

# **Mental Health Risk & Protective Factors in Latinx Individuals: Implications for Treatment & Prevention**

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# Conflicts of Interest

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- No conflicts.

# Outline of Talk

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- II. Mental Health Risk & Protective Factors
- III. Obstacles to Treatment
- IV. Cultural Adaptation of Evidence-Based Interventions
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# Previous Literature

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- Immigrant Status & Suicide Rates (e.g., Trovato & Jarvis, 1986).
- Between Ethnic Group Comparisons (e.g., Roberts & Chen, 1995; Smith et al., 1985).
- Acculturative Stress Theory (e.g., Berry, 1974; Williams & Berry, 1991).

# Risk & Protective Factors in Mexican Adolescents

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- Examined risk and protective factors for suicidal ideation in Mexican American adolescents (Hovey & King, 1996) in southern California.
- High rates of depression and suicidal ideation.
- Acculturative stress was strongly associated with depression ( $r = .32$ ) and suicidal ideation ( $r = .38$ ).
- Positive family functioning, hopefulness for the future, and acculturative stress were significant predictors of depression and suicide ideation.

# Narrative Data from Adolescent

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- To assess hopefulness towards the future, asked the adolescents what they thought their future would be like for them and their family and coded open-ended responses.
- Example of non-hopeful response:
  - “I don’t know how my future will be.... Rejection from those I love hurts. I feel as if I don’t matter. I think my future will worsen, each day a bit more.... Life for me is not worth anything now, nor will it ever....” (17-year old male)

# Risk & Protective Factors in Mexican Adults

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- For adult Mexican immigrants (Hovey, 2000a), high prevalence of depression and suicidal ideation.
- Depression and suicidal ideation were significantly associated with acculturative stress, hopelessness, family dysfunction, lack of social support, and low levels of agreement with the decision to migrate.



# Narrative Data from Adult

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- Example of hopefulness:
  - In reality, it's a little difficult to achieve success today, but I feel sure about struggling against the tide. I came to this country to achieve success, which in my country was not possible. Today I'm forging ahead with my family, sure of myself without complexes nor obstacles. We know to go forward, and we will be the future of this grand country, the United States of American. (30-year old male)

# Narrative Data from Adults

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- Examples of hopelessness:
  - I see my future as very disorganized. I feel confused. I see that I won't be able to organize the future. (21-year old female)
  - I think that everything gained is going backwards. (49-year old male)
  - I think that the future is going to be a disaster. (32-year old male)

# Risk & Protective Factors in Central American Adults

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- Examined risk and protective factors for depression and suicidal ideation in adult Central American refugees in southern California (Hovey, 2000b) and Chicago/Cincinnati (Hovey et al., 2017).
- In CA study, depression and suicidal ideation were associated with acculturative stress, depression, family dysfunction, ineffective social support, and hopelessness.
- In Midwest study, depression and suicidal ideation were associated with acculturative stress, PTSD symptoms, lack of agreement with decision to migrate, and lack of coping competence.

# Narrative Data from Central American Adult

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- Narrative example of premigration trauma:
  - “I feel happy to be alive. I came from a country in war and I survived all the ugliness that went on there. I was held hostage for 12 days...and they killed my husband.... However, I got out with my two children. Thank you U.S.A. (64-year old female)

# Summary of Acculturative Stress Studies

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- Extended Berry's (1974) model to include possible *consequences* of severe acculturative stress.
- First studies to directly link acculturative stress to mental health.
- Risk Factors: acculturative stress, depression, hopelessness, family dysfunction, ineffective social support, PTSD symptoms, lack of agreement with decision to migrate.
- Protective Factors: hopefulness (current & at time of migration), family support, perceived social support, coping competence.

