



Impacts of COVID-19 on Child Care

Interviews with Latina Mothers in Rural Gresham, Hillsboro, and Woodburn

In November 2020, five interviews were conducted with Latina mothers living in rural areas of Northwestern Oregon and who have at least one child who is not yet in kindergarten. These interviews were part of a series of interviews and listening sessions funded by the Preschool Development Grant as part of an expansion of the 2019 statewide early learning needs assessment. The interviews were co designed, planned, and hosted by Doulas Latinas International and by researchers from ABCultural Drivers, Portland State University, and the OSLC Developments, Inc. The goal of the interviews was to better understand early learning needs and child care experiences of Latinx families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ultimately, interviews will inform the development of the state's early learning plan.

Mothers interviewed had two to five children total, with at least one school-aged child and one to two children who were not yet in kindergarten. Only one mother had a child under 2 years of age; most were caring for a preschooler and school-aged children. Mothers had lived in Oregon between 2 and 17 years. In addition, one participating mother had COVID in the fall; fortunately, none of her family members contracted the virus.

What does child care look like during the COVID-19 pandemic?

What are the impacts of the pandemic on child care?

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, four of the five mothers sent their young child to care outside of the home during the week. Care settings included a family member's home, a home-based program, a child care program, and Head Start. Three mothers lost care when their programs closed or pulled their child out of care at the outset of the pandemic. Two of these mothers now rely on support from their eldest child (ages 15 and 16 years) to provide care during working hours, and the other two mothers currently care for their children themselves at home.

Although one mother reported that the pandemic did not impact child care needs or access, all participants discussed difficult changes in their families' daily life and stress associated with supporting their children in the home. Primary stressors included supporting all children's educational needs, particularly for the early elementary aged children and preschoolers; navigating limited physical space and technology usage for everyone in the home; asking older children (who are still in school) to care for young children during the day; children's and parents' mental well-being; and the challenge of paying for child care (and other household expenses) as a result of loss of work.

"Pues sí, un poco diferente, porque como le digo, tengo a las dos grandes, se quedan en su cuarto, pero al mismo tiempo también tengo que estar mirando que se conecten, porque luego me hablan [de la escuela] que no se montaron al primer período o al tercero...tengo más dificultad con mi hijo de 6 años con esto y con él tengo que estar más pegada, sentada con él, porque si lo dejo solito haciendo algo, escucho a la maestra "Julio ¡no, no te miro! ¿Y Julio dónde está?" y él no está enfrente de la computadora...y estoy como en un enredo. Así con todo. O sí, sí, es un poco más difícil, pero a mí me dicen todos que tengo mucha paciencia con todos los niños y con lo que está pasando. Yo creo que sí, es cierto. He aprendido a tener bastante paciencia. Creo que es lo que me ha ayudado ahorita mucho. Es la paciencia."

"Well, yes a little bit different, because as I mentioned, I have my two older girls, they stay in their room, but at the same time I also have to see who is going online, because then they talk to me, I don't know, that they are logging in on the first period or the third...I have more difficulty with my 6-year-old son with this and with him, I have to be closer to him, sitting by his side, checking on him, because if I leave him unattended doing something, I can hear the teacher calling him, 'And, where are you, Julio? I cannot see you. Where is Julio?' And he is no longer in front of the computer, and I am in a mess, with everything. The same with everything. Oh, yes, yes I do know everything is a little bit harder but everybody tells me that I am very patient with all my kids and with what's going on. I think so too, it's true. I have learned to be very patient. I think this is what has helped me a lot right now. Being patient."

"...no le puedo dar suficiente tiempo a cada uno y a la de 9 que ocupa ayuda...la miro y le digo mami, mira, lo puedo hacer un ratito, pero luego me ocupo otra vez y es muy difícil tratar de darle atención. No le puedo dar ni 20 minutos porque me tengo que pasar con el otro niño o con la bebé chiquita que ocupa, ya sea el biberón o cambiado de ropa, de pañal. La niña grande me dice, "mamá, me puedes hablar[para ayudarte]," pero no quiero que ella se enrede con lo de la tarea de la otra, me preocupa que me tiene que ayudar con hacer cosas que no, no es su deber, ¿verdad?"

