ideas about how men and women are expected to behave.
- We're going to spend a few minutes now talking about what some of these ideas are in the Hispanic culture.

*(Advance slide)*



# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

**Stereotypes** – common ideas that may or may not be true that may become part of what we believe.

## Stereotypes

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- It's important for us to remember that often when we talk about common ideas, we're talking about “stereotypes” which are ideas that may or may not be true but that tend to become part of what we believe. Let's look at this idea a bit further.

*NOTE to facilitator: The next two slides demonstrate how parents, who may believe these typical stereotypes, can inadvertently reinforce some of these beliefs without being aware of how stereotypes can affect children down the road.*

## Common Beliefs About Boys



### **Boys**

- ❖ Are strong and active
- ❖ Are independent and deserve more freedom
- ❖ Are less sensitive and caring
- ❖ Want to be the boss

## Common Beliefs About Boys

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- Here are some **common beliefs (or stereotypes) about boys**. Some people may believe that these are true, while others might not.
- *Read the bullets on the slide.* Boys:
  - ♦ Are strong and active.
  - ♦ Are independent and deserve more freedom.
  - ♦ Are less sensitive and caring.
  - ♦ Want to be the boss.
- What do you think about these beliefs? Are they fair and accurate?

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Common Beliefs About Girls

### Girls

- ❖ Are delicate, fragile and need greater care
- ❖ Need more affection and protection
- ❖ Are more sensitive and nurturing
- ❖ Enjoy doing things for other people



*(Advance slide)*

## Common Beliefs About Girls

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- And, here are some **common beliefs (or stereotypes) about girls.**
- *Read the bullets on the slide.* Girls:
  - ♦ Are delicate, fragile and need greater care.
  - ♦ Need more affection and protection.
  - ♦ Are more sensitive and nurturing.
  - ♦ Enjoy doing things for other people.
- How do you feel about these stereotypes? What do you think? Are they accurate?
- Again, some people may believe that these stereotypes are true, while others may not.

## What do we learn?

### Boys

When parents are less affectionate and loving with boys than with girls, boys learn to become less emotional and more distant.

*(Advance slide)*

## What do boys learn?

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- When parents are less affectionate and loving with boys than with girls (because the belief is that boys are strong, independent and less sensitive/caring), boys can learn to distance themselves from affectionate emotions.
  - ♦ In what ways might this affect him later in life? Do you think it might impact his future relationships? Do you think distancing himself from affectionate emotions might impact his relationship with his future wife? His own children? In what ways? What expectations might his future wife have about how he is supposed to be as a man?
  - ♦ *Allow time for the participants to respond to some of these questions before advancing to the next slide.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## What do we learn?

### **Girls**

When parents are more affectionate and have more interaction and physical closeness with daughters than sons, girls learn closeness and communication.

*(Advance slide)*

## Key points

- ❖ Family and culture influence who we are as boys and girls and who we become as men and women.
- ❖ Different expectations for boys and girls later affect what we expect from each other as men and women.

*(Advance slide)*

## What do girls learn?

### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- When parents have more interaction and affection towards girls than boys (because the belief is that they are fragile, need greater care and more affection), girls will learn how to communicate, show emotion, and be more comfortable with physical closeness.
  - ♦ In what ways could this lesson affect her later in life? Do you think this might impact her future relationships? In what ways? What expectations might her future husband have about how she is to behave? What might occur if in the future she is married to a man who learned to distance himself from affectionate emotions?
  - ♦ *Allow time for the participants to respond to some of these questions before advancing to the next slide.*

## Key points -

### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- Even without realizing it, our family and culture shape how we interact with boys and girls which, in turn, influences how they grow up as men and women.
- We should take time to think about and understand what has influenced each of us so that it can help us better understand our interactions within our own relationships.
- Also, when we are able to identify what has influenced our own thinking about men and women we are able to evaluate if there are alternatives. What is considered “normal” may not necessarily mean it's the only way to do things.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## ACTIVITY 2:

### Something to Talk About “Dichos”

What phrases, or “dichos,” do you know that describe how men and women are expected to behave?

#### Activity #2: Something to Talk About - “Dichos”

- **TIME:** 10-15 minutes
- **Materials needed:** none

#### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- We've spent some time talking about common beliefs (or stereotypes) about men and women, and now we're going to see how these beliefs can be found in everyday life.
- We're going to divide into two groups - men and women. Then, we're going to work in our groups to think of expressions/sayings or “dichos” that we've heard in regard to how men and women are expected to behave.

- *The facilitator should divide the participants into one group of men and one group of women. The facilitator may choose to have the men identify common proverbs or sayings about men and have the women identify common proverbs/sayings about women, OR have the men identify proverbs/saying about women and have women identify them about men. Either scenario should produce a variety of commonly heard expressions or proverbs that are part of our culture, and influence (either positively or negatively) our perceptions of how men and women are expected to be.*
  - ♦ *The facilitator may need to provide examples of the types of expressions the groups should identify. Participants should be reminded that they may provide examples in Spanish or English.*
    - *Spanish examples:*
      - *Mas calladita, mas bonita. (The quieter you are, the prettier you are.)*
      - *Todo por la felicidad de tus hijos. (Everything for the happiness of your children.)*
      - *El hombre es la cabeza del hogar y la mujer es el cuello. (The man is the head of the household and the woman is the neck.)*
      - *El hombre tiene la ultima palabra, “si mi amor.” (The man always has the last Word, “Yes, dear.”)*
      - *A la mujer ni todo el amor, ni todo el dinero. (Never give a woman all of your love or your money.)*
      - *En boca cerrada no entra mosca. (A fly cannot enter a closed mouth.)*
    - *English examples:*
      - *Girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice.*
      - *Boys are made of snips and snails and puppy dog tails.*
      - *Separate the men from the boys.*
      - *The old ball and chain.*
      - *Boys don't make passes at girls who wear glasses.*
      - *Don't buy the cow when you can get the milk for free.*
- *Once the groups have had a chance to identify some sayings, ask for a volunteer from each group to share the “dichos” that their group has written down. Then ask for volunteers to share how some of these sayings have influenced them.*
- *These expressions are part of our culture - whether they are true or false (or funny); they help shape our beliefs about boys and girls, and men and women.*
- *Next we're going to talk about some of the common beliefs about men and women that these cultural sayings or “dichos” might represent.*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Common Beliefs About Men



- ❖ Main role in the family is to protect and provide.
- ❖ See themselves as:
  - ❖ Independent
  - ❖ Not emotional
  - ❖ Productive
  - ❖ Decision-maker

## Common Beliefs About Men

### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- Remember, when we talked about the common beliefs about boys and girls we mentioned that they were common ideas or stereotypes that may or may not be true. However, because they are stereotypes, they have become part of what we - meaning 'we' as in 'all of us' in a society or culture - believe. The same is true for the next few slides. We're going to talk about some of the commonly held cultural beliefs or characteristics for Hispanic men and women. You may not agree with any or all of these, and they are not presented as being good or bad. We are simply illustrating how some of the everyday elements of our culture (the “dichos” that we've all heard) can impact overall beliefs about men and women. Each of you will decide for yourself what you agree with and what you disagree with.
- *Review each item on the slide.* Common beliefs about men include:
  - ♦ Their main role in the family is to protect and provide.
  - ♦ They see themselves as independent, unemotional, productive and as the decision-maker.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## True or False?

### Men

- ❖ Men take their roles seriously as provider, protector and decision maker.
- ❖ Men place more importance on success at work than spending time with family.

(Advance slide)

## Common Messages About Men

- ❖ Don't be a wimp.
- ❖ Be important.
- ❖ Be strong at all times.
- ❖ Be bold, a "winner" and courageous.
- ❖ Others?

