

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION



LAUNCH OF NATIONAL TE INVITO CAMPAIGN

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CONTACT:

Pierre Berastáin

Communications and Marketing Coordinator

National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities

(214) 957-0363

pberastain@casadeesperanza.org



Teinvito.org PSA

In the United States, violence against women and girls is an epidemic that impacts 1 in 4 women in their lifetimes, a statistic similar to that for Latinas ([20-25% of Latinas experience domestic violence](#)). [Twenty five percent](#) of US adolescent girls have reported that they have been pressured to perform sexual acts and [thirty percent of girls](#) (ages 15 to 19) who are murdered every year in this country die by the hands of an abusive partner.

In our continued efforts to raise awareness about and eradicate violence against women, the [National Latin@ Network](#), a project of Casa de Esperanza, has [launched the national Te Invito campaign](#), whose purpose is to engage men and boys in the fight against domestic violence. The domestic violence movement is recognizing that we all need to do more to elevate the voices of Latino men who reject violence and work to model and promote healthy relationships. Men and boys play a critical role in this work not only because the majority of the violence is perpetrated by men, but also because there are many more men and boys who do not use violence than those who do.

Regrettably, while we hear that most men have a desire to participate, many do not know how to become involved in the anti-domestic violence movement. As is our practice, we started looking for solutions to this issue by asking our community. We interviewed Latin@ men and women from the St. Paul/Minneapolis metropolitan area and asked why it is important for Latino men to be involved in ending domestic violence and how they would like to become more engaged in the work. Among other topics, participants discussed gender roles, socialization, education, violence and culture. Overwhelmingly, we heard, especially from the men..."Invite us." We also heard, from both men and women, that men listen to other men.

This is why we conceived Te Invito, which we see as a first step in helping Latinos find and create ways to participate in this work. Our hope is that the Te Invito toolkit will help communities connect with the vast majority of men and boys who respect women and girls and want to support families and communities live in peace. Aside from resources, fact sheets, and advocacy material, the Te Invito campaign features powerful and moving public service announcements (PSA) by fathers, sons, husbands, clergymen, and police officers speaking out against domestic violence and inviting their peers to join the movement. [In one PSA](#), a father looks into the camera and says, "Because my father taught me respect." I am an example for my son," says another father. A man extends an invitation, "to break the chain of abuse at home," and another echoes the sentiment, "I invite you to participate – say no to violence." "I invite you to be part of the solution," says one husband. These are messages that have been missing from the mainstream dialogue and that people have been yearning to hear.

"As with every other culture, there have always been Latino men who oppose violence against women," said Juan Carlos Areán, Director of the National Latin@ Network. "Te Invito is an opportunity for those men to lift their voices and make it clear that this [violence] is unacceptable behavior."

A number of organizations have already taken advantage of the Te Invito toolkit. [BroModels](#), an organization that seeks to change gender based inequality by employing gender and culturally specific anti-violence programs, has incorporated the toolkit's material to engage and encourage men and boys to become part of the solution. According to Robert de Leon, founder and president of BroModels, "The Te Invito toolkit has been a valuable addition to our community outreach tools, and I must say that this collaboration fits right in with our BroMotto, 'Together We Make A Difference'."

The toolkit, developed with the support of the Verizon Foundation and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, can be found at www.teinvito.org. This website houses resources for both individuals and organizations or groups who want to take action. People can [pledge non-violence](#) in their relationships, learn about how traditional masculinity can hurt both men and women, and how to have conversations with other men about why this issue is important. Organizations can also [download material](#) they can customize to engage men in their communities. In fact, all of our material--including the public service announcements – can be customized to fit the needs of local organizations.

To learn more about the campaign, please contact the National Latin@ Network at products@casadeesperanza.org or visit www.teinvito.org

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The National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities, a project of Casa de Esperanza, is the national institute on domestic violence focusing on Latin@ communities.

Working domestically and internationally, we address four primary issues that include increasing access for Latin@s experiencing domestic violence, providing training and tools for professionals and community members, conducting culturally relevant research and developing public policy based on the lived realities of Latin@s.

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL LATIN@ NETWORK FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

The National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities is a network of individuals and organizations committed to improving the health and well-being of Latin@ communities. The National Latin@ Network is led by Casa de Esperanza, a national Latina organization whose mission is to mobilize Latinas and Latin@ communities to end domestic violence. The National Latin@Network for Healthy Families and Communities builds on Casa de Esperanza's experience working in local communities to support families, end domestic violence, and increase meaningful access to services for Latina@s and incorporates a research center, public policy initiative, and training.

[español](#)

Casa de Esperanza | PO Box 75177 | St Paul | MN | 55175