

CICC's Los Niños Bien Educados Program

**Evaluative Studies Conducted During
2001-2004 in Los Angeles County**

Kerby T. Alvy, Ph.D.

Scott W. Plunkett, Ph.D.

Larry D. Rosen, Ph.D.

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**Center for the Improvement of Child Caring | 11331 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 103
Studio City, California | 91604-3147 | Phone (818) 980-0903 • Fax (818) 753-1054**

Recent Studies as Part of CICC's Community Service Projects

During the period from 2001 to 2004, CICC conducted large community service projects in different areas in Los Angeles County that involved the delivery of parenting classes and one-day seminars in the Los Niños Bien Educados program. These were all directed at parents of young children whose children were enrolled in some form of out-of-home child care. The projects were funded by First 5 LA, the Los Angeles County Children and Families First Commission.

The projects were located in two geographically different regions of Los Angeles County, the San Fernando Valley with its 1.9 million residents, which would be considered as a Metropolitan area, and the much more rural and sprawling Antelope Valley, with its 450,000 residents. Antelope Valley would be considered a Non-Metropolitan area.

Seven Los Niños Bien Educados classes were taught in the San Fernando Valley with a total attendance of 256 parents. Five such classes were also taught in the Antelope Valley with a total of 146 parents attending.

In terms of the one-day seminar versions of the program, four seminars (a total of 569 parents) were conducted in the San Fernando Valley, and seven such seminars (447 parents) were presented in the Antelope Valley.

Altogether, 1418 parents participated in these classes and seminars, making this one of the largest parent training projects ever attempted and systematically evaluated.

Each class and seminar was evaluated by having the parents complete Parent Effectiveness Questionnaires before the start of the class or seminar, and at the end of the class or seminar. These rated Questionnaires tested the parents on the effective parenting concepts, skills and strategies that were taught in the Los Niños Bien Educados program (pre-post test design). This method allowed for determining whether the parents made significant gains from the beginning to the end of the classes and seminars.

At the end of each class, the parents were also asked to speak about changes they had observed in themselves and their children as a result of using the skills and strategies from the program. These parents had ample time to observe such changes, as the classes lasted for 12 weeks. A similar set of questions about parent and child behavioral change was asked of those parents who attended the one-day seminars. Here, however, the parents had to indicate the changes they expected to see as a result of their participation in the seminar, since they had not had any time to actually apply what they had learned. So, for the seminar parents, the behavior change questions addressed their expected or anticipated changes.

A third method for evaluating the impact of the classes and seminars was both a series of rated questions about what they had learned from the classes/seminar, and their evaluation of the instructor of each class and seminar.

All of the classes and seminars were evaluated by the use of these three paper and pencil methods. One of the classes was also evaluated through a more personal methodology, a focus group evaluation. Here, the parents who had just completed a class met together to answer questions about the cultural content of the program and what it meant in terms of what they had learned and applied. This focus group evaluation was conducted by Dr. Henry J. Ortiz as his doctoral dissertation project (2003).

What we will now do with this extensive data on the program's impact is:

- a. look at the characteristics of the parents who participated in the classes in terms of their cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic characteristics, and then present the results of their paper and pencil evaluations of the classes and how they and their children changed as a result of their participation,
- b. look at the similar characteristics of the parents who participated in the one-day seminars, and report on their evaluations,
- c. provide a summary of the significant findings across both the classes and seminars, and
- d. provide a summary of the findings of the focus group evaluation that had to do with the program's cultural content.

(A) PARENTING CLASSES

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARENT PARTICIPANTS IN THE CLASSES

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area)

Of the 256 parents who attended the multi-session classes, 222 completed both the pre and post-tests. The ages of the participants in the multi-session classes, who completed pre-test surveys, ranged from 14 to 73 with the mean age being 33.07. The vast majority of participants were female. More specifically, 88% were female. On average, the parents had 2.30 children.

The majority of the parents (i.e., 60%) who participated in the parenting classes were born in Mexico. 15% El Salvador, 10% Guatemala, 8% U.S., and 7% Other (parents born in various Central and South American countries as well as Nicaragua, Cuba, and Puerto Rico). In terms of language spoken most often, 7% spoke both English and Spanish; while 9% spoke English and 84% spoke Spanish. However, the languages spoken most often in the home were English and Spanish (60%) followed by Spanish only (39%) and English only (1%).

