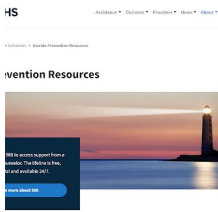




Top stories in this newsletter



NC DHHS Suicide Prevention Landing Page



The Trevor Project



Suicide in the Latino Community



Suicide Myths & Facts

New NC DHHS Suicide Prevention Landing Page



Image from [NC DHHS website](#)

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with UNC's Suicide Prevention Institute, has launched a new [suicide prevention landing page](#). Despite the abundance of state and local resources, they have historically been scattered across many independent organizations and webpages. This has made identifying evidence-based and culturally appropriate interventions and services challenging for stakeholders and those seeking care.

The new suicide prevention landing page will mitigate this challenge and serve as a central hub of user-friendly information and resources. The site includes mental and behavioral health services, community-based prevention programs, and suicide prevention data sources. Residents can now access a comprehensive catalogue of resources and guidance catered to meet the needs of North Carolina's diverse population.

The site's key features include:

- A comprehensive list of free and confidential Suicide & Crisis Lifelines to support those in distress or immediate need
- A diverse set of mental and behavioral health care services
- Low barrier, evidence-based interventions that local communities can implement to prevent suicide
- Guidance for clinical settings to improve access and delivery of suicide care and uplift best practices
- Data sources for suicide prevention to enhance understanding of suicide and mental health-related behaviors at the state and local level, to support and inform suicide evaluation and prevention efforts.

Written by Hannah Harms; Reference: [NC DHHS Website](#)

Trevor Project



Image from [TheTrevorProject.org](#)

[The Trevor Project](#) is a leading national organization dedicated to crisis intervention and suicide prevention for LGBTQ+ youth. Founded in 1998 by the creators of the Academy Award-winning short film "Trevor," the organization aims to provide critical support and a safe space for young people who may be struggling with their sexual orientation, gender identity, or mental health issues.

The Trevor Project offers a 24/7 crisis intervention lifeline, chat, and text services, ensuring that trained counselors are always available to assist those in need. Additionally, the organization provides valuable resources and educational materials to help foster a more accepting and understanding environment for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Beyond crisis intervention, The Trevor Project engages in extensive advocacy and research efforts to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ youth. The organization works to influence public policy, promote inclusive and affirming practices in schools and communities, and conduct groundbreaking research to better understand the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ young people. Through initiatives like the TrevorSpace social networking platform, they provide a supportive online community where LGBTQ+ youth can connect and share their experiences. The Trevor Project's comprehensive approach ensures that they not only address immediate crises but also contribute to long-term, systemic changes that promote mental health and well-being for LGBTQ+ youth across the country

Written by Grace Lutter; References: [TheTrevorproject.org](#)

Suicide in the Latino Community



Editor note - if you or someone you know is in crisis, Spanish language help is available by text or telephone 9-8-8 or chat at <https://988lifeline.org/es/home/>)

Latinos are the fastest growing population group in the United States, numbering 62 million. The term "Latino" refers to individuals of any race from Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central American or South American origin. ¹

Suicide remains a critical public health issue in the United States, and the Latino community is no exception. Despite cultural values emphasizing family and community support, Latino individuals face unique challenges that can increase their risk of mental health issues and suicide. Each year an estimated 243,000 Latinos attempt to end their own lives.² According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide rates among Latino adolescents have been rising, with higher rates of suicidal ideation and attempts compared to their non-Latino white peers. The CDC's provisional data for 2022 showed a record high of nearly 50,000 suicide deaths across all racial and ethnic groups.³ Community leaders and mental health researchers indicate that the pandemic hit young Latinos especially hard. Immigrant children are often expected to take on more responsibilities when their parents do not speak English. Many live in poor households, with some or all family members lacking legal residency. Cultural barriers and language issues may also prevent many from seeking care in a mental health system with already spotty access to services. While the overall suicide rate for Latino people is lower than the national average, the impact of cultural, socioeconomic, and immigration-related stressors factors cannot be overlooked.⁴

Cultural stigma is a significant issue, as mental health problems and suicide often carry substantial stigma in many Latino communities. Traditional values emphasizing resilience can discourage individuals, especially men, from seeking help. The fear of judgment and discrimination within their own community exacerbates this issue. Another factor is acculturation stress, which is the process of adapting to a new culture while maintaining one's cultural identity. This is particularly challenging for first-generation immigrants and their children, who may experience cultural clashes, identity confusion, and pressure to assimilate, contributing to mental health struggles. Socioeconomic challenges also play a role, as many Latino families face economic hardships leading to increased stress, anxiety, and depression. Lack of access to quality healthcare and mental health services due to financial constraints or language barriers further compound these issues. Furthermore, experiences of discrimination and racism can have profound negative effects on mental health, with the fear of deportation among undocumented individuals adding to the chronic stress experienced by many in the community.⁵

What Can Be Done to Support the Latino Community?

