

BIENVENIDO

Frequently Asked Questions

How does the Bienvenido Facilitator Training Program operate? Is it curriculum-based? Who are the participants – new immigrants?

The Bienvenido Program offers a facilitator training program to individuals and organizations who are interested in assisting Latino immigrants adjust to their new life in this country. Northeastern Center, Inc. sponsors a two day training where facilitators have an opportunity to interact with the curriculum and practice class lessons with other facilitators. The facilitator curriculum (Spanish) and student manual provides facilitators with a guide on facilitating the classes, provides basic group facilitation skills, allows participants to reflect on their migration journey, vent feelings regarding their adjustment to this country, and find similarities with their home and current community.

After facilitators complete the facilitator training they work at implementing the Bienvenido Program in their school and/or community. It is envisioned that other community based organizations in the area partner with local government, community based organizations, and court systems in order to reach different sectors of the Latino community.

What agencies have implemented the Bienvenido Program?

Currently the program is implemented in following settings: schools, adult literacy program, a community based organization, and a community mental health center. The classes are for adolescents between the ages of 14 – 18 and adult age participants.

How does the Latino community feel about the program? What has been their response?

At the final class participants are asked to complete an evaluation form. In this evaluation form we seek to learn if the curriculum has impacted their lives and what areas need modified. We have included several quotes from students from West Noble High School in this section and at the end of this document we have included results from evaluation forms completed by participants at Pierre Moran School, Northside School, and Northeastern Center.

“I want to thank you for giving us these classes because they have helped me adjust to this new country since our cultures are different. When I arrived in this country I knew no one and felt a little sad.” – **Juan Silva, West Noble High School**

“The classes helped me reflect on the many things of my country that I already knew. In this class I was taught to not be so closed and isolated from other people just because I don’t know English.” – **Lucero Cortez, West Noble High School**

“In the acculturation program I learned things I didn’t know like needs of life, family, and groups.” – **Oscar Barrera, West Noble High School**

“I think this program can work in the future for those persons that come seeking a better life and other opportunities.” José Barrera, West Noble High School

What does “Bienvenido” mean in Spanish? Why was this name selected?

Bienvenido translates as welcome. In the development phase of the program we decided to call it Bienvenido because many of the clients seen at Northeastern Center, community mental health center, stated no one had welcomed them to this community. Thus the name Bienvenido. In the student manual we include a welcome letter and we read this letter at the first class. In this letter we state we are happy they have chosen to live in this community and acknowledge that we do not understand everything that entails with migrating to a new country, but that our goal is to offer an opportunity for them to build on current strengths and obtain additional life skills. At the conclusion of the class session a participant came up to me after class and said, “Thank you. No one had ever welcomed me to this community and it feels good.” This solidified our reasoning for titling our program Bienvenido.

What topics related to mental health help Latinos to a new community? What life skills improve the new immigrant life transition?

Mental health topics addressed in the Bienvenido curriculum include **communication, stress reduction, depression, identifying risk factors that might lead to mental health problems, and processing the migration experience by venting with other group members.** Participants have an opportunity to identify current strengths, needs, and establish goals for their new life in another country. Participants learn acculturation strategies commonly utilized by individuals such as integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. Through the creation of a feelings exercise, participants are encouraged to identify feelings experienced when they arrived in this country. Also, clients are encouraged to reflect the tangible and intangible things brought with them on their initial trip to this country.

The exercises previously mentioned begin to help Latinos adjust to their host community and at the same time helps Latinos understand some of the cultural expectations, beliefs, and value systems they bring to this country. They are asked to respect the similarities and differences of their own and host culture value systems.

Program Evaluation Table
Evaluación de programa/Program Evaluation
Bienvenido Program

1. Entendí los temas presentados en las clases de aculturación. I understood the topics presented in the acculturation classes.	83% Agree
2. La materia presentada me ayudó a cambiar mi actitud sobre mi nueva vida en este país. The material presented helped me change my attitude toward my life in this country.	84% Agree
3. Los ejercicios individuales y grupales fueron útiles en mi comprensión de la materia. The individual and group exercises were helpful in my comprehension of the material.	92% Agree
4. Los ejercicios individuales y grupales fueron suficientemente sencillos. The individual and group exercises were simple.	58% Agree
5. He obtenido destrezas adicionales para lograr tener una mejor adaptación a este país. I have obtained additional skills in order to have a better adaptation to this country.	84% Agree
6. Las clases de aculturación fueron útiles, informativas, y valiosas. The acculturation classes were helpful, informative and beneficial.	100% Agree
7. Las clases de aculturación me ayudaron a establecer más contacto con personas de otro grupo étnico. The acculturation classes helped me establish contact with people from other ethnic groups.	83% Agree
8. Las clases de aculturación me ayudaron a ventilar y procesar mis sentimientos respecto a mi vida en este país. The acculturation classes helped vent and process my feelings regarding my life in this country.	83% Agree
9. El tamaño de mi clase fue apropiada. The size of the class was appropriate.	84% Agree
10. El facilitador tuvo buen conocimiento de la materia. The facilitator had good knowledge of the material.	100% Agree
11. El facilitador me ayudó a entender la materia. The facilitator helped me understand the material.	100% Agree
12. Volvería para retomar las clases de aculturación. Would I retake the acculturation classes.	75% Agree
13. El local donde se realizó la clase fue suficientemente seguro. The location where the classes were held was safe.	82% Agree

Student Comments, Evaluation 2004

The following comments were noted on the evaluation form completed by participants at Northeastern Center and Pierre Moran Middle School.

1. What did I like most about the acculturation classes?

- Helped me adapt and reflect on who I am and learn more how to associate with this country.
- That I used a lot of communication.
- The process of adaptation to another country.
- Being able to converse with other people.
- All of the subjects.
- When we talked about what we were going to be when we grow up.
- The teachers, the conversation and the food.
- The subjects covered in class.
- The effectiveness of the facilitators.
- That all of us had a chance to talk to the facilitators.
- I learned more about acculturation.

What were the weaknesses of the acculturation classes?

- I relived bad things from my past.
- None.
- That my facilitator didn't show up for class once.
- The time I had a headache.
- There were few students.
- I believe that nothing. All things were adaptable to this country.

What impact have the acculturation classes had on my personal life?

- Yes, it helped me on how to still believe I am Mexican and keep my culture alive.
- To be better integrated into society.
- How to better manage my temperament and better resolve my problems.
- I learned to better adjust to this country.
- It helped me to understand people from other cultures.
- Very little.
- It helped me think more about the problems in the world.
- It helped me better adapt to traditions of this country.
- It helped me a lot.
- It has helped me respect the laws more and respect myself more.

What changes do you recommend for the acculturation classes?

- Nothing. I think everything was good for my development in this country.
- Put a cafeteria and soda machines.
- Nothing, everything was okay.