



# Metamorphosis

Communications Research For Professionals Bringing About Social Change

## The Challenge of Reaching Out to LA County Latinos

LA COUNTY LATINOS LEARN ABOUT HEALTH INFORMATION AND SERVICES IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, POSING PRESSING CHALLENGES FOR HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS.

### THE STATE OF HEALTH IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY

Los Angeles County Latino families are facing a health crisis, as obesity, diabetes and cancer affect the community in alarmingly disproportionate amounts. Latino women have the second lowest rate of accessing adequate prenatal care, and the second highest obesity rate compared to other ethnic groups in California.\*

Latinos are also twice as likely to have diabetes than non-Latinos of similar ages.\*\* These problems are further exacerbated by an underutilization of health services such as health screenings, health maintenance and early interventions.

A large part of the challenge is many Latinos are simply unaware of the services available to them. Any number of factors including country of origin, education, income and language can influence how Latinos get information.

In order to reach out to the community in ways that better reflect the increasingly complex habits of Latinos, health organizations need to promote their services in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways. In an effort to help them, First 5 LA is partnering with the Metamorphosis Project at the USC Annenberg School for Communication to study how Latinos in three specific LA County neighborhoods learn about health services.

### REACHING NEW IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES:

- Place messages on Spanish language television and radio through advertising, public service announcements or earned media placements.
- Because this group relies on friends and family for information, develop creative ways to promote your messages within these social networks.
- Engage local health professionals to spread the word about available resources.
- Create culturally-appropriate pamphlets in Spanish.
- Identify your audience's key neighborhood social destinations – soccer matches, churches, retail stores, markets – and use printed material and other creative ways to reach families in these places.

### REACHING COMMUNITIES WITH A MIX OF NEW AND OLD IMMIGRANTS:

- Place messages on mainstream television and radio through advertising, public service announcements or earned media placements.
- Enlist doctors and other health professionals in outreach efforts.
- Use internet websites and e-newsletters.
- Place advertising and stories in ethnic and health-related publications.
- Place pamphlets and promotional materials in strategic locations.

\* Brett & Hayes, 2004

\*\* National Diabetes Clearing House, 2002



HOW ARE  
LATINO FAMILIES  
GETTING  
HEALTHCARE  
INFORMATION?

This is the second in a series of communication brochures to a multiethnic Los Angeles.

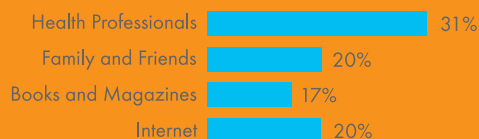


## DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS, DIFFERENT LEARNING HABITS

Surveys of Latino residents in three specific neighborhoods in Los Angeles County illustrate how a one-size-fits-all outreach approach is unlikely to succeed. Families in each of these areas display strikingly different habits when it comes to where they go for reliable information on health issues.

## GLENDALE (N=151):

### PREFERRED SOURCES OF HEALTH INFORMATION



### INTERNET USAGE

30% Not Connected



70% Connected to Internet

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Glendale is the third largest city (a 30.5 square-mile area) in Los Angeles County. Surrounded by the San Gabriel Mountains, it lies eight miles northeast of Los Angeles with three major freeways traversing the city. Glendale is an ethnically diverse area, with about half the 200,000 residents being foreign-born. According to the 2000 Census, non-Hispanic White residents (excluding Armenians) constitute

35 percent of the population, while 21 percent is Armenian, 20 percent is Latino and 16 percent is Asian from different countries of origin. Seventy-nine percent of the Glendale residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma, nearly 40 percent own homes, and the median household income is approximately \$41,800.

WESTSIDE



## PICO UNION (N=301):

### PREFERRED SOURCES OF HEALTH INFORMATION



from Central American countries). This area is relatively poor – the Latino median household income is \$19,408. Only 12 percent have a high school diploma. Relative to the other study areas and samples, Pico Union residents are the poorest, least educated, youngest, least likely to own a home, and have the highest usage rate of public transportation as the primary mode of travel.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Pico Union is an ethnically diverse area, close to the Civic Center (1.7 miles) and also borders Koreatown. According to the 2000 Census, almost 79 percent of the population in Pico Union is Latino; of these, 69 percent are first-generation immigrants (primarily

