Nuestros Niños: Child Care Needs Assessment for the Latino Population in Bloomington-Normal

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NUESTROS NIÑOS

CHILD CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT
FOR THE LATINO POPULATION
IN BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

A B S T R A C T

Immigration from the Latin American nations has become a prominent topic of discussion nationwide. Illinois is, to be sure, not an exception. The Latino population of Bloomington-Normal has grown drastically in recent years. To address these new developments, coalitions and organizations have been formed which endeavor to understand, and even provide for, the needs of this new community. Some hope this may facilitate their contribution to their new neighborhood.

This report is part of a larger needs assessment, which seeks to fulfill that goal of understanding. It examines the need for child care in relation to the Latino population in Bloomington-Normal. Several questions arise when researching this need: What is the general experience of the Latino in the United States? How does migration affect the family? What are the receiving community's perceptions of the migrant community? What does a basic makeup of a Latino community look like? What is the role of the family, and the child, in Latino culture? What are the most common trends in Latino child care provision? Are there child care needs, and if so, what are they? How is that facilitated in Bloomington-Normal? What is the role of language in this exchange? Education? Other socioeconomic factors? In order to come up with a complete, thorough needs assessment—as we hope to do—these numerous questions, and many others, oblige detailed answers. We plan to provide these answers in the report that follows.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

NUESTROS NIÑOS

CHILD CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR THE LATINO POPULATION IN BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

INTRODUCTION

The immigration of the Latino population in Illinois, in general, has been increasing rapidly—and Bloomington-Normal is not the exception. This twin-town has faced a remarkable augmentation of the Latino population in recent years. With a changing composition over time in the demography, the Latino population has high potential to affect the socioeconomic character of this town. Attention is required to address the upcoming needs and problems of these new and different demographic stakeholders. This study is a part of such a conscious effort to understand and address emerging needs, which we hope will help to ease the effects of the changing demographic landscapes in Bloomington-Normal.

Child care needs, as one of many sets of needs, may be an important problem that the Latino population faces in this town. This study gives an assessment of the child care needs for Latino children ages five and under. For the purpose of this study, the meaning of the "child care" is supervision, and/or the educational programs, for that age group.[1]

Some of the questions that guide this study are: What is the role of the family in child care in the Latino culture? What are the most common trends in Latino child care provision? What is the role of language, income, and education in the context of the child care for this group? What is the experience of child care providers with Latino children and parents?

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[1] Further discussion of our conceptualization of the study will follow below.

In the literature review, we intend to achieve a greater understanding of the cultural matters of the community, as well as a thorough appreciation for the demographic situation of the Latino population. Within a conceptual description of our study, we will explain our own framework in this project, and follow it with an explanation of the methodology we have employed to gather data regarding child care for Latino families in the Bloomington-Normal area. We will give a detailed review of the findings we obtained in our data collection. This study produced various important findings, which will help us to understand the child care needs and problems faced by Latino families. Based on the findings outlined below, this study also recommends some suggestions, which we hope contribute to address the needs of this new group.

It is our wish that this project will offer others in our community an insight into the child care situation of the Latino population in Bloomington-Normal. But we also hope that, in doing so, we can offer some suggestions for how resource holders in the community might address the issue.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Though much has been written on the Latino experience in the United States, little of the literature is concerned with their experience in the Midwest; even less covers the specific concern of child care for that population. This review will cover the most relevant literature to our topic. Three key themes emerge. The first addresses the sources and general trends surrounding the migration of Latinos to the Midwest. The second considers the socioeconomic status of Latinos in the United States, their tendencies toward community formation, and cultural differences highlighted in the Latino experience. Lastly, we look at the specific concern of child care provision for Latino children. It seeks to understand the inclinations of Latino parents to utilize certain networks—both formal and informal—and the specific issues arising therein, including those of language and educational child care.

SOURCES AND TRENDS IN LATINO MIGRATION

The long history of Latino communities and immigration in the United States is rife with political pressures and economic shifts—a central theme in the recent work of Millard & Chapa (2004). Their text offers, however, a particularly thorough review of these trends with regard to the Midwest region of the United States. According to Millard and Chapa, the Midwest has shared its industrially productive history and future with Latin American immigrants since the early twentieth century. In spite of the fact that Latino inhabitance of and immigration to this area of the United States is heir to a long history (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 28-34), the trend is thought of as a recent phenomenon, because various structural influences have intensified migration (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 34-39; 47-52). Their presence, according to these authors, has commanded greater attention as the immigration trends of the eighties and nineties caused an eighty percent increase in the Latino population nationwide, and a population increase of eight percent in the Midwest. This influx, however, has prevented a dramatic net decrease in the rural population, considering the mass emigration of Anglo groups (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 21).

Millard and Chapa explain this trend in terms of the wide employment opportunities offered in the Midwest and elsewhere, which were also affected by changing legislation in the that era (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 9). Legislatures passed "freedom to farm" laws that exempted farms and their food processing operations from local control (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 126). The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, as well as other legal changes during that decade, encouraged the influx of Latino workers by making it possible for many formerly undocumented immigrants to work legally and permanently in the United States.

According to Massey and Espinoza, however, Mexican migration may be less determined by international wage differentials than by Mexican interest rates and social networks (Massey & Espinosa, 1997: 987). They present detailed research addressing what motivates people to immigrate

to the United States, coupled with theoretical support for their data. Their research disproves the wage differential as what most people assume motivates people to migrate northward. The researchers found, instead, that the accumulation of social capital—that is, of networks and connections to resources—was a stronger indicator of the motivation behind first-time undocumented migration than the higher paying wage in the United States. In fact, in their study, the higher U.S. wage was "not even a significant predictor" (Massey and Espinosa 957, 962, 973). Rather, the strong social networks of friends and relatives, who have previously migrated and established residency in the States, deserve the credit for this migration (Massey & Espinosa, 1997: 989).

Perception of local Latino communities

As Bouvier and Jenks point out, the American population, since 1970, has grown far faster than any other industrialized country. According to these authors, immigration has accounted for 44% of this growth (Bouvier & Jenks, 1996: 3). They focus on the onus immigration has put on the state of Illinois, which, they point out, has the sixth largest foreign-born population out of the 50 states (Bouvier & Jenks, 1996: 1).[2] According to their projection, Illinois will face an ethnic shift, as the immigrant population of Illinois is expected to increase, though the total population will not, because of mass Anglo emigration. In Bouvier and Jenks' eyes, then, these new populations exert a strain on public institutions; though they did not cause these problems, they do contribute to them. As Bouvier and Jenks see it, policies of cooperation between the state and local agencies are needed to reduce undocumented immigrants from obtaining tax-payer funded goods, and the federal government needs to take more initiative to reduce undocumented immigration. These authors' suggestions may be somewhat representative of a large portion of the viewpoints of the receiving

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[2] It should be remembered, though, that Illinois also is the sixth most populous state in the nation, as well.

community's members; as such, they may be indicators of the perception of Latinos from the eyes of the Midwestern Anglo residents.

This supposition seems to be supported in Millard and Chapa's text. According to these authors, Anglos express their concern in terms of a response to socio-economic changes, not racial or ethnic changes (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 145-147). In doing so, they fail to acknowledge the racism that underlies their judgments and concerns. Rachel Waterman (2000), too, suggests that racism in local communities may limit access to resources and employment, and inhibit recognition of achievements, creating a disincentive for Latinos towards "economic, social, and political integration into U.S. life" (Waterman, 2000: 4, 11, 13).

These trends may be important in our later examination of cultural and language education in child care. According to Sánchez (1999), attitudes that are biased against Latinos create ambivalence towards cultural accommodation, including Spanish-language acquisition. Anglo ambivalency about bilingualism in the United States, based on attitudes toward the Spanish-speaking immigrant population, and originating in the cultural historical context of this country, Sánchez concludes, may prevent Latino children from enacting their full potential.

