

Experiences of Community Partners

“I like that the kids were given an opportunity to talk about cultural pride.”

—Program Manager
Colorado Organization on Adolescent
Pregnancy, Parenting, and Prevention
(COAPPP), Denver, CO

“The ¡Cuídate! program reinforces the cultural values and utilizes (these) values to get to the kids in a fun and familiar way.”

—Program Facilitator
Concilio Latino de Salud
Phoenix, AZ

“Instructions [for activities] were very clear and the kids enjoyed them.”

—Life Guidance Counselor
Mexican Heritage Association
Grand Rapids, MI



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Take Care of Yourself!



**A culturally-based program to
reduce HIV sexual risk behavior
among Latino youth**

¡Cuídate!—What Is It?

¡Cuídate! means “take care of yourself.” It is the theme of this culturally-based program designed to reduce HIV sexual risk among Latino youth. Today, all teens, including Latinos, face many health risks related to sexual behavior, such as unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV and AIDS.

¡Cuídate! helps Latino youth develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to reduce their risk for HIV. The program emphasizes risk reduction strategies such as sexual abstinence and correct condom use through activities that allow youth to:

- Acquire correct and reliable information about risk and disease
- Develop attitudes that support safe decision-making
- Build skills to be able to abstain from sex and use condoms correctly
- Reinforce confidence in their ability to practice safer sex

Who Is It For?

Spanish and non-Spanish speaking Latino youth aged 13–18 years. This program has proved to be equally effective with boys and girls.



How is ¡Cuídate! Implemented?

¡Cuídate! consists of:

- Seven 1-hour modules delivered over 2 or more days
- Sessions delivered to small groups of 6 to 10 youth
- HIV/AIDS knowledge, condom use negotiation, refusal of sex, and correct condom use skills
- Interactive games, group discussions, role-plays, videos, music, and mini-lectures.

In Oregon, **¡Cuídate!** will include a comprehensive contraceptive learning session in addition to the program's emphasis on risk reduction strategies such as sexual abstinence and correct condom use.

How Effective Is ¡Cuídate!

¡Cuídate! was tested with Latino youth in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania¹ and Monterrey, Mexico.² Youth in the **¡Cuídate!** program in Philadelphia¹ reported having significantly:

- Fewer incidents of sexual intercourse
- Fewer sex partners
- Fewer days of unprotected intercourse
- Increase in consistent condom use

All effects continued 12 months after the program ended. Success with **¡Cuídate!** in the U.S. and Mexico provides evidence of the acceptability of the program by Latino parents and effectiveness of the program for:

- Boys and girls
- English- and Spanish-speaking youth

¹ Villarruel, A. M., Jemmott, J. B. III, & Jemmott, L. S. (2006). A randomized controlled trial testing an HIV prevention intervention for Latino youth. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 160, 772-77.

² Gallegos, E. C., Villarruel, A. M., Loveland-Cherry, C., Ronis, D. L., & Zhou, Y. (2007). Intervention to reduce sexual risk behavior in adolescents. Results of a randomized control trial. *Salud Publica de Mexico*, 50 (1), 59-66.