- ❖ **Be strong at all times:** men are expected to tolerate difficulties in life without complaining and confront problems without showing weakness or expressing emotions.
  - ❖ **Be bold, a "winner" and courageous:** a man is expected to demonstrate courage and conviction.
  - ❖ **Others?**
- The facilitator may want to refer back to any "dichos" from the activity that represent any of the messages about men.
  - All of the common beliefs and messages that we've just talked about for men can be lumped together into a term that many of you may already be familiar with. The Hispanic culture actually has a word to describe this type of man.

(Advance slide)

## True or False?

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- Review each item on the slide:
  - ❖ Men take their roles seriously as provider, protector and decision maker.
  - ❖ Men place more importance on success at work than spending time with family.
- Ask the participants to respond to the items on the slide.
  - ❖ What do you think?
  - ❖ Do you think these are accurate beliefs/characteristics of men?
  - ❖ Do you disagree with any of them?
- Allow some time for discussion around the common beliefs about men.

## Common Messages About Men

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- What about these statements? Do you think these messages help or hinder how men learn about what it means to be a man?
  - ❖ **Don't be a wimp:** you aren't manly if you have attitudes or behaviors that can suggest something feminine.
  - ❖ **Be important:** your level of 'manliness' is proportional to your economic, political or social position.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Common Messages About Men

***Machismo*** – the belief that the man is the head of the family and responsible for protecting and providing for the needs of the family.

### Machismo

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- The true idea of machismo is that the man is:
  - ♦ The head of the household; he is a decision maker. *(refer back to the common beliefs slide)*
  - ♦ Responsible for protecting the family; he is strong at all times; he is courageous. *(refer back to the common messages slide)*
  - ♦ Responsible for providing for the family; he is productive; he is important and a winner. *(refer back to previous slides)*
- Machismo is a very positive cultural belief when we use this definition because it shows the commitment and dedication Hispanic men have toward their family.
- But what sometimes happens is that this positive cultural belief can be taken to the extreme, becoming a barrier for couples and families, and often giving machismo a negative meaning.
  - ♦ How might the idea of machismo be taken to the extreme? How might that impact the couple relationship and the family?
  - ♦ *Facilitators may want to think about some examples of how Machismo might be taken to the extreme, becoming a weakness for a couple/family, such as:*
    - *The husband believes that he is supposed to be the head of the household and prohibits anyone else from making decisions.*
    - *A man may feel that he is a failure as a man (and husband and father) if he loses a job and is unable to adequately provide for his family.*
- **KEY POINT:** What is important to remember here - and as we look at the next several slides - is that there are many positives when we're talking about cultural beliefs about men and women, but that anything taken to an extreme may become a challenge or a barrier for couples.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Common Beliefs About Women

- ❖ Main role in the family is affection, caring for others, and emotional support.
  - ❖ Self-sacrificing
  - ❖ Heartbeat of the family
  - ❖ Responsible for household chores and the children

*(Advance slide)*

## True or False?

### Women

- ❖ All women think motherhood is important to make them feel fulfilled.
- ❖ All women are concerned about being able to balance work with family.
- ❖ To be successful at work, a woman must put her family in second place.

*(Advance slide)*

## Common Beliefs About Women

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- So let's shift now and look at some of the common ideas about women. Remember, you may not agree with some or all of these, and they are not presented as being good or bad. We're just taking a look at how the things we experience in our culture everyday can influence our overall beliefs about men and women.
- *Review the statements on the slide.* Beliefs about women:
  - ♦ Self-sacrificing
  - ♦ Heartbeat of the family
  - ♦ Responsible for household chores and for the children
- *Facilitators may want to ask the women to respond to the statements on the slide. Do they think that paints an accurate picture of what is believed about how women should be?*

## True or False?

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- *Review the statements on the slide:*
  - ♦ All women think motherhood is important to make them feel fulfilled.
  - ♦ All women are concerned about being able to balance work with family.
  - ♦ To be successful at work, a woman must put her family in second place.
- What do you think about these statements? Do you agree or disagree with them? In general, do you think these are accurate beliefs that people have about women?
  - ♦ *Allow a few minutes for participants to discuss these questions.*



# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Common Messages to Women

- ❖ Don't be a tomboy.
- ❖ "El hombre propone y la mujer dispone."
- ❖ The way to a man's heart is through...his stomach *or* ... the kitchen.
- ❖ Others?

## Common Messages to Women

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- *Review the statements on the slide:*
  - ♦ **Don't be a tomboy.** You aren't feminine if you have behaviors or attitudes that could suggest something masculine.
  - ♦ **"El hombre propone y la mujer dispone."** The man may suggest something, but the woman makes the final decision. (Although men may feel that they have taken the lead, women have the ultimate decision.)
  - ♦ **The way to a man's heart is through his stomach (or the kitchen).** This implies that men respond to good food and a woman is expected to aspire to be a great cook.
  - ♦ **Others?**

- What do you think about these statements? Do you think these messages are how women learn about what it means to be a woman?
- Have any of you experienced any of these ideas in your own life? Have these ideas influenced your own relationships?
- **KEY POINT:** Remember that we are not discussing these statements because we are saying that they are good or bad or that they are true or false; we're bringing them up to provide you with examples of how throughout life, we receive messages about how women are expected to behave. Often we don't even realize that we're receiving them; they are just part of our culture.

*(Advance slide)*

## Cultural Beliefs



**Marianismo** – belief that women should wait until after marriage to have sex and that they should focus on becoming good mothers and faithful wives.

## Cultural beliefs - Marianismo

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- Similar to the term "Machismo," the Hispanic culture actually has a word that is used to describe the characteristics of this type of woman. Some of you may have heard it before, others may not. This term is "Marianismo."
- The idea behind Marianismo is that much of a woman's satisfaction and self-realization comes from within the family. She gets them from being the best mother possible and striving to be a faithful, loyal wife.
- The ideas behind the term Marianismo show a real strength within the Hispanic culture and the importance it places on the family, and providing love and stability to children.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

- Like Machismo, the ideas behind Marianismo can become a challenge or a barrier for couples and families if taken to the extreme.
  - ♦ How might the idea of Marianismo be taken to the extreme where it could become a weakness instead of strength? What impact might that have on the couple's relationship? How might that affect the children now and in the future?
  - ♦ *The facilitator may want to think about examples of how this concept could be taken to the extreme, such as:*
    - *A mother sacrifices all of her wants/needs for her children and husband, which leaves her feeling unfulfilled and bitter/regretful.*
    - *A woman feels that she has failed as a woman (and wife and mother) because she works outside of the home and does not care for her children full-time.*
- **KEY POINT:** Again, both Machismo and Marianismo show great strength within the Hispanic culture. The goal is to reflect on how men and women can use the positive aspects of each of these cultural beliefs to strengthen their relationship and family while creating a balance so that neither one nor the other becomes a barrier to a healthy marriage and family.