Hispanic/Latino

The interaction between Anglo and Latino communities, also, incites discussion of the terms used to describe each population. As we will discuss in our explanation of our group's conceptualization below, we have chosen to use the terms "Latino" and "Latina" as opposed to "Hispanic" throughout our report. The general consensus in academic literature is that Latina/o is a more inclusive term in that is does not combine a language connotation to a community signifier. Thus, Latina/o is more inclusive of peoples whose first language may not be Spanish, such as English-speaking Mexican-Americans or Portugese-speaking Brazilians (Oboler, 1995: 4). The history of the term Hispanic may also be objectionable to community members—it is a creation of

an Anglo "other" and the United States government (Oboler, 1995: 81) and may imply a division in Latino community between middle-class "Hispanics" and working-class "Latinos" (Oboler, 1995: 138). Further, there is an increasing trend of identifying with one's nation of origin—a more culturally specific practice that distinguishes between, for example, Columbian-American and Cubanos.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

According to Millard and Chapa, many Latino farm workers rely on governmental services to help support their families and to stretch their low wages. Children, in fact, provide crucial services to adults as informal interpreters. They often become the liaisons between their parents and the staff of the emergency room, commercial stores, schools, state unemployment offices, and other social service agencies, as there are no other alternatives.

Though Millard and Chapa did not expect that Latinos would form their own churches, they were proven wrong. In fact, these organizations provide much guidance on social services. Their study concludes that Latinos are doing well, but especially the newcomer Latinos are at the bottom of the American socioeconomic ladder. These newcomers are working in inhospitable conditions, receive low pay, and live in poor housing (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 110). The communities in which they reside often fail to fulfill their needs—including adequate education, decent working conditions, health care, and other social services (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 92-93). Millard and Chapa attribute this lack of consideration for the population to the failure of the corporation to secure those necessities for their Latino employees (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 127-128).

As was mentioned, Bouvier and Jenks (1996) expressed concern on this dependency on social services—though they offer little suggestion as to how to ameliorate the situation. Influx of immigrant populations creates an augmented strain on limited social services programs, including: education, transportation, solid waste disposal, water supply, prisons and policing, and welfare

programs (Bouvier & Jenks, 1996: 15-19). Unfortunately, as Waterman, and Millard and Chapa, point out, skills acquired by Latinos in their home countries go to waste after their migration. Degrees granted in foreign countries often are unrecognized in the United States, lending to both the Latinos' downward mobility, and the exacerbation of skilled labor shortages (Waterman, 2000: 8).

Lack of affordable child care, also, has limited the productivity of the Latino migrants. A dearth of affordable child care is estimated to have caused 1.1 million (14%) mothers, ages 21-29, from participating in the labor force—a demographic which constitutes 23% of non-participants in the labor force (Cattan, 1991:5). Latino mothers are particularly likely "to be out of the labor force because of child-care problems" (Cattan, 1991: 6).

Latino Community formation

According to Waterman, though the Latino population is growing in Bloomington-Normal, community leaders are limited in their outreach and in their resources to serve the community. She says this is fueled by cultural misunderstandings and a lack of social networks that would have the potential to facilitate community leaders' access to needy community members (Waterman, 2000: 1, 11). Only recently have Latinos started forming organizations, according to Waterman—though her writing in 2000 may be outdated.

Millard and Chapa (2004) have explained that churches may be key in encouraging intra-cultural interaction, social support and cultural identity formation for the Latino community (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 180-185) as well as networks that conduct information about local services. Churches are key places for face-to-face interaction with other Spanish-speaking individuals, who often share some elements of their cultural backgrounds. Latinos, Millard and Chapa found, might drive more than one hour to attend services in Spanish. The churches provide a social space, which is essential in the maintenance of ethnic solidarity and integration into the community.

Additionally, the Latino extended family may have a significant role in community formation, too. In Waterman's research, she found that many families are super-nuclear, having aunts, uncles, siblings, and grandparents living in one household (Waterman, 2000: 8).

LATINO CHILD CARE EXPERIENCE

As mentioned above, literature does not fully describe the condition of current Latino child care provision. Nevertheless, a few authors have offered studies and corollary recommendations for child care providers.

Virginia Buysse et al. (2005) found that in order to serve Latino communities in the provision of early childhood programs, an increase in Latino and bilingual staff and an increase in staff preparation are essential. Also, Latino families were found to have little information about early childhood services (Buysse et al, 2005: 159). Millard and Chapa also found that a lack of interpreters for child care-seeking parents is another problematic issue (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 11-12).

In regards to the language concern, Sánchez (1999) discusses the negative implications of monolingual education and child care. The assumption that children whose first language is not English will readily adapt to English-only educational settings, he argues, does not recognize the personal challenge posed by second language acquisition (Sánchez, 1999). The notion that mono-lingual Spanish- speakers suffer no traumatic consequences when immersed in an English-only care-giving environment is a false one. Other researchers cited a "growing consensus" that programs needed to include a "transformation approach" where curricula use multiple racial and ethnic approaches (Buysse et al, 2005: 160).

Education

Participation in Head Start programs—an educational rather than purely supervisional child care facility—have been shown to close the school performance gap between Hispanic children and non-Hispanic white children by at least one quarter and the gap of grade repetition rates by two-

thirds (Currie & Thomas, 1999: 259-260). However, results were not uniform across all sub-groups of Hispanics. This research may have extremely important implications given the higher dropout rates among Latino students (Millard & Chapa, 2004: 153-154).

CONCEPTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

Throughout the planning and implementation stages of this study, our research team realized that simple terms and concepts can often have an infinite number of definitions and meanings. Because our research question is broad in itself, we were respectively broad in our conceptualizations and definitions. Prior to this study, many of our researchers had little or no experience with the Latino community in Bloomington-Normal and were not readily equipped to handle the various complications that ensued. In an attempt to include all possible participants in said community, we preferred general and unrestrictive concepts. The complexities of these issues, quite naturally in new research, further developed and became more complicated as the study progressed. For this reason, maintaining broad definitions and open conceptualizations was the best possible direction for the study.

Child care. The first and most important concept that required careful consideration was that of "child care." There was some debate about whether child care was simply supervision, or whether it also included an educational aspect. In a discussion later in the study, a Latino woman mentioned that the necessary educational component was an American middle-class concept. Thus, for the purpose of this study, we conceptualized child care to mean supervision and/or educational programs for children ages five and under.

Informal and Formal Child Care Networks. In addition to education and supervision, we developed two terms to d etermine the structure of child care. First, an informal child care network refers to child care that is provided by friends and/or family in a casual setting, such as a home.

Formal child care networks refer to child care that is provided by licensed persons in a space reserved for child care purposes.

Hispanic & Latino. A second, and equally important conceptualization was that of the Hispanic vs. Latino label. First, there was the political connotation of the term "Hispanic" and its association with the U.S. government's generalization of the Hispanic/Latino community. Secondly, there is the often-controversial connotation of the term "Latino" and the more progressive tone frequently associated with this label. Furthermore, it was brought to our attention that there seems to be a divide between the lower, working class Hispanic/Latinos and the middle to upper class Hispanic/Latinos. More specifically, it is often the case that Hispanic/Latinos earning higher incomes no longer associate themselves with the Hispanic/Latino label (this is discussed in more detail in the "Findings" section). The literature review also describes in some detail the complication associated with the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" and, in an attempt to avoid this issue, we often used both Hispanic and Latino in presenting our research.

Upon discussion as a research team at the conclusion of our study, we chose the term Latino to be used in the presentation of our research. The researchers felt that the more progressive nature of the term "Latino" fits well with this type of needs assessment. While we are not assuming that all those who consider themselves Hispanic are excluded, nor should they adopt the Latino label, but for our purposes here we are using Latino to encompass both Latino, Hispanic, and all the associated labels in between.

