

**Brenda Carrasco, MSW Intern**  
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### **B. Final Project “Mejorando Mi Salud”**

I was eager to present a simple and brief presentation on mental health to monolingual Spanish speakers. Personally, coming from a traditional Latino family, I realized at a young age that in our culture there was a taboo and stigma related to mental health. Many studies have reported that people who are aware that they need mental health support don't always seek it. In addition, one of the primary reasons they don't is because they don't want to be labeled and suffer from discrimination. In today's society, bullying has become a very serious issue. So, it's easier for people to hide their most vulnerable feelings and sorrows than to seek help.

For example, in the Bay Area there are many immigrants that work in the florerias (greenhouses). If they leave work early they must obtain a doctor's note in order for them to leave work early. However, they prefer to miss a therapy session due to their job requesting a doctor's note. In addition, many have minimum paying jobs and need the finances instead of attending to their health, emotional, and mental health needs. Many immigrant parents work long hours in low-wage jobs and often work in more than one job.

On 02/15/2016, I presented at the Moonridge facility in Half Moon Bay. The Moonridge complex offers affordable housing through Mid-Peninsula to agriculture workers and their families. I contacted Moonridge coordinator, Norma Miramontes. Ms. Miramontes was gracious enough to secure a complimentary space at the facility for the presentation.

I developed the flyer 6 weeks before the event. The flyer had the following details: topic of the presentation, appetizers would be provided, and raffles/prizes would be distributed. I personally distributed the flyer around the Moonridge facility, Half Moon Bay High school, and local Library. I also notified my clients and other clinicians in the BHRS clinic about the event.

The presentation time was from 6-7:30 pm in a small hall. A total of 19 participants (14 adults and 5 children) were present.

During the power point presentation the following topics were discussed: how to become a client with BHRS, facts about mental health, depression symptoms, what individual therapy and family therapy entails. In addition, visual pictures of a family, food, sports, religion, and songs were posted on the power point. Furthermore, the presentation illustrated the bio-psycho-social part of an individual's life, and how punitive it is to balance every component. Community worker, Yolanda Novelo presented her role and what she is able to provide individuals and families. During the last 15 minutes of the presentation new San Mateo County laws were discussed, such as Laura' Law.

I developed the pretest/posttest questionnaire as well. These were the most important findings/common attributes:

- They became more aware of mental health symptoms.
- They understood that BHRS only accepts Medi-Cal.

Interested in learning more about the following/Inform the BHRS system about:

- ADHD
- Laura's Law
- Troubled Youth

- Assistance in navigating the mental health system.
- Preventive services
- Local nurseries health insurance does not offer enough mental health services. How can BHRS help?

Overall, the presentation was a success, and the audience appeared to want to learn more about mental health services.

Unfortunately, some of the individuals that attended the presentation did not have Medi-Cal. Many of the agriculture employees work at the local nurseries in Half Moon Bay. The health insurance the nurseries provide have minimal mental health service coverage. Therefore, it is very difficult for them to access the services. One of the main nurseries in Half Moon Bay is the Rocket Farms. They offer: **Network By Design health insurance:** <https://www.netbyd.com/group-health.html>.

Community mental health agencies need to provide better access for this marginalized community. For example, many of the BHRS clinics are only open from Monday-Friday with hours 8-5:00 pm. Unfortunately, the days and times available don't coincide with their time off.

On 05/03/2016, another presentation was conducted in the San Mateo Mid-Peninsula facility. I presented to 7 participants during that event. However, BHRS clinician, Arlette Molina, organized the outreach, site, and appetizers. I provided Ms. Molina and unit chief, Hector Moncada with outreach information for future events, such as the main contact for Mid-Peninsula and for Golden Gate Regional Center.