

# **Hablamos Español: The Nuances and Benefits of Providing Concurrent Spanish/English PSB Groups**



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# **The Tree House Child Advocacy Center**



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# Learning Objectives

- 1) Attendees will be able to identify signs their community would benefit from PSB services being provided in Spanish
- 2) Attendees will be able to enumerate costs and benefits associated with concurrent Spanish/English service provision
- 3) Attendees will be able to identify cultural differences between English speaking and Spanish speaking communities and cultural differences within the Spanish speaking community

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# Tree House Services

<b>Medical</b>	Examinations, documentation of injuries, treatment, STD/Pregnancy testing
<b>Forensic Interviews</b>	Developmentally appropriate interview of child Police/CWS in adjoining room, recorded, Spanish/English
<b>Therapy</b>	Assessment of symptoms Time limited evidence based treatments Individual therapy including non-offending caregiver
<b>Family Advocacy</b>	Court preparation, case management

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## How Are We Different From Local OMHCs?

### \* Specialization

- Board Certified Child Abuse Pediatrician/ Nurse Specialist
- Licensed Clinicians with Trauma Expertise
- Forensic Interviewer specifically trained to conduct developmentally sensitive and non traumatic interviews
- Family Advocate to navigate judicial system

### \* Multidisciplinary Team Model

### \* Free Services

### \* Child Friendly Environment

### \* Free Transportation (as needed)

### \* Telehealth (as appropriate)

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## Evidence Based Treatments Offered

PCIT (Ages 2-6)	CFTSI (Ages 7-18)	TF-CBT (Ages 3-18)	TF-CBT with PSB (Ages 3-12)	PSB-CBT School aged (Ages 7- 12)	EMDR (ages 4-18)
Time limited, 18-35 sessions, any time  Live coaching	Brief, 5-6 sessions, recent trauma	Time limited, 6-12 months, from one month after trauma	Time limited, 6-12 months, from one month after trauma  TFCBT +	Time limited, 19 weeks but may increase	Varying length
Increase positive interactions and efficacy of commands to increase compliance	Teach children + caregivers trauma symptoms, communication and coping	Coping skills to manage symptoms and processing of trauma experience	Learn about appropriate sexual behaviors, impulse control  Behavior management	Eliminate problematic sexual behaviors while enhancing skills in parents and other caregivers	Supporting processing of traumatic memories through bilateral stimulation

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# Transitional Trauma Therapy

- In collaboration with Child Welfare
- Short term trauma therapy to children removed from their family of origin at the time of placement in foster care/kinship care
- Aimed at reducing the trauma of being removed/placed and increasing communication between the child and their new caregiver
- 6 sessions

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# Who Are We?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ➤ 7 full time clinicians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 are bilingual - 2 of these are native Spanish speakers</li> </ul> | ➤ 1 doctor   |
| ➤ 4 contracting clinicians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 are bilingual - both are native Spanish speakers</li> </ul>     | ➤ 1 nurse  |
| ➤ Between 1 and 5 students each year  | ➤ 2 family advocates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both are native Spanish speakers</li> </ul>          |
| ➤ Currently 3 are bilingual - all 3 are native Spanish speakers   | ➤ 1 forensic interviewer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She is a native Spanish speaker</li> </ul>       |
|   | ➤ 5 administrative support staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 are native Spanish speakers</li> </ul> |

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## Our Spanish Speaking Therapists...

- All native speakers are either first or second generation immigrants
- Representing:
  - El Salvador
  - Chile
  - Nicaragua
  - Mexico
  - Ecuador
- Two non-native speakers



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## Who Do We Serve?

