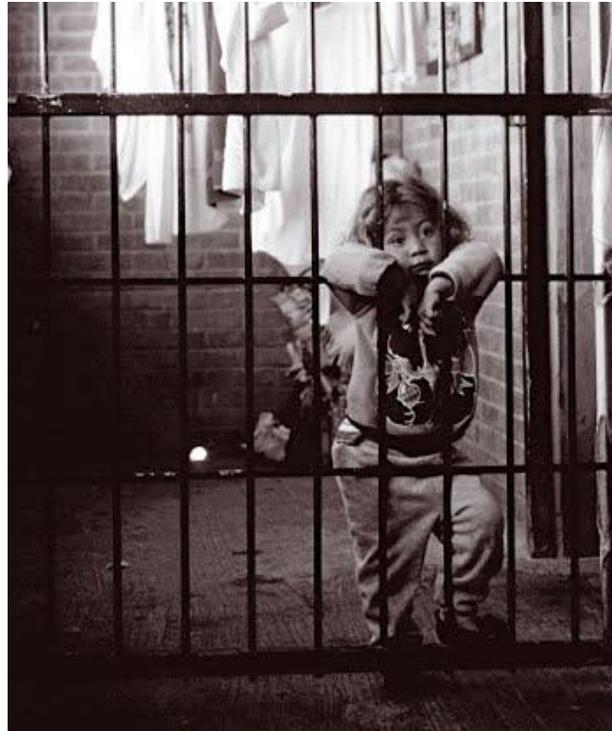


Mental Health Issues in Two Vulnerable Latino Populations: Unauthorized Immigrants and Hurricane Maria Survivors

Presented by: Evelyn Rivera, PhD, MA
Edna Fuentes-Casiano, MSSA, LSW



Overview

- I. Latino Demographics -- National, State, Local
- II. At risk populations:
 - a. Unauthorized immigrants (adults and children)
 - b. Puerto Rican Hurricane Maria survivors
- III. Mental Health Issues in Immigrant population
- IV. Mental Health Issues in Puerto Rican Hurricane survivors
- V. Therapeutic Interventions/Recommendations

Definition of Latino

- Hispanic Americans and Latino Americans are people in the United States who are descendants of people from countries of Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. The United States has the largest population of Latinos and Hispanics outside of Latin America. More generally, it includes all persons in the United States who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino, whether of full or partial ancestry.

Demographics USA

- Census 2016 Estimates:
- There are an [estimated 55 million](#) Hispanic people in the United States, comprising over 17% of the population.
- California is the state with the largest Hispanic population -- an estimated 15 million, followed by Texas and Florida. All three of these states comprise more than half (55%) of the Hispanic population.
- These are the states where more than an estimated 30% of the population is Hispanic: Arizona, 30.5%; California, 38.6%; New Mexico, 47.8%; and Texas, 38.6%.
- There are more than one million Hispanic residents in nine US states - Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York and Texas.
- Of the English-speaking Hispanics in the United States, a majority, an estimated 57.5%, are bilingual.
- Second only to English, Spanish is the language most used in the United States, as of 2016. It is spoken by approximately 38 million Hispanic people in the country, plus an additional 2.6 million non-Hispanics.