The participants represented a wide range of educational levels. More specifically, 36% had either no education or had completed grade school, 37% had completed high school or GED, and 10% had completed high school and also had other training but no college. In addition, 15% had completed college, while 3% had a graduate degree. In regards to occupation, most of the parents (60%) did not work. Of the rest, 24% were employed full-time. In addition, 16% were employed part-time.

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area)

Of the 146 parents who attended the five multi-session classes 71 completed both the pre and post-tests that were used to determine the impact of the LNBE class. The ages of the participants in the multi-session classes, who completed pre-test surveys, ranged from 19 to 67 with the mean age being 34.75. The vast majority of participants were female. More specifically, 78% were female.

The majority of the parents who participated in the parenting classes were born in Mexico. The "other" category includes parents born in various Central and South American countries as well as Nicaragua, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. In terms of language spoken most often, 3% spoke both English and Spanish; while 10% spoke English and 87% spoke Spanish. However, the languages spoken most often in the home were Spanish only (52%) followed by English and Spanish (46%) and English only (2%).

In regards to educational level, the participants represented a wide range of educational levels. More specifically, 40% had either no education or had completed grade school, 46% had completed high school or GED, and 6% had completed high school and also had other training but no college. In addition, 5% had completed college, while 2% had a graduate degree.

PRE AND POST CLASS CHANGES IN PARENTING BEHAVIORS, ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 222)

Statements About Parenting	% Correct on Pretest	% Correct on Posttest	z-score
All Latino families have the same expectations of proper behavior for children	18%	38%	-4.69***
A child's behavior can have many causes	97%	100%	2.60**
Praise works best when it is used often	92%	98%	2.90**
Parents should avoid using threats	93%	98%	2.54**
Recently immigrated Latino parents all adjust the same to the U.S.	48%	69%	4.49***
Time Outs should be used very frequently to prevent bad behaviors	44%	65%	4.44***
Ignoring a new disrespectful behavior can prevent the behavior from getting worse	56%	78%	4.93***
Allowing children to make choices is good for the child	80%	93%	4.01***
Parents can go to jail for abusing their children	94%	96%	0.97
All Latino parents want their children to speak Spanish at home	26%	45%	4.18***
Children are either "Bien Educados" or "Mal Educados" all the time	48%	52%	0.84
Praising children helps them to behave well	87%	95%	2.95**
<i>Time Outs</i> give the parent time to figure out how to stop the behavior from happening again	77%	89%	3.37***
Expectations for children change as children get older	73%	91%	4.94***
Parents sometimes teach bad behaviors to their children	85%	92%	2.31*
There are laws to protect children from harm by their parents	95%	100%	3.37***
Unrealistic expectations can hurt children	68%	93%	6.65***
Parents should call their children names when they do something bad	89%	95%	2.33**
<i>Time Outs</i> should be used before other methods to prevent bad behaviors	27%	51%	5.18***
Praise works best when you praise a behavior, not the child	51%	85%	7.68***
If a two-year-old child says "no," he/she is being disrespectful	71%	78%	1.69*
It is normal for a four-year-old child to tell lies	41%	64%	4.85***
Parents often have to show a child how to do a good behavior	92%	93%	0.40
Chores should always be done after the child goes out to play	67%	79%	2.85**
Parents should show respect for children, even when they are disciplining them	96%	98%	1.23
A long lecture is better than a brief command.	52%	90%	8.82***
Parents should help their children with homework	97%	97%	0.00

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 71)

Statements About Parenting	% Correct on Pretest	% Correct on Posttest	z-score
All Latino families have the same expectations of proper behavior for children	16%	28%	1.73*
A child's behavior can have many causes	94%	99%	1.62
Praise works best when it is used often	96%	97%	0.32
Parents should avoid using threats	87%	94%	1.42
Recently immigrated Latino parents all adjust the same to the U.S.	69%	78%	1.21
Time Outs should be used very frequently to prevent bad behaviors*	49%	62%	1.56
Ignoring a new disrespectful behavior can prevent the behavior from getting worse	69%	78%	1.21
Allowing children to make choices is good for the child	73%	87%	2.08*
Parents can go to jail for abusing their children	94%	94%	0.00
All Latino parents want their children to speak Spanish at home	37%	42%	0.61
Children are either "Bien Educados" or "Mal Educados" all the time	48%	47%	-0.12
Praising children helps them to behave well	86%	93%	1.36
<i>Time Outs</i> give the parent time to figure out how to stop the behavior from happening again	76%	89%	2.04*