I cannot give each of them enough time, and my 9-year-old, who needs help...I look at her and tell her, 'Honey, look, I can only be with you for a little while. But then, I get busy again and it's very hard to give her the attention. I cannot be with her for 20 minutes because I need to take care of the other boy or I have to be with the baby, who needs her bottle or her diapers changed. The older girl asks me, 'mommy, can you talk to me?' I don't want her to get involved with her sister's homework, I worry that she has to help me with things she should not have to do, right?"

"Pues la verdad se siente un poco desesperante, pero son nuestros hijos y yo trato de buscar la forma de calmarme de poder pasar día a día. Sí es diferente el cambio porque ahora sí que le toca a uno ya estar haciéndola un poco de maestra...pues ya todos los padres, yo creo la mayoría que no estamos trabajando dedicamos tiempo a eso."

"Well, the truth is it feels a little bit maddening, because these are our children, so I try to calm myself down and take one day at a time. Yes, the change is different because now I am having my turn as a teacher...well, it's the same to all parents, I believe, most of us who are not working, we are taking the time to do this."

What factors influence families' decisions to send their child to care or stay at home?

Concerns about contracting and spreading COVID were most commonly reported as the biggest consideration related to child care. For over one half of the mothers, known health risks for one child and close experiences with COVID-19 played particularly important roles in deciding how their children would be cared for during the pandemic. For all five mothers, keeping their family healthy and COVID free is the most important factor determining their decisions about child care right now.

“Cuando entraron a Head Start, mi hermana los llevaba y en la tarde yo los traía por lo mismo que yo trabajo en la tarde. Y cuando empezó esto de la pandemia, nosotros decidimos no llevar más al de nosotros y ella al de ella. No decidimos llevarlos porque vimos que era un gran riesgo y más para el de nosotros. Mi hijo tiene sus riñones un poquito más pequeños que lo normal y entonces él tiene que tener cuidados, no tan especiales, pero sí tenemos que tener cuidado.”

“When they got into Head Start, my sister would take them and I would pick them up in the afternoon, since I work in the afternoon. When the pandemic started, my sister and I decided not to take our kids to preschool. We decided that they should not go because it was a big risk, and more so to our kid. My son’s kidneys are a little bit smaller than normal, so he needs to be cared for, but we do have to be careful.”

“Mira, en primer lugar no lo mandaría porque no le veo la necesidad de sacarlo de la casa a exponerlo. Porque como te dije, los niños grandes siempre hemos sido una familia que vemos qué le falta al otro. Nunca lo hemos dejado en otro lado. Entonces no, no, no, no lo daría.”

“Well, I would not send them in the first place because I do not think it is worth leaving home and exposing them. As I told you, the older kids were raised to be part of a family that always looks out for each other. We haven’t taken them elsewhere. So no, no, no, I still wouldn’t.”

“Pues que le fuera a pegar la enfermedad. Y porque a veces, uno como padre dice uno, ‘tiene nada más gripa o que tiene otra cosa’, pero ya se complica a veces y resulta que ya es eso [COVID]. Y eso será mi preocupación, de que se fuera a contagiar ella. Pero yo pienso que también hay muchos cuidados también en esos lugares. Pero ningún lugar estaría más seguro que la casa.”

Well, him getting the disease. As a parent, sometimes, one thinks they just have a flu or any other thing, but at times it ends up being more complicated and turns out to be just that. That will be my concern, having my son get the virus. I also believe that those places have many safety precautions in place. But there is no place safer than home.”

Over one half of the mothers discussed their concerns about the quality of care their child might receive outside the home, both in terms of general quality as well as in terms of health and safety practices. Their concerns included not receiving enough attention to support their child’s individual needs and well-being and concerns with children being fed well and kept safe.

