



SECTION SIX

# **Recommendations for Building Culturally Proficient Anti-Violence Organizations**

In this section you will find recommendations on:

- ❖ Community Engagement
- ❖ Leadership Development
- ❖ Culturally Proficient Programming
- ❖ Coalition Building
- ❖ Funding and Policy Advocacy

## Building Culturally Proficient Anti-Violence Organizations: Recommendations for Domestic Violence Service Providers

As noted in the beginning of this document, by the year 2050, Latinas/os will account for one in four U.S. residents and people of color will comprise one half of the total U.S. population. Consequently, **the future prosperity and well-being of our nation rests on our ability to embrace diversity, build cross cultural understanding, and protect the human rights of all individuals. What is required is nothing less than social transformation and the anti-violence movement has an important role to play by recognizing that cultural and community strengths can be powerful aids in the struggle to end interpersonal violence.**

To accomplish this transformation, we must be willing to build 21<sup>st</sup> century, culturally proficient organizations and social policies that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse constituency.

Building cultural proficiency does not end with hiring a few bilingual workers and conducting occasional outreach in Latino communities. It must be an ongoing process aimed at integrating cultural proficiency principles and practices in all aspects of organizational life from program design and staffing to board governance and strategic planning.

The following recommendations delineate the many action steps that can be taken towards developing culturally proficient anti-violence strategies, programs and policies.

### Community Engagement and Outreach

Organizations that seek to provide domestic violence services for Latino communities must actively work towards garnering the trust and respect of community leaders and residents. Many communities of color have experienced decades of neglect, abuse and exploitation. Police brutality, economic disinvestment policies, gentrification leading to displacement of many families and illegal dumping of pollutants causing environmental degradation and large scale health problems, are just a few of the assaults encountered by communities of color in this country. Against this backdrop, many residents may become suspicious and reluctant to welcome an organization that has not taken the time to consult with community leaders and residents before arriving at the community's doorstep.

Thus community ownership is an important principle to embrace; programs are more likely to be successful when they are directly initiated by community members or based on demonstrated community needs and operate with a sense of accountability to the Latino community, providing ongoing mechanisms for meaningful community input.

Organizations planning to locate programs or conduct outreach in Latino neighborhoods need to foster good will and actively seek community acceptance. There are many steps that can be taken towards this aim including the following:

### Community Engagement and Ownership

- Conduct a needs assessment to gain a more comprehensive understanding of community demographics, including social and economic indicators and needs.
- Meet with community leaders and gatekeepers to better understand the community's history with service providers and current needs.
- Conduct focus groups and/or community forums to better understand the community's perspectives on domestic violence and culturally appropriate strategies.
- Meet with trusted, community based service providers to explore opportunities for collaboration as well as to promote coordination of services in order to maximize resources and avoid duplication of services.

- Develop avenues for community residents and leaders to provide ongoing input about community needs and trends as well as provide feedback on your organizational performance. This may include recruiting community residents and Latino experts from various fields for your board of directors and establishing advisory committees or working groups with structured, meaningful opportunities to provide input and recommendations.

### Community Outreach

- Before conducting outreach, assess your ability to serve the population you intend to target via your outreach. Ask yourselves, do we have sufficient knowledge, capacity and resources to help the particular group? If the answer is no, then focus on developing the necessary knowledge and resources first so as to avoid frustration and distrust that can ensue when individuals do reach out but are unable to receive the services they truly need.
- Ask community leaders and organizations to promote your services by disseminating your literature, brokering introductions with other gatekeepers and stakeholders and inviting you to speak or disseminate educational materials at meetings and events.
- Recruit and train community residents as outreach workers, community organizers and peer educators.
- Become part of the community fabric by participating in community and cultural events.
- Conduct outreach in places where residents naturally congregate such as bodegas (small grocery stores), supermarkets, schools, churches, health clinics, parks, beauty parlors/barbershops, laundromats, day care centers, community centers, music stores, social, sports and cultural clubs, etc.

### Organizational Learning

Organizations are dynamic entities that must adapt to changes in the environment if they are to survive and thrive. Domestic violence providers interested in developing culturally responsive services for emerging Latino populations must be willing to invest in ongoing cultural learning in order to develop a working knowledge of cultural norms and integrate these into program design and service delivery.