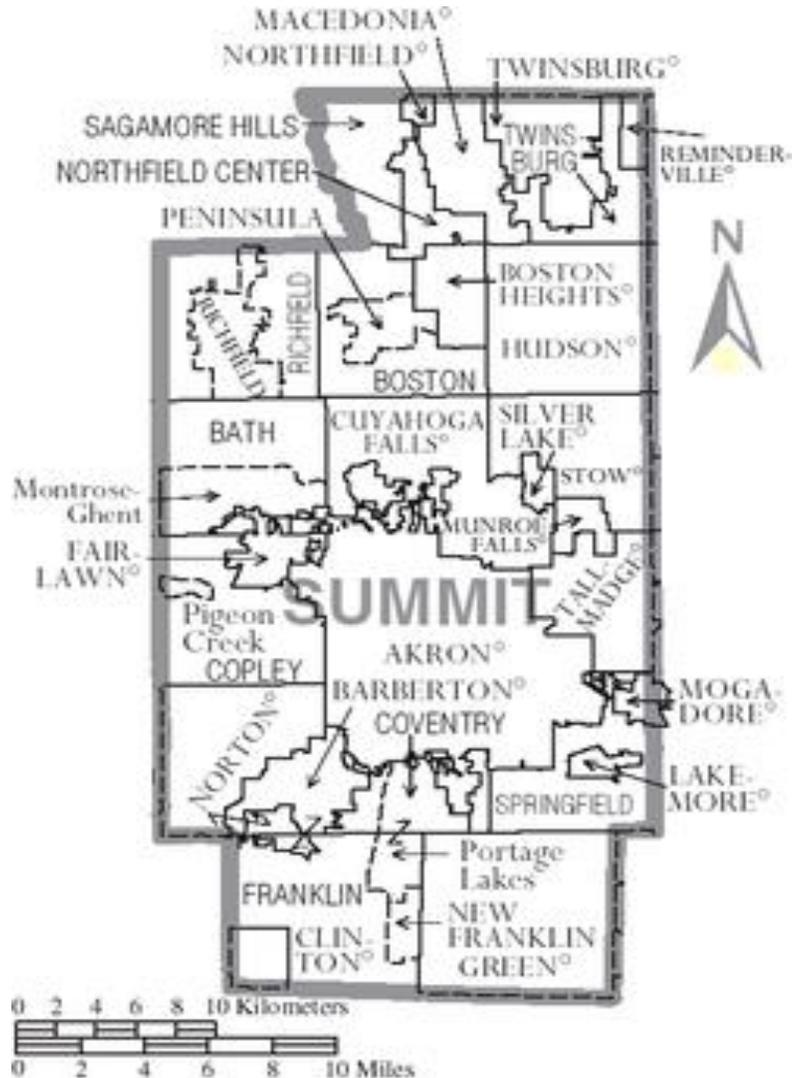
Demographics in Ohio



- 11.66 million total population in Ohio (2017)
- About 395,000 Hispanics reside in Ohio, which is 3% of the population in the state.

www.pewhispanic.org/fact-sheet/latinos-in-the-2016-election-ohio/

Demographics-Summit County



- Population in Summit County is 541,228
- 11,365 is Hispanic, which is a 2.1% of the total population in Summit County.

Unauthorized Immigrants

- The number of undocumented immigrants living in the United States stayed steady for an eighth straight year in 2016--- 11.3 million people. (Pew Center Study, 2016)
- 50% from Mexico (has steadily been dropping).
- The number of Central Americans has increased from 1.6 million in 2009 to 1.8 million in 2015, as people from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras flee violence in their countries. The U.S. has also seen an increase in the number of undocumented immigrants from Asia, Africa and the Middle East.
- Recent immigration policy and enforcement may have changed these dramatically. Still need to wait to see statistics on this.

Unauthorized Immigrants

- 13,000 immigrant children separated from parents and have been placed in tent cities or some type of foster care system.
- Between 1997-2012 - 4.2 million deportations (double the number of deportations before 1997). Most deportations were Latino men (Golash-Boza & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013).
- 50,000 immigrants arrested at the border in June 2018

Unauthorized Immigrants

- Majority of research establishes a clear link association between immigration policies and mental health outcomes such as depression, anxiety and PTSD (Hacker et al, 2011) in both adults and children.
- Clear correlation found between conditions in immigrant detention centers and increased anxiety, depression and overall stress (Steel et al, 2011; Johnston, 2009).
- These issues were further complicated if the immigrant had prior or post traumatic history I.e. exposure to violence, sexual assault, extortion or other types of abuse (Wu et al, 2015)
- We are just seeing the tip of the iceberg or the short term effects in the immigrant population. The longer term effects as they live under this fight-or-flight survival mode for an extended period of time still remains to be seen.
- Health problems/Somatic symptoms/chronic disease may be more likely after living under such stressful conditions for such an extended period of time.

Access Issues

- Fear of deportation
- Harassment by authorities
- Fear of persecution and prosecution
- Discrimination
- Financial barriers-Lack of health insurance
- Mistrust in institutions
- FEAR & MISTRUST - even persons working with immigrants are seeing this
- Stigma

Immigrant Mental Health Issues

- Trauma from incarceration
- Trauma from separation from parents
- Anxiety/Separation Anxiety, Panic Disorder, Claustrophobia, Agoraphobia
- Depression
- PTSD
- Depersonalization (body mind split)
- Fight or Flight
- Suicidality
- Alcohol and drug use
- Somatic symptoms

