



*K-12 Mental Health Training Services:
End-Year Evaluation Report from January to June 2022*

Introduction

Latino Health Access was contracted to provide grade-appropriate training to K-12 students in Orange County schools, parents, and school personnel, with the aim to improve the capacity of schools on how to respond to students' mental health needs.

Method

Student ambassadors are considered students that attended a four-module training series, 1 hour each module. After the fourth module, student ambassadors completed a post-test only survey, with several retrospective questions to compare outcomes before and after the training series. There were a total of 265 surveys for student ambassadors, 154 from 3rd to 6th graders and 111 from 7th to 12th graders.

The student body attended two activities led by student ambassadors that completed the training series. These activities took an hour and the ambassadors selected the activities such as a skit, role play, etc. After the activities, the student body completed a survey. A total of 1,674 students completed a survey, 547 from 3rd to 6th graders and 1,127 from 7th to 12th graders.

Parents attended a three-module series and also completed a post-test only survey, similar to the ambassadors. Sixty-four parents completed the survey.

School personnel attended a two-hour training session and after the training they completed a survey. Seventy-seven school personnel completed the survey.

Data collection was done online or in-person depending on prevailing COVID-19 safety mandates in Orange County. The number of responses will differ per question to account for missing data.

Results by Contracted Outcome

2.a. On average, student ambassadors will improve their skills in teaching others coping strategies.

Outcome was assessed using two questions that measured ambassadors' level of confidence in teaching target skills to peers before and after the training, using a post-test only; these questions were modified according to ambassadors' grade level.

For 3rd to 6th graders:

1. How confident are you in sharing ideas and information with your classmates?
2. How confident are you in showing how to breathe deeply to your classmates?

For 7th to 12th graders:

1. How confident are you in sharing ideas and information on mental health to your classmates?
2. How confident are you in demonstrating coping strategies (or ways) to your classmates?

The possible responses were: (1) Not at all confident, (2) Somewhat confident, (3) Confident, (4) Very confident. The outcome was calculated using two methods: First, the expected outcome would be at least a point improvement after the training. It captures small to big changes in level of confidence. For example, a student could respond 'somewhat confident (a score of 2)' before the training and 'confident (a score of 3)' after the training, a small change, or 'not at all confident (a score of 1)' before the training and 'very confident (a score of 4)' after the training, a bigger change. Second, a less conservative method calculates the level of confidence by using the percentage of ambassadors reporting being 'confident' or 'very confident' combined; it would be a better indicator of readiness in teaching others before and after the training.

Among 3rd to 6th grade ambassadors, 63% (95 out of 151) improved their confidence in sharing ideas and information to their classmates, and 62% (92 out of 149) in showing how to breathe deeply, a coping strategy, to their classmates by at least one point.

The table below shows how much student ambassadors increased their confidence in teaching coping strategies to others after the training.

Confidence in Teaching Others Coping Strategies	% Confident or Very Confident	
	Before Training	After Training
How confident are you in sharing ideas and information with your classmates?	34.4	72.9
How confident are you in showing how to breathe deeply to your classmates?	29.4	63.1

Among 7th to 12th grade ambassadors, 75% (80 out of 106) improved their confidence in sharing ideas and information to their classmates and 74% (78 out of 106) in demonstrating coping strategies (or ways) to their classmates by at least one point.

The table below shows how much student ambassadors increased their confidence in teaching coping strategies to others after the training.

Confidence in Teaching Others Coping Strategies	% Confident or Very Confident	
	Before Training	After Training
How confident are you in sharing ideas and information on mental health to your classmates?	16.2	57.6
How confident are you in demonstrating coping strategies (or ways) to your classmates?	18.9	65.1

Among parents, 46% (29 out of 63) improved their confidence in sharing ideas and information on mental health with other parents or caretakers and 43% (27 out of 63) in demonstrating coping strategies (or ways) to other parents or caretakers by at least one point.

The table below shows how much parents increased their confidence in teaching coping strategies to others after the training.