Fostering a supportive environment involves raising awareness about mental health to reduce stigma and promote understanding, with community organizations, churches, and schools playing a crucial role in disseminating information and resources. It also requires providing culturally competent care, including training more Latino and non-Latino mental health professionals, offering cultural competency training for all healthcare providers to improve the quality of care and increase trust within the community. Strengthening community ties through engagement and support networks can give individuals a sense of belonging and purpose, while encouraging open conversations about mental health within families and communities helps reduce feelings of isolation and shame. Additionally, ensuring that mental health resources are accessible, affordable, and available in multiple languages, especially in Spanish for this community is critical. Community health centers, hotlines, and online platforms offering anonymous support can bridge the gap for those hesitant to seek face-to-face help.

Moving Forward

Addressing suicide in the Latino community requires a multifaceted approach that acknowledges and respects cultural values while promoting mental health awareness and support. By fostering an environment of openness and understanding, we can help individuals feel less alone and more empowered to seek help. Together, we can break the silence and build a healthier, more resilient community.

Written by Mariana Valdez-Aguilar; References

1. Krogstad, J.M. and Noe Bustamante L. (2021). Key facts about U.S. Latinos for National Hispanic Heritage Month. Pew Research Center
2. America's Health Rankings. (2021). Trend: Suicide – Hispanic, U.S. Data from CDC Wonder.
3. Ahmad FB, Bastian B. Quarterly provisional estimates—Technical Notes—Mortality, 2021—Quarter 1, 2023. National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System. 2023. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/mortality-technical-notes.htm>.
4. Roche, Kathleen M et al. "COVID-19 Stressors and Latinx Adolescents' Mental Health Symptomology and School Performance: A Prospective Study." *Journal of youth and adolescence* vol. 51,6 (2022): 1031-1047. doi:10.1007/s10964-022-01603-7
5. Ahad, Ahmed A et al. "Understanding and Addressing Mental Health Stigma Across Cultures for Improving Psychiatric Care: A narrative Review." *Cureus* vol. 15,5 e39549. 26 May. 2023. doi:10.7759/cureus.39549

Suicide Myths & Facts



Myth: Talking about suicide or asking someone if they feel suicidal will encourage suicide attempts or put the thought in someone's head.

Fact: Asking about suicide does not increase the chances that someone will attempt suicide. Talking about it directly may actually reduce thoughts of suicide (Bender et al., 2019).

Myth: Reducing access to lethal methods of suicide, such as barriers on bridges and safe storage of firearms, don't work in preventing suicide.

Fact: Limiting someone's access to lethal methods is one of the most effective ways to lower their chances of attempting suicide. This provides them with more time to think before acting on their suicidal thoughts (Houtsma et al., 2018; Pirkis et al., 2015).

Written by Lisa Zhu; References:

- Bender, T. W., Fitzpatrick, S., Hartmann, M. A., Hames, J., Bodell, L., Selby, E. A., & Joiner Jr, T. E. (2019). Does it hurt to ask? An analysis of iatrogenic risk during suicide risk assessment. *Neurology, Psychiatry and Brain Research*, 33, 73-81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.npr.2019.07.005>
- Houtsma, C., Butterworth, S. E., & Anestis, M. D. (2018). Firearm suicide: pathways to risk and methods of prevention. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 22, 7-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.07.002>
- Pirkis, J., San Too, L., Spittal, M. J., Krysinaka, K., Robinson, J., & Cheung, Y. T. D. (2015). Interventions to reduce suicides at suicide hotspots: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 2(11), 994-1001. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(15\)00266-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(15)00266-7)

Stay tuned for new and exciting developments!

In future newsletters you can expect information on funding opportunities, new research findings, upcoming trainings, local suicide prevention initiatives and more.

If you would like to share information in a future edition (questions, events, team spotlight), please reach out to Grace Lutter and Hannah Harms at SPI@unc.edu.