



*An Evidence-Based Preventive Intervention
for Hispanic Youth and their Families*

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Familias Unidas: An Evidence-Based Preventive Intervention for Hispanic Families, Empowering Communities to Reduce Substance Use in the U.S.

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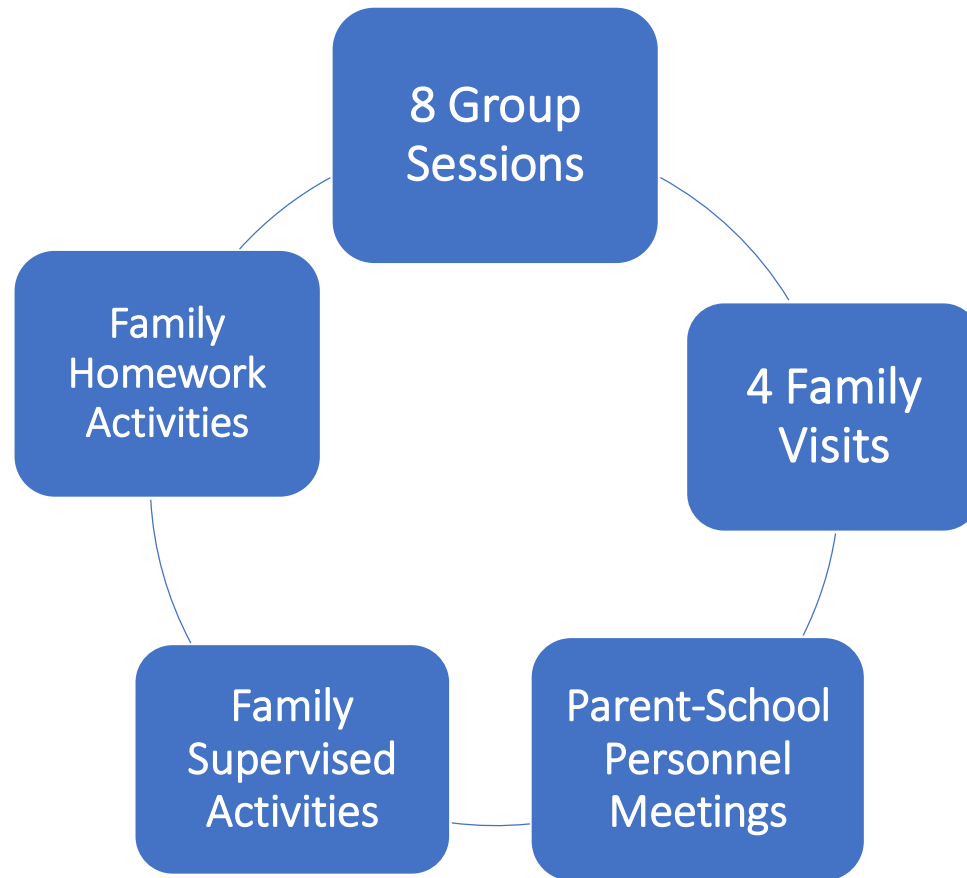
What is Familias Unidas?

- ❖ Evidence-based, culturally-informed intervention for Hispanic youth and their families
- ❖ Prevents and reduces problem behaviors, drug use and risky sexual behaviors by increasing family functioning and parental monitoring of peer and school activities
- ❖ Delivered through family-centered, multi-parent groups that place parents in leadership roles





Familias Unidas consists of...





Group Sessions

Weekly parent groups with facilitators to discuss ways to become involved in their adolescents' lives

Objectives are to increase:

- Social support for parents
- Parental investment
- Skill acquisition
- Parental self-efficacy

These objectives are accomplished by:

- Providing a context for parent participation
- Role-playing
- “Participatory learning”





Family Visits

Provide parents with the opportunity to practice skills learned in group sessions with their youth

Objectives are to increase:

- Restructure family interactions in the adolescent's worlds
- Increase parent-child communication
- Foster more nurturing supportive relationships

These objectives are accomplished by:

- Parent-adolescent or parent-family transaction guided by the facilitator.
- Utilizing the skills and knowledge learned in the group sessions.





FAMILIAS UNIDAS-SETTINGS

Where can it be implemented?

COMMUNITY
CENTERS

SCHOOLS

JUVENILE
DETENTION
CENTERS

PRIMARY
CARE
SETTINGS





Intervention Success

Familias Unidas has been shown to:

- ❖ Reduce behavior problems, drug use and risky sexual behaviors
- ❖ Increase family functioning

Familias Unidas has been evaluated in seven randomized trials (Pantin et al., 2003; Prado et al., 2007; Pantin et al., 2009; Prado et al., 2012; Estrada et al., 2015; Estrada et al., 2017).