Confidence in Teaching Others Coping Strategies	% Confident or Very Confident	
	Before Training	After Training
How confident are you in sharing ideas and information on mental health with other parents or caretakers?	55.6	87.5
How confident are you in demonstrating coping strategies to other parents or caretakers?	55.6	87.5

2.b. On average, the student body will report intent to use at least one coping strategy if the situation arises.

Outcome was assessed using 3 questions that measured students' intention to use at least one coping strategy after the student activity; these questions were modified according to students' grade level.

For 3rd to 6th graders:

1. How likely is it that you will count to 10 to cope better in a stressful situation?
2. How likely is it that you will use breathing exercises to cope better in a stressful situation?
3. How likely is it that you will talk to a classmate or friend to cope better in a stressful situation?

For 7th to 12th graders:

1. How likely is it that you will use breathing exercises to cope better in a stressful situation?
2. How likely is it that you will use physical exercise to cope better in a stressful situation?
3. How likely is it that you will use a self-care activity to cope better in a stressful situation?

The possible responses are: (1) Not at all likely, (2) Somewhat likely and (3) Very likely. The expected outcome would be a score greater than 1; that is, a student responds 'somewhat likely' and preferably, 'very likely.'

Among 3rd to 6th graders:

- 57% (314 out of 547) intended to count to 10 to cope better in a stressful situation and
- 76% (418 out of 547) intended to use breathing exercises to cope better in a stressful situation.

- **81% (442 out of 547) intended to talk to a classmate or friend to cope better in a stressful situation.**

Among 7th to 12th graders:

- 68.7% (693 out of 1009) intended to use breathing exercises to cope better in a stressful situation,
- 71.9% (726 out of 1010) intended to use physical exercise to cope better in a stressful situation) and
- 76.0% (768 out of 1010) intended to use a self-care activity to cope better in a stressful situation.

2.c. On average, student ambassadors, parents and teachers (or school personnel) will improve their skills in identifying signs of mental health risk.

Outcome was assessed using two questions that measured respondents' level of confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk before and after the training, using a post-test only; these questions were modified according to ambassadors' grade level.

For 3rd to 6th graders:

1. How confident are you in spotting a classmate with strong emotions?
2. How confident are you in knowing if a classmate is being bullied?

For 7th to 12th graders:

1. How confident are you in identifying signs of mental health risk in a classmate?
2. How confident are you in identifying a classmate being bullied?

For parents:

1. How confident are you in identifying signs of mental health risk in children, including yours, if any?
2. How confident are you in identifying a child, including yours, being bullied?

The possible responses are: (1) Not at all confident, (2) Somewhat confident, (3) Confident, (4) Very confident. Similarly to other ambassador outcomes, it was calculated using two methods: First, the expected outcome would be at least a point improvement after the training. It captures small to big changes in level of confidence. Second, a less conservative method calculates the level of confidence by using the percentage of ambassadors reporting being 'confident' or 'very confident' combined; it would be a better indicator of readiness in teaching others before and after the training.

For school personnel:

Outcome was assessed using the degree to which school personnel correctly identified 3 signs of mental health risk among students; these were open-ended responses, each correct response equal to one point.

Among 3rd to 6th grade ambassadors, 58% (88 out of 152) improved their confidence in spotting a classmate with strong emotions, and 59% (88 out of 149) in knowing if a classmate was being bullied by at least one point.

The table below shows how much student ambassadors increased their confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk after the training.

Confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk	% Confident or Very Confident	
	Before Training	After Training
How confident are you in spotting a classmate with strong emotions?	44.1	73.7
How confident are you in knowing if a classmate is being bullied?	46.8	80.5

Among 7th to 12th grade ambassadors, 70% (74 out of 105) improved their confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk in a classmate and 57% (61 out of 106) in identifying a classmate being bullied by at least one point.

The table below shows how much student ambassadors increased their confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk after the training.

Confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk	% Confident or Very Confident	
	Before Training	After Training
How confident are you in identifying signs of mental health risk in a classmate?	25.2	66.7
How confident are you in identifying a classmate being bullied?	42.7	77.3

For parents, 50% (32 out of 64) improved their confidence in identifying signs of mental health risks in children including theirs and 54% (34 out of 63) in identifying a child, including theirs, being bullied by at least one point after the training.

The table below shows how much parents increased their confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk after the training.

Confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk	% Confident or Very Confident	
	Before Training	After Training
How confident are you in identifying signs of mental health risk in children, including yours, if any?	45.4	84.4
How confident are you in identifying a child, including yours, being bullied?	51.6	90.5

All or 100% of school personnel correctly identified the 3 signs of mental health risk among students. The most frequent responses were: sleepiness, withdrawal and behavioral changes.

2d. On average, mental health student ambassadors, students and parents will report intent to use at least one (1) strategy to seek help if the situation arises.

Outcome was assessed using 2 to 3 questions that measured intention to use at least one help-seeking behavior after the training or student activity, accordingly; these questions were modified according to students' grade level.

For 3rd to 6th grade ambassadors and students:

1. How likely is it that you will talk to a classmate or friend if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?
2. How likely is it that you will talk to an adult (like a parent, teacher, counselor) if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?

For 7th to 12th grade ambassadors and students:

1. Do you intend to talk to a classmate or friend if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?
2. Do you intend to talk to an adult (like a parent, teacher, counselor) if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?
4. Do you intend to use resources from organizations like Latino Health Access if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?

For parents:

1. How likely is it that you will talk to a psychiatrist, psychologist or social worker if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?
2. How likely is it that you will talk to a trusted adult (like a family member, friend, teacher) if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?

3. How likely is it that you will use resources from organizations like Latino Health Access if you feel a lot of stress, sadness or anger?

The possible responses are: (1) Not at all, (2) Maybe, (3) Most likely and (4) Absolutely. The expected outcome would be a score greater than 2; that is, 'most likely' and preferably, 'absolutely.'

Among 3rd to 6th grade ambassadors:

- 44% (68 out of 154) intended to talk to a classmate or friend and
- 52% (80 out of 153) intended to talk to an adult (like a parent, teacher, counselor) if they felt a lot of stress, sadness or anger.

Among 7th to 12th grade ambassadors:

- 29% (22 out of 77) intended to talk to a classmate or friend,
- 20% (17 out of 85) intended to talk to an adult (like a parent, teacher, counselor) and
- 12% (10 out of 81) intended to use resources from organizations like Latino Health Access if they felt a lot of stress, sadness or anger.

For parents:

- 90% (56 out of 62) intended to talk to a psychiatrist, psychologist or social worker,
- 87% (56 out of 64) intended to talk to trusted adult (like a family member, friend, teacher) and
- 87% (56 out of 64) intended to use resources from organizations like Latino Health Access if they felt a lot of stress, sadness or anger.

Among 3rd to 6th grade student body:

- 43% (237 out of 547) intended to talk to a classmate or friend and
- 34% (188 out of 546) intended to talk to an adult (like a parent, teacher, counselor) if they felt a lot of stress, sadness or anger.

Among 7th to 12th grade student body:

- 36% (391 out of 1085) intended to talk to a classmate or friend,
- 26% (284 out of 1085) intended to talk to an adult (like a parent, teacher, counselor) and
- 77% (859 out of 1109) intended to use resources from organizations like Latino Health Access if they felt a lot of stress, sadness or anger.

2.e. On average, parents and school personnel will improve their skills in responding to the children or students seeking help.

Outcome was not assessed among parents; priority was focused on parents identifying signs of mental health risk in children, including their own children and their own help-seeking behavior.

For school personnel, a series of 5 questions were used to assess intention to provide help to students seeking help: “If you had regular contact with a student exhibiting ‘red flags,’ how likely are you to immediately...