“Soy de las que nomás...que no con cualquiera dejo a mis hijos. ¡Porque si yo tengo dificultad controlándolo, estoy hablando de él, el de 5. Y yo le digo a mi esposo que quién me asegura que otra persona les va a tener la paciencia que yo les tengo.”

I’m not like those parents who leave their children with anybody. If I have problems to control my 5-year-old son, I would talk to him, my 5-year old. I tell my husband that there is no guarantee that any other person will be as patient with him as I am.”

“Pues pues más que nada yo pienso que los cuidados que una madre le da a sus hijos, como estar más al pendiente de ellos, de que coman bien, de que estén bien; pues ya ve que uno cuando están tristes, pues uno busca la manera de apoyarlos para que se sientan mejor o algo. Entonces este. Esa sería mi preocupación de cómo estarían ellos con otra persona.”

“Mostly I think of the care a mother gives to their children by keeping an eye on them, making sure they eat well and that they are OK; or when they are sad, a mother looks for ways to support them so that they feel better or something. So, then this would be my concern when they are under the care of someone else.”

Some families described significant financial impacts of the pandemic related to inability to work (due to contracting the virus) or choosing not to work to protect family health.

“Porque yo nomás cuando trabajo lo doy a cuidar. Porque ahí me pagan y pues también le pago el cuidado. Pero si como estoy en casa, yo prefiero cuidarlo.”

Because I put him under care only when I go to work. Because I’m getting paid, and so I can pay for his care. But since I am at home, I prefer to take care of him.

"Ah, sí, ya les digo la verdad. Antes sí me pasaba cuando trabajaba, por sí me preocupaba de él, que si le iban a dar de comer o le pegaban o algo así, ¿qué le iba a pasar?. Pues ahorita con el virus, p. Pues sí, si me fuera a trabajar [...]no en otra semana y le diera cuidar, pues sí me preocuparía de él, que como van otros niños y no sé si los niños también estarán enfermos, también ahí se contagie, lno traen para casa y vuelve otra vez la situación [de enfermarme de COVID]."

"Ah, yes, to be honest. When I was working, it did happen to me that I would worry about him, I was concerned if he was going to be fed or if he was going to get mistreated or something like that, I worried about what could happen to him. But now with this virus, if I had to work another week and had to take him somewhere for babysitting, I would worry about him. There will be other kids and I don't know if they are sick, he could get the virus there too and bring it home, and the whole situation would happen all over again [in reference to COVID]."

What are parents most concerned about for their children during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Most of the mothers interviewed had concerns for their children as a result of the pandemic. Concerns included being able to support learning and development at home, especially for those children who are being cared for by older siblings currently attending online school, supporting technology needs related to online education, and overall mental well-being.

"Pues no aprende mucho porque a veces no le enseñan. Ellos [hijos grandes] no tienen tiempo para enseñarle porque están con sus maestros...y él mirando también ahí la computadora lo que ellos están viendo. A veces sí se pone a jugar con sus juguetes o cuando estoy yo, pues ya platicamos. No puedo salir mucho a ir a jugar a los parques, en la casa, estamos a pura tele nada más."

"Well, he does not learn much because sometimes they don't teach him. They don't have time to teach because they are in session with their teachers. He is looking at the monitor at what the others do. Sometimes, he starts playing with his toys and if I'm there, we discuss these things. I cannot go out much, to the parks. We stay at home, mostly watching TV all the time."

"No, pienso que hemos sabido sobrellevar la situación; no digamos que del todo bien, porque pues el estrés siempre va a existir [y] la monotonía de la misma rutina, del encierro. ¡Qué sé yo!. Pero pues yo busco la forma de que ella esté enfocada en otras cosas."

No, I think we have managed to cope with the situation; Let's not say that it is all right, because stress will always exist [and] the monotony of the same routine, of confinement. What do I know! But then I look for a way for her to be focused on other things."

Two mothers, however, reported having no concerns for their preschoolers and felt like they were able to provide the attention, care, and educational supports needed for their child's development and school readiness right now.

