

BIENVENIDO

The Bienvenido Program is a prevention intervention program that increases access to mental health services, improves mental health, and quality of life of Latino immigrants.

Division of Mental Health and Addiction to sponsor Bienvenido Facilitator Trainings

Throughout the course of 2006-2007 Northeastern Center (NEC) has met with staff from the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA) regarding the development of the Bienvenido Program. DMHA offered counsel on program evaluation work and nominated NEC to participate in a Service to Science Academy in Minnesota.

Upon completion of the program evaluation, NEC and DMHA continued dialogue about how to best implement the Bienvenido Program in Indiana. We are happy to report that DMHA will sponsor two Bienvenido Facilitator Trainings with 32 behavioral health clinicians. Upon completion of the facilitator training the clinicians will work at implementing the Bienvenido Program in their respective communities. We look forward to this upcoming partnership.

Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research – Cambridge Health Alliance and Harvard Medical School invites Northeastern Center to participate in research proposal

On September 17, 2007 NEC was contacted by Dr. Margarita Alegría, Ph.D., asking if it was interested in participating in a research grant proposal they are submitting to the National Institute of Health (NIH). Alegría informed that the proposal is directed at gaining an understanding of the policy mechanisms that are important in reducing disparities and improving access to high-quality behavioral health and educational services for minority adolescents. If the Center for Multicultural Mental Health proposal is successful the research will involve consensus groups and in-depth interviews with key policymakers, service providers and community advocates.

As the Bienvenido Program continues to evolve it is important that the prevention interventions being conducted through the curriculum be of high quality. NEC's relationship with the Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research moves us in the direction of ensuring that the interventions are culturally and linguistically appropriate. A special thank you to Dr. Alegría for inviting NEC to participate in their research grant proposal.

The Northeastern Center, Inc. launched the Bienvenido Program in 2003. It is a collaborative effort involving a health center, court system, community based organizations, school corporations, literacy and education organizations, and the state of Indiana. List of Bienvenido Program partner agencies: LEAP of Noble County, Noble Superior Court, West Noble School Corporation, Elkhart Community Schools, Hispanic/Latino Health Coalition of Elkhart County, Division of Mental Health and Addiction, Center for Nonviolence, and the Learning Generation Initiative.

NEC partners with the Hispanic/Latino Health Coalition of Elkhart County Health Fair

On September 8, 2007 NEC personnel participated at the Hispanic/Latino Health Coalition of Elkhart County Health Fair. Liliana Quintero, Executive Director of the coalition and Bienvenido Advisory Committee member, coordinated the health fair. Liliana reports that over 1300 Latinos were in attendance. All types of health screenings were available as well as short presentations on HIV and domestic violence. Northeastern Center conducted depression screenings with 70 individuals. Of the 70 individuals 85% were female. Northeastern Center encouraged participants to seek mental health services in Elkhart County and Noble County. NEC was glad to share its table space with Nancy Rodriguez Lora, LCSW, a private practice clinician from Elkhart County.



Northeastern Center meets with leaders from Benin, Africa

On September 14, 2007 NEC met with Bonaventure Akowanou, Administrator and Francois Bangbade, Academic Dean, of Benin Bible Institute (BBI). Our guests visited the LaGrange Office and shared their vision to start a pastoral counseling program at their Bible Institute. BBI's programming includes training to ministers and local leaders from Benin, Africa. The goal of the visit was to investigate the training resources in North America that may be available to their students to better enable them to serve their communities. Our guests from Benin also visited Oaklawn and met with the Associate Mennonite Biblical Seminary. NEC was honored to have met the leaders from Benin and will continue to listen how it can support the work in Benin, Africa.

Teleconference between Hispanic Mennonite Church, Mennonite Central Committee, and Northeastern Center

On October 4, 2007 NEC participated in a national teleconference with several pastors and leaders regarding an immigration education proposal being created by the Hispanic Mennonite Church. The Executive Committee of the Hispanic Mennonite Church agreed to further explore the possibility of training Mennonite pastors and leaders in March 2008 in Akron, PA. Rolando Santiago, Mennonite Central Committee, Juan Montes, Executive Director of the Hispanic Mennonite Church, and Gilberto Pérez, NEC will work on developing the training. NEC looks forward to working closely with the Hispanic Mennonite Church in 2008.

Northeastern Center hires bilingual therapist

NEC is pleased to report that Glenis Sunderg, M.A, will work at the Ligonier Outpatient Office as a bilingual therapist. Glenis brings a wealth of experience with Latino women who have suffered domestic violence and her work will be to develop domestic violence support groups and provide treatment to individuals from our community. Also, Glenis will be trained to become a Bienvenido Trainer. We look forward to introducing her more formally when she begins her work in early November.

Northeastern Center Engaging the Community:

LEAP of Noble County - New Dawn After School Program

Frank Pizana, bilingual case manager, will work with the New Dawn After School Program conducting a social skills/soccer program and Bienvenido Program with children and adolescents from the West Noble Corporation. The social skills/soccer program will address social skills needed on the playground and teach soccer skills. The Bienvenido Program will present mental health education information to the participants. We are pleased to work with New Dawn because it will allow NEC to learn directly from the students what interventions work best with children and adolescents.

Hidalgo Community Center

On September 14, 2007 NEC was present for the Ballet Folklorico performance at the Elco Theatre. The Hidalgo Community Center from Elkhart, IN sponsored the event. NEC supported the members of the center with interpretation and opening of the event. The Center has recently formed and NEC is connecting the members to other leaders from Elkhart County. NEC will continue to dialogue with the Hidalgo Community Center as to how NEC can best serve them.



Ligonier Community Dialogues

On September 27, 2007 NEC personnel helped facilitate the Ligonier Community Dialogue. Over 45 parents participated in the community dialogue and several teachers and administrators were also present. The parents worked on three questions: what does parental involvement mean to me, how can the school help me become involved, and what activities are available for me to participate in at the school. A second community dialogue was held at West Noble Middle School on October 4. A full report will be made available to the parents, school personnel, and broader community by the Celebrate Diversity Project. You may contact Margarita White at 260-894-9078 if you would like a copy of the minutes for both meetings.

Templo Betel, Ligonier, IN

NEC has begun communication training with five young adults who are part of Templo Betel's youth minister training program. The five young adults who are preparing for ministry are excited about their upcoming work with Latino youth. The training offered by NEC covers communication skills with youth, communication styles, and effective ways of being a leader in the community. The young adults show great enthusiasm and NEC looks forward to further dialogue with Templo Betel regarding their training needs.

For more information on the Bienvenido Program, feel free to contact Gilberto Pérez at gperez@nec.org or at 260-318-5042.