



BIENVENIDO

July/August 2004

Northeastern Center Inc.

Vision Statement

"To provide a caring and supportive environment where individuals can achieve their full potential, give and receive respect and develop personal responsibility and self-determination."

Mission Statement

Northeastern Center, Inc., helps individuals in Northeastern Indiana achieve emotional and mental wholeness through accessible, affordable and quality behavioral health services.

Bienvenido Acculturation Program Objectives

- *Present topics related to mental health to achieve a better adjustment to the community.*
- *Provide life skill training to improve the new immigrant life transition.*
- *Allow individuals to identify, vent, and process feelings related to a new life in another country.*

Welcome to the first Bienvenido Acculturation Program newsletter. The Bienvenido Acculturation Program is a result of many conversations held with Latino immigrants who have recently arrived in this country. In my conversations with Latino immigrants a common theme kept surfacing around not having an opportunity to share stories related to the migration experience. The acculturation program was created as a prevention program and its purpose is to reduce risk associated with mental health problems in the adjustment to another culture or community at any stage of life. When looking at creating a program and setting its vision we thought of how our community members could be empowered. Thus we based the acculturation program on the following premise: *empowerment is viewed as a facilitating process for immigrants to achieve their goals, and when necessary, and appropriate, obtain social change.*

The Bienvenido Acculturation Program has sought to help Latino immigrants better understand their migration experience, better understand and identify individual and familial strengths, and better understand acculturative stress associated with migration to another country. Through the acculturation curriculum we attempt to facilitate the process of empowerment towards achievement of social change that will enhance essential life skills that enable Latino immigrants to foster familial strengths, self determination, enhance their quality of life and, facilitate the process of linking families with community resources and opportunities for interaction with members of other ethnic groups. Those who participate in the acculturation classes are encouraged to stimulate their thinking regarding their migration experience. We ask Latino immigrants to reflect on their arrival and new life in a new country.

In October 2003 we began the implementation of the Bienvenido Acculturation Program at LEAP, Inc., (Literacy Project of Noble County) in Ligonier, IN. We thank LEAP, Inc., and its students for their dedication and commitment to community collaboration. Our hope is that through the Bienvenido Acculturation Program individuals and communities may be empowered and linked better together.

-Gilberto Pérez Jr., Team Leader

Facilitator Program launched: Northeastern Center, Inc., launched its Acculturation Facilitator Program in April 2004. A total of 25 registrants participated in a one day training at the Noble County Community Foundation in Ligonier, IN. Facilitators represented agencies such as West Noble School Corporation, LEAP, Inc., Celebrate Diversity Project, Goshen Community Schools, Center for Problem Resolution, Family Services of Elkhart, Mennonite Central Committee, Elkhart Community Schools, Immigration and Naturalization Agency, Goshen Human Relations Commission, Communities in Schools, Goshen College, Youth Services Bureau, Waterford Mennonite, and Center for Healing and Hope. Facilitators represented several countries: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and the United States. It was energizing to be in the presence of individuals who bring varying degrees of expertise and experience regarding work with Latinos and the acculturation process.

April 23 facilitator group



Marcelo Warkentin, Daniel Diener, Ellen Krulewitch, Aracelia Manríquez, Lupita Zepeda, Esmeralda Catalán, Nereida Mojica, and Gilberto Pérez.

April 30 Facilitator Group



April 30 facilitator group. Back row: Tina Schlabach, Robert Yoder, Saul Padilla, Pilar Barahona, Jimmy Dixon, Jorge Vielman, Nora Chavez-Morales, middle row: Saul Rodríguez, Amparo Hernández, Ana Mejía, Alicia Bartlett, bottom row: Gilberto Pérez, Sara Keefer, Sylvia Shirk Charles, and Rolando Sosa.

How does the Network of Acculturation Facilitators work?

Facilitators who participate in the acculturation training program become part of a network of facilitators. Facilitators complete a two-day training program directed at helping them acquire basic knowledge regarding the psychosocial adjustment needs immigrants may face when arriving in a new country. Once the facilitators complete the acculturation training they can begin to implement the acculturation classes in their community. When the facilitator conducts the acculturation class he or she can request help from other facilitators. Facilitators can maintain contact with other individuals in other communities and facilitators can offer insight and provide ideas and much needed support.

It is our hope that facilitators contact each other and share ideas and stories of how their classes are moving along. We believe that communication with other facilitators will help keep them connected and provide opportunities for learning valuable information regarding the implementation process as well as the social change happening in different communities. Facilitators can stay in contact by using the class list given to them at their training.

Ordering Bienvenido Acculturation Material

To submit orders for student manuals and acculturation game balls, please fill out the order form made available to you in your facilitator training manual and mail to PO Box 817 Kendallville, IN 46755. If you have misplaced this form, please call our office 260-894-7179 and we will gladly send out another order form.

The Bienvenido Acculturation Program newsletter is a publication by Northeastern Center, Inc., a community mental health center, who serves all residents of the following counties: Allen, Dekalb, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble and Steuben. If you would like information regarding services please call 1-260-347-2453.