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# San Benito County Parents Learning about Drugs and Alcohol in Spanish

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Capstone Report # 3

Nancy Zermeno

San Benito County Parents Learning about Drugs and Alcohol in Spanish

California State University of Monterey Bay

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Abstract

Hispanic or Latino non-speaking English Parents are not familiarized with the different types of drugs in the community. Various studies have indicated that San Benito County teenager that suffer from drug and alcohol are at-risk of being truant, dropping school, or becoming criminals. This project aimed to address a Drug prevention intervention class in Spanish to target the population of non-speaking English parents. The majority of non-speaking English parents are not familiarized with the culture or laws in the United States. The project was implemented by the Juvenile Division of San Benito County Probation Department in collaboration with Youth Alliance. The implementation method was a PowerPoint presentation in Spanish for Spanish speaking parents. Parents were asked to fill out a pre and post survey and data was collected. An activity was created at the end of the presentation where all parents participated. The most important result is that parents were able to learn about the different types of drugs affecting teenagers in and the community and received tips on how to help teenagers stay out of drugs. In addition, parents learned the signs to look for in teenagers when they think their teenagers are associated with drugs.

*Keywords:* Drugs, alcohol, teenagers, Spanish classes.

## INTRODUCTION

Many studies have found that Latinos face culture barriers related to their children's school and parent involvement. Many of the reasons for no parent involvement in their children's school or other activities related to their children are the result of language barriers, lack of time and lack of understanding (Castro, 2010). Immigrant Latino parents tend to have attended less school in their native countries than what is required in the United States and have not reached a high level of education making difficult for Latino parents to understand the education system (Castro, 2010). Additionally, Latino parents may feel overwhelmed by the adaptation to the American society and their children's school. Furthermore, part of the reason for non-involvement of Latino parents is the lack of awareness of the expectations of the U.S. school system (Castro, 2010). Even though Latino parents show concern for their children's education, they do not have the knowledge on education on laws in the United States. For example, they do not have a full understanding of attendance laws and the consequences for their children not attending school.

Teenagers are dropping out of school or becoming truant which is a result of youth at-risk of not being good productive members of the community. Parents are living under high stress worrying and the issue affects the family as a whole. When a teenager is associated with drugs or alcohol, they lack education. These teenagers are more likely to end up unemployed and at risk of becoming involved in crimes. In the long run, these students are more likely to go to jail and be on probation (Harris, 2013). According to kidsdata 2017, high school dropouts are associated with a range of adverse life outcomes. For example, young people who do not complete high school are more likely to live in poverty, dependent on welfare benefits, have poor physical and mental health, and engage in criminal activity (Kidsdata 2017). According to Kidsdata (2017),

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between 2014 and 2015 it was reported that 1,376 students were truancy students in San Benito County. This is important because according to Harris 2013, school districts lose \$1.4 billion per year by failing to get students to school because school funding is based on students' attendance rates.

In San Benito County Latino non-speaking English Parents are unaware of the different types of drugs affecting their teenagers. Drugs and alcohol are one of the causes why students become truant. The purpose of the project is to educate Spanish speaking parents on the most common types of drugs that can be found at home and in the streets. The project took initiative on providing the Latino community the opportunity to volunteer in the implementation of the project. The project was implemented because teens are committing drug-related offenses or other crimes which is one of the cause teens end up on probation.

The implementation of this project is supported by San Benito County Probation Department and the division of Juveniles. In addition, there was collaboration implementing this project with Youth Alliance. This intern in collaborations with Youth Alliance's intern carried out this project by worked in collaboration to prepare for the class and work was divided equally. Both interns created a flyer in Spanish inviting parents to attend a prevention intervention class on drugs and alcohol. Copies of the flyer were past out in both agencies inviting parents to attend. The majority of parents receiving services from Youth Alliance and the Probation Department were invited to participate in the project. Both interns collaborated in creating the PowerPoint presentation, designing an activity and survey questionnaire. Once everything was prepared on October 18, 2017, at 6:00 PM the class Papas Aprendiendo Sobre las Drogas took place.

### **ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT OUTCOMES**

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One expected outcome of the project was that twenty-five parents were expected to attend the drug class and learned how to recognize the top most common home and street drugs. Another expected outcome is that parents attending the workshop learn how to recognize factors leading to teenagers using drugs. Furthermore, parents will be able to recognize if their teenagers are linked with the use of drug or alcohol. Parents will have the knowledge of the steps necessary to take if their son or daughter are associated with drugs and the resources to reach out to in the community of San Benito County. In this case, parents are learning ways to prevent their teenagers from connecting with the use drugs and alcohol. As a result of this teenagers are being kept in school and fewer students are becoming truant.

The expected outcome was to have twenty-five active parents attend the workshop. However, when the class was implemented only twelve parents actively participated in the class. Another expected outcome is that parents will have more knowledge about the topics discussed in the class. One data collective methodology used to assess the learning of parents that took place in the drug class was a survey questionnaire. One survey was passed out for parents to fill out before the class began. There was a pre-survey that was used. Then there was a second survey that was handed out to parents at the end of the class. The second survey was used as post data collective methodology. Both surveys were filled out anonymous by parents. In this case, an actual count was recorded of the total amount of parents who were present. The post-survey had a total of twelve respondents. The measure used to assess the number of participants that showed up is by having a sign in sheet by the door, parents signed in before the event.

Parents were also asked to participate in an activity at the end of the PowerPoint presentation. The activity was based on the information that was presented to them in the PowerPoint. For this activity parents worked together in teams, the purpose of the activity was to

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match up drug names with effects, texture, and looks of that drug. All parents participated actively in the activity and had another opportunity to get familiarized with the different types of drugs.