Familias Unidas trials conducted from 2000 to date:

- ❖ Parent-Centered Intervention in Preventing Substance Use and HIV Risk Behaviors in Hispanic Adolescents
- ❖ A Randomized Controlled Trial of Familias Unidas for Hispanic Adolescents with Behavior Problems
- ❖ Preventing Drug Abuse and HIV in Hispanic First Offenders (DJJ-Study)
- ❖ Effectiveness Study: Familias Unidas Stage III Study: Preventing Substance Use in Hispanic Youth
- ❖ Brief Familias Unidas CDC (Center for Disease Control)
- ❖ Familias Unidas for Health and Wellness
- ❖ **eHealth Familias Unidas-Internet adaptation**
- ❖ eHealth Familias Unidas in Primary Care settings (on-going)

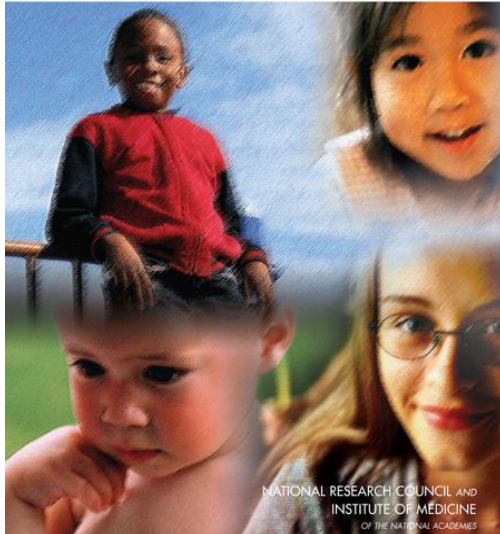




Familias Unidas: Exemplary Evidence-based Proven Intervention

Preventing Mental, Emotional,
and Behavioral Disorders
Among Young People

Progress and Possibilities



National Academy of Sciences,
Institute of Medicine

Compendium of Evidence-Based
Interventions and Best Practices
for HIV Prevention



CENTERS FOR DISEASE
CONTROL AND PREVENTION

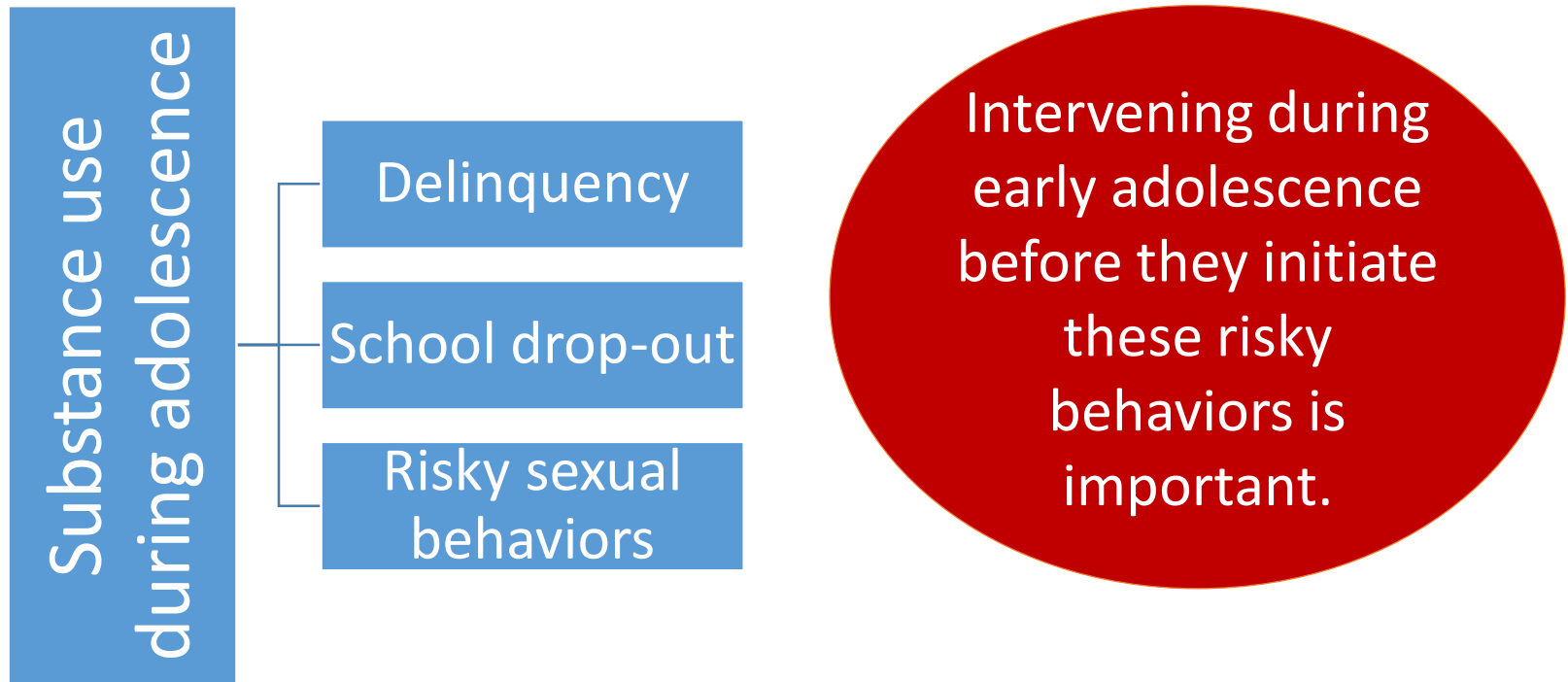


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Rationale – Risk Factors

Substance use, risky sexual behaviors, and HIV represent major public health problems facing America's youth (Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2014).





