

The National Council of La Raza's (NCLR) nearly 300 community-based Affiliates work in 41 states, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., to meet the diverse needs of Latinos. From education and health care to homeownership counseling and workforce development, the services provided by NCLR Affiliates support millions of Hispanic Americans each year as they seek to build strong futures for their families. "Family is a value that defines Latino culture, and families are at the heart of the day-to-day work our Affiliates are engaged in," says Janet Murguía, President and CEO of NCLR. "By advancing opportunities for Latino children, families and communities, NCLR and its Affiliates together are working to strengthen America as a whole."



EL HOGAR DEL NIÑO

THE HOME OF THE CHILD

EL HOGAR DEL NIÑO

Award-winning program: Toddler/2-3-Year-Old Childcare Center

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CHILDREN DO WELL WHEN THEIR FAMILIES
DO WELL, AND FAMILIES DO BETTER WHEN
THEY LIVE IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

2007 FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

FROM CHILD CARE TO FAMILY CARE

In 1972, seven young Latino mothers started a volunteer daycare in a Chicago church basement. It was the first center to provide affordable, bilingual child care for working parents in Chicago's Pilsen community, where nearly 90 percent of the population is Latino and nearly one-third lives in poverty. Today, El Hogar del Niño – The Home of the Child – is a recognized community hub, annually serving more than 600 children and their families with services far beyond daycare, encompassing health, parent education, counseling and other areas. Seventy-seven children and their families receive support through the Toddler/2-3-Year-Old Childcare Center, where the demand is so great that 300 children are on a waiting list.

“The majority of our parents are teenaged, single, immigrant parents who face diverse cultural, social and economic challenges,” says Executive Director and Founder Jane M. Garza Mancillas, who has led the growth of El Hogar del Niño since its inception. “We provide a comprehensive network of services both within our own agency and in the greater community so that parents are fully supported.”



ALTHOUGH OUR PRIMARY SERVICES FOCUS ON CHILDREN, WE ALSO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF THE ENTIRE FAMILY SO THAT CHILDREN CAN DEVELOP IN HOME AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE EMOTIONALLY, PSYCHOLOGICALLY, SOCIALLY AND FINANCIALLY STRONG.

—Jane M. Garza Mancillas, Executive Director, El Hogar del Niño

THE SUCCESS OF COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT

For every child who enrolls in daycare, El Hogar del Niño completes a family assessment and helps parents attain medical care, counseling, emergency assistance, English language classes and job services. El Hogar del Niño often connects families to partners in the National Council of La Raza Affiliate Network in Illinois. “In collaboration with our partners, we provide a chance for parents to pursue their personal, educational and career goals, and ultimately improve their children's futures,” Garza Mancillas says. “Particularly, by working with children as young as two, we are able to reach out to many single teen mothers who lack strong parenting skills, economic security and high school educations. With our comprehensive approach, we help them achieve success for their families.”

Monthly workshops held at El Hogar del Niño also teach parents about the different stages of infant and toddler development and about basic financial literacy. “Parents work. It's challenging to attend classes,” Garza Mancillas says. “But we work around parents' needs, holding workshops in the evenings and providing dinner so that they can easily stay and learn about ways to strengthen their families.” As a result, 80 percent of the center's parents attend classes.

Garza Mancillas is especially proud that of more than 2,500 children who have gone through El Hogar del Niño since its founding, all but eight have remained in school, received high school diplomas and now are employed or attending college.

FAMILIES COUNT FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

Through a joint venture of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the Families Count Family Strengthening Awards recognize NCLR Affiliates with outstanding programs that work to give children what they need most—strong, capable and economically successful families. Responding to the varied needs of the families they serve, these organizations improve the economic prospects of working men and women and create the services and networks of support that all families need to realize their aspirations for themselves and their children.