Testimonial of a Unauthorized Immigrant



Married Couple from Central America

- 22 years living in the USA
- Four children
- Both were in process with lawyer to get documentation since 2009 & 2011
- July 2018 - husband was put on house arrest for two months
- Mental health issues - depression, anxiety, irritability, decrease in appetite and sleep
- Ex. went to church one day and the area was surrounded by police for some reason. Both had anxiety attacks
- Teen daughter is in counseling
- Kids get extremely anxious when parents go to ICE appointments monthly and bimonthly
- Parents try to manage their emotions in front of their kids
- Parents have not gone to counseling
- Believe faith/religion has helped, turn to God to support
- Asked for unity from the people to help them through these difficult times

Puerto Rico, The Aftermath of Hurricane Maria

History of Puerto Rico

- Puerto Rico became a territory of the US during the Spanish American War in 1898, when the US went to war with Spain and acquired PR, Cuba, Guam and the Philippines.
- In 1917, the US passes the Jones–Shafroth Act, which grants citizenship for anyone born in Puerto Rico.
- In 1952, PR becomes a commonwealth, which has similar rights as US citizen, but can not vote for a presidential election on the island.

History of Puerto Rico before Maria hits...

- Poor electrical grid and infrastructure.
- Decade Long Economic crisis.
- Increase of homelessness/foreclosures
- High unemployment rate of 10.7%
- High rate of drug abuse/alcoholism
- Increased crime rates, high domestic violence and murder rates

Hurricane Maria hits 9-20-17 Category 4 Storm



Aftermath of Maria....

- It was reported by a group of researchers from Harvard that the estimated death toll in Puerto Rico was 4,645. (The New England Journal of Medicine, 2018)
- PR was totally cut off from electricity once the hurricane hit.
- Currently Puerto Rico is at 95% at full capacity of electricity. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/national/a-year-after-hurricane-maria-a-puerto-rican-town-is-still-in-upheaval/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.db81e3802fff)
- Estimated cost in damages is 90 billions according to US news.
- National Hurricane Center stated that Hurricane Maria was the most destructive Hurricane to hit Puerto Rico in modern times and the 3rd costliest in US history behind Katrina and Harvey. (https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/data/tcr/AL152017_Maria.pdf)

Population Decline

- According to the US Census the Population before the Hurricane was 3,728,789.
- Currently the population is at 3.337 million.
- According to the Florida Division of Emergency Management, over 208,000 people from Puerto Rico have landed at airports in Miami, Orlando, and Tampa since October 3rd 2017.
- It is being predicted that a total of 500,000 to 750,000 Puerto Ricans will leave the island over the next four-year period.

Post Maria Mental Health of Puerto Ricans

- Increase in anxiety, depression, post traumatic stress disorder, suicidality.
- Puerto Rico recorded 254 suicides last year — up 28 percent versus 2016. And this year is on track to match that level, with 137 suicides from January through July.
- 85 percent of suicides were committed by men.
- Lack of access to mental health treatment, due to poor insurance plans which do not pay for mental health therapy.

(https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/national/a-year-after-hurricane-maria-a-puerto-rican-town-is-still-in-upheaval/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.db81e3802fff)

Mental Health and Social Services

- Places where treatment and help is available:

Mental Health

- The Centers
- Murtis Taylor
- Connections/Signature Health
- MetroHealth

Social Services

- Spanish American Committee
- Esperanza
- Local Churches in Cleveland

So what can we all do?

Recommendations:

- Wu et al (2015) developed action items that should be considered to promote access to mental health care for all regardless of documentation status
- Integrate mental health care in systems that immigrants feel safe
i.e. school systems, health care system, churches (Ex. Red Flags)
- Use of culturally and linguistically competent screenings and assessment tools which screen for depression, anxiety, suicidality and trauma, i.e. Beck's Depression Scale
- Culturally & linguistically competent community based anti-stigma campaign.

So what can we all do?

- Development of faith based programming (youth groups, support groups, psycho-education, art therapy, grief support groups etc.) in church settings where they feel safe.
- Critical to identify the families as soon as possible and get them into treatment as quickly as possible (Individual and family therapy)
- Use of medications and/or alternative medicine (especially for anxiety and depressive symptoms)
- As health care and mental health providers we have an ethical code which calls us to help those we serve to the best of our abilities.
- Faith in Public Life, volunteer faith base organizations that are going to the border to support the detainees through service and prayer.
- Donate to the cause.

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE - Let them know they are loved and respected.

Counseling and Treatment

- Individual Counseling
- Medication
- Support Groups

- Challenges
 - Limited Bilingual Counselors
 - Long Waits
 - Stigma

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