"Tienes sus riñones un poquito más pequeños y en las vías urinarias su vejiga no se cierra completamente. Y desde que nació ha tenido problemas, cada año lo revisan en la universidad, viene una especialista y lo revisa. Y aparte de hacer los estudio de lo que son sus riñones y la vejiga y todo ese procedimiento, lo evalúan de cómo va su desarrollo mental, emocional y todo eso. Es un proceso de casi todo un día o parte del día donde lo evalúan si él se está desarrollando bien para caminar, para correr, para saltar, para hablar y en ese sentido, él está muy bien. Él te habla los dos idiomas, entiende bien los dos idiomas."

"His kidneys are a little bit smaller. His urinary tract and his bladder do not fully close. Since he was born, he has had problems. Every year, he has a checkup at the University. A specialist comes and examines him. Besides running tests on his kidneys and bladder and all those procedures, they assess his mental and emotional development, among other things. It's a full-day or half-day process. They evaluate if his ability to walk, run, jump and talk is developing well, and he is doing well in that regard. He speaks two languages and he understands them both well."

"No ella está bien. Más bien yo me enfoco en que juegue, porque le gustan mucho las muñecas y ella juega, que a la doctora, y pues yo lo veo que tiene un crecimiento normal. De hecho, pues ahorita ya ella ya sabe contar del 1 al 10 en inglés y en español. Yo le enseño algunas letras y algunas las hace bien, algunas no, pero lo que quiero es que ella tenga la intención de que ella también va a ir a la escuela. Pero la veo normal. Ella es muy alegre, ella canta, ella baila. Pues yo lo veo normal."

"No, she is fine. I mostly try to make her play, because she likes dolls very much and she plays with her dolls pretending she is a doctor. I believe she is growing normally. In fact, now she is able to count from 1 to 10 in English and Spanish. I teach her some letters and she can write some of them correctly. What I want is that she understands that she too is going to go to school. To me she seems normal. She is very cheerful, she sings and dances. I think it's normal.

"Yo quiero que mi niña sea una niña sociable, sea una niña que quiera compartir con los demás, que sea una niña educada y que sea una niña que no esté solo en el teléfono y en el teléfono y en el teléfono. Quiero que ella tenga otras motivaciones. Como a ella le gusta mucho la plastilina, ella hace ruedas, hace burritos, según ella hace tortillas; o yo hago tortillas a mano, ella también dice que hace tortillas y se pone hacer las bolitas. Dice "yo también te voy a ayudar" y ella hace con su plastilina, yo hago con la masa."

I want my child to be sociable. I want her to share with other people and be polite. I don't want her to be with her phone all the time. I want her to have some other motivations. She likes modelling clay. She makes circles and using those, she makes burritos. According to her, she is making tortillas. Since I make tortillas, she says she is making them too and she makes little balls of modelling clay. She wants to help me and she makes them with modelling clay while I make them with dough."

What supports are parents receiving and what supports do they most want?

These families were accessing very few resources for the children and family as a whole during the pandemic. Only one described receiving formal supports for their child (daily online speech support). Several mothers also mentioned some of the school-based supports, including computers, that were provided to their families by the school district.

"Pues acerca de la escuela no, está bien, les dieron sus computadoras y cada cierto tiempo les están dando material para que trabajen."

"Well, regarding school, no, it's fine. They gave their computers and every so often they are giving them material to work with."

Speech therapy services for one young child (and another school-aged child) were limited in duration and offered only online. The parents felt that their children could benefit from and would enjoy more time with the specialist, especially in-person if possible. One parent was concerned because she was unsure about how well she was supporting the practice of exercises in between sessions.

"A mí se me hace que quince minutos es muy poquito, la mera verdad. Pero no sé si es este el único tiempo que tienen disponible, pero para él sí me gustaría que le dieran más tiempo porque a veces habla mal, no le entiendo como le entiendo a usted."

"To be honest, I think that fifteen minutes is not enough. But I don't know if that's the only available time you have. I would like him to have more time because sometimes he does not speak well. I cannot understand him like I understand you."