- A large percentage of clients are from Spanish speaking families
- Representing various countries in Central and South America
- Predominantly uninsured or underinsured
- Some of our families don't have their own transportation



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## Our PSB Group Journey

- We began running English PSB-CBT group in September 2023
- Almost half of the PSB referrals we received, either the child or caregiver only spoke Spanish
- English groups were held midafternoon and Spanish group was held in the evening due to concern of Spanish group participation
- Spanish group began to dwindle, due to lack of referrals, attendance issues, graduations, etc
- We were able to then combine Spanish child group with English child group, and still hold separate English and Spanish caregiver groups
- Combined checkouts were completed, with therapists translated for Spanish speaking caregivers
- When we received an increase in Spanish referrals, a child group was reformed.
- We currently hold a Spanish child/caregiver group and English child/caregiver group
- Both Spanish and English groups are now held at 5pm
- We complete group planning together as a team, as well as hold combined recap and check-out from group to problem solve and coordinate as needed

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## Cultural Humility

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# Cultural Humility

"To practice cultural humility is to maintain a willingness to suspend what you know, or what you think you know, about a person based on generalizations about their culture. Rather, what you learn about your clients' culture stems from being open to what they themselves have determined is their personal expression of their heritage and culture (Moncho, Craig, 2013)."



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# Cultural Humility Research

- (Dingfelder, Sadie F, 2004) Surveyed 107 Latino students receiving therapy from a university counseling center. With a written survey, she asked them how ethnically and culturally similar their therapists were to them and how satisfied they were with their first sessions. Fraga found that satisfaction with a therapist hinged on how well the Hispanic client felt the therapist understood Latino culture, but not on the therapist's ethnicity.
- In a university counseling center sample of 247 clients who were treated by 50 therapists, we retrospectively examined the association between client ratings of their therapists' cultural humility and the degree to which clients perceived that their therapist missed opportunities to discuss their cultural identity. The results demonstrated that clients who rated their therapist as being more culturally humble also reported better therapy outcomes. Additionally, clients who perceived that their therapist missed cultural opportunities reported worse therapy outcomes (Owen, Jesse, et al, 2016)



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## Latino Values

Familismo

Respeto

Simpatia

Marianismo

Machismo

(Calzada, Esther J, 2010)

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## How We Can Practice Cultural Humility

- When explaining concepts or providing strategies, use examples that resonate with the family's cultural context
- Elevate parents as experts too, ask lots questions
- Not assume that one parenting style is universally "best" and recognizing that effective parenting practices can vary across Latino cultures
- Being open to learning and being conversant in Latino values
- Consider how Latino parent's perceive efforts to deliver evidence-based interventions

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# Connecting Values to Practice

- Family Dynamics
- Sex & Culture
- Behavior Management
- Technology

We are not just providing services in Spanish; we are meeting clients where they are and respecting the cultural nuances that influence their needs.



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# Family Dynamics and Impact on PSB Treatment Implementation



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## Why Talk About Caregivers?

- Focused on caregiver participation
- Most important predictor of improvement is caregiver (St. Amand, Bard, & Silovsky, 2008)
- Specifically, Behavior Parent Training (BPT) most significant/effective practice element
- BPT co-occurred with other practice elements
  - Rules about sexual behavior and boundaries
  - Sexual education
  - Abuse prevention skills
- Children need their caregivers to participate

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## How Talk about Caregivers?

- Success defined as caregiver participation and graduation from treatment
- Explore WHO participates in PSB group treatment
  - Cultural factors impacting participation
  - What participation looks like in a culturally relevant way
  - Suggestions for more success

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# What Impacts Caregiver Participation?

- Community based study (Garcia-Huidobro et al., 2016) found:
  - Program factors (facilitator, scheduling)
  - Sociocultural (community and cultural beliefs)
  - Individual and family characteristics (family conflict, motivation)
  - Research (recruitment procedures)
- Consistent with our experience

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# Program Implementation factors

- Childcare
- Evening scheduling (5-6:30 pm)
- Reminder calls/texts the day before
- Transportation
- Facilitated by Spanish speaking therapists
- Facilitator characteristics

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## Program Implementation factors:

### *The Facilitator-Caregiver Relationship*

Kuneman (2010) explored including the following values in group CBT Intervention:

- Respeto
  - Address concerns without confrontation
  - Properly address (formalism)
  - Awareness of gender/age roles
- Simpatia
  - Warmth
  - Provide snacks/discussion of history
  - Relationship among group members
  - Encourage supportive group
- Personalismo
  - Call Families that missed sessions
  - Small talk/individual attention
  - Space to “Deshogar”
- Familismo (more later)



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## Program Implementation factors: Tree House Implementation Considerations

- Acknowledge cultural differences
- Challenges
  - Group transitions/group attendance
  - Gender dynamics
  - Uber costs
  - Additional time
  - Possible loss of fidelity for additional sessions
- Possible additions
  - One-to-one or supplemental groups



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## Family and Sociocultural Values: Strengths and Challenges Impacting Participation *View of Mental Health/Services*

- Cultural beliefs about mental health/treatment seeking that deter participation/adherence
  - Negative views about people with mental health problems or who are seeking treatment (Dixon et al., 2020)
    - View of mental illness as problem stemming from poor discipline/parenting
    - View of people needing mental health treatment as “crazy”
    - Difficulty recognizing symptoms as part of mental health needs
    - Fear of judgment from providers, or discrimination
  - Self Stigma (referenced in Martin et al., 2021) impact
  - Strong stigma for seeking mental health treatment, and possibly even more for sexualized behaviors
- Despite challenges, Dixon et al, 2020 found most caregivers
  - Wanted “tools” to help their children at home
  - Wanted to help children informally and formally through services
  - Behavioral symptoms were more recognized
  - Social networks were described as both helpful in managing symptoms and as a barrier

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## Family and Sociocultural Values: Strengths and Challenges Impacting Participation *Familismo*

- Behavioral and attitudinal components (referenced in Calzada, Tamis-LeMonda, & Yoshikawa, 2013)
- Important for decisions in seeking treatment, and implementation of interventions at home
- Challenges
  - Difficult to seek help if disapproval from family (Martin et al., 2021)
  - Impacts intervention implementation at home
- Supports
  - May act as buffer between self-stigma and parenting stress (Martin et al., 2021)
  - Support for lifting caregiving burdens
- Costs and benefits across time (Calzada, Tamis-LeMonda, & Yoshikawa, 2013)

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# Family and Sociocultural Values: Tree House Implementation Considerations

- Current Efforts
  - Acknowledge concerns to caregivers
  - Increase transparency to build trust
  - Rely on group members to help resolve concerns
  - Exploring who else can participate and attitudes and beliefs of others not present
- Challenges
  - Not able to engage some beyond referral
  - Group schedule not flexible for all caregivers
- Possible additions
  - Explore impact of safety planning on
  - Explore who is in the room, and tangible ways to include those not in the room

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## Family and Sociocultural Values: Strengths and Challenges Impacting Fathers and Mothers Participation

- Generally low participation of fathers in group interventions
- Possible Values Challenging Participation in Latine Caregiver Group:
  - Gender roles (Garcia-Huidobro et al. 2016)
    - Father's limited role
    - Mothers feeling burdened
  - Machismo
- Possibilities
  - Study showed indigenous Guatemalan male caregivers flexible in roles to help with child caring with developmentally atypical child
  - Would also show concern about areas outside of their "role"

*"Concept of machismo may be a western concept that is far too generalizing for the indigenous couple rearing a child with atypical development. As such, Latino men remain an understudied and potentially underutilized member of the family" (Romero, 2020, p. S7).*

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## Increase Father Participation

- Participation of Fathers helps improve outcomes in other parenting interventions (Lundahl et al., 2008):
  - Better outcomes for children's behaviors
  - improvement in parenting practices
  - Some limitations
  - Modeling
- Adaptive recruitment and parenting interventions achieved higher father enrollment and higher participation in two parent families in a study on Latino immigrant families in the US (Garcia-Huidobro et al., 2019)
- Adaptive recruitment
  - Used home-visiting to explain the program to both caregivers
  - One-on-one connections with caregivers outside of group

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## Family and Sociocultural Values: Tree House Implementation & Considerations