Organizations must be willing to:

- Invest the time and resources needed to develop an organization-wide cultural proficiency learning agenda and goals focusing on increasing the cultural knowledge and skills building of all staff members.
- Develop a Cultural Proficiency Task Force to recommend learning activities and oversee follow-up. Activities may include dissemination of readings and monthly discussions at staff and team meetings regarding promising practices, ongoing research on community trends, the use of guest speakers, educational videos and agency wide workshops and trainings on cultural issues and community concerns.
- Ensure that each individual staff development plan also includes opportunities for increasing cultural knowledge and skills with incentives such as attendance at outside conferences and training programs.

## Domestic Violence Prevention and Public Education

Organizations seeking to raise awareness about domestic violence in Latino communities must make efforts to develop culturally responsive prevention messages, educational materials and campaigns that are grounded in the values and life circumstances of the particular group. Messages that incorporate cultural symbols and themes and affirm cultural and community strengths and values can become important and memorable sources of inspiration for change. Towards this aim, the following recommendations are offered:

- Promote positive and empowering images of Latinas/os in all materials as opposed to stigmatizing images of Latinas with black eyes or Latino men in prison, for example (for more in depth guidance, see *Developing Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Materials for Latina Survivors of Domestic Violence (2004)*, listed in the resources section).
- Utilize peer educators to promote anti-violence messages including Latina survivors and former batterers who are now violence free and who resemble the target audience.
- Utilize multimedia approaches to prevention and public education campaigns. This is especially important given low literacy levels among some sectors of the Latino population. Consider utilizing popular education methods including house meetings or discussion circles, participant centered theater and role playing, short graphic novels (telenovelas), murals, as well as art and music, to convey messages.
- Understand and effectively utilize the principal media outlets (radio, newspapers and television) used by Latinas/os in your area. Local Spanish language radio and television stations with talk shows or community news bulletins are especially effective communication channels for Latinas/os.
- Recruit Spanish language writers, interpreters and designers to help develop linguistically and culturally responsive educational materials.
- Utilize images that reflect the diversity of Latinas/os (e.g. younger and older women and men, families, Latinos/as of different racial and national origin groups, same sex couples, persons with disabilities, etc.).
- Develop materials that help educate Latinas/os about the many manifestations of domestic violence (e.g. checklist of abusive behaviors) as many Latinas/os do not immediately associate emotional, psychological and economic abuse with domestic violence.
- Develop specific educational campaigns to inform Latina immigrants of their rights under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and other laws.
- Ensure bilingual information is easily accessible within Latino communities (e.g. distribute brochures, fliers, posters in churches, doctor's offices, WIC centers and schools). Whenever possible, ensure that the language reflects Spanish idioms and phrases that are used by the particular Spanish-speaking groups in the community.

## Program Design, Planning and Evaluation

Culturally responsive programming requires domestic violence providers to understand and actively incorporate cultural and community knowledge and strengths in all aspects of the helping relationship. It also requires service providers to understand and systematically address the interplay of multiple oppressions in Latinas/os' lives and the resulting barriers they face.

## Program Design

- Domestic violence organizations must be sure to incorporate direct advocacy assistance in their program design to help clients address survival issues arising from the intersection of oppressions described throughout this document. These include services such as securing employment, job training and/or economic assistance, housing assistance, literacy and ESL classes, immigration assistance, translation and court accompaniment and transportation assistance particularly in rural areas, etc.
- All educational materials, participant rules and forms should be available in Spanish and other languages commonly spoken in that specific geographic area and delivered orally to participants with limited literacy capability. Every effort should be made to deliver counseling and other services in the primary language of the client.
- Programs should take affirmative steps to hire and retain bilingual workers including setting aside funds to develop aggressive advertising and recruitment plans (including incentives) and creating strategies to ensure retention. Staff training and development opportunities should also be provided.
- Peer education and advocacy training programs can play a pivotal role in building the cultural knowledge and capacity of domestic violence service providers and should be encouraged, especially given widespread success of peer models in other service areas such as HIV/AIDS.
- Recognizing that not all victims will choose shelter services, develop community based programs that help individuals encountering intimate partner violence to remain safe while staying connected to their natural support systems.
- Recognizing the historical distrust of law enforcement and the criminal justice systems within communities of color, foster the development of voluntary Latino-specific batterers' intervention programs that emphasize cultural values and community strengths as a source for healing and change.
- Design programs that include tailored outreach and enhanced services for underserved Latino populations including immigrants, LGBTQ, the elderly, and the disabled.

