Hispanic Youth

Invite them and they will come
4 Questions

➢ Who are Hispanic Youth?
  ▪ Who is our audience? What constitutes a Hispanic young person?
4 Questions

► Who are Hispanic Youth?
► What do Hispanic Youth need?
  - What kinds of physical and emotional support can the church offer them?
4 Questions

► Who are Hispanic Youth?
► What do Hispanic Youth need?
► What do Hispanic Youth bring?
  ▪ How can Hispanic youth be more fully incorporated into the life of the parish?
4 Questions

► Who are Hispanic Youth?
► What do Hispanic Youth need?
► What do Hispanic Youth bring?
► What can we do?
  ▪ What needs to happen in order for them to feel welcomed and involved?
Who are Hispanic Youth?

- Can be classified into four major categories* with very different needs
  - Immigrant workers
  - Identity seekers
  - Mainstream movers
  - High risk youth

*Instituto Fe y Vida
## Who are Hispanic Youth?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrant Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mostly Spanish-speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly of Mexican origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many are undocumented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 74% Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many seek moral and spiritual support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little formal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have large families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated and helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to work hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly lower end of economic spectrum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instituto Fe y Vida: [http://www.feyvida.org/research/fastfacts.html](http://www.feyvida.org/research/fastfacts.html)
## Who are Hispanic Youth?

**Mainstream Movers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mostly English-speaking</th>
<th>College education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mostly born in US</td>
<td>Attend private schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May leave barrio behind</td>
<td>Motivated and hopeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May leave Catholic Church</td>
<td>Willing to work hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May look down on other Hispanics</td>
<td>Mostly upper-middle on economic spectrum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Who are Hispanic Youth?

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Seekers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mostly born in US</td>
<td>Mostly bilingual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children of immigrants</td>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggle to finish school</td>
<td>Unmotivated/apathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May find hope in work and family</td>
<td>Mostly in lower-middle of economic spectrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May seek refuge in alcohol, drugs or promiscuity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Who are Hispanic Youth?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gang Members and High-Risk Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited bilingual abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly born in US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many live in inner cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most are unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May become habitual drug users/sellers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Different Mindsets

School Systems
Different Mindsets

► School Systems

- Secondary school in Latin America ends at 15 or 16 years old, at which time most youth begin to work.
- Hispanic youth in the US often fail to complete high school, opting to leave at age 16.
- Ministers should stress to young people the importance of education.
Different Mindsets

► Youth Ministry/Pastoral de Jóvenes
Different Mindsets

► Youth Ministry/Pastoral de Jóvenes
  - The word *jóvenes* traditionally refers to those between the life stages of puberty and marriage (or about 15-30 years old)
  - For Latinos, intergenerational interaction among youth and young adults is common
Different Mindsets

► Work with parents through a translator to gain their trust and promote the best interests of the youth.
Hispanic population in the US is young.
- In 2000, 35.7 percent of Hispanics were less than eighteen years old.
- Hispanics make up 41% of Catholics under 30.

In the year 2000, 84% of the US population over age 25 had completed high school.
What do Hispanic Youth need?

► Education
  ▪ Better understanding of US education system and opportunities for funding
  ▪ Encouragement to finish high school
What do Hispanic Youth need?

► Education
► Identification with peers
  ▪ “Many jóvenes come to the church to meet their need for identity and community” *

* Medina-Rivera, 16
What do Hispanic Youth need?

► Education
► Identification with peers
► Pastoral care
  ▪ Be aware of your constituency in order to develop appropriate programs
    ► ESOL, traditional pastoral care in Spanish, etc.
What do Hispanic Youth need?

- Vibrancy and acceptance in both cultures
  - Often feel “stuck in the middle”
  - Help them take the best of both worlds
What do Hispanic Youth bring?

► Cultural sharing
  ▪ Opportunities to explore both cultural and Catholic identity
  ▪ Celebrate diversity
What do Hispanic Youth bring?

► Willingness to lead

“Jóvenes occupy a relevant place as agents of cultural transformation because...one of their ideals is to create a better world than the one in which their parents lived.” *

Cervantes, 12
What do Hispanic Youth bring?

► Sense of Mission
  ▪ They become evangelizers for their peers *
  ► Highly successful missionaries

*Vilar, 39
What can we do?

➤ Get to know your community
  - Find an “objective” translator
  - Set up a meeting with family/friends
What can we do?

► Create sacred space

- Culturally specific youth groups should also be integrated into larger youth community
- “Programs for youth from one country or region increase pride in a specific bi-cultural identity.”*

*Easter and Refiki, 2
What can we do?

► Create sacred space
► Offer a chance to plan
  ▪ Invite them to attend youth planning meetings
What can we do?

► **Remain involved and supportive**

> “We cannot leave the responsibility for youth ministry in the hands of young leaders. If we want *jóvenes* to mature, and groups to remain intact, we must have pastoral workers who support the *jóvenes* and who foster meaningful, valuable apostolic action.” *

*Diez de Sollano, 33*
What can we do?

► Create sacred space
► Offer a chance to plan
► Remain involved and supportive
► Celebrate diversity and growing involvement


## Handout

### Different Youth, Different Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Immigrant Worker</th>
<th>Identity Seekers</th>
<th>Mainstream Movers</th>
<th>High Risk Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Life</strong></td>
<td>Need faith to face great life challenges</td>
<td>Need faith to develop a sense of hope</td>
<td>Need faith to overcome individualism &amp; consumerism</td>
<td>Need faith to move from anger/hatred to forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual Development</strong></td>
<td>Need an accessible alternative system of education</td>
<td>Need encouragement to finish high school or GED</td>
<td>Need financial aid and help understanding U.S. system of high education</td>
<td>Need an accessible alternative system of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affective Maturity &amp; Socialization</strong></td>
<td>Need a healthy environment for relationships</td>
<td>Need assistance to develop self-esteem</td>
<td>Need positive role models of social/cultural integration</td>
<td>Need a place to belong, healthy role models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquisition of Human Virtues</strong></td>
<td>Need help to avoid pitfalls of vice/addictions</td>
<td>Need guidance and directions in life</td>
<td>Need to learn to value community service</td>
<td>Multiple deep-seated needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of Young Hispanics</strong></td>
<td>25% to 45%</td>
<td>25% to 45%</td>
<td>15% to 25%</td>
<td>10% to 15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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