Latino Families. The concept of what it means to be a Latino family was another difficult issue that arose later in our study. Aside from the problematic title of Latino, the combination of two ambiguous terms ("Latino" and "family") led to even more complications. For example, there was some discrepancy as to whether a couple consisting of one Latino person and one non-Latino person constituted a "Latino family." Once again, to avoid being restrictive, we conceptualized

Latino family as any relationship in which one or more of the parents self-defined as being of Latino descent.

RESEARCH METHODS SECTION

Typically when doing research, it is desirable to obtain a comprehensive sample frame (i.e., a list) that includes each and every possible participant. From this sample frame, the researcher(s) draw a sample of people to target for participation in the study (Babbie 2004). This type of sampling frame, however, is not available for the population we were studying since the Latino community consists of several undocumented persons. Furthermore, unlike a geographic database or one based on quantifiable commonalities (such as the population of people in Bloomington-Normal over 65, population of Bloomington-Normal with industrial jobs, etc.), ethnic populations are consistently hard to define in order to determine a sampling frame. Consequently, we relied on a non-probability sampling approach. The main limitation of non-probability sampling methods is that the results are non-generalizable to the broader population. However, our attempt in this study was not to gather generalizable data, but rather, to recognize key themes and patterns of our sample through the eyes of the Latino community. Since this study is part of a larger needs assessment, we are simply gaining information and testing methods that may or may not serve to be the best approach in the long run. The results of this study are not only to benefit the goals of our research group, but also to aid in the implementation of a larger and more thorough data collection process.

The research design used was cross-sectional, allowing us to have one-time interactions with the participants and gain an understanding of their current situation. There were three data collection methods used—all of which were convenience samples; these included key informant interviews, focus groups, and observing behavior (Babbie 2004).

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

We performed eighteen key informant interviews at a Kermes Bazaar, a predominantly Latino festival, hosted by Saint Mary's Catholic Church in Bloomington, Illinois on Sunday, September 16, 2007. The interviews were semi-structured, adhering to a list of questions that were pre-determined by the researchers (In English, see Appendix A; and also in Spanish, see Appendix B). Interviews were conducted in the language of the participants' choice (Spanish or English).

We accomplished this by having five translators present at different times. One translator, who was part of the research team, spoke Spanish as his first language; a second translator was recruited from the Spanish program at Illinois State University, he was a junior majoring in Spanish; a third translator learned Spanish while serving two years in the Peace Corps; the last two translators spoke Spanish as their first language, and volunteered to help prior to the event.

The selection process at the bazaar was again non-probability convenience sampling. The researchers approached Latino participants at the bazaar that were attending with children, specifically those ages five or younger. Each participant was provided with an informed consent form in either English (See Appendix C) or Spanish (See Appendix D). Typically, one researcher was asking the questions, as a second researcher was taking notes. However, some interviews had more than two researchers listening and taking notes.

Semi-structured, key informant interviews were chosen as the best method for this particular event for several reasons. We were guests at the event; therefore, structured interviews or focus groups would not have elicited the participation for which we were aiming. The annual event was the participant's main priority and drawing their attention away from that and toward our research was not conceivable or respectful given the cultural atmosphere.

However, limitations did arise. As mentioned previously, this was most of the researcher's first time working with the Latino community and some cultural and language blunders were certain

to occur. Also, the bazaar setting was less conducive to research than other, more traditional, interview settings—loud music, children running around, and overall commotion often made the conversations difficult. While the presence of the translators proved to be helpful in easing the conversation, it made data collection somewhat cumbersome due to the absence of a free-flowing conversation; the interviews were unbalanced, as they occurred between the interviewer, the translator, and the participant.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH LATINO FAMILIES

In addition to the key informant interviews conducted, we also held two separate focus groups targeted at Latino families. These focus groups were held at Western Avenue Community Center (WACC) during the afternoons of Saturday, October 20th and Saturday, November 3rd, 2007. To elicit participation, we displayed flyers in both English and Spanish (See Appendix E, F, G and H) at various locations we thought would reach the most possible participants. These locations included restaurants, grocery stores, mobile home parks, and churches that were reported as having a large number of Latino residents. We chose to hold the focus groups at WACC because many Latinos frequent the center. The Director of Social Services for the Hispanic Population at WACC, Soccorro Alvarez, seemed to have a close relationship with many of the families in the area and was more than willing to help us with our research.

On the days of the focus groups, we provided food and drinks as well as child care for those who attended with children. Each participant was given an informed consent (See Appendix C and D) and assigned a number to ensure their anonymity. At the focus groups, members of our research team were assigned to serve different purposes: two facilitators to ask questions and guide the conversation (See Appendix I), two to four note-takers, and two researchers designated to provide the child care. Soccorro Alvarez translated the first focus group; the second focus group held did not need a translator because all participants spoke English.

As with the key informant interviews, there were some limitations to this approach. First, though the nature of focus groups lends to a wealth of observational and spoken data that can help to capture the essence of the discussion, due to language barriers, much of this was lost, quite literally, "in translation." Responses were slowed down and the free-flowing conversation was significantly inhibited. However, it seems as though this was an issue that would become apparent in most research conducted within the confines of language barriers.

It is important to note here that questionnaires seem to be the only method that could serve to avoid translation issues. However, several factors limited the research team's interest in pursuing this method. First, our research team's lack of knowledge on the subject of child care in the Latino community resulted in an inability to create the relevant close-ended questions necessary to create a useful questionnaire. Secondly, the researchers agreed that the quantitative nature of questionnaires would sacrifice the many advantages that can be gained through qualitative discussions. More specifically, because of the intimate nature of this issue for most families, asking them to choose a response from a list of pre-determined answers would further inhibit the data. Third, questionnaires are meant to be representative of the larger population, and without a sampling frame and thus the ability to distribute the questionnaire accurately, the data collected from a questionnaire would not be wholly representative or legitimate. Fourth, we feared the reluctance of some members of the Latino population, especially those that may be undocumented members of the community, to write down personal information and opinions – this, too, would create problems with our response rate. Finally, the time given to do our research did not permit the use of questionnaires, as the process is often lengthy. In summary, stumbling over language issues while allowing the Latino community members to express their true feelings and concerns through key informant interviews and focus groups was more beneficial than the myriad hazards of the questionnaire. We are certain that the

qualitative information gathered through the more difficult process of interviews and focus groups is more representative of the individual concerns about child care for the Latino community.

A second limitation of the focus groups was that our flyers did not seem useful in reaching all the possible participants. They may have either been ineffective in advertising our research or our locations did not prove to be representative of the Latino community in Bloomington-Normal. It was later found that all of our participants at the first focus group were willing to partake because Soccorro Alvarez had called each personally and requested their help with our research.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

While we spent a great deal of time trying to interview Latino families, we also felt it necessary to talk to child care providers in the area to determine how, or if, they were meeting the needs of Latinos in the Bloomington-Normal area. We compiled a list of 56 child care providers in the area (See Appendix J). Though this list is not comprehensive and we do not claim to have reached all possible providers, this was simply a starting point. Our research team made efforts to contact (via telephone and e-mail) each of the providers on the list and ask for participation during one of the two focus groups we held. The focus groups were held at the Unity Center in Normal, Illinois during the evenings of Monday, November 5th and Wednesday, November 7th, 2007. These focus groups were set up much like those for the Latino families: two facilitators to ask questions and guide discussion (See Appendix K), and several note-takers. Translators were not needed for these focus groups as all the child care providers spoke English.

Limitations for this aspect of the research revolved around the lack of interest, on behalf of the child care providers, in participating in our research. As the limitations section will show, only a small number of child care providers actually committed to attend our focus groups and an even smaller number were actually present on the evening of the focus groups. Based on our research, the reasons for this are numerous – extending from a disconnect between the child care providers in the

Bloomington-Normal community and the families of the Latino community to other issues concerning the timing of the focus groups and the lack of preparation time to make initial contact with the providers.

