FOCUS GROUPS WITH LATINO COMMUNITIES TO INFORM SAFETY CENTRE SERVICES

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Purpose In the US, unintentional injury is the third leading cause of death in the Latino population compared to fifth in the White population. The Children are safe (CARES) mobile safety centre is a 40-foot vehicle designed like an urban home to teach injury prevention messages and provide access to low cost safety products. Interested in reaching out to Latino communities with CARES, we needed to better understand their injury prevention needs, cultural issues and barriers to using CARES.

Methods We planned, conducted (in Spanish) and then transcribed and coded the groups using the open coding method. Focus group facilitators asked questions to explore injury-related practices in the country of origin, knowledge of specific injury countermeasures, and perceptions of the CARES centre.
Results Five focus groups were conducted with 36 adults. Most participants were female (86%), from Mexico (64%), ranging in age from 19–51 with an average of 2.3 children. Most (89%) went to school in their country of origin and 66% had less than a high school education. Focus groups revealed that none of the participants had used smoke alarms, 92% did not have a fire escape plan and 81% had never heard of carbon monoxide alarms. Distrust and lack of awareness of its services were cited as the two main reasons for not visiting CARES. Additional cultural issues and barriers to using CARES will be reported.

Conclusions Focus group results revealed important information to develop culturally appropriate and effective educational messages and services.