Children of Puerto Rico & COVID-19: At the crossroads of poverty and disaster

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Puerto Rico in the past two years…

Hurricane Maria August 20, 2017
Puerto Rico in the past two years...

July 24, 2019 the governor announced his resignation at that time.

Breaking the social contract
Puerto Rico in the past two years…

Earthquakes in January, 2020
Current context on the island

Puerto Rico and COVID-19: A Precarious Healthcare System ...
Puerto Rico and COVID-19: A Precarious Healthcare System Faces ... See also BBC News Mundo, "Coronavirus: el mapa que muestra el ... 1 month ago

Miami Herald
Puerto Rico cancels order for coronavirus tests, as questions swirl around response
The news, first reported by El Nuevo Dia, threatens to undermine the ... The status of Puerto Rico's COVID-19 testing has been shrouded in ... 4 weeks ago

Despite early gains, Puerto Rico stumbles in data darkness amid lack of coronavirus tests
Coronavirus. News. Sections. News · South Florida · Miami-Dade ... But in the month since Puerto Rico began battling the virus, it has fallen behind ... according to data pulled from the COVID-19 Tracking Project and the U.S. 2 weeks ago

Telemundo Puerto Rico
Sismo provoca daños estructurales en Ponce
SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico - El fuerte sismo de magnitud 5.5 que se registró ... a ... Templo parroquial por el terremoto de hoy 2 de mayo de 2020. 5 hours ago

El Vocero de Puerto Rico
Fuerte temblor al sur de la Isla
La Red Sísmica de Puerto Rico reportó un temblor de magnitud 5.4 en la región sur. ... Emitido: 2020-05-02 09:35:35 (GMT-4)https://t.co/Ox5LrNPtIS ... los daños ocasionados en una casa parroquial por el sismo de hoy. 9 hours ago

Radio Fórmula
Sismo de 5.2 en Puerto Rico provoca caídas de estructuras (FOTOS)
Un temblor con magnitud 5.2 se ocurrió hoy en Puerto Rico y se ... aún permanecen en refugios por terremotos ocurridos en este año 2020 ... 4 hours ago

El Vocero de Puerto Rico
Recorrido por Ponce luego de temblor de 5.4 | ACTUALIDAD
Historical Trauma

- Collective trauma inflicted on a group of people who share an identity or affiliation (ethnicity, nationality, religión, etc.)
- Characterized by the transgenerational legacy of experienced traumatic events
- Expressed through various psychological and social responses (Brave Heart, 2003, 1998).

Documented clinical implications of historical trauma

- Feelings of loss
- Unresolved grief
- Complicated grief
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Depression

Frequently, all of the above are comorbid with problematic substance use

Every generation of children offers mankind the possibility of rebuilding his ruin of a world.

Eglantyne Jebb
Estimates of abuse

According to the World Health Organizations (WHO), approximately **25%** off all adults in the world suffered some type of physical abuse during childhood, but it is highly probable that this figure is an underestimate.
Estimates of abuse

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 20% of girls and 8% of boys experience sexual abuse.

*At the level of the United States and its territories, in the fiscal year of 2017, 3.5 million minors were investigated and approximately 674,000 were confirmed victims.

Estimates of abuse

75% victims of neglect

18% victims of physical abuse

9% victims of sexual abuse

Estimates in Puerto Rico

In Puerto Rico in 2017, a total of 5,729 minors were victims of abuse; this means that approximately 9 out of every 1,000 minors are mistreated each year in our jurisdiction.
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and wellbeing

Abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

Neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Physical neglect

Household Challenges
- Domestic violence
- Substance abuse
- Mental illness
- Parental separation / divorce
- Incarcerated parent

People with 6+ ACEs can die
20 yrs earlier than those who have none

1/8 of the population have more than 4 ACEs

67% of the population have at least 1 ACE

4 or more ACEs
- 3x the levels of lung disease and adult smoking
- 14x the number of suicide attempts
- 4.5x more likely to develop depression
- 11x the level of intravenous drug abuse
- 4x as likely to have begun intercourse by age 15
- 2x the level of liver disease

Adverse childhood experiences are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our nation today
Dr. Robert Block, the former President of the American Academy of Pediatrics

How many have we collectively lived in the past years?
Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Among the most reported adverse experiences in research with children under 5 years of age are socioeconomic deprivation, separation or divorce from parents, emotional or psychological abuse (Baron-lee, Bonner, Knapp, et al., 2015).
Comorbidity of Adverse Childhood Experiences

According to Clarkson (2014),

– Physical abuse is related to sexual abuse, neglect, and domestic violence;
– while the use of abuse of substances in the home tends to occur along with other indicators related to the child’s family;
– such as having a caregiver with mental health problems, witnessing domestic violence and being in a family with a criminal history.
Context of Puerto Rico

La pobreza infantil, que es la dura realidad de vida del 78% de los niños y niñas en Puerto Rico, le cuesta al Estado al menos 84,418 millones anuales, dice un abarrotado estudio que fue divulgado por primera vez hoy y que propone un conjunto de estrategias y políticas públicas mediante las cuales, según los autores del análisis, se podría sacar a 141,000 menores de la indigencia en apenas una década.

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Piden créditos tributarios para atajar la pobreza infantil en Puerto Rico

El Instituto del Desarrollo de la Juventud de Puerto Rico divulgó este martes un estudio sobre la pobreza infantil, como parte de sus esfuerzos para que el Congreso apruebe una serie de políticas públicas para mitigarla.