"Pues sí, el año pasado venían, pues venía y le traían un juguetito y le enseñaban cómo se decía, No sé, [ahora] está como un poco complicado, [virtual] se me hace así. Así pues, yo les decía a ellos pues que...no sé cómo explicar... pero que ellos enseñaran más a él, pues porque yo sí le enseño pero a mi manera. Pues a mi manera no sé si voy bien o voy mal. [Ahora que es virtual] me siento bien, pues por lo menos me dicen cómo le voy a hacer con mi hijo."

"Well, last year they would come and bring him a toy. They would teach him how to say things. They would make him pick it up or hand it over or something like that. And that was it. It's a little bit complicated I think. I told them to do something different. Something more advanced. I wanted them to devote more time to playing or using the toys. I don't know how to explain it. I wanted them to teach more to him, because I do teach him but in my own way. I don't know if this helps him or not. I feel fine. At least I am told what to do with my son."

When asked about what others supports they need mothers expressed no need for anything at the moment and having the basics covered. When explored a bit more it was clear that most of them were unaware of possible supports available at this time. One mother that was recovering from COVID herself mentioned the family had applied for financial support for a program for farm workers but at the time of interview had not yet heard about the outcome of that ask.

Two of these Latinx mothers mentioned support from direct family adult members living close by, but they did not mention other specific support from friends, or others in the community. The mothers interviewed were understandably proud that they are making the most of a terribly difficult situation during the pandemic, they are relying on the support of older children and their emotional resilience to overcome their ongoing challenges. There was recognition that other individuals and families are worse off than their own, and no one was taking their ability to make do for granted.

"Yo tengo una niña chiquita y hay otros papás que a lo mejor tienen dos o tres niños pequeños y yo pienso que va a ser más complicación así. Sí, porque como le digo, a lo mejor la diferencia conmigo es que la niña está chiquita, pero es que mi niño ya está grande. Entonces con el grande no tengo mucho que navegar y con ella pues a lo mejor el enfoque es más con ella que con mi hijo. Pero imagínate si tuviera los tres chiquitos, pues ¿cómo le haría? Sí, sería más complicado."

"I have a small girl and there are other parents who may have two or three small children and I think it will be more complicated like this. Yes, because as I said, maybe the difference with me is that my daughter is young, but my son is older. So with the older one I don't have to help navigate as much, so I can focus more on her than with my son. But imagine if I had the three little ones, well how would I do? Yes, it would be more complicated."

How do parents find child care support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

What are the challenges in finding care?

None of the Latina mothers interviewed had looked for child care supports during the COVID pandemic. One mother, however, had sought preschool programming for her four-year old and found it challenging to find right before COVID hit. She applied to one program but never heard back from them. If a teacher at a local elementary school had not personally reached out to her about their online preschool program, her daughter would not have any early childhood educational supports apart from what she is able to provide at home. She is now engaging in preschool online.

A couple of the mothers have contemplated searching for care, but the risk of contracting and spreading COVID is still too great. All five of these mothers would prefer to keep their children at home for the time being.

Given that none of these mothers were looking for care at this moment, when asked hypothetically about which of their children they would prefer to find care for and which would be most difficult to find, they all mentioned their preschool-aged children (four- and five-year olds) because they are the ones that demand most attention. The other ages mentioned were kindergarteners and early grade-age children because they need most support at staying attentive during virtual school and need most support with schoolwork and homework.

How do child care settings include parent voice and family culture?

How are child care providers including parent voices?

Informal conversation between parents and child care providers was the most common way in which input and feedback is being shared. The majority of mothers that talked about having informal conversations with their providers said that these conversations were well-received, and in some cases, were even initiated by the child care providers themselves.

"Con ella me fue bien porque también me avisó de unos como workshop que tenía. Yo y mi esposo fuimos los dos. Tuvimos buena comunicación con ella y de ahí seguimos... Fue fácil contactarme con ella, buscarla si tenía alguna pregunta... Y lo que pasa es que me sentía como bien agusto con ella porque platicaba en inglés también... de repente se nos iba el español y me sentía como bien agusto con ella platicar, y cualquier pregunta que yo tenía a ella agarramos mucha confianza."