### **PROJECT RESULTS/FINDINGS**

The project was implemented on October 18, 2017, at 6:00 PM, the project took place in Rancho San Justo apartment complex in Hollister, CA. The Papas Aprendiendo Sobre las Drogas class was successful, the class was given positive evaluations by the clients that attended. The majority of the clients that filled out the questionnaires agreed that the class was a good way to learn about drugs and alcohol. All clients participated in the class, the pre-survey showed that clients had a basic knowledge of the topic before the class.

After the class, the post-survey showed that clients learned something new and had more knowledge on drugs and alcohol than before. Parents requested for more parent education classes on teenager issues. They enjoyed and were able to learn something new because it was simple and in their language. The survey showed that parents could correctly answer the questions asked on the questionnaires. The questions were written in Spanish and simple to understand. These results show that there was a slight increase in knowledge gained after the class when comparing the pre and post surveys. Another finding is that parents have a feeling of disconnect with the community and county. Parents indicated that there are not many resources available to them in Spanish.

One strength of the project that contributed to the outcomes is that there were two facilitators facilitating the workshop. Interns provided support to one another in preparing for the workshop and during the workshop. Another strength that contributed to the outcomes is that both interns are Spanish speaker and come from similar backgrounds as the parents participating in the

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workshop. This allowed parents to connect more with the interns and a more trusted relationship was created. The prep and post surveys were a success because interns were able to receive feedback from the participants. The workshop design activity method had several strengths that contributed its overall success. The success that contributed to the outcomes is that participants were able to engage in the activity of identifying the different types of drugs and engaged in the class by asked questions. In addition, a debate was created among the parents discussing the causes of why teenagers engage in drug and alcohol use and ideas on how to prevent it from happening.

Although the workshop was a success there were some areas that could be been improved. One area that could have been improved was the time of the workshop. For example, the class took place at 6:00 PM but parents did not begin to show up until 6:30 PM. This is an indicator that parents work late, a later time for the class would be ideal. The class did not begin until 6:30 PM when most of the parents had shown up. One challenge faced during this workshop is that it originally designed to make the class two days. The plan was to have a guest speaker expert on the topic. Unfortunately, interns were unable to find a guest speaker and the class had to be reduced to one day. At the end of the workshop, it worked out fine because parents received the good amount of information without necessarily having to do two days.

### **CONCLUSIONS/INTERPRETATION**

The Papas Aprendiendo Sobre las Drogas provided Spanish-speaking parents with information about drugs and alcohol in their language. Latinos in the United States face cultural barriers when it comes to their children's school and other interests that their children may have. Latino parents are not familiarized with laws surrounding their children's education. Language



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barriers, lack of time and lack of understanding are all issues Latinos face when moving to the United States and trying to adapt to the culture. If more workshops were offered in Spanish about teen issues, Latino parents would be less overwhelmed when addressing the issues affecting their children. Furthermore, the classes should take place for a longer period of time allowing parents to receive more information. For instance, each teen issue class should be a set of at least two class periods allowing parents to become more knowledgeable on the topics being discussed. Several parents approached both interns after the workshop and requested that the class be repeated in the future because they found the information helpful. Also, parents requested more parent education classes on teenage issues in Spanish. With the positive feedback provided on the post-survey, it is recommended that this class and other educational workshops are repeated in the future. It would be beneficial if the class was expanded to all Spanish-speaking parents in San Benito County and not just clients from the Probation Department and Youth Alliance. Finding a guest speaker expert in the topic would be beneficial to better connect with participants.

The Aprendiendo Sobre las Drogas class aimed to address the social issue of teenagers using drugs and alcohol and the barriers that Latino Speaking-Spanish face by not receive the information in their language. The class sought to address a small part of this issue by providing information to them in Spanish and help reduce one of the barriers. Furthermore, parents had an opportunity to be more familiarized with the issue of drugs and alcohol affecting the teenagers in the community of San Benito County. Before the beginning of planning this project, this intern was not knowledgeable about the topic, but through the research conducted this intern had a better understanding. It was a success being able to provide information out to the community especially for a population that appreciated the information given to them. Going through the

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process taught this intern organizational skill when putting a workshop together and making sure everything comes out as planned. During the preparation, this intern had doubt about being able to complete the project successfully, but at the end discovered that the project was a total success.

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## APPENDICES

### PRE

#### Encuesta para Padres- Antes de Clase

¿Ha asistido a un grupo de información sobre drogas en el pasado?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Es usted un padre de un adolescente?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Está al tanto de las drogas a las que sus hijos podrían estar expuestos en la comunidad?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Tiene conversaciones con su hijo acerca de las drogas?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Ha visto algún comportamiento inusual en su hijo que pueda indicar abuso de sustancias?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Está o ha tenido su hijo en problemas por razones de abuso de sustancias con la ley o en la escuela?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Sabe usted que el consumo de alcohol en los adolescentes	

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es peligroso ya que su cerebro sigue desarrollándose?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Está de acuerdo en que la marihuana "te relaja y no es peligrosa"?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Qué espera ganar con este grupo?	

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Por favor explique su razón para asistir a este grupo...

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**POST**

**Encuesta para Padres- Después de Clase**

Este evento cumplió con mis expectativas...	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
Los facilitadores proporcionaron información valiosa...	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
Me gustaría ver más de estos eventos en la comunidad...	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
Si se ofrece, ¿asistirías a otro grupo de información sobre drogas?	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
He aprendido sobre una droga que no tenía ni idea de...	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
Usaré la información proporcionada para ayudar a mi adolescente a mantenerse alejado de las drogas ...	<b>Falso Cierto</b>
¿Hay algo que usted cambiaría o agregaría al grupo de hoy? Si es así, por favor explique.	

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**Comentarios Adicionales:**

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