

# EL Futuro

## **Leveraging Youth Advisory Councils for More Impactful Latine Mental Health Care**

Immigrant Mental Health Solidarity Network Covering, March 2026



# Presenters

**Rachel Siegel**, Therapist & *LAYA* Clinical Lead  
**D'Arlene Martinez**, LAC member  
**Ismael Mastache Lagunas**, LAC member



# El Futuro



- Community-based nonprofit outpatient mental health clinic in NC
- To address the unmet need for bilingual mental health services for North Carolina's growing Latino immigrant community
- Bilingual and culturally-responsive mental health services including therapy, psychiatry, substance use, case management, CPSS, CMHWs and ADHD coaches.
- Serving more than 2,500 Latinos yearly
- Reaching more than 50% of state counties.

*¡20 años en La Lucha!*

# The LAYA Program



First meeting of *LAYA* Advisory Council

Social Media campaigns aim to reduce stigma re: MH in Latine community  
TikTok: @elfuturonc

*Arte y Alma*: teen expressive arts group  
LAC Cohort 2: Interviews  
Lazos Fuertes: Cultural Identity  
Narrative Therapy Training for clinicians



October 2023

March 2024

April 2024

August 2024

September 2024

October 2024

Launch of *Lazos Fuertes* 2.0 parenting webinar series  
Broadcasting on FaceBook Live

Blue Cross Blue Shield Multi-Week Program  
Lazos Fuertes: Anxiety from youth perspective  
NLBHA Presentation

First in person Cohort 2 Advisory Council Meeting  
BCBS Youth MH Forum  
Lazos Fuertes: ADHD  
YA Social Group Launch





Carolina Hurricanes Hockey game for a Mental Health Awareness  
Lazos Fuertes: **Substance Use Prevention**

Recovery Coach Academy Basics Training  
Dulce Amor Event  
Lazos Fuertes: **Disordered Eating**

Lazos Fuertes: HS to College  
SALUD Activity  
DPS Family Summit Outreach



November 2024

January 2025

February 2025

March 2025

April 2025

May 2025

First Los Compas Hang Out  
**Seasonal Depression Lazos**  
Four new LAC members.  
Total of 20 members!

QPR and CRM Training for LAYA Advisory Council  
Lazos Fuertes: **Grief**  
IAMYH International Association for Youth Mental Health Vancouver Conference

LAC Final Meeting  
Mother's Day Kermes  
El Futuro Board Present  
Northern HS MH Awareness Week  
Lazos Fuertes: **Masculinity in MH**



# Why Being Community-driven Matters?



We are experts in Mental Health, but the community is expert in the community itself!

Youth voices need to be at the center of every decision that is being made regarding their mental health

# Empowering Youth Through Mental Health Advocacy

- Why I chose to be part of LAYA?
- What I gained through LAYA?
- Creating a space for open conversation
- Youth and community involvement





# Amplifying Youth Voices: My International Mental Health Advocacy Experience



March 2025: IAYMH International Conference

Ismael Mastache Lagunas

**Advocacy**

**Empowerment**

**Ideas**

**Results**



**Ask your yourself, How does youth mental health look like in 5 years?**

# En Resumen

TikTok Posts: 35  
Views: 30,489  
Reach: 24,817  
Likes: 2,882  
Demographics: % 18-24 yo

Over 33 Nominees for LAYA AC  
17 LAC Members  
Monthly Council Meetings  
2 Subcommittees

Lazos Fuertes (Strong Bonds): 6  
FB Views: 3,418  
Topics such as: Cultural Identity,  
Faith and mental health, and how to  
have hard conversations with youth

Community outreach events: 30  
SU Prevention events: 19  
YMH Awareness presentations: 8  
Total overall engaged: 2,489



# Youth Voices



"I want for my community of young Latine people to not view mental health as a luxury that they cannot afford. I want for them to know that their feelings are valid and that perpetuating the stigma can be stopped with them."

"Being part of this group has made me become a better leader but also shown my friends, school, family, and church about what we've done. I feel like I've connected with my community in a better way."

"For me it has been a rewarding experience to learn different things in this council. It has also been a fun experience to meet new people who also struggle with the same things I do."

"I have been inspired by those around me, every one who I've met during my time in LAYA has inspired me even if it was a small thing. I think I surrounded myself with inspiration, which helps me inspire others."

"I have never been involved in anything like this, I was scared that I wasn't going to meet certain standards, but after the first meeting, I adored the purpose of LAYA. Knowing that I am part of something that is made specifically for Latine Youth Mental Health has made me so happy."

"I have gained a new impression on how to talk about mental health. Before, I was hesitant to bring it up/advocate for a change due to society bias."

From our *familia* to yours

Thank you and *muchas gracias!*

