

Promotora Approach:

The Promotora model was developed in collaboration with the East LA Women's center as means for an alternative intervention and empowering healing, promoting awareness and education, and supporting upstream strategies for prevention.

The Promotora Project can be described as a community-based model of providing education and advocacy training to ethnic communities in a culturally inclusive manner. Specifically, the model targets the Latino community and emphasizes domestic violence advocacy. The following are phases of implementation of the project.

- **Phase I of the Promotora Project** consisted of a 15-hour training facilitated by the East Los Angeles Women's Center (ELWC). Twelve community health workers from TCC and Su Casa received training on a variety of topics, including domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, teen dating violence, and community presentation skills.
- **Phase II of Promotora Project** consisted of implementing a training and advocacy group within the DVHCP. Eight patients who received services at TCC, Su Casa and MLP participated in a four-week training program focused on educating patients of the following topics: Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence. This group, which was facilitated by Luz Garcia (Promotora/CHW I), provided a framework for Promotoras to begin their own community presentations.
- **Phase III of Promotora Project** included facilitating community presentations on domestic violence by Promotoras trained in Phase I and II of the project. In the month of March, Promotoras have already made five presentations covering sexual assault and domestic violence to different audiences representing over 400 individuals. The project has received positive community feedback. Patients are grateful for the opportunity to reach out to get help, disclose and find support by hearing Promotoras tell their story. Most importantly, participants are finding inspiration to join the fight against domestic violence.

Promotora Participant Stories

The following Promotora stories are both verbal and emailed experiences that were translated and transcribed during a Promotora meeting on March 13, 2017. Also, included were two original email exchanges. The individuals below were part of our first Promotora training that was facilitated by East Los Angeles Women Center back in November 2016 and remain active Promotoras in our community. Please note, also included is an experience shared from a participant from our own TCC Promotora training. In general, the women were asked to share about their experiences with the Promotora training as well as their experiences going out to the community facilitating their own presentations on any of the following topics: Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence.

Marybel (Verbal Story translated/transcribed):

I would describe my experience taking the East Los Angeles Women Center (ELWC) Promotora training as the great opportunity I was waiting for. I have been out in the community providing education on domestic violence, sexual assault, and bullying since 2010. The opportunity to become a Promotora has given me the capacity to continue growing. I am thankful to ELWC, The Children's Clinic (TCC), and Su Casa for this opportunity. As a result, of this program/training I feel more developed, confident, and supported. One of the good things about being a Promotora is having the ability to know I can call someone to get support. Since completing the Promotora training facilitated by ELWC I was able to coordinate four community presentations at my local church. Each presentation had audience varying in sizes from 100 individuals to up to 200 individuals. In all, the audience responded in a positive manner and provided us with lots of feedback. I received comments of acceptance, suggestions for expanding presentations to adolescents in English, individuals wanting more referrals, and individuals simply wanting a hug and or a listening ear. Presenting out in the community was something really motivating and it made me feel like I had a greater responsibility to the community. I thank programs like these for allowing me to do something I am passionate about. "I no longer feel alone."

Gloria (Verbal Story translated/transcribed):

The ELWC training changed my life. What can I say, I was very impressed by Luz because she is the one who had my number and who contacted me to become part of this team. After the ELWC training I felt more educated and supported to provide community education on topics that are prominently ignored. This training also brought satisfaction to me as a person because I have always wanted to help others but felt inapt to do so. However, after this training I feel ready to provide information and help women who need it. After completing the Promotora training I was invited by a fellow Promotora to take part in a community presentation. I remember thinking my first presentation was going to be to a group of about ten people, but to my surprise I would end up in front of a group of over 150 people. I felt so nervous because it was my first time facilitating a presentation- I could literally feel my back covered in sweat, but it was so gratifying to know that the training we got was being put to use. My fellow Promotora whom I presented with Marybel has left me so impressed and it has been such a unique experience to get to know each other as Promotoras. We have been able to form a unique bound. I would hate and would feel disappointed if a program like this is not sustained.

Dalila (Verbal Story translated/transcribed):

The Promotora training was something I had been waiting for since I had heard of this project from Su Casa. During the training I got lots of information on how to help people who are going through violence. I myself was a victim of domestic violence and I have learned that each experience is unique. For this reason, it is important to me to learn how to open up and learn from others. This training has supported me in getting stronger as an individual. I also feel happy being able to help myself and help others. I am a survivor now, but I realize my experience of domestic violence will always be something I will live with forever, therefore, doing something that continues to build me up as an individual is what I need. Since completing the Promotora training I also partnered with Marybel a fellow Promotora to present during one of the four community presentations. I remember feeling so nervous that I thought I could see myself. I thought I would be able to present well because of my own experience, but I realized I need to prepare myself more because the adrenaline and emotions I felt that day got in the way with the information I had to present. Still, this experience has only fueled me with more motivation to give more of my effort and empower myself even more. It was a positive experience.

Addie (Email Exchange):

It has been a privilege to be a part of the East Los Angeles Women's Center Promotora Contra La Violencia Training. Through this training not only did I learn to understand my own experience but also how to use these new tools to educate the community. I learned to look at Domestic Violence from a cultural perspective and how much of our own upbringing affects the way we identify healthy relationships. It was a great experience to learn the cultural aspect; it gave me hope that by bringing this education to the communities and presenting materials on this issue will instigate change. Now in my career as a Parent Partner I feel I have better tools to understand and support the families I work with. I have a better cultural understanding on how Domestic Violence has been normalized and that breaking the chain and cycle is challenging but not impossible if we keep educating our communities. Presenting with Marybel to the community was a privilege, but the positive impact and attention brought to such a difficult subject with an open mind was the best. We had a great audience, willing to participate throughout, during our Sexual Abuse presentation. Even though this is a very difficult subject to discuss in our Hispanic communities, it was a great experience seeing how the audience was participating and interacting with us. The best part about presenting to the community was the impact you leave behind, the resources you provide, and knowing that someone who needs the information will have it.

Vanessa (Email Exchange):

I first learned about the Promotora model while I was studying in an immersion program in Mexico City, and what I loved about it was that it really focused on the community's needs. Mental health and violence are topics that hold a stigma in our society and especially in communities of color. So, when a therapist/doctor referral is not accepted by an individual in a minority, I think this Promotora model can be a great stepping stone in providing much needed support to people who may not yet feel comfortable in other more "professional" settings. When I learned that The Children' Clinic was offering a Promotora training covering various topics around domestic violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA), I had to jump on the opportunity.

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My experience in the February Promotora training was made richer by the voices of the women in this group. Every single woman had a different experience that involved some aspect of interpersonal violence and I loved that the leaders of the group (Luz and Alicia) could create a space in which every single person, including myself, immediately felt safe enough to share these personal experiences. I loved how the statistical information and facts helped all group members become more educated on their experience and realize that in fact, these violent experiences were not okay. The way in which we easily connected with other women, were able to empathize with their fellow classmates, and learn from others was incredible to see in such a short amount of time.