Rationale - Protective Factors at the Family Level

Families are important to intervention success (protective factors).

According to research, family factors that protect adolescents from risks include:

- ❖ Good communication
- ❖ Warm & nurturing relationships
- ❖ Parental involvement & monitoring
- ❖ Effective behavior management





Hispanic Population

- ❖ Hispanic youth are at risk for problem behaviors including:
 - ❖ Delinquency
 - ❖ Substance Use
 - ❖ Risky sexual behavior
- ❖ This is especially disconcerting because Hispanics are:
 - ❖ The largest minority group in the US
 - ❖ A youthful population with 1/3 under the age of 18





Therefore...

It is surprising that to date Familias Unidas is the ONLY family-centered intervention designed specifically for Hispanics that has been shown to prevent or reduce substance use and risky sexual behaviors and improve family functioning.





Theoretical Framework

Familias Unidas is guided by **Ecodevelopmental Theory**

(Szapocznik & Coatsworth, 1999)

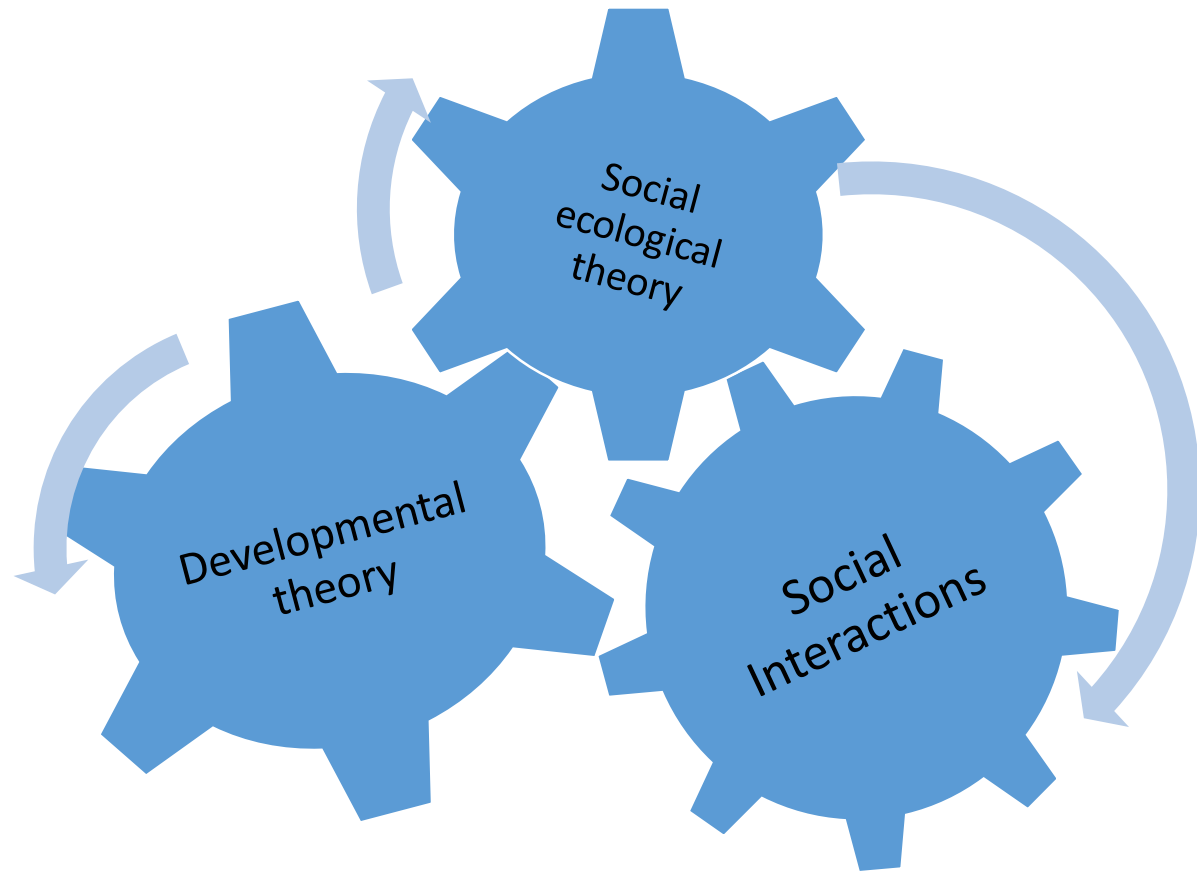
Ecodevelopmental theory argues that understanding adolescent risk and protection requires looking beyond the individual.



