

SUPPORTING LATINO PARENTS IN ADDRESSING BULLYING AMONG LATINO YOUTH

PHASE II

December 2025

Prepared by:



Sponsored by:



MANKATO AREA FOUNDATION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Bullying continues to affect many families and has deep, long-lasting emotional impacts. It is defined as the repeated use of power to harm another person through unwanted words or actions, causing physical or emotional distress (PACER Center, 2023). Bullying is also recognized as a form of youth violence and an adverse childhood experience (ACE).

In 2024, HACER conducted seven interviews with Latino parents of middle school students in Madelia and St. James. All participants reported that their children experienced bullying, including racial, physical, and cyberbullying, often related to language, appearance, or cultural identity. Cyberbullying was commonly reported on platforms such as Snapchat and TikTok. Parents described inconsistent school responses, limited Spanish-language communication, and unclear anti-bullying protocols, leading some families to seek support from law enforcement or healthcare providers.

The findings highlighted significant emotional, behavioral, and academic impacts on students and underscored the need for early intervention, stronger school–family communication, and culturally responsive support. These results informed HACER’s 2024 workshops with SMRLS and NAMI and support the expansion of workshops in 2025 to strengthen parental advocacy and access to legal and mental health resources.

WORKSHOP IMPLEMENTATION

Use of 2024 Workshop Feedback to Design the 2025 Workshops

Feedback and pre–post survey data from the four 2024 workshops guided the design of the 2025 series. Results showed gains in knowledge, confidence, and awareness of resources, while also identifying content gaps and access barriers.

Legal workshop feedback highlighted strong interest and learning gains but varied baseline knowledge, leading to the creation of two dedicated 2025 workshops focused on legal tools and concrete advocacy steps. Mental health workshop feedback showed high satisfaction and increased understanding of bullying’s emotional impact, supporting the addition of two 2025 workshops centered on culturally responsive mental health tools and resources.

Participation feedback also revealed scheduling barriers for working parents. In response, workshops were recorded and shared by email and text, a strategy that will continue in 2025 to expand access.

FINDINGS

The following findings are based on feedback collected from participants who attended the workshops and from viewers of the educational videos. Although surveys and follow-up links were shared with participants after each workshop, not all individuals completed them. Registration data collected during workshops and events reflects approximately 60 individuals who were interested in and received the information. The feedback presented includes responses from workshop participants who completed the surveys as well as insights from video viewers.

Knowledge Gains:

- Participants initially reported low to medium knowledge of bullying-related topics, including recognizing signs, navigating schools, and understanding laws/resources.
- Post-workshop, most reported medium to high knowledge levels, particularly in:
 - Effects of bullying on children’s mental health
 - Parents’ rights and school responsibilities
 - Legal frameworks and community resources

Confidence and Self-Efficacy:

- Significant increase in confidence to advocate for children in bullying situations at school and in the community.
- Participants felt more capable of taking action and seeking support.

	Workshops on Legal Aspects	Workshops on Mental Health Tools
Pre-Knowledge	Low-medium	Low
Post-Knowledge	Medium-High	Medium High
Knowledge Gain	Effects of bullying, parent's rights, legal frameworks	School protocols, signs in children, resources, parents' rights
Confidence Gains	Increased advocacy confidence	Increased self-efficacy in taking action
Requests for Future Workshops	Deeper legal processes, parents' rights	Mental Health tools, practical interventions strategies

Qualitative Insights:

- Parents valued practical guidance, such as concrete steps to address bullying and recognizing emotional/behavioral changes.
- Many requested deeper exploration of legal processes and mental health tools for future workshops.

Implications for Future Workshops:

- Expand and specialize content on legal rights, advocacy strategies, and mental health tools.
- Maintain culturally responsive, practical, and action-oriented approaches.

CONCLUSIONS

The second phase of this project strengthened culturally responsive bullying prevention workshops for Latino parents, informed by parent interviews and 2024 workshop feedback, and implemented in partnership with SMRLS and NAMI. The focus was on legal advocacy tools and mental health strategies to support children experiencing bullying.

Workshops increased parents' knowledge, confidence, and ability to recognize bullying, understand their rights, and access legal and mental health resources. Participants valued Spanish-language content and approaches that reflected their cultural experiences and barriers within school systems.

To address scheduling barriers, workshops were recorded and shared via email and text, receiving about 25 views within 12 days; one mental health session was not recorded to protect a safe sharing space. These efforts reinforced cross-organizational collaboration and informed the 2025 workshop series focused on legal and mental health supports.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We extend our sincere gratitude to the HickoryTech Fund of the Mankato Area Foundation and the Mankato Clinic Foundation for their generous support, which was instrumental in advancing the two phases of this project. Their belief in our work and support of an initiative addressing bullying in school environments—especially during a time when hate and discriminatory rhetoric are prevalent—allowed us to expand our educational efforts beyond Madelia, St. James, and Mankato and to strengthen workshop content based on participant feedback from the first phase.

Beyond financial support, their trust and confidence enabled the delivery of impactful workshops focused on legal advocacy and mental health resources. Through online workshops and recorded sessions shared on YouTube, approximately 60 parents were reached. HACER proudly recognizes our funders and partners across all outreach materials and deeply appreciates their commitment to supporting Latino/Hispanic families and creating safer, more inclusive environments for youth.

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