Expectations for children change as children get older	87%	92%	0.97
Parents sometimes teach bad behaviors to their children	90%	97%	1.69*
There are laws to protect children from harm by their parents	97%	99%	0.85
Unrealistic expectations can hurt children	78%	92%	2.34**
Parents should call their children names when they do something bad	87%	97%	2.20*
<i>Time Outs</i> should be used before other methods to prevent bad behaviors	21%	44%	2.93**
Praise works best when you praise a behavior, not the child	59%	85%	3.45***
If a two-year-old child says "no," he/she is being disrespectful	76%	83%	1.03
It is normal for a four-year-old child to tell lies	41%	61%	2.38**
Parents often have to show a child how to do a good behavior	97%	93%	-1.07
Chores should always be done after the child goes out to play	61%	80%	2.48**
Parents should show respect for children, even when they are disciplining them	99%	97%	-0.85
A long lecture is better than a brief command.	52%	86%	4.38***
Parents should help their children with homework	96%	96%	0.00

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

PRE AND POST CLASS CHANGES IN ATTITUDES ABOUT PRAISE AND SPANKING

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 222)

Question		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
In the last three months, how often would you say that you praised your child?	Pretest	-	3%	22%	46%	29%
	Posttest	2%	2%	11%	34%	51%
In the last three months, how often would you say that you spanked or hit your child?	Pretest	35%	41%	22%	1%	1%
	Posttest	54%	29%	15%	-	1%

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 71)

Question		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
In the last three months, how often would you say that you praised your child?	Pretest	2%	2%	22%	50%	25%
	Posttest	0%	0%	12%	46%	42%
In the last three months, how often would you say that you spanked or hit your child?	Pretest	40%	28%	29%	2%	2%
	Posttest	57%	39%	6%	2%	6%

PARENT DESCRIBED CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THE CLASSES

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 222)

- Do you feel different about being a parent? (94% said yes)
- Do you feel different about your children? (92% said yes)
- Have you changed how you treat your children? (99% said yes)
- Have your children changed because of you taking the class? (100% said yes)
- Have you discussed the ideas learned in the class with others? (97% said yes)

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 71)

- Will the ideas presented in the class, help you raise your children? (95% said yes)
- Did the class present ideas that you already knew or were already doing with your children? (88% said yes)
- Will you discuss the ideas learned in the class with others? (97% said yes)

PARENTAL RATINGS OF THE INSTRUCTOR AND CLASSES

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 222)

Please use the following scale to rate the instructor	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Knowledge of parenting	-	-	1%	19%	78%
Ability to explain the material	1%	-	3%	18%	78%
Prepared and organized	-	1%	3%	20%	76%
Positive attitude toward participants	-	-	-	10%	90%
Overall instructor rating	-	-	1%	15%	84%

Please use the following scale to rate the class	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This class increased my knowledge about parenting	-	-	1%	10%	89%
This class was worthwhile to me	-	-	1%	8%	91%
This class has improved my confidence in being an effective parent	-	-	1%	8%	91%
I would recommend this class to others	-	-	-	6%	94%
This class has improved my parenting skills	1%	-	-	9%	89%

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 71)

Please use the following scale to rate the instructor	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Knowledge of parenting	-	-	-	28%	72%
Ability to explain the material	-	-	-	32%	64%
Prepared and organized	-	-	4%	32%	64%
Positive attitude toward participants	-	-	-	14%	86%
Overall instructor rating	-	-	-	14%	86%

Please use the following scale to rate the class	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This class increased my knowledge about parenting	-	-	-	10%	90%
This class has improved my confidence in being an effective parent	-	-	-	7%	93%
This class has improved my parenting skills	-	-	-	7%	93%
This class was worthwhile to me	-	-	-	7%	93%
I would recommend this class to others	-	-	-	7%	93%

(B) ONE-DAY PARENTING SEMINARS

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARENT PARTICIPANTS IN THE SEMINARS

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area)

Of the 524 seminar participants, 457 completed both pretests and posttests. The ages ranged from 17 to 623 with the mean age being 36.20. The vast majority of participants were female. More specifically, 84% were female. On average, the parents had 2.42 children, ranging from a single child to six children. Overall, 73% of the parents had children five years of age and younger.