## Assessment and Counseling

- All service providers must become aware of their own individual biases and internalized stereotypes, refrain from making assumptions and instead ask many clarifying questions.
- Employ a cultural assets approach to counseling and overall program development that builds upon cultural, community and individual strengths rather than relying on deficit or pathology focused models.
- Recognize that assimilation and/or acculturation models that seek to "Americanize" Latinas/os can also be destructive. Instead, create safe spaces where Latinas/os feel welcomed and accepted and can critically examine the cultural, social and institutional factors that perpetuate domestic violence and other forms of oppression in their lives. Creating a safe space for Latinas/os will allow for a mutual support system to evolve and for Latinas/os to craft life strategies to combat domestic violence and other forms of subjugation they encounter on a daily basis, in a manner that makes "cultural sense."
- Actively incorporate Latino cultural values in helping situations. Be mindful of *personalismo* and invest considerable time in building rapport and trust with the Latina domestic violence survivor or Latino batterer seeking help.
- Gain an understanding of the individual's socio-cultural experiences and worldview. Remember that Latinas/os are a heterogeneous group. Work to understand the cultural subtleties particular to the individual's country of origin,

and where appropriate, the circumstances leading to the decision to migrate (e.g. economic opportunity, civil war, reunification of the family, education, etc.).

- After trust has been established and confidentiality has been explained, assess whether the individual is experiencing any acculturative stress or has concerns about his/her immigration status.
- Gaining a basic knowledge of Latino cultural norms and values is just the first step. Take the time to understand the cultural lens through which each individual person interprets and responds to his/her life situation. Ask the individual to share how his/her cultural values and beliefs influence the way she or he approaches the domestic violence in his/her life.
- Acknowledge and respect the resiliency, resources and strengths of disenfranchised communities; explore extended family and community support systems that can aid the individual seeking help.
- Work in partnership with the client to develop an action plan that makes "cultural sense" from his or her perspective.
- Recognize and respect the various pathways to healing including the arts, spirituality and culturally based, traditional healing practices and incorporate these in an authentic manner wherever possible.
- Advise the Latina immigrant survivor to keep copies of important papers in a safe place (e.g. passports, visas, green cards and other immigration related documents) related to herself and her children that she may need in the future and that are oftentimes very difficult to replace.

### Information, Referral and Advocacy

- Provide *Know Your Rights* and other forms of advocacy training that enable Latinas/os to better navigate institutions and demand the services to which they are entitled, as well as, facilitating educational, employment and training opportunities that enable Latinas/os to widen their life options and increase self efficacy.
- Build collaborations and partnerships with key institutions in the Latino community that can serve as important allies in seeking solutions to immigration, housing and other problems your clients may encounter.
- Build seamless referral mechanisms and wherever possible broker initial meetings with other service providers and the client, making every effort to help clients access culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- Develop and disseminate bilingual resources directories, social service information sheets, know your rights handouts, and bilingual social service referral letters, etc.

### Use of Interpreters

- The use of interpreters should be a measure of last resort. In light of the growing Latino population, organizations should invest considerable resources in recruiting, training and retaining bilingual workers.
- Be mindful that the use of an interpreter can be experienced as an invasion of the client's safe space and may have a chilling effect on the therapeutic process. The use of an interpreter can also impede a counselor's ability to empathize and establish the necessary rapport that enables clients to share their intimate thoughts and feelings.<sup>116</sup>
- When interpreters must be used, the interpreter should have an understanding of the culture as well as language and be trained on issues of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

- The use of children or family members as interpreters should be avoided because of the disempowering impact it may have on the client and potentially traumatizing impact on the interpreter-relative.
- Trained interpreters should be used who are familiar with, and abide by the *National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care*.<sup>177</sup>

### Planning and Evaluation

- Develop a community advisory council and conduct client focus groups and stakeholder interviews on an ongoing basis to continually assess progress made towards achieving cultural proficiency, fine tune modalities and improve program planning.
- Retain capacity building consultants with expertise in multicultural organizational development and evaluators familiar with culturally proficient evaluation techniques and measures.

