



Our mission is to build a welcoming community and create opportunities where Latino families can belong, contribute, and succeed.

Immigration FAQs by Teachers:

Social Services:

My student's family is going through a tough time. Do you have any free or low cost counseling services offered in Spanish?

Below are some organizations that offer counseling in Spanish for adults and children that are free or on a sliding scale:

- Family & Children's Service (at Casa Azafrán Community Center) – (615) 835-2514
- Oasis Center – (615) 327-4455
- Mercy Community Healthcare – (615) 692-1095
- Insight Counseling Services (Pastoral Counseling) – (615) 383-2115

Where can I refer my students' parents for English classes?

- Conexión Américas offers English classes at various levels and times. We conduct a general orientation every few months: during that event we provide more information about classes, register participants, and assess their English level. The next orientations are scheduled for May 17th at 7pm and May 18th at 10am at Casa Azafrán. The best way for a family to learn more about English classes is to call our office at (615) 320-5152.
- The Metro Human Relations Commission & MNPS partner for weekly LEAF (Linking, Empowering, and Advancing Families) Community Nights at Wright Middle School. In addition to free ESL instruction, families receive dinner, workshops on community resources, and enrichment activities for children. Click here for more information: <http://www.alignmentnashville.org/leaf-spring-2017/>
- Local churches and other organizations also offer English classes. Visit the Nashville Public Library for a list of free or low cost ESL classes: <http://nashvillepubliclibrary.org/newamericanscorner/learn-english-esl/>.



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For questions about other social services, including housing, medical, financial, or other related services, please call or encourage families to call Conexión Américas directly at (615) 320-5152. We have a range of resources and services at Casa Azafrán Community Center, where we are located, and can also refer families to other organizations.

Legal:

How can I connect my families to legal services?

- Conexión Américas (general questions or referrals) – www.conexionamericas.org | (615) 320-5152
- Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (immigration)– www.tnimmigrant.org | (615) 833-0384
- Justice For Our Neighbors (immigration) – www.tnjfon.org | (615) 835-2512
- Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee (employment, family, health, housing legal issues) – www.las.org/clinics | 1-800-238-1443

Education/Family Engagement:

How can I get more informed about the Latino community and how to best serve my students? Can you recommend any teaching resources for working with English Learner (EL) students in the classroom? I don't want to inquire about my students' immigration status but I want to offer support.

- Conexión Américas offers trainings on developing culturally responsive practices for working with Latino students and families. For more information about how to bring these trainings to your school, please contact Jermaine Soto, Training & Leadership Development Manager, at jermaine@conexionamericas.org.



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- Check out our tip sheet for working with Latino families and students, available at www.conexionamericas.org

Teaching Resources: Teaching Tolerance: www.tolerance.org | Colorin Colorado: www.colorincolorado.org
Resource for parents in Spanish: Clave al Exito: <http://exito.univision.com/en/> (choose language on the top left)

I would like to learn Spanish. Where can I take classes?

- The Tennessee Foreign Language Institute regularly offers Spanish classes. The best way to learn more about class schedules and prices is on their website: <https://reg126.imperisoft.com/TFLI/Search/Registration.aspx>
- Spanish Lessons by Emily D offers private and small-group Spanish lessons. Visit this website for more information on classes and rates: <http://www.spanishlessonswithemilyd.com>.
- Nashville Community Education offers Spanish classes in various levels. Check out their catalog for more information: <http://www.nashville.gov/Nashville-Community-Education.aspx>

My school wants to support immigrant families who might be experiencing fear and uncertainty due to the new presidential administration. Do you offer workshops for parents?

- Conexión Américas offers informational workshops in Spanish for families. They include information on recent executive orders as well as information on what families can do to stay informed, safe, and prepared for future immigration changes. Please contact Maria Zapata, Family Engagement Manager, at maria@conexionamericas.org if you are interested in offering this workshop at your school.
- Conexión Américas has offered Parents as Partners (Padres Comprometidos), a Latino family engagement program, to schools in MNPS since 2008. The program, delivered in Spanish, is a nine-week series of workshops that helps parents understand the school system, provides strategies for supporting their child's academic success, and creates stronger connections between parents and schools. During the program, we also address issues facing the Latino community and will ensure that families stay informed about any immigration actions or changes. Please contact Maria Zapata, Family



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Engagement Manager, at maria@conexionamericas.org if you are interested in offering Parents as Partners at your school.

What is DACA?

- DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) is an executive order signed by President Obama in 2012 that grants undocumented youth (who entered the country before age 16, as of 2012) a two year relief from deportation and work authorization. For DACA recipients in TN, this means they can get a driver's license and work permit.
- For more information about DACA, visit: <https://www.nilc.org/issues/daca/faqdeferredactionyouth/>.
- Info sheet about DACA in 2017: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

What are some resources that can help undocumented students on the path to college?

Local:

- Conexión América's "Escalera Step to Success" program at Overton High School and Glencliff High School: <http://www.conexionamericas.org/what-we-do/programs-and-services-for-latino-families/youth-development/#escalera>
- Tennessee Educational Equity Coalition: <http://tnedequity.org/undocumented>
- Equal Chance for Education: <https://www.equalchanceforeducation.com/>
- Oasis Center's College Connection: <https://www.oasiscenter.org/#programs>
- Latino Achievers: <http://latinoachievers.blogspot.com/>

National:

- United We Dream: <http://unitedwedream.org/about/projects/education-deep/>
- United We Dream Educators Toolkit: <http://weareheretostay.org/resources/>
- Educators For Fair Consideration: <http://www.e4fc.org/>



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- College Board: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/for-undocumented-students>
- Dreamer's Road Map: <http://www.dreamersroadmap.com/>
- Get Me to College: <http://getmetocollege.org/financial-aid/info-for-undocumented-students>

My school doesn't have a full-time or consistent translator/interpreter; how can I reach out to my Spanish-speaking families?

- Prior planning is the key to communicating with families in other languages, as requests generally need to be made 5-7 days in advance. All schools have an on-call interpreter and all teachers can individually request an interpreter at <http://www.mnps.org/request-an-interpreter>. This system can also be used for requesting an interpreter during a phone call. Written materials can be sent to translation@mnps.org. For emergency phone calls, call the EL Office at (615) 259-3282.
- Technology can also help bridge the gap. Although imperfect, Google translate or www.linguee.com can help with small documents or words.
- “Clave al Exito (Key to Success)” is a bilingual educational tool created by Univision, a Spanish-language news resource. One of the tools is a parent-communicator website. When teachers and parents register through the site, they can exchange emails that are automatically translated. <http://exito.univision.com/en/tools/parent-communicator/>
- Some schools encourage parents to send notes to teachers written in their native language. Teachers can then have the note and a response translated. If this is something that is feasible for your school, explicitly encourage parents to take advantage of this resource, as some parents will not feel comfortable doing so if they haven't been told this is an accepted practice at their school.

Does your organization offer translation or interpretation services?

- Conexión Américas does not offer translation or interpretation services. We encourage teachers to reach out to the MNPS EL Office at (615) 259-3282 for translation or interpretation services.



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Families in my school community are worried about the executive orders about immigration. What should they do?

- Conexión Américas is offering Family Preparedness workshops in Spanish. Please have the family call (615) 320-5152 to find out when the next workshop will take place.
- Conexión Américas has the brochures available on our website at www.conexionamericas.org

Parents are wondering how to talk to their children about the current political environment. What should they say?

Prepare yourself:

- Children tend to observe their parent's emotions. Parents need to work on their own fears and anxieties, calm down, and become well informed of the facts before talking to their children. It doesn't mean that parents should feel perfectly well, but it doesn't help a child to hear all the parent's intense feelings.

First start by talking about what your child feels they need to talk about in regards to this topic. Make sure to set a time aside where you are not in the middle of something or in a hurry.

Listen to your child, without interruptions, accepting their point of view. (I understand how you feel...)

Afterward:

If your child expresses fear that their family might be separated, or that they may arrive home and not be able to find their family, respond calmly. First, accept the child's point of view. If you think that this could happen in your family, don't pretend that there isn't a risk or danger. Explain to your child that no matter what, "Our family will make decisions that will keep us together and we will have what we need." It's important for the child's mental health to know that their family will do what is necessary to remain together.

Children sometimes don't know how to manage their feelings. **Recognize** their feelings (we all have the right to have feelings).

Are you feeling afraid? Are you angry? Are you sad?, etc.



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After identifying the feeling, **talk about actions** one can take to deal with these feelings. What do we need to deal with our feelings at **this moment**:

A big hug? To punch a pillow? To cry? To draw? To sing?

Remind your child that your family is strong and that when there are hard times, the family will work together so that everyone is together and has what they need.

If your child is having nightmares, can't concentrate at school, changes their routines or eating habits, or becomes aggressive, talk to the school counselor or social worker to get more help and information. You can also talk to your child's doctor. Your doctor can refer you to a counselor or psychologist who can help your family with a specific need.

Visit www.conexionamericas.org for more information and resources.