Evaluating Knowledge of Developmental Disabilities Among WIC Participants

Carolina Regalado Murillo  
*Portland State University*

Katharine Zuckerman  
*Oregon Health and Science University*

Alison Chavez  
*Oregon Health and Science University*

Julie A. Reeder  
*Women Infant and Children*

Follow this and additional works at: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/studentsymposium

Part of the [Community Health and Preventive Medicine Commons](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/studentsymposium), [Health Services Research Commons](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/studentsymposium), and the [Public Health Education and Promotion Commons](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/studentsymposium)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/studentsymposium/2017/posters/21

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research Symposium by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.
Evaluating Knowledge of Developmental Disabilities Among WIC Participants

Carolina Regalado; Alison Chavez, B.A.; Julie Reeder, Ph.D., M.P.H.; Katharine Zuckerman, M.D., M.P.H.

Background

• One in six children in the U.S. has a developmental disability (DD) such as intellectual disability, language delay, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or Down Syndrome.

• Early diagnosis of DDs improves long-term child development and improves family coping strategies; however, under-diagnosis and late diagnosis are more prevalent in low-income and racial/ethnic minority families.

• The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a national public health program that has been providing health screenings, nutritional education, referrals and supplemental foods for the last 40 years.

• WIC may be a promising setting for early identification of DDs since little is known about the reasons behind late diagnosis amongst minority children.

Objectives

• To assess what parents attending WIC know about typical child development and common developmental conditions of early childhood.

• To evaluate the connection between ethnicity and English proficiency in WIC participant knowledge of child development and in knowing someone with a developmental condition.

Methods

• Parents (n=539) with children 24-59 months of age attending WIC clinics in six Oregon counties were asked to complete a survey in English or Spanish.

• Two bilingual, bicultural research assistants helped parents needing oral administration.

• Survey items included:
  - Questions asking whether parents’ know individuals with DDs
  - “Quiz” on signs of typical and atypical child development
  - Parents’ familiarity with DDs
  - Parents’ race/ethnicity, educational attainment, and English proficiency

Respondent Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Percentage or Mean (N=539)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Latino white</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino - English proficient (EP)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino - limited English proficient (LEP)</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade or less</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate or GED completed</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college education</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor’s degree completed</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean parent age</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

Summary of Results:

• Compared to white non-Latinos, Latinos with LEP were significantly less likely to know someone with ASD or ADHD.

• After doctors and partners/spouses, WIC is the third most frequent source of information about child development for respondents.

• Latinos with LEP had significantly less knowledge about typical child development than white non-Latino participants.

• Latinos with LEP were less likely than white non-Latino and Latino-EP groups to report knowing “a lot” or “a little” (versus “never heard of it”) about ASD, ADHD, and Down syndrome.

• Overall, Latino-EP respondents tended to act more similarly to white non-Latino than to Latino-LEP respondents, suggesting English proficiency may play a critical role in knowing about DDs and child development.

Conclusions and Implications

• Lack of information and awareness about DDs may constitute a significant barrier to DDs identification within the Latino population.

Suggestions for Creating Awareness about Disabilities

• Since low health literacy may be an obstacle to understanding written health information, visual and auditory materials on child development in English and Spanish may be viable alternatives for teaching Latino families about the early signs of DDs.

• Encourage Spanish language media exposure, community outreach, and public presentations focusing on recognizing typical and atypical child development.

• Increase knowledge and awareness of DDs in the Latino community by providing information and support in areas Latinos frequent for healthcare services, such as WIC clinics. Support services could take the form of organized parent support groups focused on sharing concerns about developmental conditions.

• Inform healthcare providers on how to educate the Latino community about early signs of developmental disabilities.

• Advise WIC participants with limited English proficiency to take advantage of interpreter availability during doctor visits to ensure they communicate all healthcare concerns.

References:


