

## Team

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## Background

Mental illness stigma continues to be rampant within the Latinx population.<sup>1</sup> Mental illness stigma, along with low understanding of mental illness, has been shown to negatively affect treatment-seeking behavior, particularly in adolescents.<sup>2</sup> However, studies have shown that educational anti-stigma interventions can positively affect knowledge, empowerment, and help-seeking behavior in adolescents.<sup>3</sup>

## Hypothesis & Objectives

Our hypothesis is that an awareness campaign involving classes around mental illness and targeting high school students from predominately Latinx and underserved/underprivileged backgrounds will decrease the stigma of mental illness and lead to increased likelihood to seek help when mental health is threatened within this population.

Our objectives are the following:

- To dispel common misconceptions about mental health that may exist within our study population
- To de-stigmatize discussions about mental health and to encourage latinx high school students to support each other and reach out for professional help when needed

## Materials, Methods, and Plan

1. Classes were created by Dr. Silva, and will be reviewed collaboratively with advisement from Dr. Iten, Dr. Triana, and other members of the JMH Family Medicine Residency Clinic Integrated Behavioral Health Team.
2. Our team will work in concert with local high schools and/or community organizations to recruit youth in the community who may be interested in attending our classes, and we will specifically target local East Bay underserved Latinx populations.
3. When participants are secured, classes will be administered over the online Zoom platform in the setting of the current COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Pre- and post-surveys will be administered to examine the degree to which participants acquired knowledge and awareness of general concepts of mental health as well as common misconceptions

## Proposal/Model

Our classes will be subdivided into 4 modules as per below. The intent of these modules is to allow students to reflect on their own mental health, learn about psychiatric diagnoses and become aware of common myths about mental illness, and then empower them to seek help and assist their peers in seeking help.



Classes will last an hour long and the entirety of the course will be 5 classes, with 2 classes total to cover “#2- What is Mental Illness?” A pre-survey will be given on at the start of class on day 1, and a post-survey will be given at the end of class on day 5.

## Discussion

Previous studies, particularly Milin et al and Lanfredi et al, have shown the positive effectiveness of mental health literacy interventions on both mental health stigma and knowledge within adolescents and high-school age children.<sup>3,4</sup> If these findings can be found to be replicated in Latinx children in the same age group, it would highly support the use of these classes in this specific population as well. It may also support the use of culturally specific and culturally appropriate resources to address the unique needs of this population and others as well.

## Literature Cited

- 1) Benuto LT, Gonzalez F, Reinoso-Segovia F, Duckworth M. Mental Health Literacy, Stigma, and Behavioral Health Service Use: the Case of Latinx and Non-Latinx Whites. *J Racial Ethn Health Disparities*. 2019 Dec;6(6):1122-1130. doi: 10.1007/s40615-019-00614-8. Epub 2019 Jul 20. PMID: 31327136.
- 2) Kaushik A, Kostaki E, Kyriakopoulos M. The stigma of mental illness in children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Psychiatry Res*. 2016 Sep 30;243:469-94. doi: 10.1016/j.psychres.2016.04.042. Epub 2016 Jun 23. PMID: 27517643.
- 3) Lanfredi M, Macis A, Ferrari C, Rilosi L, Ughi EC, Fanelli A, Younis N, Cadei L, Gallizioli C, Uggeri G, Rossi R. Effects of education and social contact on mental health-related stigma among high-school students. *Psychiatry Res*. 2019 Nov;281:112581. doi: 10.1016/j.psychres.2019.112581. Epub 2019 Sep 27. PMID: 31586833.
- 4) Milin R, Kutcher S, Lewis SP, Walker S, Wei Y, Ferrill N, Armstrong MA. Impact of a Mental Health Curriculum on Knowledge and Stigma Among High School Students: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 2016 May;55(5):383-391.e1. doi: 10.1016/j.jaac.2016.02.018. Epub 2016 Mar 8. PMID: 27126852.