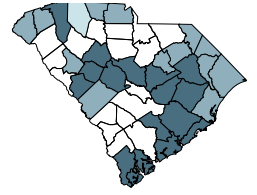


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PASOS: A CATALYST, A BRIDGE BUILDER, AND AN ADVOCATE FOR SOUTH CAROLINA'S LATINO POPULATION



PASOs is the primary voice for the health and wellbeing of the Latino population of South Carolina and the primary connector for this population to health and early childhood services they need to thrive

Model

PASOs' model is based first and foremost on developing strong relationships based on trust and respect with the individuals and communities it serves and the belief that everyone has strengths to offer. From this position of partnership with participants and conscientious attention to organizational values, PASOs is able to achieve strong outcomes through community-based programming. PASOs also works with a systemic lens, training service providers and organizations to improve quality and access to services for Latino families, sharing the strengths and challenges of this population with statewide coalitions, and have integrated our PASOs-trained Community Health Workers (CHWs) into health and social service systems.

PASOs provides:

- Culturally tailored educational workshops that promote the health and well-being of Latino families and the optimal development of their young children.
- Help navigating and learning how to use the complicated and often overwhelming systems of health care, social services and early childhood resources.
- Partnership with and training for organizations so they can provide more effective health care, social services and early childhood services to the Latino population.
- Leadership development for Latino CHWs, called Promotores, who are creating positive changes in their communities.
- Advocacy to ensure that Latino voices are heard and the needs of Latino children and their families are reflected in the policies of community and state organizations.

The Need

PASOs' participants are Latino, have an average of a 9th grade education, have lived in the United States for an average of nine years, and earn an average annual household income of \$22,000. In comparison, the median family income for families with children under the age of 18 in South Carolina from 2010 to 2014 was \$51,388.

Because South Carolina's Latino population is relatively new, the community faces many barriers to care and resources, including language and culture differences, limited social support networks, and fear and mistrust due to anti-immigrant laws and sentiments.

The majority of PASOs' participants are from Mexico, and approximately 93% of adult participants are uninsured.

In South Carolina, 40% of Latino children live in poverty compared to 26% of all South Carolina children, and 40% live in families with no secure employment, compared to 25% of white children. South Carolina has the second fastest growing Latino population in the country and 10% of the children in almost half of South Carolina's counties, including Greenville, Charleston, and Beaufort counties, are Latino.

In 2015, PASOs...

- Provided culturally appropriate, strengths-based health and parenting education to over 600 individuals. Eighty-five percent of them improved their health and parenting knowledge after participation in the courses. During each course, participants are encouraged to choose a behavior change goal and facilitators are available to support the participants on working towards their goals. The average score on the pre-tests was 47% correct and on the posttest 82%, representing very positive changes in knowledge.
- Assisted approximately 1,630 individuals with navigation of over 2,800 health and early childhood resources that benefit their families. Eighty-six percent of these individuals successfully connected to and benefited from the resources they needed, such as Medicaid, dental care, parenting, or breastfeeding support.
- Successfully connected 74% of participants without a medical home or physician to appropriate health care services, and enrolled 84% of pregnant participants in affordable prenatal care services.
- Supported 261 adults and 438 children with health and education needs through our pediatric literacy program. Many of these needs related to the social determinants of health, such as issues of violence, legal issues, economic stability, and food security.
- Conducted 178 developmental screenings. Those identified at moderate to high-risk for developmental issues were connected with services to provide further screenings and resources.
- Supported 60 new mothers in reaching their breastfeeding goals to initiate breastfeeding and to breastfeed for 3 months, 6 months, or 12 months.
- Reached 102 parents with information on early childhood oral health, impacting 240 children. Parents set health behavior goals, including making a child's dental appointment, monitoring and improving child's oral health habits, putting a child to bed without a bottle/sippy cup, refraining from sharing cups or utensils, and/or using fluoridated water.
- Facilitated statistically significant improvements in knowledge of parenting and child development, nurturing and attachment, social

support and family functioning and resilience with over 60 parents of children ages 0-8.

- Worked with 175 partners statewide to improve the quality and availability of care and services for Latino families. There were 55 changes to policies and procedures recorded, with the top two related to “improved access to care” and “improved quality.”
- Trained 60 Community Health Workers on effective communication and outreach, peer support techniques, health prevention, resource navigation, and child development. The CHWs work in their neighborhoods, schools, churches, and/or workplaces to connect their peers to helpful resources, help them navigate challenges they face, and learn information that benefits them and their families in a safe, organic way.

What we mean to the Alliance for a Healthier South Carolina:

Here to Now

In 2004, the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) division of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control asked PASOs’ Executive Director Julie Smithwick to conduct a needs assessment of the growing Latino population and its MCH needs. This division recognized the population’s increasing birth rate, but noted the gap in services to address particular needs the population might have. The research led to the foundation of PASOs. Since that time, PASOs has filled gaps that are not being addressed by any other organization in our state, and the model has evolved to address not only the individual and family-level needs of our participants, but also the systemic changes needed to improve service delivery processes in a sustainable way.

In just eleven years, PASOs has grown from one employee covering two counties with prenatal health education to a team of 22 employees and 60 community-based Community Health Workers addressing a variety of maternal, child and family health needs; access to care and services; and early childhood development.

Due to PASOs’ outcomes and unique ability to reach families where they are and build trusting relationships, PASOs has now become the largest, most comprehensive organization focusing on the strengths and needs of Latino families in the state, and has grown every year to offer greater, more effective services throughout the state.

Due to PASOs’ training of Latino leaders and partnership with organizations over the last eleven years, the Latino perspective is now being sought out more frequently. There are more Latino and bicultural individuals at decision-making tables, and Latino families are no longer an afterthought. Policies and procedures at many organizations have been altered or changed as a result, and both state agencies and private nonprofits are seeking out partnerships with and advice from PASOs as they work to better serve the Latino population.

Awards and Accolades

In 2011, PASOs was named a Promising Practice by the National Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs and awarded Promising Practice of the Year in 2012.

In 2013, PASOs was awarded the Program of the Year award from the South Carolina Office of Rural Health, and also in 2013 was given the Community Catalyst award by the Central Carolina Community Foundation.

What Makes Us Special

PASOs’ greatest asset is the dedication, passion, and teamwork demonstrated by our staff. PASOs’ team is dedicated to living out our values of education, trust, community involvement, excellence, family and equity throughout all programming and interactions with community members and organizational partners. The organization engages community voices in each step of its process, and strives to authentically represent both the community’s strengths and challenges in local and statewide forums. Lastly, PASOs addresses not only individual and community needs, but also systemic challenges. This ensures that changes are not only immediate, but also long-lasting and sustainable.

Despite structural barriers, Latino families are working hard to build better lives for their children and contribute to their communities. They are best able to do this when they have the right information and resources. PASOs partners with Latino communities to leverage their strengths and help make sure families have the tools they need to be successful.

There are health- and early childhood-focused organizations that work to reach Latino families as a subset of the population they target. However, due to the intense systemic barriers faced by many Latino families in our state, many of them are not effective in reaching or serving Latino families who are at risk for negative or substandard health and early childhood outcomes.

By working in partnership with the communities PASOs serves; the leaders from these communities; and leaders from agencies, organizations and coalitions around the state, we help more families connect to needed resources, gain information that helps them address their needs, feel more empowered to use their voices, and receive more appropriate services. Our model is holistic and works to create change at various levels, in order to ensure more sustainable changes and improved quality of life for this population.