- Contact the family,
- Discuss your concerns with another teacher,
- Discuss your concerns with a member of the administrative team,
- Discuss your concerns with the counselor and,
- Have a conversation with the student.”

The possible responses are: (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often and (5) always. The expected outcome would be a score equal or greater than 4; that is, ‘often’ and preferably, ‘always.’

School personnel reported that :

- 83% (64 out of 77) would often or always contact the family, if a student exhibiting ‘red flags,’
- 84% (65 out of 77) would often or always discuss their concerns with another teacher,
- 84% (65 out of 77) would often or always discuss their concerns with a member of the administrative team,
- 78% (60 out of 77) would often or always discuss their concerns with the counselor and,
- 93% (72 out of 77) would often or always have a conversation with the student.

Satisfaction

There were 3 satisfaction questions (see below). The possible responses are: (4) strongly agree, (3) agree, (2) disagree (1) strongly disagree. The expected outcome would be a score equal or greater than 3; that is, ‘agree’ and, ‘strongly agree.’

The majority of respondents, particularly parents, agreed or strongly agreed with the satisfaction statements.

Satisfaction Questions	3rd to 6th grade ambassadors	7th to 12th grade ambassadors	Parents	School Personnel	3rd to 6th grade students	7th to 12th grade students
Staff at this training were nice to me	99.3%	99.1%	96.9%	100%	96.7%	95.0%
I would tell my friends about this training	92.9%	93.3%	96.9%	100%	86.5%	82.5%
Overall, I am satisfied with this training	95.6%	98.1%	96.8%	100%	91.3%	92.6%

Summary

Among 3rd to 6th grade ambassadors, the data showed:

- above average (greater than 50%) improvement in ambassadors' confidence to teach information and coping strategies to other classmates or peers;
- the majority increased their confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk, particularly signs of being bullied after the training; and
- average intentions to seek help.

Among 7th to 12th grade ambassadors, the data also showed:

- above average improvement in ambassadors' confidence to teach information on mental health and coping strategies to other classmates or peers and
- in identifying signs of mental health risk after the training; yet
- their intentions to seek help were relatively low.

For parents:

The majority reported improvement in their confidence to:

- teach information and coping strategies to other parents or caregivers, as well as to
- identify signs of mental health risks in children, including theirs, particularly being bullied, after the training.
- overwhelmingly parents reported intending to seek help when needed.

For school personnel:

- all identified three signs of mental health risk among students,
- the majority reported intending to 'often' or "always" respond immediately to students seeking help by having a conversation with the student.

Among the 3rd to 6th grade student body:

- the majority reported intentions to use breathing exercises and talking to a classmate or friend to cope better in a stressful situation, and
- about half reported intentions to seek help if they felt a lot of stress, sadness or anger.

Among the 7th to 12th grade student body:

- the majority reported intentions to using coping strategies in stressful situation, particularly using physical exercise and self-care, and
- above average intentions to seek help at organizations like Latino Health Access.

Conclusion

The end-year data show that the ambassador training is effective in improving student ambassadors' confidence in teaching information and coping strategies to their peers. In particular, 7th to 12th grade ambassadors gained the greatest confidence, perhaps another session would boost their confidence to above average levels. This group also gained their confidence in identifying signs of mental health risk. The data alludes to existing awareness on bullying, but not on overall mental health risk signs. The student body data showed that the majority intended, regardless of grade level, to use coping strategies in stressful situations; an encouraging result from the ambassador-led student activities.

With the exception of the 7th to 12th grader student body, intention to seek help was below average for student ambassadors and the student body. The ambassador training and its peer activities were the start for students to practice help-seeking behavior, and students would benefit from continuous hands-on school-wide activities to practice such behavior.

Parents had the most promising results in their confidence to teach other parents or caregivers about mental health risk, a valuable resource to have in the schools.

A notable finding was that not all school personnel intended to intervene immediately when a student exhibited 'red flags.' There is an opportunity for schools to review existing practices that facilitate teacher intervention, train or retrain school personnel on these processes.