OBSERVING BEHAVIOR

Throughout this study, we used two different observational techniques. The first and most prominent was that of a participant-observer. While most of the time we were largely embedded in the interactions with both Latino families and child care providers, we were also continuously analyzing the contextual setting of our research, the behavior of participants, and the style of conversations through which we were gathering our data. This type of observational data is highly important in qualitative methods as it helps to set the context for discussions and gives some background for the emergence of major themes (Babbie 2004).

A second, and less utilized technique, was that of the complete observer, where we were not actively taking part in interactions. For example, the note-takers at the key informant interviews and focus groups were not taking part in the interaction; they were simply there to capture the interaction. Specifically at the Kermes Bazaar, we took on the role as a complete observer. At this event, we had an information table where many of us sat and took notes about the interactions taking place around us without actually taking part in them. Through these and other informal means of recording observations, our research team aimed to gain a better understanding of the very different and unique cultural setting in which our research was to take place. Through the undertaking of collecting both qualitative data from interviews and focus groups and observational data at each research setting, we are confident that our study will have a more complete, thorough assessment of the child care needs of the Latino population in Bloomington-Normal.

FINDINGS

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS WITH LATINO FAMILIES

Key informant interviews were conducted during the Kermes Bazaar on the grounds of St. Mary's Church on the afternoon of September 16, 2007. The information gathered came from both interviewing the Latino families in attendance, and from observing the interactions of all attendees. In reviewing all of the interviews conducted that day, certain trends emerged concerning child care in the Latino population served that day. Although some Latino parents reported that child care was not currently an important issue for their families, many parents disclosed some of the important challenges they faced when trying find suitable care for their children. Some of the main obstacles in securing child care for the Latino parents interviewed included the cost, the safety issues, and the lack of *confianza* in current childcare resources.

Before discussing the obstacles certain parents faced when trying to obtain child care, it must be noted that a significant, although not a majority, of parents had their child care needs met. For example, several parents cited that they did not need child care because other family members such as a grandmother or sister took care of the children. In these instances, the parents reported that they had no further child care needs. However, in other cases, a parent or family member must stay home with the children because no other option is present. For example, a few mothers interviewed stayed at home to care for their children instead of working, yet both mothers informed us that they would like to like to work, but are being held back by the lack of child care.

Common Themes

For those parents who were actively seeking child care, or who currently have child care, certain obstacles and challenges in finding adequate care for their children were cited. For many parents, safety was mentioned as a serious obstacle to finding adequate child care. One mother relayed a particular experience with an at-home child care provider. She said that after using this

childcare provider for a few weeks, she started to get the feeling that something was wrong with the provider, as her child would regularly get agitated in a "desperate" way when the mother would drop the child off. Soon thereafter the mother came to pick up her child earlier than she was scheduled to, and found the provider forcibly rubbing a cookie all over her child's face in an attempt to make the child eat the cookie. As a result, she never returned her child to that provider, and has since been wary of using at-home child care services.

A general concern for the safety of their children when using largely unknown child care providers and services leads to a second big obstacle for the Latino population in finding child care - the lack of *confianza*. This term generally refers to a trust and confidence in another person, and is especially important for Latinos in general, and Latinos seeking child care in specific. For example, one grandmother said that she was the primary child care provider for the family, and she didn't want that situation to change. She cited *confianza* as the biggest hurdle in finding child care, as she does not trust anyone else. She was very skeptical of the habits of neighbors and family friends, as she was concerned that others might drink and smoke in the child care setting.

Additional Findings

Another important consideration for many parents who were interested in child care was the cost of child care services. For instance, one mother conveyed to us that the cost of child care was prohibiting her from working. Currently, the family has a single income, yet the mother desires to work, but cannot because the cost of sending the children to child care would outweigh the benefits. Since many families do not qualify for government assistance with basic childcare services, it is actually cheaper for one parent to stay home instead of working. However, for some Latino parents who can afford child care services the biggest obstacle is learning about different services that are offered. In two separate interviews with Latino families, both of the parents who were interviewed were unaware of different child care services and were interested in exploring their options. One of

these parents said that if she needed to find a new child care provider, she would use word of mouth or would consult the internet. But while using the Internet can be fruitful for some parents, many Latino families seemed either unaware of this resource, or could not find access to it.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH LATINO FAMILIES

Building upon what was learned from the key informant interviews with the Latino families at the Kermes Bazaar, we decided to hold two focus groups with Latino families at WACC. Despite promoting the event through Socorro Alvarez at WACC, the HERO group at State Farm, and flyers posted at many locations around the community, only a total of ten participants (all women) showed up between the two focus groups. Of the eight participants in the first focus group, there was a relatively even number of women who stayed home to watch their children and who relied on a formal child care provider to care for their children. In the second focus group, one participant was a mother who divided the child care responsibilities between herself and her husband, while the other woman was not a mother but worked with many Latino families in her job as a Latino liaison and translator at an organization in the community.

Common Themes

While many of the topics that were mentioned in the interviews were also mentioned at the focus groups, the issue of language was discussed more extensively in the focus groups. For example, Socorro Alvarez, who was helping to host the focus group at WACC, mentioned that many child care providers who claim to offer bilingual services do not truly provide services in Spanish. Furthermore, they don't even return messages that are left in Spanish. Also, another participant mentioned that the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, whose job it is to help families with child care issues, does not offer any services in Spanish. The participants in the second focus group explained further that there is a lack of Spanish translators and services at child care facilities, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), hospitals, training courses for

parenting, and training courses for obtaining a certification to provide child care. Thus, she stated, even if a Spanish-speaking Latino wanted to start a child care facility, he or she must take child care classes in English before being able to offer child care.

Another common theme mentioned in the focus groups was a general lack of information about available child care services in the community. Specifically, no participants in the first group were aware of any other child care providers or ways to find other child care providers beyond what they were currently using. In the second focus group, one woman mentioned that, while she had seen some copies of the Spanish version of the PATH directory distributed by HFWG and even handed it out to some families, she does not believe families are using this resource to look for child care or other services. Instead, she said that Latinos rely on heavily on *personalismo*[3] when looking for services or when participating in events. In fact, this concept may partly explain the low number of participants at our focus groups. Specifically, only one participant showed up because she noticed the flyers. All of the other participants showed up because they were either contacted by Socorro or knew someone else who was attending.

One unexpected finding is of an apparent divide between low-income and middle to upper-income Latinos in the community. Specifically, one participant in the second focus group mentioned that this issue was a major problem, and the other participant agreed with her. It has also been brought up throughout observations and conversations that our research team has had with individuals in the Latino community. As mentioned in the Research Methods section of this report, it appears that as many Latinos move up the income ladder they begin to have less association with low-income Latinos, even going as far as some no longer considering themselves Latinos. This was witnessed in our inability to hold a focus group with State Farm Latino employees. Although Alex Cardona, a member of the State Farm HERO group for Latino employees at State Farm, graciously

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[3] Loosely translated as a personal connection.

spoke with us and tried to help us arrange a focus group with HERO members, it ultimately fell through because some other members of the group were not interested in assisting with our research. Furthermore, although HERO members were directly invited to the second focus group at WACC, none attended. From this, and what was mentioned at the focus group, it appears that a social divide exists in the Latino community between high-income and low-income Latinos. This apparent divide is relevant to the issue of child care because many of these higher-income Latinos could help to provide translation, cultural awareness, and/or child care services for low-income Latino families.

Additional Findings

One discovery that came to light during the focus groups and their preparations was the key role that WACC plays in the lives of many low income Latinos in the community. This was evidenced by the fact that Socorro Alvarez personally contacted almost all of the focus group participants. Furthermore, many families also rely on WACC for information about child care and other services in the community; including translation assistance when filling out important forms or attempting to communicate with various organizations in the community. Since many people are relying heavily on WACC, the organization's resources are stretched very thin and could use the assistance of other organizations in the community in order to best meet the needs of the Latino population.

It is worth bringing up three other findings from the focus groups. First, a few participants in the first focus group mentioned that they work into the mid-evening and have been unable to find a child care provider that is open at that time. This points to the possibility of a lack of child care services available during second-shift hours. Next, one topic discussed in the second focus group was that some Latino families may not be aware of culturally acceptable child care standards. Specifically, one mother was afraid of being reported to the authorities for parenting methods that

would be accepted in the Latino culture but are considered unacceptable in American culture. This was supported by the other participant who believed some Latino parents were having their children taken away by DCFS simply because they were not aware of culturally acceptable parenting standards. Finally, the issue of mistreatment by childcare providers was also raised in the focus groups. An example of this possible mistreatment was described by one member in the first focus group who stated that her child care provider did not supervise the children enough and also forgot to feed the children meals on multiple occasions.

Summary of Findings from Latino Families

Latino families are meeting their child care needs using a variety of different services; many families rely on commercial child care providers, some mothers stay home and watch their children themselves, while other parents have other family members or neighbors watch their children. In general, it appears as though the minimum child care needs of most Latino families are being met, however much is still lacking from Latino child care. Key themes that emerged from both interviews and focus groups include lack of available and accurate information about child care providers and their characteristics[4], barriers of language and culture between families and child care providers, and the quality of childcare that Latinos are receiving. Until these issues are addressed, there will continue to be a gap between the child care needs of Latino families and the child care services provided in the community.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Focus groups were also conducted with representatives from three child care providers, out of a possible 56 providers who were contacted and invited. Among those providers who agreed to participate, representatives came from within the community, and spoke for facilities who had one

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[4] Specifically, the characteristics that Latinos consider to be important, such as bilingual services, trust, transportation, affordability, and second-shift hours.

Latino child, 12% Latino children, and another with 40% Latino children, respectively. Based on interview notes, most of the discussions at the focus group meetings were related to the following themes: the presence of a communication gap, culture differences between providers and families and the importance of having Western Avenue Community Center as a "cultural bridge" between providers and families. These three themes are closely related to how outreach and services are provided to Latino families in Bloomington-Normal.

Common Themes

The first common theme is the communication gap between the child care providers and Latino families. At one particular provider, the staff lacks the necessary Spanish language skills to communicate clearly with Latino families. This language barrier limits their interaction and ability to get together with families and talk about child care issues in detail. At the moment, some of the this provider's staff is receiving Spanish language training at the Heartland Community College and Head Start provides translators on limited hours per week. At another provider, there is no staff available with Spanish language skills and the local forms are not available in Spanish. This provider's representative pointed that ESL courses were provided in previous years but funding ended after a period of time. Furthermore, the representative took some introductory Spanish courses but has limited availability to communicate with the Latino families. It is challenging for both providers to organize a parents-teachers conference and communicate directly with families as a result of limited funding for Spanish languages and bilingual staff. The communication gap between child care providers and Latino families limits the understanding of cultural differences between both groups.

The second common theme is related to the culture differences between child care providers and Latino families. One participant remarked that some Latino families bring their children late to the child care services and providers are continuously reminding these families about the importance

of arriving early to take full advantage of the child care activities. In the case of another child care provider, staff members have noticed the changing of names among parents who apply to child care services and the use of jewelry for the children during nap times. These cultural differences affect the way services are provided to Latino families at the child care centers. The concept of time, changing of names and clothing practices are culture differences that some providers do not understand as a result of communication and trust gaps with the families. The communication and cultures gaps are addressed at times with the assistance from Western Avenue Community Center and some of their Spanish speaking staff.

The third common theme is the importance of having WACC as a "cultural bridge" between providers and families. One representative pointed out that they strongly depend on assistance from Head Start and WACC to promote their services and build trust among Latino families. Many families learn about the child care services available in Bloomington-Normal through referrals from WACC. In the case of one provider, Latino families are referred from WACC and back to the WACC for other services. It is crucial to work in collaboration with WACC to address the obstacles that providers are facing when meeting the child care needs of Latino families.

Summary of Findings from Child Care Providers

After conducting interviews with a limited number of local child care providers, it is possible to conclude that there are three key common themes that need to be addressed by the HFWG. These themes include the presence of a communication gap, culture differences between providers and families and the importance of having Western Avenue Community Center as a "cultural bridge" between providers and families. The HFWG could work closely with WACC to search for additional funds that would provide better Spanish language skills for service providers and provide opportunities for some families to learn basic English language skills. The exposure to both

languages between providers and families would assist to reduce the communication, culture, and trust gaps between both groups.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In relation to the question of whether or not the child care needs of Latino families of Bloomington-Normal are being met sufficiently, a few points can be made within the context of common themes that emerged from the research. While our research was conducted using a couple different methods and crossed over a few different populations, namely the population served by WACC, those served by St. Mary's Parish, and also child care providers from the area, these findings are in no way blanket statements about the issues facing the local Latino community as a whole. Rather, these findings can be viewed as trends that could exist for families and could serve as a starting point for further research into the larger Latino community of Bloomington-Normal.

Among the families that participated in our research, the need for child care provision among Latino families was usually filled through informal networks comprised of family members and trusted friends. Trust was a main determinant in where families sought child care; the concept of *Confianza* led many families to fill the need for child care through the family networks.

However, other issues also kept the families out of formal, private child care or day care facilities. The lack of information within the Latino community about viable options for child care underscores what could be a larger problem. Latino families who were unaware of other options for child care may suggest that there is insufficient information available about other social programs and services that could assist many families in meeting all kinds of social and economic needs. Latino families, however, did have an ally in this situation. When many families have needs that they do not know how to fill, the Western Avenue Community Center was likely the outlet through which their questions could be answered. WACC is deeply rooted in the Latino community, and the

bilingual staff there is able to provide invaluable assistance to those families for whom the language barrier precludes utilization of social services and networks of assistance.

WACC could be an effective vehicle for the delivery and implementation of social programs aimed specifically at the Latino population of Bloomington-Normal.

The lack of information about options also brings to light another issue that was touched on quite frequently by families and child care providers alike. Differences in language and culture have made effective and proper child care provision difficult not only for families, but also for child care organizations as well. These difficulties are often rooted in administrative issues like filling out forms, payment options and schedules, and even basic communication between parents and providers. Bilingual staff is either non-existent or underprovided so badly that many parents do not even consider private provision of child care to be a viable option. Funding is usually not readily available or sufficient to hire or train dedicated bilingual staff, and providers do not see the influx of Latino customers that would require ordinary budgeting for such staff.

The findings from our research are consistent with the accepted body of work on the subject of child care. Bilingual child care providers are needed not only for educational purposes and communication in child care, but also for the mental well-being of Spanish-speaking children. It is argued that the transition into an English-only care environment is traumatic, and bilingual staff could help children better cope with such a change, or even negate any kind of emotional complications that come from being immersed in such an unfamiliar situation. Also consistent was the role of Head Start in the early education of Latino children. Head Start answers many of the concerns voiced by families like language, transportation , and cost, but is limited in their capacity by the amount of funding. A greater presence (increased funding) of Head Start programs in the Latino Community of McLean County could help to ease many of the burdens placed on families that come from trying to provide the best possible care for their children.

Another possible obstacle for the Latino Community could be the cultural dissociation between socio-economic classes. Latinos who work at State Farm seem to have different priorities and face different issues, while those who frequent St. Mary's and WACC are dependent on their community for assistance in filling their social needs. What has caused this divide does not fall under the realm of our research, but getting to the root of this problem may present viable solutions to the issues facing families that have not gained the social status and mobility that comes with having a job at State Farm.

