Cara y Corazon – Face and Heart
A Family – Strengthening, Rebalancing and Community Mobilizing Process

Program Description

The movement and healing of a people is based on the community’s interdependent responsibility to each other. The interdependent responsibility is taken from the ancient concept – You are my other me – Tu eres mi otro yo. It means we all have a purpose of living and that we should be reflections of each other. Our actions affect each other and our behaviors are reflections of the respect we have for each other. Each is a teacher and a student for one another.

The concepts of Face and Heart (Cara y Corazon) are also directly related to the traditional concept of Character development – (La Educación). This is not a phrase to be directly translated as education, but rather a phrase meaning character development. Character Development – (La Educación) is a fundamental principle for appropriate living for most families. It is taught to all children through the normal processes of modeling appropriate and expected behaviors and family interaction.

A mother may say to her child “Please give your chair to your Aunt Esperanza,” is sometimes valued more than social learning or formal education.

These principles are the foundation on which the Face and Heart/Cara y Corazon curriculum is based. They are contained in four essential values represented through Face and Heart/Cara y Corazon.

La Educacion – Character
Cara – Face Corazon – Heart
Dignidad – Dignity Respect – Respeto
Confianza – Trust/Bonding
Cariño – Love/Acceptance

The Face reflects the values of dignity and respect.
The Heart reflects the values of interdependent, intuitive bonding and love/acceptance.

Persons that have character development – bien educados have a balanced sense of Face and Heart/Cara y Corazon and have intertwined them in to their lives and there interactions with others.
El Joven Noble – Rites of Passage
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

El Joven Noble Rites of Passage, Character Development Program, is a youth development, support, and leadership enhancement program developed in 1996 that provides a process and a vehicle for the continued “rites of passage” development of youth ages 10-24. The program incorporates an approach and curriculum that is based on the philosophy that youth need other men/women, their family, and community to care for, assist, heal, guide, and successfully prepare them for true womanhood/manhood.

**Jovenes con Palabra** is a ten-session curriculum that is part of a more intensive El Joven Noble (The Noble Young Person) Youth Rites of Passage Process. The specific goal of the Jovenes con Palabra curriculum is the CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT of young men/women while targeting the reduction and prevention of unwanted or unplanned pregnancies, substance abuse, and community violence and to increase the ability of youth to act in a responsible and respectful way in reference to their relationships.

The impetus of these concepts and philosophy were developed by CALMECAC, a Chicano/Latino Mental Health Training group based in Los Angeles, California. In addition, a special acknowledgement is given to the “Circulo de Hombres” whose mission is to strengthen, balance and redevelop the traditional compadre extended family systems in communities for supporting this process.

Historically, it has been traditional for indigenous people of all cultures as men, women, families, and communities to gather in “circles” to teach, learn, heal and prepare for the continued development of the people. By participating in special roles in the family, they would assume an extended kinship/parental (compadre/comadre) role in the lives of the children and family. Through example and teaching, they would collectively assist in the nurturing, protection, guidance and responsibility of the children. Jovenes con Palabra is a return to these teachings and this responsibility for preparing and guiding the next generation in a positive way.

By way of societal oppression and direct invalidation of our values and traditions, many of these essential elements of the culture have been hidden, imbalanced, or thought to be unimportant. This has had a great negative effect on Chicano/Latino children and families.

For many reasons, the mujeres (women), for the most part, have been able to maintain closer ties to the valores (values) and the traditions of being comadres, but for the “hombres”, much has been lost or hidden.

**Compadres Network**

With the intent of reclaiming this important support system, an essential prerequisite of this or any effective youth development program is having a circle of balanced, responsible Chicano/Latino men/women who see youth leadership and development as a major focus of their role as men/women. This “rites of passage” process includes the recruitment, training, and establishment of a Chicano/Latino Compadres Network (Extended Kinship) to serve as guides, leaders, mentors who support in a fashion similar to that of tios/tias (uncles/aunts) in the traditional Chicano/Latino family. This is an essential phase in transitioning the young women/men to provide support network upon completion of the program.
Training Manual Format

This manual itself was written in a generalized format (with specifics covered in the training), thus allowing for the integration of the particular style of the facilitator who is coordinating the program. It also assumes that the facilitators will use their creative skills and experience to modify the curriculum for the specific target population they are serving.

Finally, it is important to note that the term, “Chicano/Latino” is used in this manual to include those who have Mexican, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central American, and South American heritage, or who identify with the spirit and struggles of people of that tradition. However, the concepts and issues are universal in nature and can be applicable to people of all cultures. It should also be understood that there is diversity among our culture which should always be respected by the facilitator. Focus should be kept on guiding youth to feel proud of whom they are, respectful of people and other youth, of all cultures, who are capable of being positive, responsible roles in their community.