El Nuevo Dia.com

Cuando el COVID-19 te coge sin carro, sin computadora y ...

Más de la mitad de los niños pobres viven en hogares que no tienen ... La pandemia es llover sobre mojado en el terreno de las familias pobres; cada vez ... Además, sabemos por estudios del IDJ que la pobreza infantil nos ...

1 week ago
Proposals and Response
Different levels of response

- State and federal government structures
- Social empowerment, community response, non-governmental organizations
- Family values and transgenerational experiences
- Intrinsic strengths and areas of opportunity
Public Policy Proposals

What you need to know about the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

Kids involved with the child welfare system should grow up in safe, stable and secure families.

Take part in the historic reform of the child welfare system. Learn more at FamilyFirstAct.org
Advocacy…the work of everyone...

Los testimonios de decenas de familias con estudiantes en el sistema de educación pública que necesitan alimentarse durante el toque de queda establecido para controlar la propagación del COVID-19, recogidos por organizaciones que trabajan con niños y comunidades, no han sido suficientes para convencer al Departamento de Educación (DE) de Puerto Rico de abrir los comedores escolares para preparar comidas balanceadas para llevar.

Entidades como la Red por los Derechos de la Niñez y Juventud de Puerto Rico y el Instituto Nueva Escuela (INE) han documentado el sentir de esta población. La encuesta del INE, en la que participaron 2,700 familias de niños en el sistema Montessori público, reflejó que el 68% están preocupadas por proveer alimentos a sus hijos y 50% dijeron que usarían el comedor de la escuela si estuviera disponible. Además, el 4% de las asistentes de escuelas Montessori afirmaron tener conocimiento de que algún estudiante o su familia pudiera tener escasez de alimentos a causa de esta emergencia.

La líder comunitaria del sector Playita en San Juan, Rosalyn Hernández, es una de las personas que confirmó esta preocupación en un video en el que la madre de un adolescente de 16 y un bebé de seis meses describió que, “lo más difícil de esta situación es que la comida se acaba y no puedes salir, no puedes trabajar. Los hijos están ahora 24/7 en la casa, no tienen servicio de comedores...”.

La maestra de la escuela intermedia Gloria M. Barrero de Guayanilla, Amarilla Nazario, contó que “hubo un padre en uno de los colegios de la escuela que avisó que se le iba a acabar el Internet en el teléfono y que eso no iba a ser prioridad [para las tareas escolares]. Primero es comprar comida”.

Por los pasados cinco años, el nivel de pobreza entre menores de edad se ha mantenido constante, pero con una tendencia al alza del 56% al 58%, analizó el Instituto de la Juventud (ID) en su Índice de Bienestar de la Niñez y la Juventud de 2010. El documento también se enoentra expuesto que 47% de las familias tienen menos de un salario mínimo.
Proposed Integrated Services...

- Offer continuity and identify needs to support existing laws
TRAUMA-INFORMED MODELS
From the family, the home, or the caregivers…

Communication, explore with children and adolescents their thoughts, worries, and concerns

- Explain to them terms they may be hearing, such as COVID-19, pandemic and others.
- You can use visual aids to explain to children. For example:
  - Story
  - Videos
  - Games
Plan how you want to talk about COVID-19 with your family
1) What is the current disease outbreak about?
2) How is it contracted
3) What are the possible dangers
4) Protective measures being taken in the community / nation / global community
5) Preventive measures that the whole family can take
(Source: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.NCTSN.org)
From the family, the home, or the caregivers

Prevent and promote health, make children part of the family plan.

- Regularly wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water (song length A-B-C) or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer of at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing with a tissue or in the arm bend.
- Among others…
It is important to maintain a consistent schedule, regarding bedtime, meals, and others.

Identify some time to do things at home that have made you and your family feel better in other stressful situations, such as reading, watching movies, listening to music, playing games, exercising, and others.

According to the values of each family, incorporate religious activities and practices (such as praying or participating in religious services on the internet).

To the extent that it possible, maintain communication regarding the distance learning activities that the school has maintained.

Participate in family routines, which include housework, peer support, and plan strategies to improve health promoting behaviors.

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From the family, the home, or the caregivers…

**Programming**

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- According to the values of each family, incorporate religious activities and practices (such as praying or participating in religious services on the internet).
- To the extent that it possible, maintain communication regarding the distance learning activities that the school has maintained.
- Participate in family routines, which include housework, peer support, and plan strategies to improve health promoting behaviors.
Recognize and accept emotions

- Recognize how we feel and motivate our children and adolescents to recognize and express their feelings.
- Some examples can be: sadness, loss, loneliness, boredom, fear of contracting illnesses, anxiety, stress and others, they are normal reactions to a stressful situation.

From the family, the home, or the caregivers…
From the family, the home, or the caregivers…

How to promote coping

● Help child and adolescents in developing healthy strategies to express and manage their emotions.
● Modify your daily activities to address the current reality of the situation and focus on what you can achieve.
● Change expectations and priorities to focus more on what gives you meaning, purpose, or satisfaction.
● Take short breaks from the stress of the situation.

A resource:
https://www.sesamestreet.org/caring
From the family, the home, or the caregivers...

Self-care at home

- Play with the children and with the family
- Speak with someone
- Physical activity
- Do some activities that you like
- Disconnect for some period from social networks and the media

What works best for you and your family
Thanks for your attention!

Comments and Questions?

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