Elements of Ecodevelopmental Theory



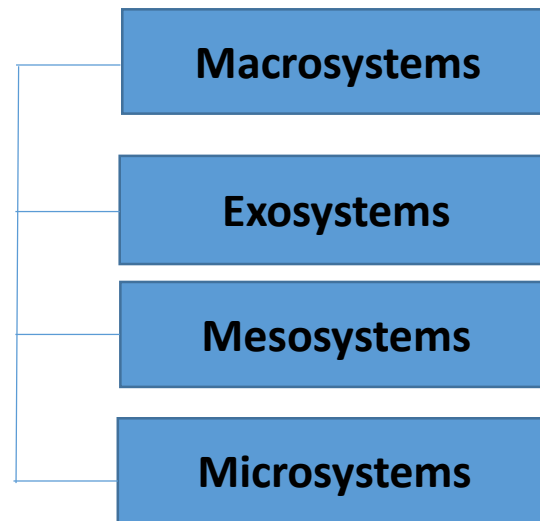
Ecodevelopmental theory incorporates the following three primary, integrated elements





Social Ecological Theory

- ❖ Rooted in Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1986) conceptualization of four overlapping levels of the social context.
- ❖ These levels of social context influence adolescent development and are organized according to their proximity to the adolescent, presented here from furthest to closest:



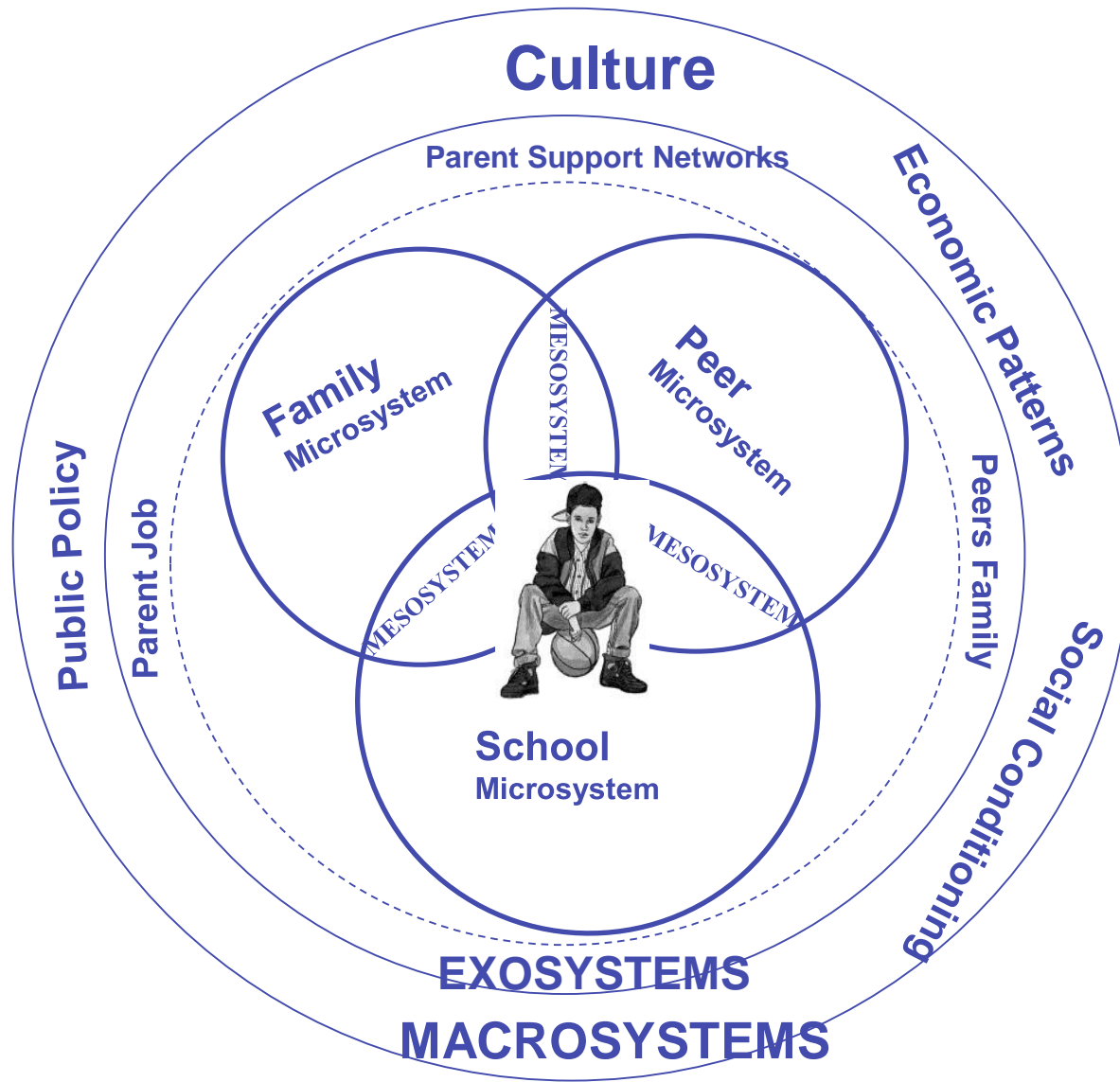


Social Interactions

Social interactional component refers to specific sequences of interpersonal transactions that affect risk and protection.

Simply put, the events that occur at the different systemic levels affect each other.







Microsystem

- ❖ Microsystems refer to the social domains in which the adolescent participates directly. These include:
 - ❖ Family
 - ❖ Peers
 - ❖ School
- ❖ Within each domain, the child maintains relationships with a network of people who shape her/his development toward either health or dysfunction.





WHERE WE ARE NOW

National and International sites:

- ❖ Familias Unidas in Guayaquil, Ecuador
- ❖ Familias Unidas in Santiago de Chile, Chile (Large Dissemination Initiative started in 2019)
- ❖ **Chester County, Pennsylvania, USA**
- ❖ Providence, Rhode Island, USA





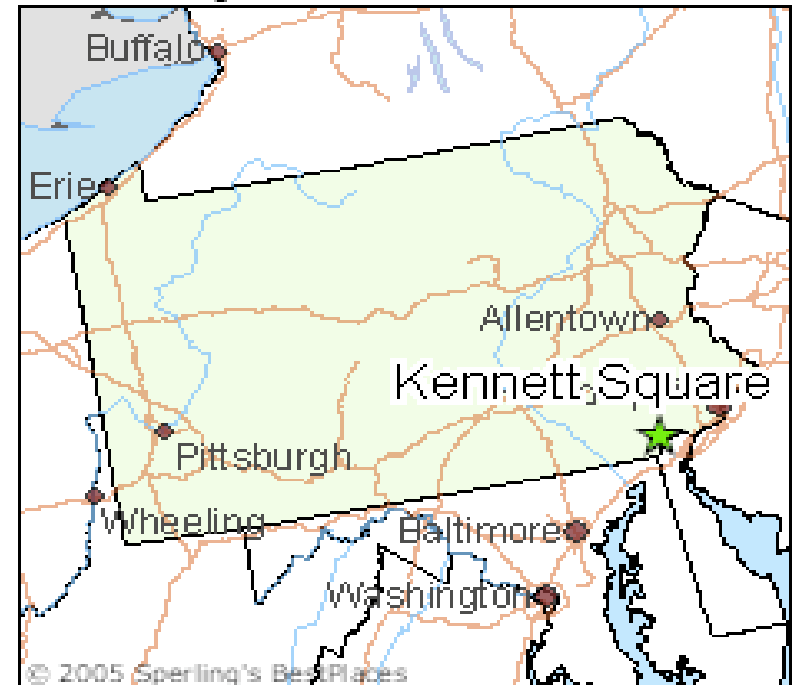
Our Community

- 48.1% Hispanic
- 47.3% White
- 4% Black or Africa American

- Median Household Income \$76,371
- Poverty rate: 10.3%
 - Median Home Value: \$252,500