The majority of the parents who participated in the parenting seminars were born in Mexico (i.e., 67%). 10% El Salvador, 8% Guatemala, 6% U.S., and 9% other (parents born in various Central and South American countries as well as Nicaragua, Cuba, and Puerto Rico). In terms of language, 8% spoke both English and Spanish; while 82% spoke only Spanish and 9% spoke only English. In addition, parents spoke Arabic (1%), and Farsi (less than 1%). However, the languages spoken most often in the home were English and Spanish (53%), Spanish only 47% and English only (1%).

The participants represented a wide range of educational levels. More specifically, 39% of the parents had no education or completed grade school, 31% had completed high school or GED, and 10% had completed high school and also had other training but no college. In addition, 14% had completed college, while 7% had a graduate degree. In regards to occupation, half of the parents (50%) did not work while 33% were employed full-time. In addition, 17% were employed part-time.

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area)

Of the 477 seminar participants in the seven seminars 401 completed both pretests and posttests. The ages ranged from 16 to 73 with the mean age being 34.41. The vast majority of participants were female. More specifically, 80% were female. On average, the parents had 1.41 children five and under and 1.85 children over 5.

The majority of the parents who participated in the parenting seminars were born in Mexico. The "other" category includes parents born in various Central and South American countries as well as Nicaragua, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. In terms of language, 50% spoke both English and Spanish; while 49% spoke only Spanish and 1% spoke only English. In addition, parents spoke Arabic and Portuguese. However, the languages spoken most often in the home were Spanish only (85%), English and Spanish (6%), and English only (9%).

In regards to educational level, the participants represented a wide range of educational levels. More specifically, 35% of the parents had no education or completed grade school, 36% had completed high school or GED, and 10% had completed high school and also had other training but no college. In addition, 14% had completed college, while 5% had a graduate degree.

PRE AND POST SEMINAR CHANGES IN PARENTING BEHAVIORS, ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 457)

Statements About Parenting	% Correct on Pretest	% Correct on Posttest	z-score
All Latino families have the same expectations of proper behavior for children	20%	23%	1.10
A child's behavior can have many causes	96%	99%	2.90**
Praise works best when it is used often	90%	95%	2.87**
Parents should avoid using threats	90%	96%	3.55***
Recently immigrated Latino parents all adjust the same to the U.S.	61%	68%	2.21*
Time Outs should be used very frequently to prevent bad behaviors*	45%	66%	6.39***
Ignoring a new disrespectful behavior can prevent the behavior from getting worse	58%	67%	2.81**
Allowing children to make choices is good for the child	79%	86%	2.78**
Parents can go to jail for abusing their children	94%	94%	0.00
All Latino parents want their children to speak Spanish at home	32%	41%	2.82**
Children are either "Bien Educados" or "Mal Educados" all the time	42%	56%	4.23***
Praising children helps them to behave well	88%	91%	1.48
Time Outs give the parent time to figure out how to stop the behavior from happening again	70%	86%	5.84***
Expectations for children change as children get older	72%	83%	3.98***
Parents sometimes teach bad behaviors to their children	89%	94%	2.71**
There are laws to protect children from harm by their parents	96%	98%	1.77*
Unrealistic expectations can hurt children	73%	84%	4.05***
Parents should call their children names when they do something bad	88%	89%	0.47
Time Outs should be used before other methods to prevent bad behaviors	22%	52%	9.39***
Praise works best when you praise a behavior, not the child	48%	82%	10.78***
If a two-year-old child says "no," he/she is being disrespectful	71%	74%	1.01
It is normal for a four-year-old child to tell lies	42%	58%	4.84***
Parents often have to show a child how to do a good behavior	93%	94%	0.61
Chores should always be done after the child goes out to play	61%	76%	4.88***

Parents should show respect for children, even when they are disciplining them	97%	96%	-0.82
A long lecture is better than a brief command.	58%	84%	8.66***
Parents should help their children with homework	98%	97%	-0.97

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 401)