- Research Consistent with our experience of implementation at Tree House
  - 2 male caregivers; 11 female caregivers
    - vs English group
  - Receptiveness challenges
  - Some variation
- Suggestions
  - Maintain flexible views about the roles of mothers/fathers
  - Recognize impact of fathers on implementation even if not present
  - Recruit fathers through adaptive interventions
- Challenges
  - Low male engagement
  - Devices

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## Alternate Caregivers

- Familismo
  - High reliance on family or family-like supports for child rearing (Calzada et al., 2012)
  - Multiple generations often live in the home together
- Even when not the primary caregiver, grandmothers have important child-rearing roles

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## Family and Sociocultural Values: Tree House Implementation & Considerations

- Implementation at Tree House
  - Differences
  - Anecdotal similarities
  - Stepmothers, aunts, etc.
- Suggestions
  - Include adaptive interventions to recruit or reach out to additional caregivers not able to attend the weekly group meeting
  - Second group
  - Discuss in group how to involve/communicate with additional caregivers
  - Explore stressors related to immigration/separation from family
  - Explore impact on family events/interactions
- Challenges
  - Privacy
  - Distrust of outside supports

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## Individual Characteristics: Strengths and Challenges Impacting Participation *The Child and Impact of Familial Separation*

- Many children immigrating from Latin America have been separated from their primary caregivers
  - Risks (Schapiro et al, 2015)
    - Young men often have greater exposure to violence
    - Have greater difficulty re-integrating into the family
  - Primarily working with young men
  - Behavior issues can impact relationship
  - Impact on group interventions

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## Individual Characteristics: Tree House Implementation & Considerations

- Differences
- Challenges
  - Group transitions/group attendance

### Possible Interventions:

- Referrals for family therapy/reunification work
- Identify which caregiver has the strongest relationship with the client—might not be the caregiver in the room
- Focus on the relationship components in the intervention (praise, assignment of family activities, conjoint sessions)

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## Summary:

# Implications for Clinical Practice

- Adaptive interventions to include other caregivers in the home
- Adaptive recruitment for fathers and other caregivers
- Explore impact of PSB on whole family, and impact on engagement/implementation
- Explore how can be implemented with fidelity with additional groups
- Explore cultural values consistent with practice
- Consider attachment relationship building/supports

### Challenges:

- Additional time
- Fidelity drift
- Additional costs

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# Cultural Values Influencing Parenting Skills and Practice

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# Cultural Considerations in Parenting Skill Implementation:

## Praise

- English vs Spanish group expectations around praise
- Implications
  - Spend time with caregivers articulating/identify values and discuss how the parenting skill can serve them
  - Explicit connections for parent-child to align with values
  - Use the idea of linking back to the caregivers experiences as children, and explore how impacted, and how they strategies were/are valued
  - Teaching benefit of verbal praise in addition to considering caregivers' form of praise
  - Modeling praise in group

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## Setting Limits

- Limits as they relate to Latino values and differences in culture
- Who is setting limits within the family
- Implications
  - Finding a common middle ground

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## Consequences & Rewards

- Consequences and rewards as they relate to Latino values and differences in culture
- Vary based on family dynamics and cultural interpretations of discipline.
- Implications:
  - Increased psychoeducation and understanding of who implements punishments

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## Behavior Management

- Behavior management as they relate to Latino values and differences in culture
- Attitudes towards behavior plans in Spanish vs English group
- Implications:
  - Engagement of multiple caregivers in behavior plans

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## Research on Adapting Parenting Skills

- (Parra, Cardona, José, et al, 2009) Conducted a qualitative investigation among Latino parents to explore the relevance of culturally adapting an evidence-based parenting intervention. Findings from this study indicate that Latino immigrant parents want to participate in a culturally adapted parenting intervention as long as it is culturally relevant, respectful, and responsive to their life experiences.
- This study highlights the necessity of exploring ways to develop culturally adapted interventions characterized by high cultural relevance, as well as high fidelity to the core components.