It went well with her because she told me about some workshops she had. My husband and I attended. We had good communication with her and we went on from there... Contacting her in case I had any questions was easy... I felt really comfortable with her because she also spoke English... Suddenly we would stop speaking Spanish and I felt really at ease with her. We could talk and I asked all questions I had, we felt she was really trustworthy.

"Todo el tiempo estuvieron en él [Head Start], todo el tiempo estuvieron en comunicación conmigo, porque mi niño siempre fue muy sensible, uy, muy sensible. Él me escribía una carta y lloraba y me hacía un dibujo y me lo daba y lloraba, y entonces ellas me decían que por qué...siempre estaban hablando conmigo. Le digo él es así, s muy sensible."

"All the time they were with him, all the time they were in communication with me, she was. Because my son has always been very sensitive. Very, very sensitive. He writes to me, he wrote a letter to me and cried, and this one drew a picture and gave it to me and cried, and so they asked me, why are they were always talking to me. I told them he is like this. He is very sensitive. However, with the passing of the years, he has changed a lot. I feel he is already more like, a bit more mature."

One mother was very pleased with the way in which the Head Start program that her children attended incorporated her feedback. Strong relationships between Head Start staff and teachers and the entire family had developed over the years that all four of her children attended the program. Having this trusting relationship with program staff and being able to do it in Spanish was important to open communication.

"Uno se siente comfortable en el idioma, se siente como apoyado... porque a veces tu dices 'oh pues mira, necesito que me ayudes en esto' y a tu trabajador social a que me ayudes en lo otro. Y ellos están pendientes de ti. Entonces uno se siente como con esa fortaleza de que como ya te conocen de tanto tiempo."

"You feel comfortable with the language, you feel like, supported, because sometimes you may say, well, look, I need your help with this thing, and your social worker will help with other things. They are keeping an eye on you. Then, you feel confident because they have known you for a long time."

How are child care providers reflecting families' culture and traditions in their work?

All five of the mothers interviewed were happy to report that their child care providers, prior to the start of the pandemic, reflected their culture, traditions, and language. Prior to the pandemic, all children attended programs that were conducted completely in Spanish or were bilingual (English-Spanish), and providers celebrated culturally-specific holidays including Day of the Dead and Mexican Independence Day. One mother, whose child attended a Spanish-speaking Head Start program, also noted how cultural celebrations were being used to teach about basic concepts like colors.

"Por ejemplo, si es el día de la independencia de México, ellos adornan el salón con colores, con colores mexicanos, flores mexicanas, faldas. A los niños les hacen como tipo disfraces y les ponen moños en el pelo y les toman fotos."

Es una cosa bien interesante porque invitan a los papás a participar, [preguntan] si les gustaría ir en la hora que van a hacer eso y lo dejan como por uno o dos días. Por ejemplo, el estado de Oaxaca, que es el más colorido, él me dice, "estamos celebrando el estado de Oaxaca. Y tú sabes que Oaxaca tiene en la tradición ropa de colores. Es como un color, mira, es como el color rojo, luego verde luego azul y muchos colores", pero es porque ahí les ponen de diferentes vestidos tradicionales y es una manera también de enseñarles los diferentes colores."

"For example, if it's the Mexican Independence Day, classrooms are decorated with the colors of the Mexican flag, Mexican flowers and skirts. Children think they are a kind of costume. They wear hair bows and they take pictures. It's so interesting, because they invite the parents to participate during the time of the day they will have that celebration. That goes on for a couple of days. My child would come from school and we were celebrating. For instance, he says that in the State of Oaxaca, which is the most colorful state, they actually celebrate the State of Oaxaca. And he says he has to be part of that tradition of colorful clothing. They mention the colors. This is red, this is the red color, this is green, then this is blue. There are many colors. This is how they show them the different colors and it's a way of teaching them to the children."

