Latina/Hispanic Teen’s Reproductive Experiences in Oklahoma: Knowledge and Expertise from the Latino Community Development Agency (LCDA)

Principal Investigator - Dr. Mónica M. Alzate
Co-Principal Investigator – Dr. Susy Villegas

Description: In 2008, the number of Oklahoma teens (15 – 19 year-olds) giving birth was more than double the number of incoming female freshman students at the two largest universities in the state (Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy [OICA], 2010a). Not surprisingly, Oklahoma is among the ten worst states in the country in terms of high teen fertility (Alan Guttmacher Institute [AGI], 2010). According to 2005 estimates by ethnicity (AGI, 2010), the teen Latina/Hispanic birth rate in Oklahoma was 2.5 times higher than the overall teen birth rate of the country; more than 1.7 times higher than the overall teen birth rate of the state; and 1.3 times higher than the national Latina birth rate. Latina teens are disproportionately affected by this pressing social and health problem in the state. Even though the link between Latino acculturation (Meston & Ahrold, 2010) and values (Bourdeau, et al, 2008) to risky sexual behaviors exists, there is no research on the cultural-contextual life-course factors associated with Latina teen’s experiences with pregnancy and birth. The researchers involved in this study have begun to fill this void by conducting an exploratory pilot study through a Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach in which our partner agency, the Latino Community Development Agency (LCDA), has bridged the ways of knowing between academia and Latino/a adolescents and their families based on its in-depth knowledge and 20 years of experience with the Latino population in Oklahoma. This research was supported by the Knee Center for Strong Families (KCSF), LCDA, and a $29,991 SEED grant from Oklahoma IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE), School of Community Medicine, OU-Tulsa.