Today’s Presenters

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Connected Communities, consultant and co-author of Once Upon a Cuento: Bilingual Storytime in English and Spanish

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Before Bilingual Storytime:
The Outreach Bridge to Engaging Latino and Spanish-speaking Families

Katie Scherrer and Lauren Simon
Demographics

• Largest and youngest minority group in the United States (16.9% of population; median age of 27)\(^1\)
• ¼ of all newborns in US are Latino\(^2\)
• In 17 states, at least 20% of kindergarteners are Latino\(^3\)
• 38% of Latinos are Spanish-dominant, 36% are bilingual, and 25% are English-dominant\(^4\)
• The self-described heritage of most Latinos in the US is Mexican, followed by Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran and Dominican\(^1\)
• Latino community in the US is \textit{very} diverse!

A library realizes there is a new/growing Latino community, currently underserved in its service area. In order to attract families to the library, they decide to offer a bilingual storytime. They research and plan and get great books and songs to use...but no one comes.

What went wrong?
Where Is Your Library?

- No Services or Outreach
- Some Services/Outreach but Library Use is Still Small
- Thriving Library Use and Active Outreach
Why is Outreach Necessary?

• To build awareness
• To reach people where they are
• To learn about what people actually need/want from the library
• To build relationships and establish trust

Image of outreach effort conducted by staff from Charlotte Mecklenburg Library - http://libraryinaction.blogspot.com/
What is Outreach?

Outreach is an ongoing process consisting of:

• Research
• Relationship building
• Establishing a presence *outside* of the library
• Marketing
• Internal evaluation
• Follow up

Image of partnership between El Centro Comunal Latino and the Monroe County (IN) Public Library - [http://www.elcentrocomunal.com/CommunityPartners.html](http://www.elcentrocomunal.com/CommunityPartners.html)
5 Strategies for Beginning the Outreach Process:

1. Explore your neighborhood!
2. Make connections with other agencies serving your target user group
3. Conduct Community Leader Interviews
4. Work with local Latino and Spanish-language media
5. Work with your supervisor(s) and administration
Tualatin Public Library

Images of Tualatin Public Library: [http://www.tualatinoregon.gov/library](http://www.tualatinoregon.gov/library)
Community Profile

Total Population: 27,475
Hispanic or Latino: 4,977 (18.1%)
Primarily Mexican (14.2%)
14.2% of Tualatin Residents speak Spanish
Three public schools and one charter school
One Head Start Program (2 half-day classrooms)
Bilingual Storytime

• Saturday Mornings at 11am
• All Ages with a Craft
• Sept 2015 - May 2016 average (and median) attendance has been 7 adults and 10 children
Things I’ve Learned

• **Go** the same events and groups **over and over again**

• **Building relationships and connections takes time** (years, usually) and sometimes things go slowly

• **Word-of-mouth is important.** Get a few library users on your side to help talk up the library.

• Sometimes **things don’t work exactly how you expect,** but it still important to keep trying. **Don’t give up!**
5 quick strategies

1. **Call your local schools** to see if there is a Family Liaison and/or multicultural coordinator and see if you can visit a Spanish-speaking parents meeting.

2. **Identify Latino/Hispanic Businesses**, chat with owners, and see if you can have them put up flyers.

3. **Connect with local churches** and see if you could come to an ESL class they teach and/or other events.

4. **Visit Free Lunch Sites** to sign kids up for Summer Reading Program and do a craft or storytime.

5. **Set up a time to interview and/or chat with Latino/Hispanic community leaders** (library users, church leaders, teachers, business owners, volunteers etc.)
Places to Promote Bilingual Storytime

• Head Start classrooms
• Free summer lunch sites
• Spanish parent meetings at local elementary schools
• Local apartment complexes
• Service provider networking meetings
• In-home daycare providers
• Community events
• Flyers in local Latino/Hispanic grocery stores, apartments, and laundromats
Working On / Dreaming Big

- Program is still small and trying to grow attendance at storytime
- Latino Advisory Committee (meets a few times a year)
- Spanish-language e-mail list every few months featuring all special events
- Possibly offering storytime after school or in apartment complexes
- Connecting with Spanish-language in-home childcare providers
Example One: Party in the Park

Attended a city-sponsored event in the park on Saturday in a highly populated Latino/Hispanic neighborhood; did a STEAM activity; talked to families; invited them into the library
Example Two:
Head Start Family Night @ the Library

Dinner provided by Head Start teachers; kids did crafts with teen volunteers; early literacy presentation; 15 minute bilingual story time
Example Three: Free Lunch Site at Atfalati Park

- Every Wednesday from 11:30am-1pm
- STEAM activities and Summer Reading sign-ups for average 50 kids provided with help from bilingual intern and a bilingual volunteer
Example Four: ESL Class Visit at Local Church

• Weekly ESL class taught at local church by volunteers on Monday evenings
• Childcare is provided
• Visited each classroom (Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced) to talk about the library and its resources
• Visited the two rooms of children
  • 0-5 years old presented story time
  • 5-12 years old did craft
Example Five: Bridgeport Elementary School Parent Meeting

- Parent group had participated in a focus group for our Strategic Planning Process a week earlier
- End of year event for parents
  - Signed up kids for summer reading
  - Invited families to library events, including the Free Lunch Site with STEAM activities
  - Knew/recognized families from previous visits to the school or park
  - A few families came to a library event a few weeks later
Resources
REFORMA
The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking

www.reforma.org
Resources

¡Colorín Colorado!

- [www.colorincolorado.org](http://www.colorincolorado.org)
- Bilingual website for educators and families of ELL’s
- Sister site to Reading Rockets
- Helpful articles, videos, activity guides, etc.
Resources

Books

- ¡Bienvenidos! ¡Welcome! A Handy Resource for Marketing Your Library to Latinos by Susannah Byrd
- ¡Hola, amigos! A Plan for Latino Outreach by Susana Baumann
- Serving Latino Communities: A How-to-Do-It Manual for Librarians by Camila Alire and Jacqueline Ayala
Resources

Jumpstart Your Outreach Plan Conference Session Materials

WebJunction Resources:

Spanish Speakers
• Spanish Language Outreach Program Workshop Curriculum
• Community Leader Interview Guide

Serving Diverse Community Where They Are (Jan 2016 Webinar)
http://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/community-engagement-serving-diverse-communities-where-they-are.html
Questions? Reach out!

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