## Association of Acculturative Stress & Anxiety

Group	Fisher's Z	95% CI	Z-Value	p-Value
Overall (14 studies; 2,621 observations)	.408	.312-.504	8.338	0.000
Immigrant Status (9 studies; 1,154 observations)	.471***	.373-.569	9.418	0.000
Non-immigrant Status (5 studies; 1,467 observations)	.291	.117-.464	3.287	0.001

Note: \*\*\*Association between acculturative stress and anxiety is significantly stronger for immigrants ( $Z = 4.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

### Association of Acculturative Stress & Depression

Group	Fisher's Z	95% CI	Z-Value	p-Value
Overall (44 studies; 17,717 observations)	.408	.369-.447	20.578	0.000
Immigrant Status (28 studies; 7,099 observations)	.422**	.378-.465	19.035	0.000
Non-immigrant Status (18 studies; 10,618 observations)	.382	.323-.441	12.721	0.000

Note: \*\*Association between acculturative stress and depression is significantly stronger for immigrants ( $Z = 2.52$ ,  $p = .01$ ).

### Association of Acculturative Stress & Suicide Ideation

Group	Fisher's Z	95% CI	Z-Value	p-Value
Overall (7 studies; 900 observations)	.272	.206-.339	8.031	0.000
Immigrant Status (4 studies; 364 observations)	.265	.160-.370	4.955	0.000
Non-immigrant Status (5 studies; 536 observations)	.277	.191-.363	6.322	0.000



# Mental Health of Migrant Farmworkers

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- Individuals who annually migrate from one location to another to earn a living in agriculture (approximately 3-5 million).
- Research findings from Michigan and Ohio indicated that depression and suicide thoughts were associated with acculturative stress, anxiety, depression, family dysfunction, ineffective social support, low self-esteem, and lack of agreement with decision to do farmwork (Hovey & Magana, 2000, 2003).
- Acculturative stress scale did not fully capture the stress involved in being a migrant farmworker.

# Stressors Identified by Migrant Farmworkers (Hovey & Seligman, 2006)

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- Being Away From Family Or Friends
- Hard Physical Labor / Physical Pain Related To Farmwork
- Rigid Work Demands
- Unpredictable Work Or Housing / Uprooting
- Poor Housing Conditions
- Low Family Socioeconomic Status / Poor Pay / Poverty
- Language Barriers
- Geographical And Social Isolation
- Emotional Isolation
- Lack Of Transportation / Unreliable Transportation
- Education Of Self Or Children
- Discrimination From Society
- Exploitation By Employer
- Lack Of Daycare And Supervision Of Children
- Socialization Of Children
- Limited Access To Health Care
- Loss Of Spouse
- Domestic Abuse / Poor Spousal Relations
- Undocumented Status
- Acculturating To New Environment
- Immigration Experience
- Paperwork For Social Services
- Responsibilities Specific To Being A Female

# Exploitation

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They are supposed to pay us weekly or every other week and sometimes they take a long time in paying us. They make excuses such as they have not gotten the checks or they may say to come another day. We usually need the money right away.... (26-year-old male)

# Emotional Isolation

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It's difficult coming here without my family. I cry because of the loneliness and because there is nobody to talk to. You can't just walk up to someone and carry on a conversation. It makes me feel like a stray vagrant. I get this hopeless feeling—a helpless feeling. You want to make friends with somebody and you can't because everybody knows that you are just temporary and just passing through, so they don't trust you. They don't want to take the responsibility of helping you. (36-year-old male)

# Farmworkers with Suicide Behavior vs Farmworkers without Suicide Behavior (Hovey, 2004)

	<u>Suicidal Thoughts and/or Attempts</u>		<i>F</i>	Odds Ratio
	Yes	No		
MFW Stress	71.2 (31.8)	60.3 (28.7)	2.9*	1.5
Self Esteem	15.3 (3.5)	17.6 (3.4)	21.9**	2.0
Hopelessness	7.1 (5.4)	3.7 (3.2)	15.0**	2.2
Anxiety	64.7 (14.8)	54.4 (11.1)	14.8**	2.0
Depression	25.1 (13.3)	14.0 (9.9)	9.8**	2.3
Agree	2.97 (1.0)	3.32 (0.7)	3.8*	2.3
Marital Status				1.7