Statements About Parenting	% Correct on Pretest	% Correct on Posttest	z-score
All Latino families have the same expectations of proper behavior for children	14%	18%	1.54
A child's behavior can have many causes	97%	99%	2.02*
Praise works best when it is used often	91%	96%	2.87**
Parents should avoid using threats	92%	95%	1.73*
Recently immigrated Latino parents all adjust the same to the U.S.	60%	65%	1.46
Time Outs should be used very frequently to prevent bad behaviors*	37%	58%	5.95***
Ignoring a new disrespectful behavior can prevent the behavior from getting worse	56%	71%	4.41***
Allowing children to make choices is good for the child	80%	82%	0.72
Parents can go to jail for abusing their children	98%	97%	-0.91
All Latino parents want their children to speak Spanish at home	25%	32%	2.20*
Children are either "Bien Educados" or "Mal Educados" all the time	39%	48%	2.59**
Praising children helps them to behave well	87%	95%	3.96***
Time Outs give the parent time to figure out how to stop the behavior from happening again	77%	87%	3.69***
Expectations for children change as children get older	79%	87%	3.01**
Parents sometimes teach bad behaviors to their children	86%	91%	2.22*
There are laws to protect children from harm by their parents	97%	99%	2.02*
Unrealistic expectations can hurt children	79%	84%	1.82*
Parents should call their children names when they do something bad	91%	94%	1.61
Time Outs should be used before other methods to prevent bad behaviors	20%	43%	7.01***
Praise works best when you praise a behavior, not the child	59%	88%	9.30***
If a two-year-old child says "no," he/she is being disrespectful	77%	77%	0.00
It is normal for a four-year-old child to tell lies	37%	50%	3.71***
Parents often have to show a child how to do a good behavior	94%	97%	2.05*
Chores should always be done after the child goes out to play	64%	81%	5.39***
Parents should show respect for children, even when they are disciplining them	97%	98%	0.91
A long lecture is better than a brief command.	56%	83%	8.30***
Parents should help their children with homework	96%	96%	0.00

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

PRE AND POST SEMINAR CHANGES IN ATTITUDES ABOUT PRAISE AND SPANKING

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 457)

How often would you say that you...		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
...praised your child in the last three months?	Pretest	1%	3%	20%	41%	35%
...will praise your child in the next three months?	Posttest	2%	5%	20%	42%	31%
...spanked your child in the last three months?	Pretest	45%	33%	18%	2%	1%
...will spank your child in the next three months?	Posttest	47%	31%	18%	3%	1%

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 401)

How often would you say that you...		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
...praised your child in the last three months?	Pretest	2%	2%	26%	49%	20%
...will praise your child in the next three months?	Posttest	0%	0%	10%	46%	42%
...spanked your child in the last three months?	Pretest	38%	30%	27%	3%	2%
...will spank your child in the next three months?	Posttest	59%	30%	9%	2%	0%

PARENT DESCRIBED CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THE SEMINARS

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 457)

- Do you feel different about being a parent? (97% said yes)
- Do you feel different about your children? (92% said yes)
- Do you think this seminar will change how you treat your children? (99% said yes)
- Do you think your children will change because of you taking the seminar? (100% said yes)
- Will you discuss the ideas learned in the seminar with others? (97% said yes)

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 401)

Three additional questions were asked of the parents following their seminar:

- Will the ideas presented in the seminar, help you raise your children? (94% said yes)
- Did the seminar present ideas that you already knew or were already doing with your children? (84% said yes)
- Will you discuss the ideas learned in the seminar with others? (96% said yes)

PARENTAL RATINGS OF THE INSTRUCTOR AND THE SEMINAR

San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Metropolitan Area) (n = 457)

Please use the following scale to rate the instructor	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Knowledge of parenting	-	1%	6%	23%	69%
Ability to explain the material	1%	1%	9%	25%	65%
Prepared and organized	-	2%	11%	25%	62%
Positive attitude toward participants	1%	1%	5%	17%	77%
Overall instructor rating	-	1%	5%	21%	73%

Please use the following scale to rate the seminar	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This seminar increased my knowledge about parenting	-	-	2%	22%	76%
This seminar was worthwhile to me	-	-	2%	20%	78%
This seminar has improved my confidence in being an effective parent	-	-	1%	18%	80%
I would recommend this seminar to others	-	-	1%	12%	87%
This seminar has improved my parenting skills	1%	-	2%	16%	82%

Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County (i.e., Non-Metropolitan Area) (n = 401)

Please use the following scale to rate the instructor	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Knowledge of parenting	1%	1%	4%	25%	69%
Ability to explain the material	1%	2%	6%	23%	67%
Prepared and organized	1%	2%	7%	22%	68%
Positive attitude toward participants	-	2%	2%	16%	81%

Overall instructor rating	1%	1%	2%	18%	78%
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Please use the following scale to rate the seminar	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This seminar increased my knowledge about parenting	-	-	1%	19%	79%
This seminar has improved my confidence in being an effective parent	-	-	2%	17%	81%
This seminar has improved my parenting skills	-	-	2%	16%	82%
This seminar was worthwhile to me	-	-	1%	11%	88%
I would recommend this seminar to others	-	-	2%	16%	81%

