

discapacitados abriéndose caminos



**EL ARTE DE TRABAJAR CON
FAMILIAS LATINAS:**

PRÁCTICAS CULTURALES EFECTIVAS



Community Parent Resource Center



HISTORY

- discapacitados abriéndose caminos (d.a.c.), which translates to mean “*people with disabilities opening paths in life*”, was founded in 1994 (21 years ago) by Ana and Kevin Perez, discapacitados abriéndose caminos provides information and support to Latino families who have children, youth, and adult with disabilities. They will be more knowledgeable about their children’s needs and about their rights and responsibilities under IDEA. Many Latino families are dealing not only with the disability-related issues of their children with special needs, but also with a whole host of issues related to the challenges of poverty, linguistic and cultural diversity. Our service area encompasses high-poverty schools, and persistently low-achieving schools. Eighty percent (80%) of Minnesota’s lowest-achieving schools are located in the counties served by d.a.c., Of the 80% of these lowest-achieving schools, 100% have more than 50% free and reduced lunch student population (the average is 92.3%)
- **Needs of the target population of Minneapolis and St Paul, Minnesota, include: Limited English fluency:** Latino families struggle to find support and information and problem-solving in their language, Spanish, in a predominantly Anglo culture. Seventy-five percent (75%) of families served by d.a.c. have “no or “limited” English proficiency. In addition, d.a.c. families come from among the 21 Spanish speaking countries so variations in the language itself from country to the next also complicate communication. In response to this need, d.a.c. provides all of our services in Spanish; our materials, training, support groups and activities are conducted in Spanish. When a parent calls d.a.c., they are met with staffs who all speak Spanish, as well as English. **Limited literacy:** Many parents cannot read English, and many do not even read Spanish. Many parents have dropped out of school due to economic demands; others grew up in areas with limited schooling, or left schooling because it was so unreceptive to their culture and language. In response to this need, d.a.c. provides services over the telephone and in person in Spanish, and help parents understand and translate the school and other related documents regarding their child’s disability, education, or other services. **Understanding of the differing cultural backgrounds within the Latino culture:** “Latinos” are often regarded as a homogenous group by the Anglo world but individual differences require understanding. Some parents came from very isolated rural communities and others from high poverty urban settings. d.a.c. staff has lived in both rural and urban areas, and understand these.

WHO WORKS ON THE PROJECT

Ana M. Perez de Perez –Executive Director, Kevin I. Perez Rodriguez- Assistant Director, Elbia Valentin, Administrative Assistant

WHO FUNDS THE PROJECT.

**CPRC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION -OSEP
WHEN IS THE PROJECT FUNDED THROUGH
- 2011-2016**

Title of Project



- Receive culturally and linguistically appropriate informational and emotional support to help them to gain skills to parent their child with a disability and to participate as partners in educational decision-making for their children;
- Receive and benefit from individual assistance and support to access services and advocate for themselves and their children; and
- Participate in support groups with other parents and develop mutually supportive connections among themselves.

Cultural Responsive Services (Spanish)



ON THE PHONE 15%

IN-PERSON 70% Holding Hands

THROUGH TECHNOLOGY 10%

Email with SW and others individual that work in the community. Consumers start using Facebooks.

Outreach Activities



We do support group every Tuesday
and is divided in two part

First: Presentation with a community provider
(Schools, Health, Social Services Provider)

Second: Family Networking

Collaboration with Stakeholders



Connection to other AGENCIES & TYPES of collaboration

1. Schools
2. County Social Services
3. Clinics and Hospitals
4. Community Agency
5. Others

Lessons Learned



SUCSESSES

Twenty-one years in the community

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Families are special and unique and to train the providers on how to work with the families has been difficult, because they believe that one size fits all.

WISH LIST

More funding to hire more staff.

Parent Center



Any Other Odds & Ends to Share...