- Kennett Consolidated School District
- 6 Schools
- 4,206 Students
- 45% Hispanic
 - 44 % Students Receiving Free or Reduced Lunch

Pennsylvania





The Need

- Economic Disparities
- Acculturation Issues
- Attendance/Academic Issues
- Parental Engagement





Sharing the Vision & Putting the Right Team into Place

- Identifying Key Stakeholders
 - School Districts
 - County Social Workers
 - Non-Profit Agencies
 - Community Businesses and Organizations

- Identifying Facilitators - Where are they?
 - Qualities
 - Training
 - Commitment





Recruitment Goals

- **To create an approach that:**
 - Is involving, evokes feelings and meets needs
 - Demonstrates credibility of the program
 - Reflects a logical and rewarding investment for the family
 - What have they communicated to you?
 - Individual family concerns need to be addressed
 - NOT “we can do this for you” rather WHAT can we do for you?





The Process

- **Engagement**
 - Addressing Individual Needs
 - Building Relationships
 - Incentivize
- **Empowerment**
 - Group Dynamics
 - Facilitation vs. Teaching





Challenges



Solutions

Facilitator Recruitment



- Community relationships
- Address District needs for staff to be trained

Family Recruitment



- Address needs of each family
- Establish rapport
- The Snowball Effect

Family Retention



- It's all about RELATIONSHIPS!





OUTCOMES

Number of Parent/Caregivers with Increased Substance Use Rules and Expectations	69%
Number of Parent/Caregivers that Reported Improved Parent-youth Relationship Quality	85%
Number of Youth that Reported Improved Family Communication	64%
Number of Youth that Reported Improved Parent-youth Relationship Quality	57%





Where do we go from here?

- New Communities are waiting!
- Juvenile Justice
 - Within Juvenile Justice facilities
 - Diversionary Opportunities
- Truancy Prevention/Intervention
 - School Districts
 - Truancy Court



Lazos System:

Comprehensive System of Intervention for Social Prevention in children and adolescents

Public Policy of the Under Secretary of Crime Prevention, Chile's Government

LAZOS SYSTEM – OUR MODEL 2018-2022

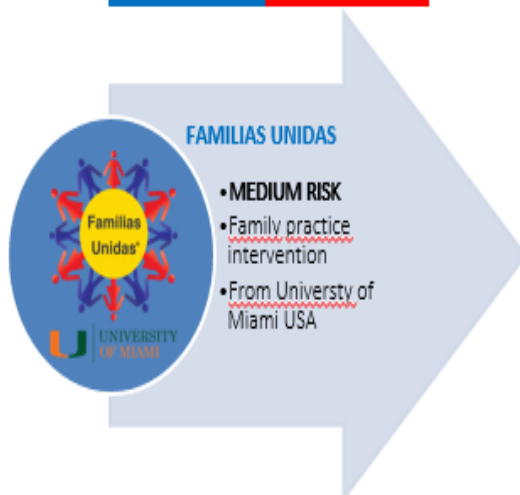
EDT

EARLYDETECTION | PSYCHOSOCIAL ASSESMENT | ASSET EVALUATION

EARLY



PREVENTIVE



INTEGRAL





Acknowledgments

Participating Families

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Pediatrics Primary Care Clinics

Pennsylvania, Chester County, Teams in Chile and Ecuador

Familias Unidas Research Team

- ❖ Preventing HIV in Hispanic Adolescents via an Internet-based Family Intervention (CDC 5U01PS003316)
- ❖ Familias Unidas Stage III: Preventing Substance Use in Hispanic Youth (NIDA R01 DA025192-01A1)
- ❖ Preventing Drug Abuse and HIV in Hispanic First Offenders (NIDA 1R01DA025894)
- ❖ Preventing HIV Risk Behaviors in Hispanic Adolescents (CDC 1U01PS000671-01)
- ❖ Preventing Drug Abuse and HIV in Hispanic Adolescents (NIDA R01 DA 017462-01)

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Thank you!

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