Including cultural traditions and language in child care programming was very important for all five of the mothers interviewed because it promotes cultural history and heritage outside the home and encourages children to connect with, appreciate, and embrace their cultural backgrounds, especially when the dominant White culture in the U.S. does not celebrate the same traditions.

"Porque así como yo crecí con mi mamá, fue lo que yo vi, como yo fui creciendo ¿Y ahora qué hacemos aquí? Como le comenté que no tenemos a nadie de familiares, a veces mi hija más grande me dice, 'Yo extraño las posadas' y le digo pues yo sé, pero aquí es diferente, no todos hacen lo mismo y ella quiere que nosotros empecemos aquí con alguien, que hagamos eso, porque ella dice, 'estoy como muy triste en estas fechas, que no hagamos esto.' Tengo aquí una comadre que vive cerca de nosotros y es mi amiga la que tengo aquí en nuestro apartamento y le estaba comentando que si les gustaría hacerlo entre nosotras, aunque sea para que los niños no dejen de sentir esta alegría. Porque es lo que yo miro, que mi hija está como triste porque no lo hacemos."

"I grew up with my mom and it was what I'm used to. I grew up with that and we celebrated each year. That was the way we did it. What will we do here? Like I said, we don't have any relatives here. Sometimes, my eldest daughter tells me she misses the Mexican festivities. I tell her that I understand but it's different in here. Not everyone does the same thing and she wants us to start celebrating it here with someone. She says, 'These days I'm feeling sad because we are not celebrating in our way'. I have a friend nearby and my friend who lives with us in our apartment. I was telling them to celebrate among us, so we can bring some joy to our children. Because I noticed it my daughter, she is like sad because we are not doing anything."

"Yo pienso que saber acerca de la cultura de nosotros o de dónde venimos, las tradiciones que nosotros tenemos... Yo pienso que es importante que ella las tenga bien presentes y sepa cuáles son. es puede servir porque ya ve que hay otros niños ya cuando están en Estados Unidos, por ejemplo, los que son hijos de un hispano, ya no hablan en español, no le enseñan en su casa a hablar español, hablan inglés. Y yo pienso que se separan de las culturas de uno. Si uno los va inculcando y enseñando desde chiquitos ya están sabidos, y ya saben más o menos sobre las tradiciones [y]ué significan para uno."

"I think so, it's like our culture or where we are come from, the traditions we have. I think that it is important that she knows them well and that she knows what they are... It could be useful to them, because as you can see, there are other children that once they get to the United States, for instance, the Hispanic children, they don't speak Spanish anymore, their parents don't teach them to speak Spanish, they only speak English. I think that it is a separation from our culture. If you can instruct them and teach them from the moment they are young, then, they grow up knowing, more or less, about our traditions. What they mean to us."

Key Takeaways

- ▶ Parents and children alike are under a lot of stress during the pandemic, which is impacting their mental well-being, parenting, and learning and development opportunities.
- ▶ During the pandemic, Latinx families are preferring to care for their children at home, even if it entails sacrificing going to work and bringing the income. The largest factors influencing decisions if they were to seek care would be related to child care are health and safety, followed by quality of care, and cost. These findings align with results from other recent research on child care decision-making in other Latinx communities.
- ▶ More access to educational supports and early learning resources that could be incorporated into families' daily lives, especially for preschoolers and young children in early elementary school who are unable to attend school online independently, is much needed.
- ▶ Rural Latinx families are falling through the cracks because they are not receiving many of the resources that were once more readily available to them. In combination with Latinx cultural values to "make the most of what you've got," the lack of proactive outreach by early learning services, programs, and other community-based resources means that Latinx children are even less likely to access early learning opportunities than they were prior to the pandemic. The long-term implications of such could have a profound impact on Latinx communities across the state.
- ▶ Families are in need of other community-based resources and supports to address serious financial and emotional strains on individuals and families as a whole. Holistic or wrap-around supports would better help families attend to the needs of each family member and the family unit as a whole.

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