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .001$

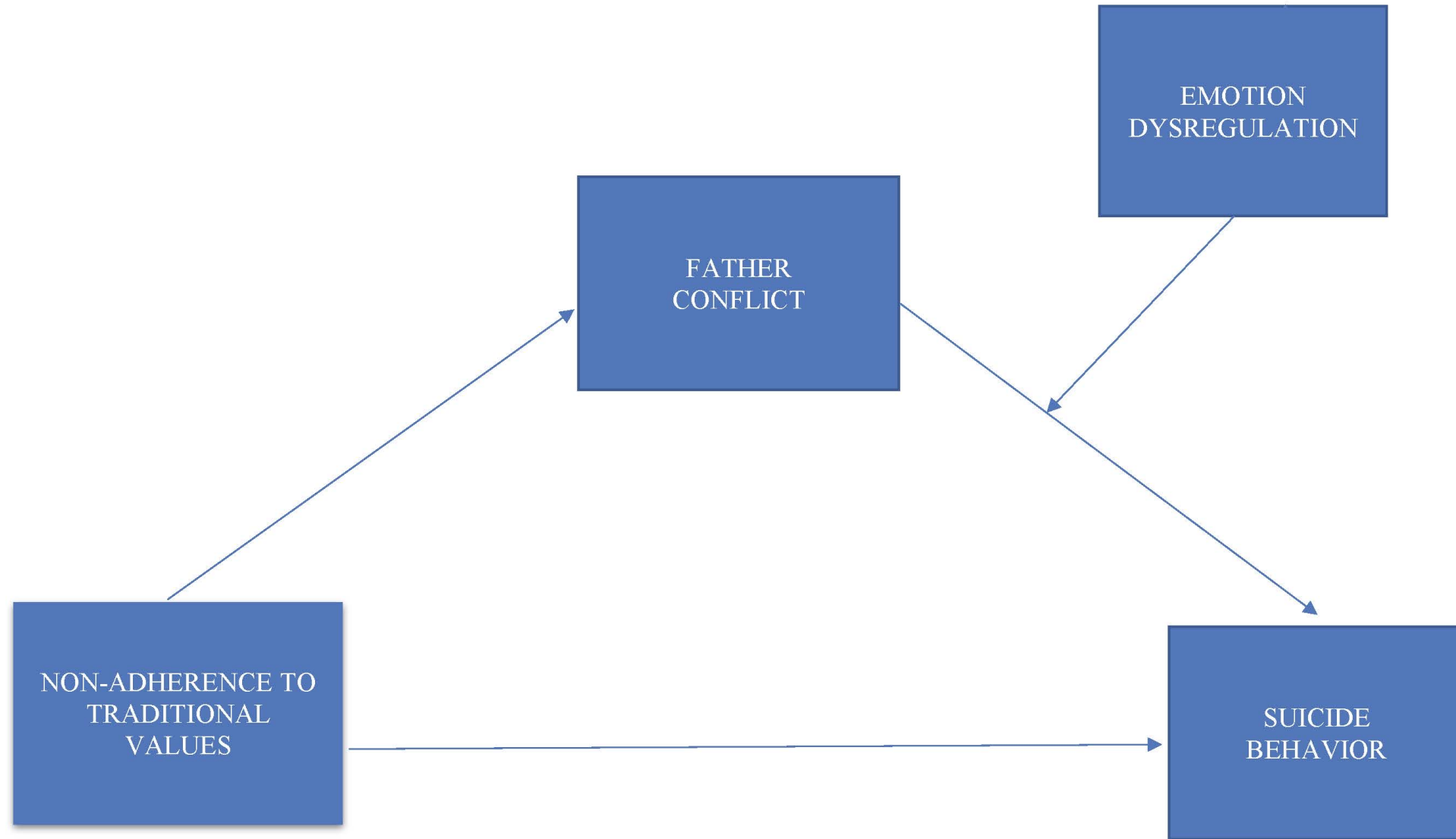
# Cultural Values & Suicide Risk in Latina Adolescents (Hovey, 2020)

- According to the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey data over the last few decades, Latina adolescents have consistently reported greater suicide ideation, planning, and attempts compared to other ethnic groups.
- Zayas et al. (2005) posited that increased suicide behavior in Latina adolescents may be due to parent-adolescent differences in traditional values.
- In specific, in families that support cultural beliefs emphasizing deference to parents, restrictions on adolescent female autonomy, and family unity – family conflict may arise when Latina adolescents exert autonomy and adapt non-traditional values, with conflict surrounding dating being especially stressful.
- The consequent intense interpersonal stress then leads to increased suicide thoughts and behavior in Latina adolescents.