### Staff Development, Leadership Development and Succession Planning

Many Latinas/os complain of a glass ceiling even within the nonprofit sector, noting that Latinas/os are still concentrated in entry-level jobs with limited opportunities for training and advancement. Culturally proficient organizations recognize the value of developing diverse leadership and promote the authentic involvement and equitable representation of Latinas/os in the design and delivery of services and in decision making and policy setting roles within the organization. Lack of a diverse, skilled workforce and leadership structure hinders the efficacy of organizations, and to address this concern the following recommendations are offered:

- Develop peer education, community organizing and advocacy training programs that can help Latinas/os prepare for and access job opportunities, while at the same time helping to address the gap in bilingual/bicultural workers.
- Develop mentoring initiatives, on the job training programs and tuition assistance incentives that will enable Latinas/os in entry level positions to advance within the organization, thereby maximizing retention and reducing costs associated with bringing on new hires.
- Collaborate with other organizations to create leadership opportunities and leadership training initiatives that will enable Latinas/os to lead efforts to better address domestic violence and other social problems affecting their communities.
- Show flexibility in hiring criteria. Recognize and value the strengths of diverse applicants (e.g. leadership skills, community organizing skills, bilingual skills, etc.) and be mindful of not “over-professionalizing” job requirements.
- Prevent burnout by setting realistic expectations about workload. It is not uncommon for organizations to hire one or two bilingual workers and have them shoulder the responsibility of all Spanish-speaking clients. Agencies seldom factor in the extra time spent translating and educating clients about systems, which is required to appropriately serve immigrant and limited English proficiency clients. On the contrary, it is not uncommon for bilingual workers to have much higher caseloads than monolingual workers, along with many additional outreach and translation responsibilities, yet they are expected to, and held responsible for, providing the same quality of service.
- As baby boomers in leadership positions retire, it will be necessary to replace them with culturally diverse, 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders reflective of the communities served. Therefore, organizations should begin succession planning early including identifying and grooming potential Executive Director candidates from within the organization. When executive search firms or executive transition consultants are employed to assist the organization, screening and selection criteria should include familiarity with diversity issues and cultural competency.

## Board Governance

A recent study of the nonprofit sector indicated that Latinas/os are woefully under-represented on nonprofit boards. In fact, Latinas/os account for only 3% of nonprofit board members nationwide although they represent 14% of the U.S. population.<sup>118</sup> To address this issue the following recommendations are offered:

- A commitment to diverse leadership and cultural proficiency should be reflected in the membership of the organization's board of directors. Diverse representation not only sends a powerful message to the community and other stakeholders that cultural diversity is a priority but also is likely to increase the board's focus on ensuring culturally responsive policies and practices are adopted throughout the organization. This also applies to Latino-led organizations that serve clients from diverse Latino groups. Boards with little diversity should establish a Board committee that can research and recommend affirmative steps to increase board diversity.
- When recruiting community members to serve on the board of directors it will be important to provide training on board governance and mentoring to ensure new members are fully engaged and prepared to exercise their duties and leadership role.
- Forging a board of directors that operates in a manner consistent with the principles of cultural proficiency also implies a duty to the community served. Boards of directors should therefore strive to be transparent in their decision-making and consider themselves accountable to constituents and the community, providing progress reports and creating avenues to establish community dialogue and secure feedback.

## Organizational Policies and Practices

Building a culturally proficient organization requires members to pay ongoing attention to how organizational policies and practices can be improved so as to promote diversity, inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness. Culturally proficient organizations strive to:

- Adopt intentional, purposeful practices to eliminate institutional racism and oppression as well as other barriers to services.
- Work to build non-hierarchical, egalitarian organizational practices where clients or constituents have a sense of ownership and are fully incorporated in organizational planning, decision-making, service delivery design and programming.
- Allocate sufficient financial resources and staffing time to build cultural proficiency within the organization reflected in the organization's budget priorities, annual operating plan and staff development plans.
- Actively recruit staff, board members and volunteers from diverse backgrounds - becoming familiar with culturally diverse networks and strategies for recruiting individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Develop respectful, transparent and democratic processes for addressing cross-cultural tensions and differences of opinion.
- Demonstrate respect for the community served by creating multiple avenues for community consultation and participating in community building activities and partnerships.
- Design and implement programs in a manner that does not address the issue of domestic violence in isolation, but also helps constituents/clients address the interplay of oppressions in their lives.



## Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is an important vehicle used by organizations to analyze trends, examine community needs, develop a vision, articulate priorities and develop a strategy for action. Cultural proficiency principles should be incorporated throughout the strategic plan; towards this aim the following recommendations are offered:

- Ensure the ample representation of community residents and leaders throughout the process, including representation in the committee overseeing the strategic planning process.
- Seek to incorporate fundamental human rights principles such as respect, dignity and self determination as part of the organization's stated mission, vision and values.
- Conduct extensive research and data analysis to help identify new trends within the community and among clients/constituents including changing demographics, potential threats to the community/constituents such as growing anti-immigrant sentiment and anti-immigrant legislation, discriminatory practices by local institutions, gentrification, etc.
- Ensure that proactive strategies to increase diversity and cultural proficiency are incorporated in all segments of the strategic plan including:
  - recruitment and hiring practices;
  - staff development;
  - board membership;
  - multicultural organizational learning strategies;
  - program design, development and evaluation;
  - leadership development initiatives and structures;
  - community building strategies;
  - strategic planning priorities;
  - collaborations, partnerships, key alliances; and
  - organizational resource allocation decisions.