*(Advance slide)*



**Changing Expectations**

**Acculturation** – the blending of a new culture's beliefs and traditions with our own

## Changing Expectations

*NOTE to facilitator: This slide will come up in two parts. The first slide will show the header, "Changing Expectations." Advance the slide after you explain the term, "acculturation."*

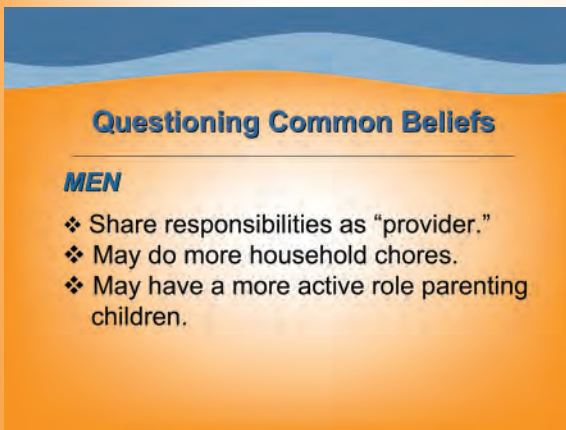
*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- We've spent time talking about what some common cultural beliefs are about men and women, how we learn these beliefs/ideas, and the impact they have on our expectations regarding how men and women are expected to behave.
  - What happens if these beliefs that we've learned are questioned? Do you think there is ever a time when our expectations for how men and women should behave might change?
- The idea of changing expectations related to the behavior and roles we place on each gender (men/women) can be seen over time as a couple and family blends beliefs and customs of a new main stream society (United States), with those of their cultural heritage - a process referred to as "acculturation." For those in this group who are second or even third generation Hispanics, you might find it interesting to talk with your parents, grandparents, or other family members that have first hand knowledge of the experience of adapting to the U.S. culture when they first immigrated.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

- *Advance slide to include “acculturation.”* Acculturation is an academic word that refers to this process, but for the purposes of our class today we'll refer to this as “blending in” or “adapting.”
- Recently immigrated couples and families living in the U.S. may find that some of the common beliefs of men and women from their culture are different from mainstream U.S. culture beliefs.
- Couples may find that as they adapt (acculturate), their expectations for each other and themselves might change.

*(Advance slide)*



**Questioning Common Beliefs**

**MEN**

- ❖ Share responsibilities as “provider.”
- ❖ May do more household chores.
- ❖ May have a more active role parenting children.

## Questioning Common Beliefs About Men

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- What are some ways that the common cultural beliefs we discussed earlier would be questioned when living within a different culture?
- Blending a mainstream culture's belief system and traditions can affect the beliefs held about men. For example, let's take a look at the traditional role of 'sole provider':
  - ♦ Many couples in the U.S. find it necessary for both partners to work outside the home to support the family. So, the expectation for the man to fill the role of sole provider for the family may not be realistic and this expectation may change. For many recently immigrated men, this experience may leave them feeling inadequate or that they are not “living up to” their role as husband and father.

- ♦ With both partners working outside the home, men may find that they do more household chores - changing the expectation that house work is generally for women.
- ♦ Men may have a more active role in parenting children if both partners are sharing the workload outside and inside the home.
- ♦ Let's take a look at how some of the common beliefs and expectations for women might change over time if a couple is living within a different culture.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Questioning Common Beliefs

### WOMEN

- ❖ May choose to work outside the home.
- ❖ May receive additional education and training.
- ❖ May wait to get married and/or have children.

## Questioning Common Beliefs About Women

- As mentioned before, women may either choose to (or find it necessary to) work outside of the home to help support the family. There may also be opportunities for a woman to further her education that were not available before (ESL classes, GED programs, college courses, etc.).
- Additionally, expectations about decision making power, the division of household chores, and parenting responsibilities may also shift as both partners are working and caring for the family.
- **KEY POINT:** While many couples learn to adjust to new roles and responsibilities as well as changing expectations, this shift may lead to additional conflict for some couples. The problems often come because both members of the couple don't change their views at the same time. Remember that this may occur, and if/when it does practice the communication skills you've learned in a healthy marriage program. This will help you confront and resolve conflicts **and** grow closer together.

(Advance slide)

## Effects on Couples

- ❖ One spouse may blame the other for changes.
- ❖ Sharing new cultural experiences may bring the couple closer together.
- ❖ The couple may experience more shared parenting responsibilities.

## Effects on couples

- *For facilitators' reference only: There are some negative effects of acculturation that can impact couples. For example, there is the potential for an increase in separations/divorces and dysfunctional relationships as well as increased strain, tension and even fighting or violence in the home among couples who are adjusting to life within a new culture.*

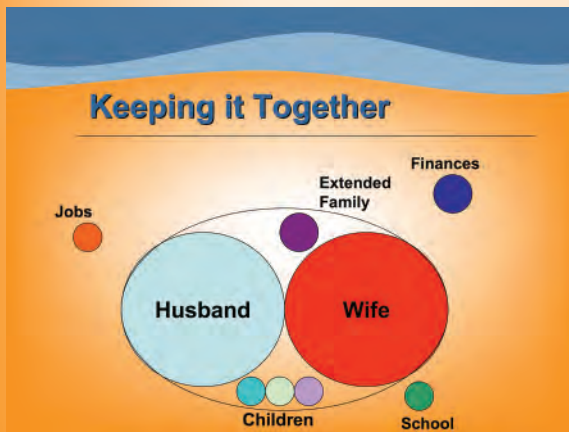
### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- So what are some of the effects on a couple's relationship of blending existing cultural beliefs with new beliefs (or acculturating)?
- One spouse might blame the other for the changes, especially if one partner was more in favor of moving to the new country, or they had to move because of a job. Placing blame for current stress or challenges is a common response for individuals who are learning to adjust to a new environment. What is important to remember is that you need to work together as a team to confront these challenges.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

- Another effect might be that couples actually strengthen their bond and become closer because they are sharing new experiences. There is a sense of discovering and creating a future together that might bring couples even closer.
- Another effect might be that couples have to share parenting responsibilities. **This is a really important point** because many couples (who are raising children and find themselves balancing two cultures) say that most of the conflict they experience in their relationship is related to parenting and discipline issues with the children. Because parents may still be parenting based on the norms of their country of origin, conflict arises since their children are experiencing something totally different in the U.S. This can leave parents at a disadvantage because they feel they can't keep up with their kids. Making an additional effort to talk about parenting styles, discipline and working together as a couple, can help ease some of the tension created when raising children in a different culture from what their parents might be accustomed to.
- **KEY POINT:** *Facilitator should take time to emphasize that while the effects of acculturation may add additional stress on couples and families, the fact that the participants are learning what to expect and how to deal with the challenges puts them at an advantage for a successful, satisfying relationship.*

(Advance slide)



## Keeping it Together

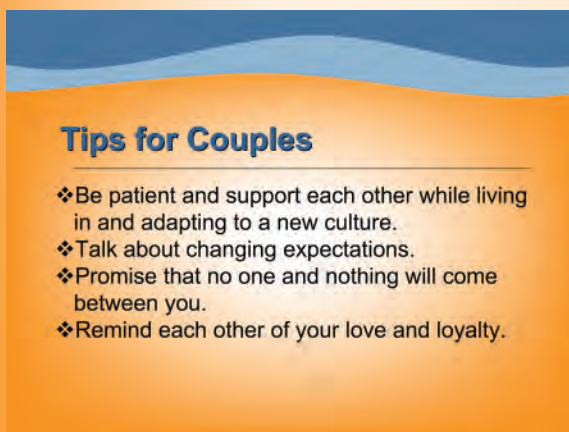
*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- The picture on this slide shows us an image of a family (husband, wife, children, and extended family) and then shows some of the “outside” things that might cause problems for couples. Most of these are common challenges that all couples face such as jobs, finances and school.
- Just a few minutes ago, we were talking about some of the stress and tension that living in a different culture might bring. This acculturation process (or blending new ideas and beliefs into your own) can magnify and intensify the common challenges faced by couples.
- *Encourage couples to take the time to talk about how they will handle these challenges.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

- *Facilitators working with migrant communities or recently immigrated couples might want to ask the following questions:*
  - ♦ *How does this idea or goal of “keeping it together” change when one partner is separated from the family for work or immigration?*
  - ♦ *How do you “keep it together” over long distances?*
- Challenges may be different for couples who are apart. It is important that you talk regularly and you are going to have to work hard to make communication happen. Set 'talking' goals and:
  - ♦ Talk about your future together.
  - ♦ Talk often as friends.
  - ♦ Stay involved in household decisions.
  - ♦ Talk about future plans for when you are together again (if you are currently living apart.)
  - ♦ Describe your new setting; tell the other partner about where you are and what's going on.
  - ♦ Focus on keeping trust strong by continuing to talk to each other.