(C) Summary of Results from Classes and Seminars

As has just been seen, the pre and post testing of the parents in terms of changes in parental behaviors, attitudes and knowledge resulted in numerous statistically significant changes that reflect that the parents learned a great deal about being effective. For example, significantly more parents from all geographic areas and who participated in both the classes and/or seminars demonstrated:

- A broader appreciation of child development, in regard to understanding that a child's behavior has many causes, that unrealistic expectations can harm children, that expectations change as children get older, that it is age-appropriate for four-year-olds to tell lies, and that it is wise to allow children to make choices.
- A fuller understanding of effective and ineffective parenting approaches, such as that it is a good idea to avoid threats and long lectures, and to be as positive as possible.
- A stronger appreciation about how to apply specific parenting practices, such as using "time outs" infrequently and only after other methods have been unsuccessful, praising behaviors and not the child, and making opportunities for children to play contingent on completing chores, etc.

The results also showed that more parents who participated in the parenting classes indicated that they stopped hitting or spanking their children and that they are praising them more.

The vast majority of the parents (76% to 100%) in both the classes and the seminars also indicated that as a result of their participation they:

- Feel different about being parents,
- Feel different about their children,
- That the ideas from the classes and seminars had already or will eventually help them in raising their children,
- That they were also presented with ideas that they already knew and were using, reinforcing good practices,
- That what they have learned had or will eventually change how they treat their children,
- That their children had changed or will eventually change because of what they did or will eventually be doing differently,
- That they had already or are planning to discuss what they had learned with others, thereby spreading knowledge of effective parenting to more people,
- That they are more confident in being an effective parent,
- That they are more knowledgeable, and
- That their parenting skills have improved.

(D) Focus Group Evaluation of the Cultural Dimensions of the Program

Dr. Ortiz's focus group was conducted after a group of parents had completed the 12-session class in the Los Niños Bien Educados Program, which was taught by one of the senior instructors in the program. That instructor, a recent immigrant from Mexico, had completed the workshop to learn how to deliver the program and had run many Los Niños Bien Educados classes with a variety of Latino American parents in Los Angeles, California.

The results are herein summarized in terms of (1) the consistent cultural themes that emerged as the focus group discussions proceeded, and (2) the contributions to program effectiveness made by the instructor.

The summary that follows includes direct quotes from Dr. Ortiz's report of his study.

1. The participants in the focus group conveyed in a global and very appreciative manner that the class "was attuned to them culturally, and was, thus, extraordinarily impactful on their experience as attendees. They overwhelmingly reported that the discussions of Latino and American cultures and of cultural adjustments to this country were empowering to them, both personally and culturally."
2. "They also described improved relationships with their children as a result of shifts from hierarchically-based, one-way communication to methods of communication that include more discussion and listening to their children."
3. "Moreover, the participants shared many changes in their views on traditional gender roles. For example, they learned to allow their boys to play with dolls, to develop interests in cooking, and to clean after themselves without fear that it would make them homosexual."
4. "The participants also expressed considerable improvements in their cultural adjustments to America that made them more accepting of themselves and of those that are different from them. They described making more cultural adjustments in an informed, deliberate, and culturally enriching manner."
5. Also particularly emphasized was the use of the dichos or Spanish proverbs. "The participants unanimously declared that these culturally important proverbs put them 'on the same channel' and conveyed the meaning behind the teachings in the class."

"Additionally salient throughout the focus group meeting were descriptions of the characteristics of the instructor that impacted the experience in the class."

1. The participants "explained that her understanding of Latino culture and traditions was motivating for them."
2. "They also described her egalitarian stance as a crucial aspect of their positive connection to the course. Related to that style, the participants expressed the safety they felt as a result of the instructor's acceptance, without burdening them with blame or guilt for their mistakes."
3. "Other characteristics included her ability to understand their situations, provide confidence and security, her consistent motivation and respect, the individual attention she provided, and her ability to help them see the positive viewpoint in their situation."

These focus group results, combined with numerous statistically significant findings with the more than one thousand Latino American parents who participated in these community service projects, provides further evidence about the program's ability to improve and enhance the parenting attitudes and behaviors of a wide spectrum of parents. The focus group findings help

to clarify the important role that the program's cultural emphasis has on parental participation, comfort, and on their motivation to use the skills and concepts that are taught. These findings also bring attention to the importance of having well-trained and culturally knowledgeable instructors to lead the program.