## Collaborations, Partnerships and Coalition Building

Collaborations can serve as an important vehicle by which to increase cultural knowledge and to coalesce resources and strategies to address unmet community needs, improve service coordination and delivery. Towards this aim the following recommendations are offered:

- Consider establishing joint ventures, partnerships or subcontracting agreements with Latino community based organizations that can provide technical expertise and resources for building culturally responsive programs and organizational practices. Recognizing that Latino organizations are often extremely under-funded, ensure that there is adequate financial support for Latino community based organizations that enter into joint projects with mainstream institutions.
- Acknowledging the interplay of oppressions impacting Latinas/os on a daily basis, consider joining cross issue coalitions or establishing partnerships that address key issues relevant to your constituents such as immigration, economic development and housing. Sharing of information and expertise across these different sectors will increase awareness of domestic violence, help facilitate referrals for needed services, as well as improve community planning processes aimed at addressing unmet needs.
- Develop memoranda of understanding or partnership agreements which specify the cultural proficiency principles and practices that should guide the collaboration.

## Recommendations for Domestic Violence Coalitions, Policy Makers and Funders

### Domestic Violence Coalitions: Leading by Example

Domestic violence coalitions at the state and national level play an important role in promoting domestic violence education and training, articulating standards and best practices, educating legislators and promoting progressive policies that serve to increase access and quality of services. They are an essential partner in the quest to advance culturally proficient practices, as described below:

- **Promoting Capacity Building.** Coalitions can undertake many action steps to promote cultural diversity and culturally responsive programming including: sponsoring cultural proficiency trainings and capacity building services, developing bilingual materials and education campaigns, publishing bilingual resource directories, and incubating cultural proficiency projects/initiatives.
- **Developing Women of Color Leadership and Mentoring Programs.** Coalitions should promote leadership and mentoring programs that will enable Latinas to gain entree into positions of influence and leadership including policy making groups, legislative drafting committees, boards of directors, and peer review committees of national and state governmental agencies, etc.
- **Advancing a Human Rights Framework.** Domestic violence coalitions should seek to broaden their policy agendas to encompass issues impacting disenfranchised groups including racism, anti-immigrant legislation, homophobia, discrimination based on disabilities, as well as addressing issues critical to well-being such as access to health care, educational and employment opportunities and housing.
- **Establishing Cultural Proficiency Standards and Practices:** State and national domestic violence coalitions should set an example by incorporating cultural proficiency principles in their mission statements, articulating specific cultural proficiency goals in their strategic plans and advocating for the adoption of cultural proficiency standards.
- **Documenting Need and Advocating for Funding.** Domestic violence coalitions should periodically survey member agencies to determine gaps in the provision of culturally responsive services and advocate for capacity building funding to help local domestic services providers develop or enhance culturally responsive programming.
- **Fostering Partnerships with Latino Community-Based Organizations.** Coalitions should support the efforts of Latino community-based organizations that seek to address domestic violence issues but may not have the necessary experience and could benefit from partnering with an existing domestic violence program. Partnering organizations may consider applying jointly for new VAWA funding that is available to support initiatives of culturally specific organizations in underserved communities within communities of color.
- **Improving the State Planning Process.** Coalitions should assist VAWA and FVPSA State Administrators to engage in comprehensive state planning processes that take into account the needs of communities of color and other underserved populations, providing meaningful access and actively engaging representatives of these diverse groups in all aspects of the state planning processes.
- **Leadership and Alliance Building.** Domestic violence coalitions should take a leadership role in promoting research and dialogue about the use of new and different models of delivering domestic violence services that may work more effectively with specific cultural groups. Additionally, domestic violence coalitions must seek to forge stronger alliances with national Latino policy groups and Latino community-based organizations in order to develop common agendas for action.