*(Advance slide)*



## Tips for Couples

- ❖ Be patient and support each other while living in and adapting to a new culture.
- ❖ Talk about changing expectations.
- ❖ Promise that no one and nothing will come between you.
- ❖ Remind each other of your love and loyalty.

*(Advance slide)*

## Tips for Couples

*Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- So, what can we do to be sure that we are not letting outside stressors and challenges get in the way of our commitment to each other?
- Here are some great tips. *Review the points on the slide:*
  - ♦ Be patient and support each other while living in the new culture.
  - ♦ Talk about changing expectations.
  - ♦ Promise that no one and nothing will come between you.
  - ♦ Remind each other (often) of your love and loyalty.
- *Ask the participants for some other examples of what they have done/said to each other to manage the challenge of adaptation/acculturation OR things they have seen other couples do (friends, family members, etc.).*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## ACTIVITY 3:

### Your Family Treasure Chest



### Activity #3: Your Family Treasure Chest

- **TIME:** 15-20 minutes OR 20-30 minutes if optional enhancement is chosen
- **Materials Needed:**
  - ♦ Treasure Chest handout (one per couple)
  - ♦ Pens/Pencils
- *Optional activity: The facilitator may want to enhance the activity by having the couples decorate a small box to use as their treasure chest.*
- *This hands-on activity is designed to:*
  - ♦ Allow couples time to talk about and write down treasured traditions that helped shape their identity.
  - ♦ Give couples a chance to mix traditions with new ideas to create their own family treasure chest.

#### *Suggested Facilitator's Script:*

- The treasure chest is a picture of your family's core beliefs - what you hold dear and/or what you value as a family. Some beliefs come from your upbringing and the culture you were raised in; some may be from the new culture you're a part of now. Your treasure chest probably will be a blend of your cultural heritage as well as new values and traditions.
- This treasure chest includes positive messages, traditions and experiences you had growing up.
- *Distribute the Treasure Chest pages:*
  - ♦ Think about and write down (or talk about) the experiences and memories that helped you become who you are.
  - ♦ Next, as a couple, review and discuss each other's list of experiences and decide together what traditions and experiences they want to pass along to your children.
  - ♦ Write the traditions and experiences (or talk about them) in the "What We Want to Pass Along" section of the handout.

*Have participants share their Family Treasure Chest and add any final thoughts they have about the activity.*

### Your Family Treasure Chest



**As a couple,  
decide what to put  
in your treasure  
chest.**

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

*Suggested facilitator script:*

In summary, what we learned today was that starting early in life we all get messages about how boys/girls and men/women are expected to be, based on the way people treat us and the things they say to us. Some of these messages are positive and some are negative. But as we just saw in the treasure chest activity, you get to decide for your family what kind of messages you share with your children about what it is to be a man or a woman, and what messages you choose to leave in the past.

As we go forward some of these things may come up again as we go through other parts of the curriculum. As we talk about how to approach problems in our relationships, all of these things play a part. So just keep this discussion in mind and we'll refer back to it as we move forward.



## Module 2

### Gender – What Makes Us Different?

## Activity Instructions

### Activity 1 – When You Were Young

This activity gives participants a chance to remember what the expectations were for boys and girls and men and women in their families growing up. It also encourages participants to think about what affected the way they believe men and women should behave.

This small group discussion is designed to:

- Help participants remember and share how things were when they were growing up.
- Let participants talk with others about how expectations have changed.
- Help participants see the important roles family members play in shaping the view of men and women.

#### **TIME**

10-15 minutes

#### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

None

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

- Break the group into smaller groups of three or four couples.
- Introduce the discussion questions related to how the participants' families influenced their gender identity and expectations. (Discussion questions will be displayed for the participants as a PowerPoint slide.)

Facilitators may want to help couples during this activity by providing some examples to each discussion question. Examples for each discussion question might include:

- **What were the roles like in your family when you were growing up?**
  - Who in the family was in charge of disciplining children?
  - Who had the final say on big decisions?
- **What work or chores did your mom and dad do when you were growing up?**
  - Who was in charge of chores around the house?
  - Was there a difference in the type of chores that your mother and father did?  
(i.e. taking out the trash, cooking and cleaning, doing repairs)
- **What were the children expected to do?**
  - Were the expectations different for boys and girls?

Facilitators should feel open to adding additional discussion questions and/or asking participants to share other ways in which their family of origin influenced their gender identity and expectations for their spouse and children.

#### **WRAP-UP**

Ask participants to share a few examples of what was discussed in the larger group.

## Module 2

### Gender – What Makes Us Different?

## Activity Instructions

### Activity 2 – Something to Talk About “Dichos”

Now that the group has spent time talking about common beliefs about men and women, it’s time to work in groups to identify how these beliefs can be seen in everyday life.

This separate male and female activity is designed to:

- Help participants remember and talk about messages that show how men and women are expected to behave.
- Help participants talk about whether hearing these sayings, or *dichos*, growing up has affected them as adults.

#### **TIME**

10-15 minutes

#### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

None

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

- Separate men and women into two groups.
- Ask the two groups to talk about some of the *dichos* they can recall.

Note: Facilitator may want to share some examples to get the discussion going.

#### Spanish examples

Mas calladita, mas bonita. (The quieter you are, the prettier you are.)

Todo por la felicidad de tus hijos. (Everything for the happiness of your children.)

El hombre es la cabeza del hogar y la mujer es el cuello. (The man is the head of the household and the woman is the neck.)

El hombre tiene la ultima palabra, “si mi amor.” (The man always has the last Word, “Yes, dear.”)

A la mujer ni todo el amor, ni todo el dinero. (Never give a woman all of your love or your money.)

En boca cerrada no entra mosca. (A fly cannot enter a closed mouth.)

#### English examples

Girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice.

Boys are made of snips and snails and puppy dog tails.

Separate the men from the boys.

The old ball and chain.

Boys don't make passes at girls who wear glasses.

Don't buy the cow when you can get the milk for free.

#### **WRAP-UP**

Ask participants to share a few examples with the entire group and talk about how *dichos* have influenced them.

The treasure chest is a metaphor for the participant's family's core beliefs: what they hold dear, what they value as a family. Some of these beliefs come from the participant's upbringing and the culture they were raised in. Some might come from the new culture they are a part of now. Each participant's family treasure chest probably will be a blend.

This hands-on activity is designed to give participants time to:

- Talk about and write down treasured traditions that helped shape their identity.
- Discuss which traditions mix well with new ideas for their own family.
- Decide, as a couple, what to put in their treasure chest to pass along to their children.

#### **TIME**

15-20 minutes OR

20-30 minutes (if optional enhancement is chosen)

#### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

- Treasure Chest handout (one per couple)
- Pens/pencils

*Optional activity:* The facilitator may want to enhance the activity by having the couples decorate a small box to use as their treasure chest.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

- Distribute the Treasure Chest pages.
- Ask participants to think about and write down experiences and memories that helped them become who they are.
- Next, *as a couple*, review and discuss each other's list of experiences and *decide together* what traditions and experiences you want to pass along to your children.
- Write the traditions and experiences in the *What We Want to Pass Along* section of the handout.

#### **WRAP-UP**

Have participants share their Family Treasure Chest and add any final thoughts they have about the activity.



# Family Treasure Chest

## What I've Learned

*Family traditions that helped shape each of us*

Him

Her


## What We Want to Pass Along (Our Treasure Chest)

*Traditions and experiences we, as a couple, want to pass along to our children*

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# Module 3

## Talking Together

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT...