Generally, the needs of families for child care were satisfied in many ways, seeming to encompass almost all options from day care to in-home provision by family members. Barriers to families who would like to put their children in day care may be deeply rooted in the culture, like the concept of *confianza*, or could be a result of information and language difficulties. These were not the only issues facing families. Cost of child care and transportation issues were also mentioned along with the difficulty of trying to find providers whose hours were compatible with the parents' work schedules. Some problems may be more easily dealt with than others, as in the case of cultural and language issues, but whatever the root of these problems, it is likely that they are not confined to the limited population that is represented by our research.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Throughout the course of our research, an unidentifiable sample population, language barriers, time constraints, community division, and respondent participation were some of the challenges that limited the breadth and depth of our findings. However, we can also highlight some of the strengths of our study. First, being able to use space at St. Mary's Church and WACC was critical to conducting our interviews and focus groups. However, the tacit support from Father Gregg Petri and Socorro Alvarez that these locations offered us were more important than the

physical spaces; the support from these trusted community members was essential for our ability to reach the Latino community. Second, our study used consistent and well-planned research questions as protocols to guide our key informant interviews and focus groups sessions. By being very deliberate in planning, we were able to obtain consistency in our data collection. The initial time spent planning in the beginning was a wise investment

One of the biggest limitations of our study is that it is not generalizable for the entire Latino population in McLean County or Bloomington-Normal. Through our interviews and focus groups, we talked to a very small segment of the Latino population. Because Latinos are a scattered group in terms of social class and geographic location, coupled with the fact that an unknown percentage of this population is undocumented, identifying the entire population is difficult if not impossible. Without being able to identify the whole population, a generalizable random sample cannot be constructed. We have carefully chosen the language in our findings section to represent this fact, and any discussion of our report should also acknowledge this limitation.

Another limitation was the time constraint we faced in conducting our research. Because we are doing this as part of a graduate class at Illinois State University, our timetable for research had to fit with the fifteen-week schedule of our semester. With more time, we could have been able to develop more connections within the community, which may have garnered more trust and participation. We may have also been able to conduct more interviews and focus groups. While more time would have allowed us to gather more data, we do feel that what have gathered is valid and important.

Language was also a large obstacle for our research team. Only one of our members spoke Spanish, so all of our efforts to reach the Spanish-speaking community were hindered by this communication barrier. Before the key informant interviews and focus groups, we had difficulty translating our questions and ensuring that these translations were actually asking what we wanted to

know. During the interviews themselves we realized that many of the translations from our interpreters were often summaries rather than verbatim answers, which limited some of the personal and contextual information we were receiving. When more than one person was speaking (especially in our first focus group with Latinos), our interpreters were only able to translate one thread of conversation at a time, meaning we missed some of the side conversations that could have provided valuable information. The need for translation also slowed down the conversations, so many of our interviews were not as smooth and comfortable as they could have been if they were conducted in one language. Because we needed interpreters, the dates and times we could conduct interviews were complicated by when they would be available. If it is possible, it may be easier to conduct future research entirely in Spanish and then translate the data into English after it has been collected.

Our study also had difficulty achieving participation from the Latino community. During our research, we noticed a divide between lower-class Latinos and middle-class to upper-class Latinos. We tried to gather information from both groups, but we had more success with contacting the working class population. As mentioned previously, our personal contacts at St. Mary's Church and WACC seemed to be the best way to attract participants in our study. We tried to set up a focus group at State Farm to learn about the needs of higher-income Latinos, but we were unable to host it with their affinity group. To attract all income levels, we attempted to distribute flyers advertising our events, but these did not seem to work. It is plausible that many undocumented Latinos did not feel comfortable meeting with an outside group of researchers they did not know, but we cannot verify this idea. For the more affluent Latino community, it is plausible that they did not see themselves as part of the target population for the needs assessment.

Getting child care providers to participate in our focus groups was also difficult. Many providers who did not currently serve Latino clients did not see the point in participating. Initially, we thought that evening focus groups would be the best method for working with this group

because most child care is provided during the day. However, we realized that the administrators we were contacting were not usually actively watching the children during the daytime, and could possibly step away from the organization during the day if needed. We do not know if they would be more successful, but lunchtime events with meals provided might have worked. We also realized that many of these providers have email accounts and a survey conducted over the Internet or email may have received a greater response rate because it involves a more flexible time commitment. However, we were fortunate in that the providers that did participate were eager to share their experiences and wanted to learn better ways to serve Latino families.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In an effort to better meet the child care needs of the Latino community throughout the Bloomington-Normal area, this report offers a series of recommendations and areas for future research to the HFWG based on findings gathered via the data collection process discussed above. Understanding of the limitations and scope of the HFWG as facilitator, we provide these recommendations as areas for potential community-wide collaboration.

Though relatively small in scope, our findings were consistent enough to generate a number of recommendations. Coupled with recommendations for future research, this report serves to provide the HFWG with a number of critical first-step points of focus.

BILINGUAL STAFF

Fostering a more trusting environment between members of the Latino community and child care providers is a key priority. Bridging the language barrier by hiring bilingual staff will be a first step in addressing this need. Ways to approach this might include providing Spanish classes to child care staff, and offering translated application forms and other necessary documentation. Interpreter training for child care provider staff could potentially increase enrollment, providing an

incentive for child care providers. Increased numbers of enrolled children, regardless of funding sources, will generate greater profit for local child care providers. Cultural sensitivity training for both children and adult community members could also be offered, bridging the perceived cultural divide in the Bloomington-Normal community.

RESOURCE ROOM

For the local Latino population, courses in Spanish on parenting skills training, CPR accreditation, and child care provider licensing could be offered with little overall cost. Any number of differing classes could be offered in a relatively small workspace. Also, providing opportunities for Latino community members to improve English language skills could be achieved through the creation of an appropriately equipped resource room located at WACC or other community center. A resource room would provide community members of all ages, regardless of ethnicity, with the tools to achieve greater levels of cultural awareness, language skills and parenting training, to name only a few potential scenarios. With a relatively small amount of technology, the possibilities are exciting.

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

As enrollment costs for many child care providers extend beyond the financial reach of many Latino families, the creation of education-based scholarships, perhaps through foundation development, would help to ease the economic burden attached to quality child care. In the same vein, opportunities for mentoring programs and capacity/capital building could further assist Latino families.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation represents a major concern to Latino families interviewed in this study. Without the means to safe, efficient, and affordable modes of transport, it is difficult if not

impossible for many Latino families to reach child care facilities. Focus on increasing the routes and availability of public transportation, most likely in the form of bus lines, would better serve the needs of local Latino families.

AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Additionally, greater emphasis must be placed on the transmission of information throughout Latino community; this could come in the form of a translated social services or government subsidies referral guide. Knowledge of available resources and means to reach these opportunities is a crucial facet of this process. As the importance of communication and free-flow of information cannot be overstressed, we strongly recommend that the HFWG engage in greater contact with WACC, as well as to share these and future findings with the community and fellow stakeholder organizations. Despite perceived division within the Bloomington-Normal Latino population regarding socio-economic stratification, it is essential to the overall process that heightened levels of communication begin immediately. With resources at a premium, the sharing of information and overall vision will improve upon likelihood of success, at great benefit to the Latino population.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

With exponentially greater numbers of Latino children introduced into Bloomington-Normal schools each year, the HFWG would be well-served in encouraging the public school system to introduce Spanish language and Latino cultural courses into earlier grade curricula than is presently offered. The earlier children become introduced to cultural diversity and language, the better.