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## Current Adaptations at Tree House

- Weekly support caregivers to identify specific praise in sessions.
- Creating social cohesion in the group.
- Extra one-on-one check-ins or sessions.
- Meeting the need that some caregivers feel more comfortable speaking their native language and prefer to converse in Spanish.
- Client centered language to build ongoing relationships with caregivers.
- Using collaboration and flexibility—to obtain the maximum benefit for Latino families.
- Additional time/sessions.

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## Benefits of Cultural Humility in Behavior Parent Training:

- Empowerment of families: Respecting cultural diversity can empower parents to feel heard and valued, leading to greater self-efficacy
- Improved therapeutic alliance: Fosters a stronger relationship between the therapist and caregivers, leading to better engagement and treatment outcomes
- More effective interventions: Tailoring interventions to the family's cultural context increases the likelihood of successful implementation
- Culturally grounded and family-centered approach to parenting, resulted in effective parenting with low levels of family conflict (Ayon, Cecilia, 2016).

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## Sex & Culture

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## 5 Areas Where Sex and Culture Mix

Connection, Closeness, and Trust

Monitoring

Communication

Traditional Family Values

Control and Discipline

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## Connection, Closeness, and Trust

- High levels of parent-family connectedness are associated with delayed sexual initiation (Allen, et al., 2008)
- Higher levels of maternal self-disclosure about dating and sexual experiences were related to more openness in adolescents' relationships with their mother and to adolescents having more conservative attitude towards premarital sex (Guilamo-Ramos, et al., 2006).
- Trust in family relationships builds openness to discuss sex education

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## Control & Discipline

Latino parents place greater importance on their children being independent, exercising self-control, obeying, and getting along with others (Allen, et al., 2008).

## Monitoring

Age-appropriate parental monitoring of adolescents' whereabouts protects against intention or actual engagement in sexual intercourse and other sexual behaviors (Allen, et al., 2008).

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## Communication

- Latino families have generally depicted less parent-adolescent communication of both a general and a sex-specific nature than in families from other ethnic groups
- While Latino parents appreciate the need for open communication, they find engaging in these conversations difficult (Allen, et al., 2008).
- How is communication shaped by an adolescent's gender?

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# Traditional Family Values

Hispanic families hold more traditional gender roles/norms compared to non-Hispanic

## Machismo

- Attitudes and behaviors that accompany the leadership or decision-making role that men individually and collectively assume in the home
- Males are expected to be strong and provide for the family (Allen, et al., 2008).

## Marianismo

- Derives from the devotion shown to the Virgin Mary
- Avoidance of sexual discussions
- Women are expected to be subservient to the male head of household (Allen, et al., 2008).

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# How Does Religion and Homosexuality Come into Play With Latino Parents and PSB?

- Male and Female homosexuality is not looked upon favorably in the Latino community
- Research indicates that the parental reaction to a child's sexual orientation disclosure may impact the parent-child relationship
- Although it is not clear if the impact of religion on negative parental reactions toward sexual orientation disclosure is greater or more common among Hispanic families, it is known that individuals of Hispanic ethnicity often come from more traditionally Catholic backgrounds and that historically, in the Catholic faith, homosexuality has been historically viewed as morally corrupt (Gattamorta, Salerno, & Quidley-Rodriguez, 2020).

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## Barriers

- Barriers to initiating these conversations, such as their own lack of communication about sex with their parents, and embarrassment on both their part and the part of their children (Allen, Svetaz, Hardeman, & Resnick., 2008).
- For Latino adults, particularly women, communicating about sex appears to cause discomfort and is perceived as inappropriate (Deardorff, Tschann, & Flores, 2008).
- Communication about sex represents a significant parenting challenge. Many parents express difficulty finding the right time and place to speak with their adolescents or indicate that they anticipate problems with stating things clearly and find such discussions anxiety inducing (Allen, Svetaz, Hardeman, & Resnick., 2008).