Successful communication is essential to the health and satisfaction of relationships. Through both verbal and non-verbal communication, couples exchange information about feelings, fears and perceptions about their relationship and family. In this module, we will discuss two dynamics of couple communication: content and style. Both content (what you say) and style (how you say it), play a role in forming relationships, strengthening common visions, and protecting individual vulnerabilities.

It is important to remember that both communication content and style are affected by an individual's cultural experience. With this in mind, studies have been devoted to understanding communication dynamics among Hispanics. These studies present topics most discussed among Hispanic couples as well as various styles by which interactions take place. The significance of these findings for Hispanic healthy marriage programs is that they open the door for program facilitators to help couples identify what they think is important to communicate (content) in addition to discussing what influences how they communicate with one another (style).

For example, Hispanic couples with more traditional cultural values may find that the content of their communication is clearly defined by traditional gender expectations (i.e. a women communicate in relation to emotions, children and household matters, while men tend to focus on work, daily life and finances.) Similarly, traditional Hispanic couples may find that their communication style tends to have one partner acting as a passive communicator, while the other takes a stronger role. The experience of Hispanic immigrant couples should also be considered as it relates to content and styles of communication. For example, the additional stressors associated with living in the United States may change what topics couples focus on *and* how they communicate with one another.

### KEY OBJECTIVE

Module Three helps couples understand what they believe are important topics of communication and recognize the various styles of communication in the context of the Hispanic culture. In doing so, healthy marriage education facilitators can help couples develop skills to communicate more effectively, which creates a safer and more trusting environment in which both partners can communicate openly. Ultimately this leads to a healthier and more satisfying relationship.

# Module 3

## Talking Together

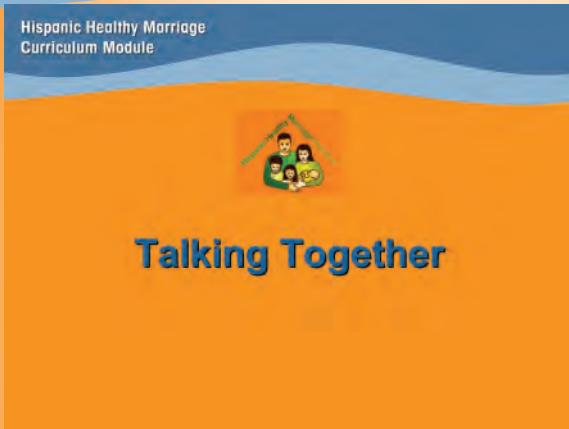
### OVERALL GOALS

- Help individuals become more aware of content of their communication
- Help participants identify neglected areas of content in their relationship
- Help participants understand different styles of communication
- Help participants recognize their own communication style and how it affects how they interact with their partner
- Help participants communicate more effectively

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

- *Talking Together* will complement any discussion focused on communication and how a couple interacts with each other. This module provides an opportunity for individuals to recognize their communication style and practice ways to become better communicators within their marriage.
- Utilize active learning techniques – don't just lecture. We have included in this module several activities that should encourage couples to discuss Hispanic culture and how it influences relationships. Take advantage of these activities, but make sure that the main objective and goals of the curriculum are addressed.
- The last activity (Writing and Sharing "I Feel" Statements) might be especially emotional for participants. It will require the facilitator to pay close attention to the dynamics in the room and make adjustments based on how the couples respond to the activity.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules



## Module Introduction: Talking Together

**Note to Facilitator:** In this module, a suggested facilitator's script is provided for each slide. Comments and/or notes to the facilitator are italicized.

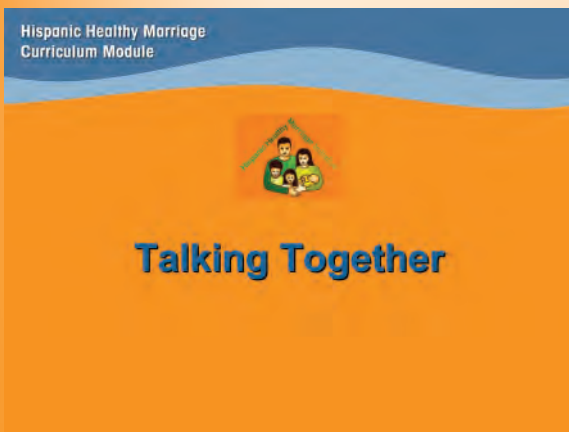
*After welcoming each participant, start your class by giving them an idea of what to expect from this module, as well as what you expect their role to be.*

### **Lessons to learn from this module:**

- *Identify what types of things they spend time talking about with their partner, and what areas might need more attention in order to strengthen their relationship.*
- *Learn about various styles of interaction and identify what their own natural style is.*
- *Determine how their natural communication styles might impact their relationships.*
- *Develop effective communication skills to create a safer and more trusting relationship environment.*

### **Expectations of participants:**

- *Both spouses are expected to get involved in the discussion and activities.*



## **Talking Together**

### *Suggested facilitator script:*

- Communication is one of the most important components of a relationship. Communicating thoughts and feelings with one another creates a bond between partners. Maintaining healthy, effective communication over time helps strengthen this bond.
- We're going to take some time during this session to think about how we communicate with one another and our families, as well as identify important areas about which couples might not spend enough time talking.
- We're also going to learn about some common styles of communication and how our individual (and natural) styles might be preventing us from effectively communicating—and connecting—with our partner.
- After we've had a chance to look at some styles of communicating, we'll learn a technique that, when practiced, can help improve communication and strengthen your bond as a couple.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## What is Communication?

### What is Communication?

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- How do we communicate with each other? What are the methods we use to get our message across to other people?
  - ♦ *Ask the participants to think about and discuss what they think communication means.*
  - ♦ *After the participants have shared some examples, the facilitator may want to ask the following questions if they have not already been shared:*
    - Is the “silent treatment” communication?
    - Is yelling communication?
    - Is “rolling your eyes” communication?
      - ▶ Some may argue, “But I didn’t say anything, so how is that communication?” Because you still sent a message and it was received loud and clear!
    - Is a text message communication?
  - ♦ So communication is more than just words. It also includes body language and *how* we *say* words.

*(Advance slide)*



# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## What is communication?

The exchange of information between people

### Verbal Communication

Written or spoken language

### Non Verbal Communication

Body language; facial gestures and expressions, personal distance, silence and visual contact; the way we sit down, walk

## What is Communication?

*Note to facilitator: This slide will come up in two parts. First the “exchange of information” phrase will appear, then when the slide is advanced, the Verbal/Non-Verbal information will appear.*

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Simply put, communication is the exchange of information between people. And, in many ways, the quality of communication determines the quality of our relationships.

## What is Communication? Verbal/Non Verbal

- Communication occurs primarily in two ways. Verbal is the words we say, and non-verbal is our body language. Communication is what you say *AND* how you say it.
  - ♦ Anytime we use words to express our message to another person it is considered verbal communication.
  - ♦ But sometimes what we say (our actual words) isn't heard because of the non-verbal signals we give.
    - Non-verbal communication consists of all gestures, eye movements, posture, and even our physical connection to the conversation. Am I looking at you or do I seem distracted? Am I rolling my eyes? Am I turned toward you while we're talking or do I seem like I'm trying to disengage and cut you off?
    - When we are listening to someone, our non-verbal messages tell them whether we are paying attention and care about what is being said.
  - ♦ So, what are some ways that you communicate with your partner verbally and non-verbally?
    - *Allow some time for participants to share. If needed, the facilitator may want to provide some examples to get the discussion started:*
      - ▶ Hugging, winking, smiling
      - ▶ Holding hands when getting news from the doctor
      - ▶ Discussing how to handle a situation at your child's school
  - ♦ In general, communication is a way to express your feelings, successes, joys and disappointment. It is also the key to resolving conflict.

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Talking Together

In Relationships, communication can be the source of...