# Cultural Values & Suicide Risk Findings

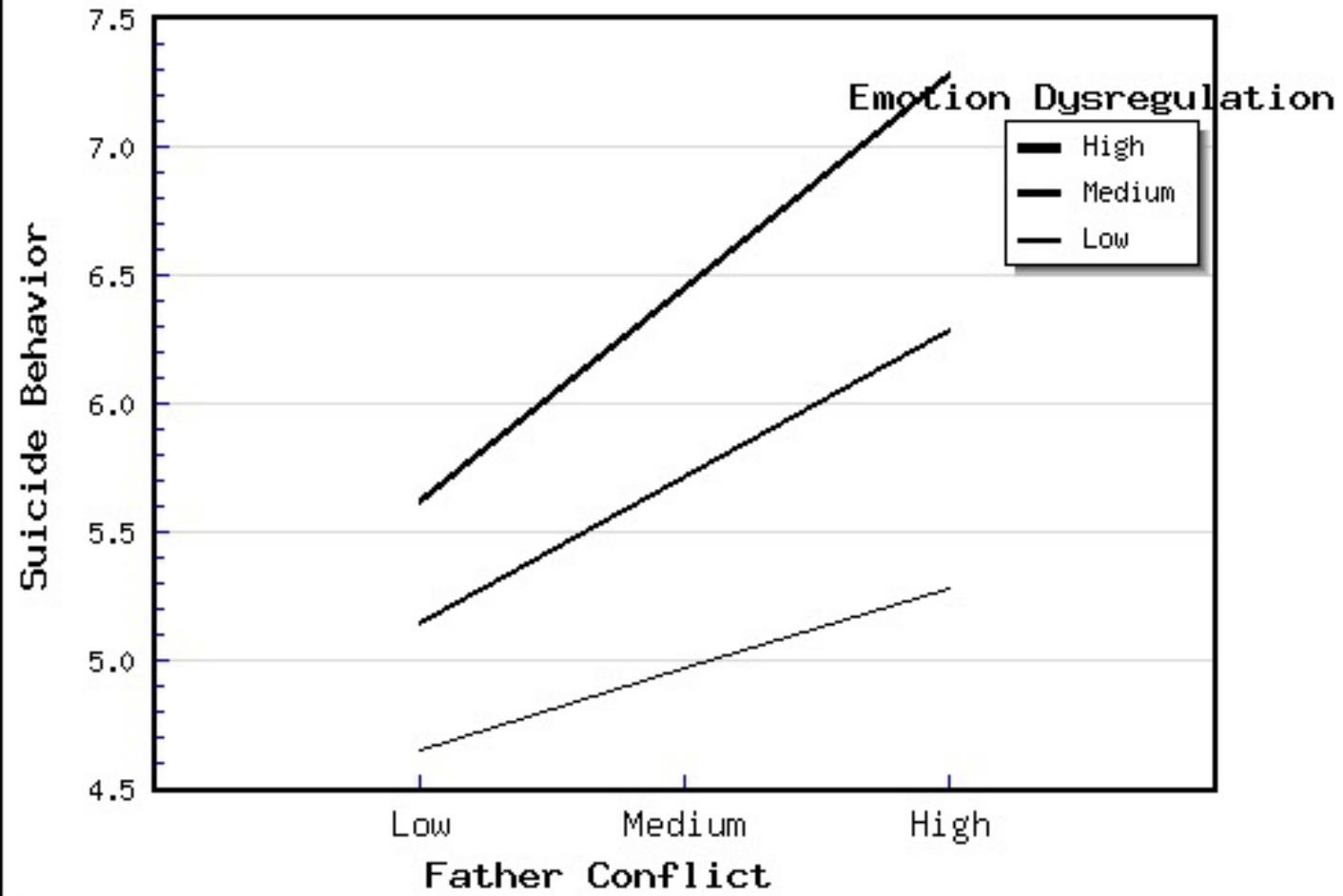
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- Do cultural values influence Latina adolescent suicide behavior or is this behavior explained by universal factors such as emotion dysregulation?
- In sample of 368 Latina adolescents aged 18 and 19, utilized Marianismo Beliefs Scale (Castillo et al., 2010), which assesses the extent to which a Latina believes that she should practice cultural values related to the female gender in Hispanic cultures. Subscales include Virtuous and Chaste, Subordinate to Others, Self-Silencing to Maintain Harmony, Family Pillar, and Spiritual Pillar.
- Also measured family conflict, mother conflict, father conflict, coping competence, emotion dysregulation, depression, hopelessness, burdensomeness, and suicide behavior.
- Virtuous and father conflict were primary predictors. Lower adherence to virtuous was associated with greater levels of father conflict, emotion dysregulation, depression, hopelessness, and suicide behavior.
- Greater father conflict was associated with lower coping competence and greater emotion dysregulation, depression, hopelessness, burdensomeness, and suicide behavior.