PROMOTION OF MULTICULTURAL FESTIVALS

One final recommendation involves the greater promotion of local multicultural festivals, which provide the opportunity for all residents of Bloomington-Normal to congregate, share cultures, aid in the trust-building process and promote greater appreciation of cultural diversity in an atmosphere of goodwill and harmony. When community members of all ethnic groupings have the occasion to learn and appreciate diversity of cultures, the possibility for acceptance and trust building occurs.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Because of the limitation of our small research sample size, one direction for future research should include utilizing the surveys that we developed in class this semester in order to reach a larger sample of the local Latino population. This survey would build on the information of the limited demographic that participated in our study this semester via focus groups and key informant interviews. Ultimately, we are trying to determine if the main concerns that were voiced by respondents we heard from this semester are representative of the general Latino population in Bloomington/Normal. Therefore, the survey would initially continue in the same direction as current findings would indicate, such as bilingual staff, importance of *confianza*, affordability, etc. These instruments could be written in Spanish and administered by the Western Avenue Community Center to lower income Latinos, and online in English and Spanish for middle and upper income Latinos. Surveys for child care providers in Bloomington-Normal should be administered online so that they could be completed at the convenience of the respondent. Providing incentives, such as a chance to win a raffle for gift certificates from local retail donors, might also increase participation.

It will also be necessary to conduct additional key informant interviews to further explore whether there are any different or changing concerns from those already determined previously.

Again, there would be a range of approaches to this; for new immigrants and Latinos in the lower socioeconomic demographic, the interviews might be conducted via one person who speaks fluent Spanish and holds the trust of the Latino community. For the middle to upper socioeconomic demographic and child care providers, it might be useful to have simply one or two people conducting the interviews for the sake of consistency in data gathering. It is important to broaden the range of informants in order to get a larger data set as well as to be able to have representation from a wide swath of groups.

It will be important to conduct additional focus groups. Because the focus groups for this semester's study were sparse, thus making any real generalizations impossible, it is important to run more and larger focus groups. Time and networking were the real issue on this point this semester; therefore, with more time and sustained effort, utilizing community networks, it should be possible to run larger focus groups.

Finally, expanding the study to include all of McLean County would give a greater scope and a larger picture of the child care needs of the Latino community. It would also allow for input from those who may work in Bloomington-Normal and/or have children in child care in Bloomington-Normal, but live in the outlying rural areas.

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GLOSSARY

Anglo. A term to be used for the largely white Midwestern American residents. This term is largely borrowed from Millard & Chapa (2004).

Child Care. Supervision and/or educational programs for children ages 0-5.

Confianza. Trust.

Latino. A term this paper will use to describe people of Latin American descent.

Personalismo. Character.

APPENDICES

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, IN ENGLISH

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your family?
    1. Who lives in the household?
    2. How many children?
    3. Their ages and gender?
    4. Who works?

2. Which languages do you speak at home?

3. Are your child care needs currently being met?
    1. How are your child care needs currently being met?
    2. Is there anything lacking in your current child care situation?

4. What are the most important qualities for you when deciding on child care?
    1. (prompt - ie: cost, flexibility, time, trust/safety, special needs care, language, transportation, education, etc..)

5. What other child care programs or networks are you currently aware of?
    1. How did you learn of them?
    2. What are your reasons for not using them?

6. What else would you like to tell me about child care issues?

APPENDIX B: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, IN SPANISH

1. Puede usted decirme un poquito sobre su familia?
   1. Quién vive en la casa?
   2. Cuántos niños?
   3. Sus años y género?
   4. Quién trabaja?

2. Qué lenguas dice usted en casa?

3. Encontrado actualmente sus necesidades de cuidado de los niños?
   a. Cómo encontrado actualmente sus necesidades de cuidado de los niños?
   b. Hay allí algo careciendo en su situación de cuidado de los niños corriente?

4. Cuáles son las calidades más importantes para usted decidiendo el cuidado de los niños?
   a. (ie: flexibilidad, tiempo, confianza/seguridad, cuidado de necesidades especial, lengua, transporte, educación…)

5. De qué otros programas de cuidado de los niños o redes usted es consciente actualmente?
   a. Cómo aprendió usted de ellos?
   b. Cuáles son sus motivos de no usarlos?

6. Qué quisiera usted decirme sobre cuestiones de cuidado de los niños?

APPENDIX C. INFORMED CONSENT FORM IN ENGLISH

Dear Community Member,

The Hispanic Families Work Group is sponsoring a project in the community to better understand your opinions about the needs of Hispanic Families in the community. In particular, we are first trying to understand how the child care needs of Hispanic families are being met in the Bloomington/Normal community. The first phase of this project involves speaking to Hispanic/Latino families to understand their views child care for children ages 0-5. Your contribution and perspectives are vital to helping us to better understand the needs within the Hispanic community.

The interview will last between 15-30 minutes and can be conducted in either Spanish or English. The questions will focus on getting a better understanding of how Hispanic families are meeting their child care needs and what specific problems they may be encountering.

Your participation in completely voluntary and all information will remain confidential. If you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact Dr. Joan Brehm, Illinois State University, tel: 309-438-7177, email: jmbrehm@ilstu.edu or Karen Major, Chair, Hispanic Families Work Group, 309-557-1062, email: kmajor@thebabyfold.org

Thank you for your time and participation.

APPENDIX D. INFORMED CONSENT FORM IN SPANISH

Estimado Miembro de la Comunidad,

El Grupo de Trabajo de Familias Hispanas (Hispanic Families Work Group) está auspiciando un proyecto en la comunidad en el cual queremos saber su opinión sobre las necesidades de las familias Hispanas, en particular la necesidad para el cuidado de niños. La primera parte de este proyecto está enfocada en saber cuales son las necesidades para el cuidado de los niños de 0-5 años de edad. Su contribución y perspectiva son vitales para ayudarnos en este proyecto para así poder entender las necesidades de la familias Hispanas en nuestra comunidad.

La entrevista durará entre unos 15 - 30 minutos y podrá ser en español o inglés. Las preguntas se concentrarán en tratar de entender cómo y quienes están cubriendo sus necesidades de cuidado de los ninos y que problemas específicos puede estar enfrentando su familia.

Su participación sería completamente voluntaria y toda información es completamente confidencial. Para más información o si tiene alguna pregunta, por favor de comunicarse con Dr. Joan Brehm, Illinois State University, tel: 309-438-7177, email: jmbrehm@ilstu.edu   o Karen Major, Chair, Hispanic Families Work Group, 309-557-1062, email: kmajor@thebabyfold.org

APPENDIX E. FIRST LATINO FAMILY FOCUS GROUP FLYER IN ENGLISH

Your Kids Need You!

Hispanic Families with Kids 5 and Under
Share Your Childcare Experiences and Concerns

Please join us at the

Western Avenue
Community Center

600 N. Western Avenue, Bloomington

Free Food!

Kids Games!

Saturday, October 20th at 11:30
- OR -
Saturday, November 3rd at 11:30

We would like to talk to you about your childcare experiences to determine the childcare needs of Hispanics in the Bloomington-Normal area.
We highly value your opinion!

For More Information Contact:
Socorro Alvarez (309) 827-3794
Joan Brehm (309) 438-7177

APPENDIX F. FIRST LATINO FAMILY FOCUS GROUP FLYER IN SPANISH

APPENDIX G. SECOND LATINO FAMILY FOCUS GROUP FLYER IN ENGLISH

APPENDIX H. SECOND LATINO FAMILY FOCUS GROUP FLYER IN SPANISH

¿Qué opina sobre el cuidado de sus niños?

Familias Latinas con niños menores de 6 años
Están invitados a compartir sus experiencias y
preocupaciones sobre el cuidado de sus niños

¡Juegos para los Niños!

¡Comida Gratis!

¿Donde?:   Centro Comunitario Western Avenue
            600 N. Western Avenue, Bloomington
¿Cuando?:   Sábado 20 de octubre de 2007 - 11:30 am
            ó
            Sábado 3 de noviembre de 2007 - 11:30 am

Queremos hablar con ustedes sobre sus experiencias para aprender
sobre sus necesidades en relación al cuidado de sus niños en
Bloomington-Normal.