**great satisfaction**



and/or **great conflict**

## Talking Together

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- In our relationships, the quality of communication determines the quality of the relationship.
  - ♦ If communication between partners is not good, then the relationship will typically be filled with conflict and stress.
  - ♦ If communication in a relationship is good, then more than likely the relationship will also be healthy and strong. Good communication allows you to:
    - Share your feelings and values.
    - Share your hopes and dreams.
    - Show love and learn how to be loved.
    - Heal from past hurts and family relationships.
- ♦ While all relationships have conflict, without the ability to communicate our opinions and feelings safely with our partner, then we begin to build up unresolved conflict.
  - Unresolved conflict can isolate and overwhelm a couple into believing that everything in their relationship is bad. This feeling of hopelessness slowly eats away at the connection between partners.
- We've talked about some of the ways we communicate with our partner (*facilitator can reference examples shared with previous slide*), but there are actually things that we do naturally that can either help or hinder our communication. Things like touching can be good, but on the other hand, poking typically causes a negative reaction.
  - ♦ *Facilitator can refer to the image on the slide of the girl poking her finger at her partner.* Do you think her natural reaction to poke her finger to make a point is helping or hindering communication in this situation?

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Talking Together

In talking together, **how you say it** is as important or more important than what you say.

## Talking Together

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Good communication is more than just words; it's also how we say those words. It is important to be aware of the tone in our voice or **how** we say things.
  - ♦ *Ask for examples of how your tone of voice can be important to consider depending on the message that you're trying to convey. For Spanish speaking groups, the facilitator may want to use this example of how tone impacts a message:*
    - ¿Cómo amaneciste, vieja? (*lovingly*)
    - Como amaneciste vieja... (*spoken with disbelief*)
    - ¿Cómo? ¿Amaneciste vieja? (*spoken with a surprised tone*)
- ♦ Even a response like "I love you, too" can have different meanings depending on the tone and body language.
  - It can be said tenderly and be a very genuine expression of affection, but with a different inflection, it can become sarcastic and hurtful.

*(Advance slide)*

## What Couples Talk About

- ❖ Work or School
- ❖ Chores
- ❖ Other family members
- ❖ Conversations with others
- ❖ Food

## What Couples Talk About

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- According to research done in Puerto Rico and Mexico, these are the top things that Hispanic couples talk about:
  - ♦ Work or school
  - ♦ Chores
  - ♦ Other family members
  - ♦ Conversations with others
  - ♦ Food
- Think about your own life and relationship. Do you agree with this? Are these common topics of discussion in your home?

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## What Else Do Couples Talk About?

### What Else Do Couples Talk About?

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- So, what was missing from the list on the previous slide?
- What else do couples talk about?
  - ♦ *Allow time for the participants to provide examples of other things couples talk about. Facilitators may want to get the discussion started by providing some other topics that couples reported discussing:*
    - Affection: positive or negative feelings toward each other
    - Emotions: expressing moods
    - Extended family: information regarding each spouse's family
    - Sex life: couple's intimate life
    - Friends: couple's friendships
    - Children: things related to the children
    - Work life: work outside the home
    - Marital relations: couple's beliefs, attitudes and opinions
    - Daily life: food, chores, social events
    - Expectations: thoughts and feelings about the couple's future together
    - Economy & free time: couple's finances and how free time is spent
    - Attraction: qualities that make each person desirable to the other
    - *Some of these examples might be given by the participants. If not, briefly review the list to show participants what other types of things couples spend time talking about.*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## ACTIVITY 1

### Let's Talk About It



#### Activity #1: Let's Talk About It

- **Time:** 10 minutes
- **Materials Needed:** None
- *Suggested facilitator script:*
  - ♦ We've spent some time talking about what other couples say they talk about most. Now, you are going to have an opportunity to sit together with your partner and identify what you feel you talk about most in your relationship.
    - What you learn might surprise you. There might be some things that you realize you need to spend more time talking about.
    - *Encourage couples to write down a list of these topics.*
- **Activity instructions:**
  - ♦ Have each couple discuss the following questions:
    - What did you discover about the things you talk about most?
    - What important topics are not being discussed?
    - What topics would help your relationship grow if they were talked about more?
  - ♦ *As a homework exercise, have each couple circle one topic on their list that they think would help their relationship grow. Then ask couples to set a time during the upcoming week to discuss the topic they have chosen.*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## ACTIVITY 2

### Puzzle Play



#### Activity #2: Puzzle Play

- **Time:** 10-12 minutes
- **Materials needed:**
  - ♦ One miniature puzzle per couple provided by facilitator (usually available at discount stores such as Dollar Tree, Walmart, Target, Dollar Store, Family Dollar, or Dollar General)
  - ♦ CD player or other device and background music
- *Suggested facilitator script:*
- Now you've all got your homework assignment – to talk about the subject that you identified as needing more attention in your relationship.

- Before we move on with this session, we're going to do another activity.
  - ♦ When we're finished, we'll discuss the purpose of the exercise.
- **Facilitator Note:** *The objectives below are for the facilitator's reference only and should not be shared with participants until the activity has been completed. This activity is designed to:*
  - ♦ Give participants a chance to display their interaction styles in a natural way.
  - ♦ Create an experience for the participants to reflect upon later in the presentation when the various interaction styles are discussed.
  - ♦ Show how popular cultural elements (like music) might influence our beliefs about how we interact with our partner/family.
- **Activity instructions:**
  - ♦ Distribute a puzzle to each couple.
  - ♦ Ask each couple to complete their puzzle together, but offer very little other instruction.
  - ♦ While participants complete the activity, play culturally appropriate music such as "El Rey" by José Alfredo Jiménez.
- **Facilitator instructions:** *While couples are completing the puzzle, observe the following for each couple:*
  - ♦ How are the couples cooperating?
  - ♦ Are they working as a team?
  - ♦ Is one partner taking more of a leadership role than the other, or are they both actively participating?
  - ♦ Did the music provoke any reactions?
- **Wrap-up:**
- *Invite the couples to respond to the following questions:*
  - ♦ What do you think was the purpose of this activity?
  - ♦ What did you notice about your partner?
- By now we all probably realize that people communicate in different ways.
- We're going to talk in more detail about the various styles of communication and how our natural styles might affect our relationships.

(Advance slide)

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Communication Styles



(Advance slide)

## Communication Styles

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- During this section of the presentation, we're going to talk about four different styles of interaction:
  - ♦ Peacekeeper
  - ♦ People Pleaser
  - ♦ Pushy
  - ♦ Courteous & Confident
- **Facilitator note:** *During the next several slides, the facilitator should ask the participants to reflect back on how they interacted with their partner during the puzzle activity. Ask them to identify (to themselves) what type of communication style they might use.*

## Peacekeepers

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- These are the people who want everyone to be happy, and they will work very hard to bring harmony and peace to a relationship/family when disagreements arise.
  - ♦ Peacekeepers do not like conflict, and tend to avoid it whenever possible.
  - ♦ Peacekeepers can easily find themselves in unhealthy relationships since they struggle to openly express their thoughts or opinions for fear of creating conflict.
  - ♦ This passive nature can also make them more likely to find themselves in (and stay in) an unhealthy relationship.

- ♦ Peacekeepers also:
  - Have a hard time saying “no.”
  - Feel guilty expressing what they need/want.
- This style of communication is very common – and there is nothing wrong with it; after all, is it a bad thing to want harmony and less conflict in a family? Of course not, but if you aren't careful, this communication style can send the message that:
  - ♦ “I don't count.”
  - ♦ “You can take advantage of me.”
  - ♦ “My thoughts and feelings aren't as important as yours.”
  - ♦ “I am nobody; you are better than me.”

(Advance slide)

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## People Pleasers...