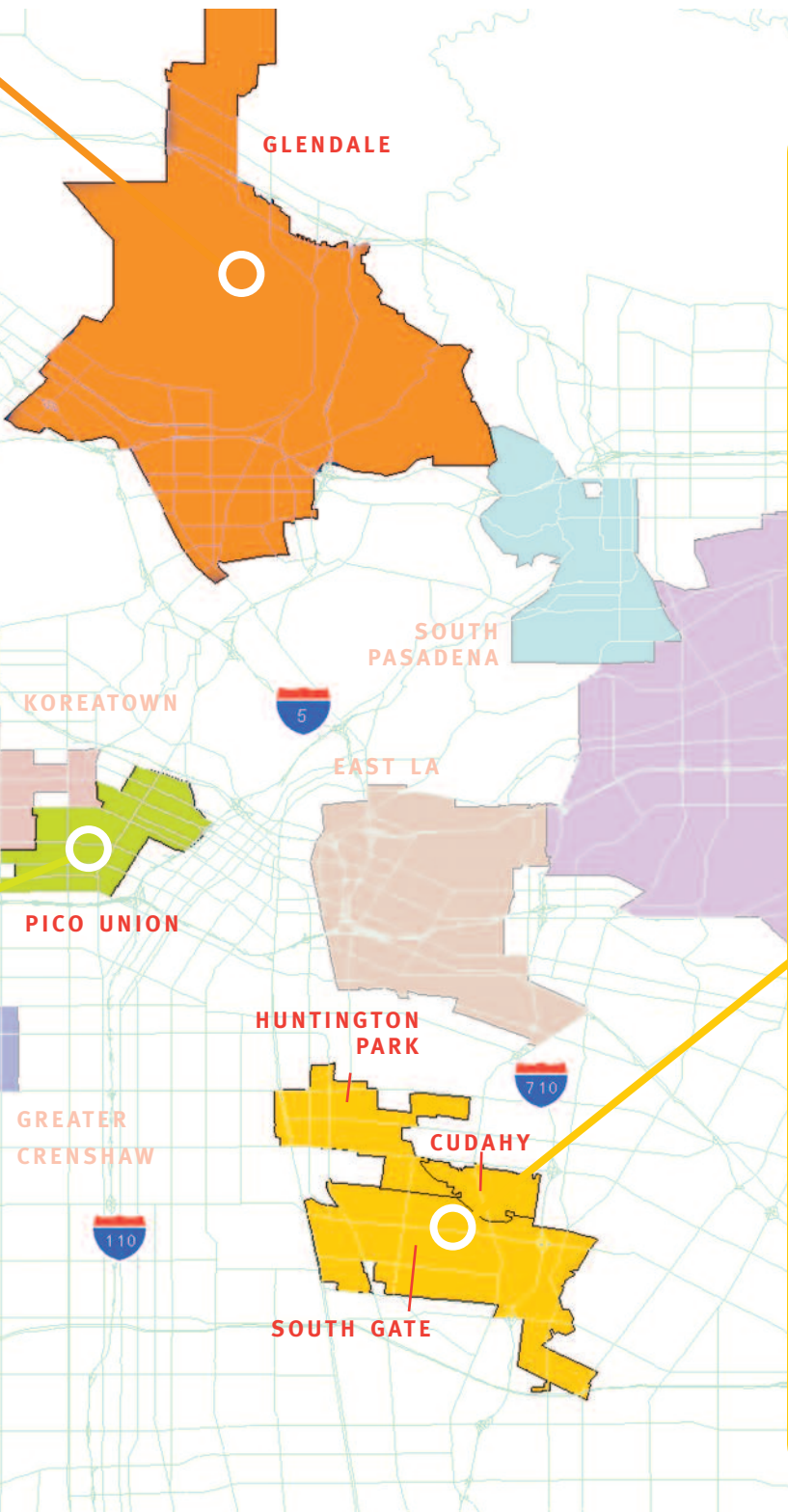
### INTERNET USAGE

22% Connected to Internet



78% Not Connected

# HOW DO YOU REACH THE LATINO COMMUNITY WITH HEALTH CARE INFORMATION?

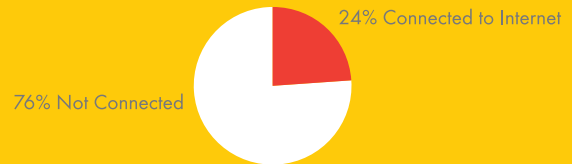


## SOUTHEAST (N=438):

### PREFERRED SOURCES OF HEALTH INFORMATION



### INTERNET USAGE



## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The southeast region includes the contiguous cities of Huntington Park, South Gate and Cudahy, an area of 11.6 square miles east of the Los Angeles River and Los Angeles city limits. Although these areas were historically white suburban communities, dramatic demographic and cultural shifts have occurred in the last three decades. These areas are now Latino (mostly Mexican-origin) ethnic enclaves. According to the 2000 Census, 96 percent of the total population of Huntington Park, 92 percent of South Gate and 94 percent of Cudahy is Latino. Residents are relatively young and only 34 percent have completed high school. The median household income is about \$32,500 and about 22 percent live below the poverty line. More than half the residents are first-generation immigrants.

# WHAT IS

## THE METAMORPHOSIS PROJECT?

The project was born in 1992, in large part as a result of the riots that shook Los Angeles. Dr. Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, the developer of Metamorphosis, knew that as a communication researcher, she should have something to contribute to policymakers and practitioners trying to bring about social change. *The Metamorphosis Project—Transforming the Ties that Bind*, the full name of the endeavor, was officially launched in 1998 at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Southern California (USC). First 5 LA has funded Metamorphosis Project research since 2002.

### Metamorphosis asks:

- How can people build a sense of community that cuts across lines of race and ethnicity?
- How can residents come together to solve common problems?

## WHO AND WHAT DOES THE METAMORPHOSIS PROJECT STUDY?

The project studies ethnic areas of Los Angeles.

### So far research has been conducted with the following groups:

- African-Americans in the Greater Crenshaw area.
- Anglos on the Westside and in South Pasadena.
- Chinese in the Greater Monterey Park area.
- Koreans in Koreatown.
- Latinos in East LA, Pico Union, and the three southeast cities of Huntington Park, South Gate, and Cudahy.
- Anglos, Latinos, and Armenians in Glendale.

# Metamorphosis

First 5 LA is a unique child advocacy organization created by California voters that invests tobacco tax revenues for programs to improve the lives of children prenatal through 5 in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA champions health, education and safety issues benefiting young children and families.

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To learn more about this topic and other research being done by the Metamorphosis Project at USC's Annenberg School for Communication, visit the website at [www.metamorph.org](http://www.metamorph.org).



Champions For Our Children