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## What We've Seen In Group

- Parents reported feeling uncomfortable with discussing sex education topics with their children
- Parents of younger children with problematic sexual behavior felt that their child was too young to learn about sex education topics
- Parents also reported that they themselves did not receive any sex education from their own parents, citing feeling unable to ask questions about the topic without punishment
- Parents had a lack of knowledge on topics, including function and names of body parts
- Materials in Spanish on sex education topics were very limited
- Homophobia has not been seen as much despite PSB behaviors or sex education topics. Caregivers have been more open-minded

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## Spanish vs English Materials



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## Implications for Clinical Practice

- Check with parents on their comfortability to having these conversations and any barriers they have
- Discuss sex education and language with parents from the beginning for gradual exposure to lessen discomfort
- Make a plan with parents on what topics they want to discuss with their child (conception, dating, sex, functions of body parts, etc.)
- Review and have several options for sex education materials for parents to pick from that meet their preferences/needs
- Normalize their discomfort and remind them that it gets easier to talk about these topics with practice.

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# Technology, Monitoring, & Supervision

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## How Access Has Changed Since COVID-19

- Research Show (Assis and Valenca, 2024):
- Increased access
- Increasingly younger ages
- 1/3 mobile app users globally are children
- 86% Brazilian internet users between 9 and 17yo have at least one social media profile

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## What Does Greater Exposure Mean?

- Social difficulties
- Behavior problems
- Sleep and eating issues
- Increase anxiety
- Exposure to inappropriate content
- Pornography consumption by males with ADHD is “closely related to compulsive sexual behavior and hypersexuality” (Privara & Bob, 2023)
- Studies suggest ADHD may be a predictive factor for problematic pornography use and other PSBs (Privara & Bob, 2023)

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## Apps Most Commonly Used By Youth

### Tik Tok (Assis and Valenca, 2024)

- Doesn't allow children to ask for help within the app
- Doesn't require parents approve financial transactions
- Doesn't obtain parental consent for using the child's data
- Family Pairing
- 13+ don't need parental consent

### Instagram (Assis and Valenca, 2024)

- Doesn't allow children to ask for help within the app
- Doesn't require parents approve financial transactions
- Doesn't obtain parental consent for using the child's data
- Does allow parents access/ability to manage child's data
- Enable parental supervision and parents can change teens' settings
- Parents and teens must agree for parental supervision on the teen account
- 13-15 can't change any settings without parental consent
- Requires the caregiver to have their own account
- Allows caregivers to see who the teen has interacted with over the past 7 days (but not content)

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## Parental Support/Supervision

- Caregivers aren't as well versed in new technology
- In 2022, less than 10% of children had enabled parental controls on Instagram\*
- This leads to:
  - Lack of protective communication around internet access
  - Unsupervised internet access

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## Tree House Caregivers

- Primarily low SES
- Technology often supplements supervision/caregiving
  - Anecdotally, Latino caregivers rely more on smartphones than our English speaking caregivers
- Lower rates of literacy with Spanish speaking caregivers
- Lower rates of technology proficiency with Spanish speaking caregivers
- Spanish speaking caregivers have more difficulty accessing parental control apps
- Phone is symbolic of what caregivers have worked hard to give their children
- Cultural expectations

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## Implications for Clinical Practice

- Spend an extra session on technology with Latino caregivers
- Increase check ins on device supervision/oversight
- Set up individual time to assist with installing parental control apps, adjusting settings, etc.
- Taking time to help caregivers connect technology safety with their values to increase buy in
- Explore additional possibilities for your site
  - Loaner dumb phones?
  - Run a technology specific group for caregivers

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## Conclusions/Wrap Up

We've realized that simply translating the content leaves gaping holes in the relevance and relatability of the information being provided to our Spanish speaking families. Particularly with regard to understanding what behaviors are developmentally normative, technology, sex topics, parenting skills and strategies, and the caregivers' response to authority (specifically the treating clinicians). Additional attention must be given to these areas in order to adequately treat children's problematic sexual behaviors in Latino families.

Balancing the needs and differences between the English and Spanish speaking clientele can be administratively delicate, but is an important aspect of ensuring PSB-CBT is provided in a useful and meaningful way for our community.

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