## Recommendations for Policy Makers and Funders

### Overview of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA 2005)

VAWA 2005 was reauthorized and signed into law in January 2006 (Public Law 109-162). One of the goals of VAWA 2005 was to ensure that victim services are culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate in order to overcome obstacles to accessing services commonly experienced by communities of color. VAWA 2005 added some important provisions to help protect the rights of immigrant women, as well as to support the development of more culturally and linguistically specific services for underserved populations. Additionally, it included a number of new programs specifically focused on preventing violence.

Important changes to the STOP Grant programs included emphasizing the need to improve services to communities of color. Of significance is the establishment of a **10% set-aside** of the victim services money in the STOP grant formula in each state, to be distributed to "**Culturally Specific Community-Based Organizations**" providing services to address violence against women.

VAWA 2005 also requires State plans to specifically address the needs of **underserved communities** and mandates that funds to address underserved populations be **distributed equitably** among those populations. These changes in the VAWA legislation serve to recognize the importance of affording communities of color the opportunities and resources to develop culturally appropriate services and work on prevention initiatives in their own language and for their own communities.

Additionally, the definition of a **Community-based Organization** in the VAWA legislation presents a significant change by broadening the kinds of entities that are eligible to apply for VAWA funds. This is especially significant given that many victim services programs and criminal justice agencies have not been able to adequately respond to the needs of individuals encountering domestic violence and sexual assault from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, there are many community-based, culturally specific organizations interested in reducing domestic violence, dating violence and sexual assault that previously have been unable to access VAWA funding because they could not show that their primary work was violence against women. This includes immigrants' rights groups and culturally specific agencies that offer services to diverse communities.

**This new definition of Community-based Organization in VAWA 2005 allows such organizations to apply if they have a culturally specific program addressing violence against women** (even if that is not their primary work) or if they are creating a new program to address violence against women and they are able to effectively collaborate with others organizations who are more experienced in addressing violence against women.

In addition to the funding available, at the state level through the STOP grants, VAWA 2005 also includes newly authorized programs which will be administered by OVW to address the unmet needs of communities of color including:

- a) Grants to Enhance Culturally and Linguistically Specific Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking;
- b) Grants to Culturally Specific Programs Addressing Sexual Assault; and
- c) Grants for Outreach to Underserved Populations.

It is important to note that culturally specific organizations are not limited to accessing resources through these specific programs; they can also apply for any of the funding streams in VAWA.

However, enhanced legislation such as VAWA 2005 is only the first step. Funders and policy makers can and should play a pivotal role in ensuring the provision of additional funding incentives and capacity building assistance to help anti-violence groups to re-tool their organizations, programs and core strategies in order to become more culturally responsive.

### Policy makers should work cooperatively to:

- Promote the development of standards for the provision of culturally and linguistically proficient services for victims of intimate partner violence, similar to the standards adopted by the health care field, promulgated by the Office of Minority Health.<sup>119</sup>
- Enhance policies to prevent discrimination based on language or immigration status and enable broader access to services beyond traditional models.
- Promote legislation to create educational and training incentives that can be utilized to increase the number of bilingual workers in the anti-violence field.
- Promote public policy reforms at the local, state, and national levels that benefit immigrant women facing violence, particularly undocumented immigrants and their children.
- Ensure access to resources for culturally and linguistically specific community-based organizations serving communities of color.

### Funders should work cooperatively to:

- Fund efforts to improve cultural and linguistic proficiency in the areas of domestic violence prevention and intervention by supporting initiatives that provide training and technical assistance to local groups, enhance community education, conduct research, disseminate findings on promising practices, and develop culturally proficient evaluation methodologies.
- Fund independent research and evaluation projects to study the efficacy of culturally specific and nontraditional models for delivering prevention, education and services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, batterers, affected children and youth as well as specific underserved communities within communities of color, such as immigrants, LGBTQ, the elderly and the disabled.
- Invest in transforming the field by funding a wide array of cultural proficiency training and technical assistance services, supporting conferences, publications and tool kits that can be adapted by local groups with limited resources.
- Fund partnerships and coalition building efforts between domestic violence and Latino community based organizations in order to bridge understanding and expand culturally proficient prevention, education and services.
- Fund efforts of Latino community based organizations to establish domestic violence programs; this is particularly important given that **currently only 2% of all funding distributed by foundations in the U.S. is directed to Latino organizations.**<sup>120</sup>

## Conclusion

As illustrated by the above recommendations, there are many proactive steps service providers, policy makers and funders can take to build culturally proficient domestic violence programs and organizations. To end violence, we must remind ourselves that *one size does not fit all*. What is required is a diversity of approaches that fully engage underserved communities and maximize cultural and community strengths as a fundamental strategy for change.