Para más información favor de
comunicarse con:
Socorro Alvarez (309) 827-3794
Joan Brehm (309) 438-7177

APPENDIX I. LATINO FAMILY FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Introduction:

1. Who we are
2. What we are doing and why
3. Hispanic Families Work Group (have some flyers to hand out)
4. Discussion will last about an hour, but feel free to leave early if you need to.
5. When we refer to child care, we mean supervision and/or educational programs for children ages 0-5.

Guiding Questions:

1. Introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about your family. (maybe go around room in a circle for this one)

2. Who provides child care for your children?
    a. Why did you select that?

3. Is there anything that would make child care better for you?
    a. What is that? (ie: easier, more convenient, more accessible, etc…)

4. What other child care programs or networks are you currently aware of?
    a. How did you learn of them?
    b. What are your reasons for not using them?

5. What else would you like to tell me about child care issues?

(Original questions – used to help explain to interpreter what our intentions are)
Are your child care needs currently being met?
How are your child care needs currently being met?
Is there anything lacking in your current child care situation?
What are the most important qualities for you when deciding on child care?
(prompt - ie: cost, flexibility, time, trust/safety, special needs care, language, transportation, education, etc..)

APPENDIX J. LIST OF CONTACTED CHILD CARE PROVIDERS IN BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL, ILLINOIS

1. A Child's View Preschool, 400 W. Union, Bloomington, 829-3995
2. A Cozy Home Daycare , 309-454-7864, Normal IL 61761
3. A Great Daycare , 1307 Ogelthorpe Ave , Normal. 309-454-7864
4. Aunt T. Day Care: 2405 21st St, Bloomington, IL 61704
5. B's World , 606 N Mason St , Bloomington, IL, 309-823-9054
6. Better Daycare, 404 E Mulberry St Bloomington, IL, (309) 828-6495
7. Blooming Grove Academy, 510 E. Washington, Bloomington , 827-2932
8. Bloomington Day Care Center Inc., 309 E. Wood, Bloomington, 829-1541
9. Buttons & Bows Child Care: 1414 Norma Dr, Bloomington, IL 61704
10. Calvary United Methodist Nursery School, 814 Jersey, Normal, 452-4560
11. Chesterbrook Academy: 802 E Emerson St, Bloomington, IL 61701
12. Child Care Connection, 1308 Bancroft Dr., Bloomington, 662-0131
13. Child Care Resource & Referral Network, 207 W. Jefferson, Bloomington, 828-1892
14. Child's World Child Care Center, 813 E. Bell, Bloomington, 827-5566
15. The Children's Foundation (Early Start, Child Care Center)-Bloomington, (309) 827-0374
16. Clubhouse Child Care Center Incorporated: 210 N Williamsburg Dr, Bloomington, IL 61704
17. Daddy Daycare, 906 W Jefferson St, Bloomington - (309) 828-8973
18. Day Care Center of McLean Co., 315 N. Stillwell, Bloomington, 829-4202
19. Debbie S. Childcare: 418 E Grove St , Bloomington, IL 61701
20. Debra T. Thomas Learning Center, 6 Westport Ct., Bloomington, 663-5708
21. Discovery World Child Care Center, 2504 E. Washington, Bloomington, 663-6529
22. Eastview Christian Pre-School, 1705 Towanda, Bloomington, 662-9376
23. Good Shephard Luthreran Child Development Center, 201 S. Main, Normal, 862-0101
24. Heartland Head Start, Bloomington, (309) 662-4880
25. Hilltop Pre-School, 1406 Searle, Normal, 452-5318
26. Janice's Licensed Day Care Home-Bloomington
27. Katie's Daycare, 318 De Ville Dr, Bloomington - (309) 821-0350
28. Kiddie Korner Pre-School, 1510 N. Main, Normal, 452-2277
29. Kid's Club East Child Care Center, 2708 E. Lincoln, Bloomington, 663-5437
    o Kid's Club West Child Care Center, 1009 Maple Hill Road, Bloomington, 829-5437
30. Kids To Go, Transportation Service, Bloomington, 888-4448
31. Kinder-Care Learning Center, 2410 E. Washington, Bloomington, 662-7033
32. La Petite Academy, 616 IAA Drive, Bloomington, 662-3431
    o La Petite Academy, 2602 Danbury Dr., Bloomington, 828-3643
    o La Petite Academy, 1607 N. Hershey Rd., Bloomington, 662-2237
33. Little Lamb Pre-School, 1710 W. College, Normal, 454-4314
34. Little Jewels Learning Center: 4117 E Oakland Ave, Bloomington, IL 61701
35. Lollipop U, 405 Greenbriar, Normal, 452-7913
    o Lollipop U, R.R. 13, Bloomington, 829-3450
36. Moppet Junction, Inc., 1613 E. Emerson, Bloomington, 827-6532
37. Mulberry School, 320 E. Mulberry, Bloomington, 828-0512
38. Noah's Ark Pre-School, 1617 E. Emerson, Bloomington, 828-1974
39. Playmates Pre-School, 2000 E. College, Normal, 862-3216
40. Precious Jewels Christian: 806 Four Seasons Rd, Bloomington, IL 61701
41. Rocking Horse Child Care, 212 Williamsburg Rd., Bloomington, 662-0803
    o Rocking Horse Child Care, 110 N. Regency, Bloomington, 663-6642
    o Rocking Horse Child Care, 802 E. Emerson, Bloomington, 828-1914

   o Rocking Horse Child Care, 403 Kays Drive, Normal, 454-5939
42. Rogy's New Generation, 407 Kays Drive, Normal, 862-0708
43. Sally's Daycare
44. Scribbles Center For Learning-Bloomington
45. Shining Star Learning Center-Normal
46. Shirley's Daycare, 809 N Fell Ave, Normal - (309) 452-8505
47. Sharing Tree Pre-School, 116 N. Cottage, Normal, 452-4939
48. Tomorrow's Promise Learning Center, 3107 Airport Rd., Bloomington, 662-6201
49. TLC Family Care, 510 E. Washington, Bloomington, 827-3383
50. St. Mary's, 603 W. Jackson, Bloomington, 828-5954
51. St. Mattew's Preschool, 1920 E. Oakland Ave., Bloomington, 662-4646
52. Second Presbyterian Church Preschool, 313 N. East, Bloomington, 828-6297
53. Terry's In-Home Licensed Day Care, 1200 Cadwell Dr., Bloomington, 662-1418
54. Trinity Lutheran Church Pre-K, S. Madison, Bloomington, 828-8188
55. Washington St. Kindercare Preschool Center: 2410 East Washington Street, Bloomington, IL 61704
56. YWCA Childcare, 1201 N. Hershey Rd., Bloomington, 662-78

APPENDIX K. CHILD CARE PROVIDER FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Outline of Meeting:

I.   Greetings and Introductions
- ISU Graduate Students – Facilitators, note takers and caregivers
- Participants

II. Purpose
- Focus Group Discussion – Hispanic Families Work Group's assessment project
- Issue of Child Care in the Latino community – Bloomington/ Normal

III. Present consent forms and specify right to being anonymous, give each participant a copy of consent form to take home with them.

IV. Raise focus group questions and develop discussions

V. Final points and conclusion

Focus Group Questions: Child Care Providers

1. Tell us about your child care facility.
    a. How long have you been around?
    b. What age range do you serve?
    c. How many children/families do you serve?
    d. What services do you provide?
        - (prompts: transportation, education, supervision, income/payment assistance, holiday care, etc.)

2. Do you currently have any Hispanic clients?
    e. If yes, how many? What about the facility do you think is appealing to them?
    f. If no, why do you think that is?

3. Within the context of child care provision, describe your experiences with the Hispanic community.
    - (prompts: transportation issues; cultural/language issues; paperwork/logistics; contact with family, etc.)

4. What obstacles do you face in meeting the child care needs of Hispanic families?
    g. What resources do you have to address those obstacles?
        - ie., Spanish language assistance; funding
    h. What's worked for you?

5. What would make it better/easier to serve the Hispanic community?

6. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?