- Have a hard time saying “No” because they don’t want to hurt other people’s feelings.
- Place too much importance on what others think and say
- Have a hard time stating their own opinions



## People Pleasers

### *Suggested facilitator script:*

- People pleasers are very good at adapting their opinions to match those of the people around them. Their main strategy is to blend in.
  - ♦ People pleasers don’t like to stand out or rock the boat. For them, it is important that they be in agreement with others rather than express a differing idea or opinion.
  - ♦ People pleasers are very concerned about what other people think of them.

- ♦ People pleasers have a hard time saying “no” because they don’t want to hurt anyone’s feelings.
- ♦ People pleasers place too much importance on what others think and say.
- ♦ People pleasers have a hard time stating their opinions.
- Again, this type of communicator is very common and there is nothing wrong with being a people pleaser. After all, what’s wrong with wanting to be agreeable and be liked by your spouse, family and friends? But if they’re not careful, people pleasers can send the message that:
  - ♦ “I don’t count unless you are happy.”
  - ♦ “My feelings change according to your feelings.”
  - ♦ “I am here to make you happy.”
  - ♦ “I am only somebody if you are happy.”

*(Advance slide)*

## Pushy people...

- Are rigid and not flexible
- Always want to be right
- Want to be the boss



## Pushy People

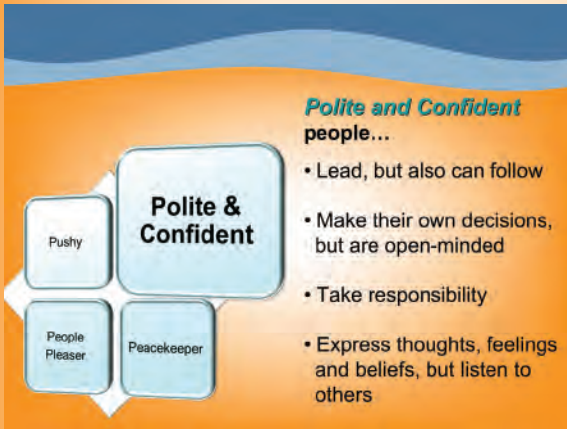
### *Suggested facilitator script:*

- Pushy people can come across as always:
  - ♦ Wanting to be right.
  - ♦ Wanting their own way.
  - ♦ Wanting to be the boss.
- Pushy people can be very rigid and not at all flexible: “It’s my way or the highway”, or, “Las cosas se hacen como yo digo y punto” (we do things like I say, period.)
  - ♦ Pushy people can also be perceived as overbearing.
- Being a pushy person is okay (just as are people pleasers and peacekeepers) because they know what they want and need. But the challenge is to not allow your overbearing communication style to come across too strong and send the message that:
  - ♦ “You are a fool for thinking differently than me.”
  - ♦ “Mine is the only opinion that matters.”
  - ♦ “What you want isn’t important.”
  - ♦ “What you feel doesn’t count.”

*(Advance slide)*



# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules



- Learning to be “polite and confident” communicators will help us share our own needs in a thoughtful way.
- Learning how to balance our natural styles with the traits of the “polite and confident” person can help our relationships because we are able to express ourselves honestly and openly while also being open to listening to the opinions of others.
- For people whose natural style might be peacekeeping or people pleasing, this might feel selfish.
- And for people whose natural style might be pushy, this might feel weak.

*(Advance slide)*



- *Ask couples to give more examples of how they can turn peacekeeping or pushy statements into polite and confident ones. Allow a few moments for participants to respond.*
- *Facilitator note: the next few slides will provide examples.*

*(Advance slide)*

## Polite and Confident

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Polite and confident people are assertive enough to get their point across, but open-minded enough to consider and value the opinions of others.
  - ♦ Polite and confident people lead but can also follow.
  - ♦ They make their own decisions, but are open-minded.
  - ♦ Polite and confident people take responsibility for their actions (whether good or bad).
  - ♦ They express their own thoughts, feelings and beliefs but listen to others.

## Benefits of Learning and Practicing Polite and Confident Communication

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Learning to communicate in a polite and confident way will reap a number of benefits. Polite and confident people :
  - ♦ Have increased confidence and self-respect.
  - ♦ Can say things without offending others.
  - ♦ Can say “no” when needed without feeling guilty.
  - ♦ Can make requests and ask for help.
  - ♦ Can express positive and negative feelings.
  - ♦ Worry less about trivial things.
  - ♦ Are able to start, continue and end general conversations.

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Let's Practice

### Peacekeepers

I will see that movie if you want to.

### Pushy

We will see this movie. I know you will like it.

### Polite and Confident

## Let's Practice

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Let's think about how someone, who might naturally interact in a peacekeeper or pushy way, can practice making statements in a polite and confident way.
- *Facilitator should read the examples on the slide and ask participants for examples of how to re-phrase the statement in a polite and confident (or assertive) way.*

*An example of re-phrasing the statement might be:*

*"I would like to see this movie. Do you want to?"*

*(Advance slide)*

## Let's Practice

### Peacekeeper

I don't think our daughter should be friends with Maria. But if you think it's OK, I do, too.

### Pushy

Our daughter will not be friends with Maria because I say so!

### Polite and Confident

## Let's Practice

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- Let's try another one. . . .
- *Facilitator should read examples on the slide and again ask participants for examples of how to re-phrase the statement in a polite and confident way.*

♦ *An example of the re-phrased statement might be:*

- *"Let's talk about our daughter's friendship with Maria. I am concerned that it could be harmful to her schoolwork."*

*(Advance slide)*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Let's Practice Being Polite and Confident

Using an "I Feel" statement

When you \_\_\_\_\_ (the behavior)

like you \_\_\_\_\_ (when, be specific)

I feel \_\_\_\_\_ (your feeling expressed)

- *Facilitator Note: Write the three steps on a board or flip chart, or provide participants a handout with the three steps.*
- Here's how it works:
  - ♦ You complete the phrase: "When you..." by stating a specific behavior.
  - ♦ Then, you complete the next phrase, "like you..." by including a particular time when the behavior has happened.
  - ♦ The last step is to share how this made you feel in a respectful but open and honest way.

(Advance slide)

## Let's Practice Being Polite and Confident

**Pay attention to the good things**

Using an "I Feel" statement

When you spend time with my family (the behavior)

like you did last weekend (when, be specific)

it really made me feel special and like I am important to you (your feeling expressed)

(Advance slide)

## Let's Practice Being Polite and Confident

*Note to facilitator: This slide will come up in several parts. First the "I Feel" line will appear, then with each advance of the slide, each of the other 3 lines will appear.*

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- We've practiced being polite and confident communicators as a group; now you're going to get a chance to practice as a couple.
- When you are unsure how to say something in a polite and confident way, you can always use an "I feel" statement. This technique allows you to describe to your partner exactly how you feel or what you are thinking in a polite and confident way. In other words, you learn to express yourself in an honest way without offending your partner.