Interaction of Emotion Regulation and Father Conflict



# Other Studies

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- Examination of Interpersonal Theory of Suicide in Adults and Adolescents from Mexico (Hurtado, Hovey et al., 2019; Hsieh et al. 2020).
- Obesity & Suicide Behavior in Latina youth (Hovey et al., 2019).
- Cyberbullying and Suicide Behavior in Latino/a youth (Hovey et al., 2016).

# Culturally-Adapted Evidence-Based Treatments

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- CBT is suitable for Latino/a individuals due to its directive, problem solving approach that fits well with traditional expectations of immediate symptom relief and guidance; its didactic style helps to quickly orient clients to treatment and helps to demystify therapy, thus alleviating stigma (Interian & Diaz-Martinez, 2007; Organista & Munoz, 1996).
- Meta-analyses have found a large effect size for culturally-adapted CBT for anxiety and depression (e.g., Casas et al., 2020; Rathod et al., 2018; Van Loon et al., 2013).

# CBT Support Group for Migrant Farmworker Women (Hovey et al., 2014)

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- Female farmworkers from Grand Junction, CO.
- Co-led by licensed therapist and promotora.
- Education and CBT techniques such as cognitive restructuring, exposure, and social learning.
- Emphasized culturally valued interactions: simpatia, respeto, personalismo.
- Conducted in Spanish over 6 weekly sessions: (1) Topics generated; (2) understanding and coping against stress, anxiety, depression; (3) increasing hopefulness and self-esteem; (4) individuation and assertion in larger society; (5) family issues such as nurturance, communication, acculturation gaps; (6) domestic violence and other trauma.

# Support Group Findings

**Table 1** Differences in mean scores of mental health variables at pretreatment, posttreatment, and six-month followup

Variables	Pre	Post	<i>d</i>	Followup	<i>d</i>
Migrant farmworker stress	80.0 (25.6)	64.5 (21.4)	.64	58.5 (18.1)	.72
Depression	34.4 (14.1)	16.6 (8.0)	1.54	15.5 (4.7)	1.60
Anxiety	75.3 (19.1)	—	—	65.0 (6.4)	.72
Hopelessness	4.8 (3.8)	—	—	3.2 (1.0)	.55
Self-esteem	2.3 (0.5)	—	—	3.1 (0.5)	1.75

*d* = Cohen's effect size. *d* values of .2, .5, and .8 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively

# Dental Anxiety Interventions

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- Youth are more likely to have dental phobia if their earliest dental experiences are traumatic (Seligman, Hovey et al. 2017).
- At risk nature of Latino/a children in south Texas.
- NIDCR R34 to develop OST for dental anxiety delivered in dental offices.
- OST: graduated in vivo exposure + modeling + social reinforcement + brief cognitive restructuring → Implicit Learning that feared consequences will not occur.
- Upcoming NIDCR UG3/UH3 to conduct 7-year clinical trial on the OST.
- NIDCR R01 to examine VR pre-exposure of positive dental experiences as a deterrent against dental anxiety.

# Intervention Obstacles

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- Seligman, Hovey et al. (2020): Latino/a parents were as likely to be accepting of CBT for their children compared to non-Latino/a parents, but they expressed significantly more concerns about the feasibility of treatment.

# Current and Future Directions

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- Telemental health.
- Smartphone technology.
- Culturally appropriate assessment of coping and resilience.
- Machine learning of suicide behavior.
- Intersection of ethnicity, genetic influences, and history of pain and pain management in examining pain sensitivity.



# Thank You

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- Questions and comments.