

Handout #2

Community Needs Assessment

How do you find problems and weaknesses?

Libraries can help with the following problems and weaknesses in the Latino community detected by other libraries and community organizations:

Work-related:

1. Where to find employment
2. How to apply for a job
3. How to write a resume
4. How to dress for job interviews
5. How to speak to your interviewer (cultural aspects of the interview process)
6. How to manage discrimination at work (glass ceiling)
7. How to manage sexual harassment at work
8. How to improve relationships with non-Spanish speaking co-workers
9. How to improve career paths and overcome the “work-only-with-Latinos” syndrome
10. Physical and sexual stereotypes in the workplace
11. Confidentiality and legal issues in the workplace
12. Benefits of working out of the house (for Latina women)

Family-related:

1. Acculturation and assimilation problems between generations
2. Language acquisition for Latino women staying at home
3. Family separation: what it does to the Latino family values
4. Problems of identity and diversity among neighbors and acquaintances
5. Religious beliefs and Latino marriage (machismo and marianismo)
6. Children as family interpreters
7. Monolingualism and bilingualism issues in the Latino family
8. Low literacy levels in Spanish and English
9. Physical discipline vs. child abuse
10. Domestic violence and addictions
11. Latinas heads of households
12. Young Latino American women and the Ñ generation
13. Latino families in transition
14. Anti-drug and anti-gangs activities for Latino teens

Health-related:

1. How to handle religious beliefs related to health issues with doctors and hospitals
2. What to expect when going to the doctor or the hospital (appointments, visits, fees, health insurance, paperwork, emergency rooms, prevention, vaccination, etc.)
3. Main health disparities

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4. Adaptation of dietary habits and ingredients to a new environment
5. Malnutrition and obesity in Latino children
6. Latinas taking care of themselves (marianismo)
7. Men taking care of themselves (machismo)
8. How to handle work-related injuries and diseases (legal issues, employers, fear of confidentiality issues, etc.)

School-related:

1. Helping children with homework
2. Detecting early learning disabilities in Latino children
3. Understanding and participating at the school system (PTA, meetings, counselors, etc.)
4. Understanding the school rules and functioning (bus pickup and schedules, homework, class trips authorization, school library, etc.)
5. Summer school and activities at the library
6. Attrition and dropout problems in high school for Latino teens
7. Immigration issues related to college education (non-resident school students)
8. Colleges and universities (expectations, how to apply, where to apply, financial aid, selecting a career) for children and parents
9. Alternative education for Latino young adults (+18)
10. Learning to use the local public/institutional library beyond school years

Government-related:

1. Tax issues (how to pay taxes, get a tax ID, file returns, get earned credit, etc.)
2. Immigration issues (visas, green cards, citizenship, deportation, new immigration laws, special cases such as political refugees, etc.)
3. Traffic issues (where to get a driver's license or pay a ticket, how to plead in a traffic offense, etc.)
4. State and local government issues (from garbage collection to volunteering at the firehouse!)

Do not assume that these are the same problems and weaknesses of Latinos in *your* community. You need to crosscheck them with local information. Once you know some apply, think how you can build upon these problems and weaknesses in order to offer your services and attract local Latino customers, by yourself or with other strategic partners in your community.