## Let's Practice Being Polite and Confident, Example One

*Note to facilitator: This slide will come up in several parts. First the "I Feel" line will appear, then with each advance of the slide, each of the other 3 lines will appear.*

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- "I feel" statements are a great way to compliment your partner and share all of the good things that you like and appreciate about him or her.
- Let's look at an example of this...
  - ♦ When you "spend time with the family" like you "did last weekend," it "really made me feel special and like I am important to you."
  - ♦ *Facilitator note: emphasize the three steps: identify the behavior, when the behavior occurred, and your feeling expressed.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## Let's Practice Being Polite and Confident

### Area of Concern

Using an "I Feel" statement

When you don't call me to let me know you are going to be late (the behavior)

like tonight (when, be specific)

it makes me feel scared and worried for your safety (your feeling expressed)

(Advance slide)

## ACTIVITY 3

### Writing and Sharing "I Feel" Statements



## Let's Practice Being Polite and Confident, Example Two

*Note to facilitator: This slide will come up in several parts. First the "I Feel" line will appear, then with each advance of the slide, each of the other 3 lines will appear.*

*Suggested facilitator script:*

- The "I feel" technique can also be used when you need to share something that might be difficult to express to your partner (or any friend or family member).
- Here's an example of this...
  - ♦ When you "don't call me to let me know you're going to be late" like "tonight," it makes me feel "scared and worried for your safety."
  - ♦ *Facilitator note: again, emphasize the three steps: identify the behavior, when the behavior occurred, and your feeling expressed.*

## Activity #3: Writing and Sharing "I Feel" Statements

- **Time:** 20-25 minutes
- **Materials needed:**
  - ♦ "I feel" statements handout
  - ♦ Pens/pencils
- **Facilitator Note:** *This activity has the potential of becoming emotional as couples share their feelings with one another. It will require the facilitator to pay close attention to the dynamics in the room and make adjustments based on how the couples are responding to the activity. It is specifically intended to help participants:*
  - ♦ *Identify two positive things about their partner.*
  - ♦ *Note an area of concern about their partner.*
  - ♦ *Share their "I feel" statements openly with their partner.*

# Hispanic Healthy Marriage Curriculum Modules

## *Suggested facilitator script:*

- How many of you have ever overlooked something your partner did for you? Of course, you have – we all do from time to time.
- Before we start this activity, I want you all to think of some things your partner does for you that you appreciate or that make you feel good.
  - ♦ It can be something small like, “she sits next to me in the truck,” or, “he always kisses me goodbye when he goes to work.”
  - ♦ It can be an every day thing occurrence like, “she irons my shirts,” or, “he takes out the trash.”
  - ♦ The important thing is to focus on the things that are the easiest to overlook.
  - ♦ *Facilitator note: This activity will give participants a chance to practice using “I feel” statements. Write some of these down on a flipchart, chalkboard, or white board for couples to refer to during the remainder of the activity.*
- **Activity instructions**
- *Participants may choose to practice writing “I feel” statements (handout is provided), or they may prefer to think of “I feel” statements according to the following guidelines:*
  - ♦ Think of two “I feel” statements that acknowledge or compliment your partner for something kind or thoughtful that he or she said or did.
  - ♦ Write (or think of) a third “I feel” statement that addresses an area of concern that you would like to express to your partner.

*(Advance slide)*

## **ACTIVITY 3**

### **Time to Share**

### **Activity #3, continued: Time to Share**

#### *Suggested facilitator script:*

- Take a minute with your partner to find a comfortable place in the room, away from others.
  - Turn your chairs to face each other and decide who will go first. Take your partner’s hand and share one compliment “I feel” statement.
    - ♦ Then have your partner repeat back to you what he or she heard.
  - Repeat the process with the other partner sharing a compliment.
  - Next share the area of concern “I feel” statement.
  - Again, have your partner repeat back to you what he or she heard.
- *Ask the couples to try not to respond to the statement right now.*
  - *Have couples rotate sharing their “I feel” statements.*
  - *Make sure to have participants finish with a compliment so that their sharing time ends on a high-note.*
  - *Remind the couples to take turns so they become comfortable with sharing and listening.*
  - *Ask couples to share what the experience of using “I feel” statements was like for them. Remind couples not to provide specifics/details of the statements since their partner might not be comfortable sharing that information with the group.*

The group has listed other common topics that couples talk about. Now it's time for each couple to identify what they talk about most and see if there are some things they may want to talk about more often.

**This activity is designed to help participants**

- Note what topics they discuss most at home
- See what is NOT being discussed
- Agree on topics to talk about at home

**TIME**

10 minutes

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

None

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Have each couple discuss the following questions

- What did you discover about the things you talk about most?
- What important topics are not being discussed?
- What topics would help your relationship grow if they were talked about more?
- Couples may choose to write these topics down if they want

**WRAP UP**

- As a homework exercise, have each couple choose one topic that would help their relationship grow and write it down and/or circle it from the list they have made
- Ask the couples to plan this week to discuss the topic they have chosen as a couple

People communicate in different ways. This activity gives couples a chance to communicate with one another as they would naturally. Their interaction during the activity will be referenced later in the presentation as the various styles of communication are introduced.

*NOTE: The objectives below are for the facilitator's reference and should not be shared with the couples until the activity has been completed.*

### **OBJECTIVES**

**This activity is designed to:**

- Give participants a chance to display their interaction styles in a natural way.
- Create an experience for the participants to reflect upon later in the presentation when the various interaction styles are discussed.
- Show how some popular cultural elements (like music) might influence our beliefs about how we are to interact with our partner/family.

### **TIME**

10-12 minutes

### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

- One miniature puzzle per couple
- CD player or device to play background music

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

- Distribute a puzzle to each couple.
- Ask the couples to complete the puzzles together, offering very little other instruction.
- Play music while the participants complete the activity, but do not tell them what song or songs you will be playing. You might want to play several songs that illustrate different communication styles. An example of a song that illustrates a more inflexible or rigid style of communication and demonstrates more traditionally held beliefs about men's behavior is "El Rey" by José Alfredo Jimenez.

*Note to facilitator:* While couples are completing the puzzle, observe the following:

- How the couples are cooperating?
- Are they working as a team?
- Is one partner taking more of a leadership role than the other, or are they both actively participating?
- Did the music provoke any reactions?

### **WRAP-UP**

Invite the couples to respond to the following questions:

- What do you think was the purpose of that activity?
- What did you notice about your partner?

The participants now have seen several examples of how to use “I Feel” statements. This activity lets them practice with their partner so that they feel more comfortable using the skill at home.

*NOTE: This activity has the potential of becoming emotional as couples share feelings with one another. It will require the facilitator to pay close attention to the dynamics in the room and make adjustments based on how the couples are responding to the activity. It is recommended that, before beginning this activity, the facilitator spend a few minutes asking participants for examples of positive little things partners do for each other. These ideas could be listed on a chalkboard or flipchart and will help the couples as they form “I Feel” statements to compliment their partner.*

This activity will give participants a chance to practice using “I Feel” statements. It is specifically intended to help participants

- Identify two positive things about their partner.
- Note an area of concern about their partner.
- Share their “I Feel” statements openly with their partner.

### **TIME**

20-25 minutes

### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

“I Feel” Statements Handout

Pens/Pencils

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Participants may choose to practice *writing* “I Feel” statements (handout provided), or they may prefer to *think of* “I Feel” statements according to the following guidelines:

- Two “I Feel” statements to *acknowledge* or *compliment* your partner for a kindness he or she said or did.
- Write or think of a third “I Feel” Statement to address an *area of concern* that you would like to express to your partner.

### **SHARING**

- Have each couple take turns sharing their “I Feel” Statement with each other. Make sure to have participants place the *area of concern* in the middle so that their sharing time ends on a high note with a compliment.

### **WRAP-UP**

Ask for volunteers to share what the experience of using “I Feel” statements was like for them.



# Practicing "I Feel" Statements

## Compliment

When you \_\_\_\_\_  
*(the behavior)*

\_\_\_\_\_

like you \_\_\_\_\_  
*(when, be specific)*

\_\_\_\_\_

it made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
*(your feeling expressed)*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Area of Concern

When you \_\_\_\_\_  
*(the behavior)*

\_\_\_\_\_

like you \_\_\_\_\_  
*(when, be specific)*

\_\_\_\_\_

it made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
*(your feeling expressed)*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Compliment

When you \_\_\_\_\_  
*(the behavior)*

\_\_\_\_\_

like you \_\_\_\_\_  
*(when, be specific)*

\_\_\_\_\_

it made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
*(your feeling expressed)*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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