



# Community Violence Exposures in Latinx Adolescence, Access to Care, and Well-Being Outcomes

Nestor I. Hernandez, Lisa Kort-Butler, Ph.D.

Department of Sociology, University of Nebraska–Lincoln



## Background

- Hispanic and Black youth are exposed to violence in their communities at much higher rates than White counterparts (Zimmerman & Messner, 2013)
- Exposure to violence can include direct victimization, indirect victimization, and survival expectations (Kort-Butler, 2010; Warner & Swisher, 2014)
- Violence exposure is linked to range of negative mental and behavioral health outcomes in adolescents (Bennet & Joe, 2015),
  - Limited research focused on the experiences of Latinx youth
- One key factor not assessed is the lack of access to health care, which may assist youth in coping with trauma and support better health outcomes (Voisin, 2007)

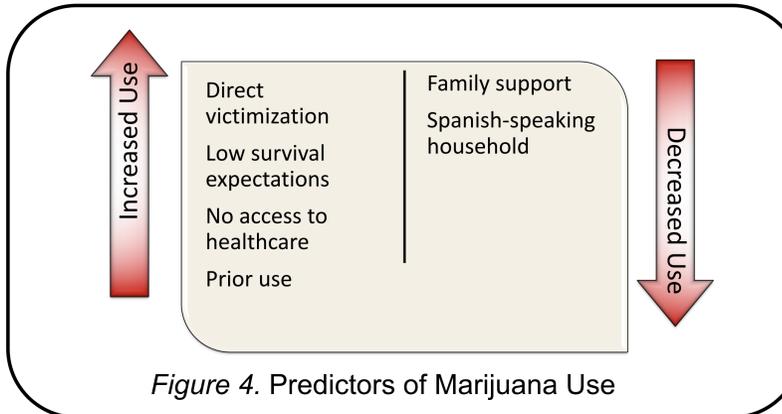
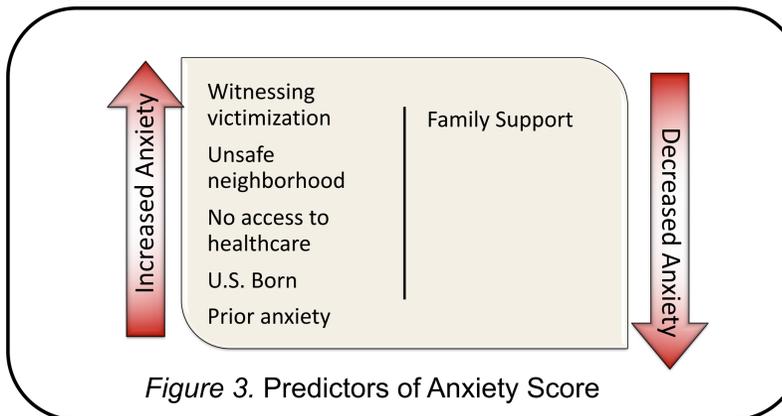
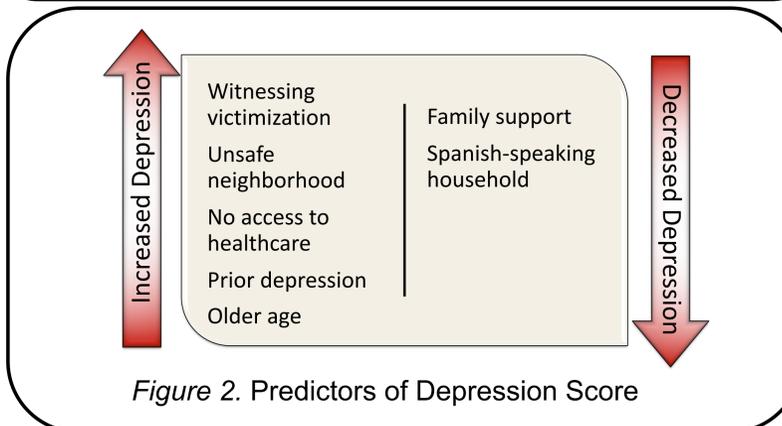
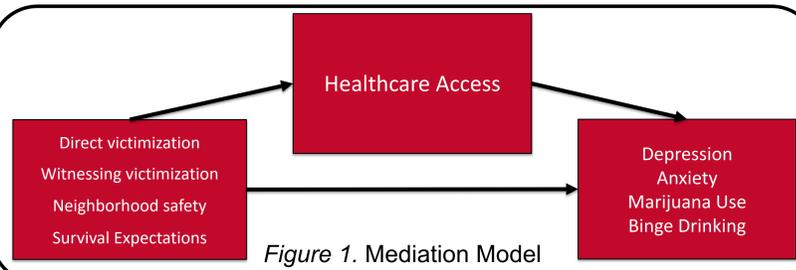
## Hypotheses

- H1:** Witnessing and experiencing community violence, poor life expectations, and perceptions of an unsafe neighborhood will contribute to negative well-being outcomes for Latinx youth
- H2:** Health care utilization will mediate the relationship between community violence and negative well-being outcomes for Latinx youth

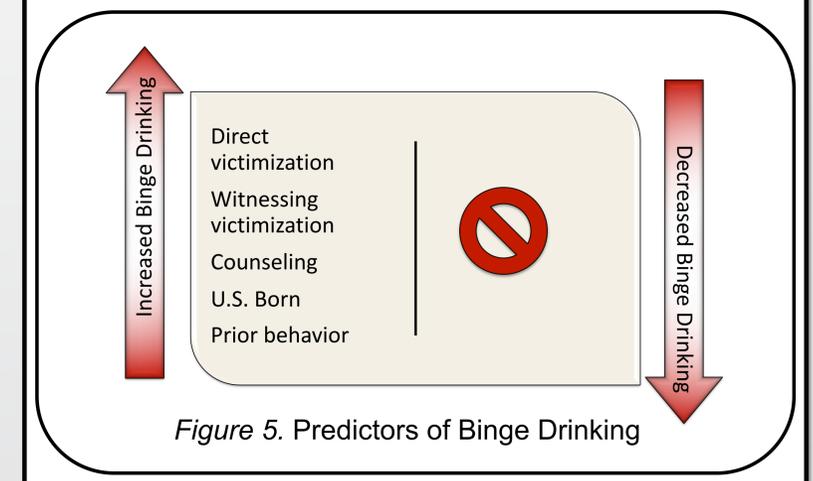
## Sample and Methods

- National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health)
  - Nationally representative sample of adolescents in grades 7-12, in the 1994-1995 school year (Bearman, Jones, & Udry, 1997)
  - Violence exposure and healthcare measures were drawn from Wave 1
  - Depression, anxiety, and substance use were drawn from Wave 2
  - Fifty-one percent male, mean age 16.09
  - Fifty-five percent U.S. born, 26% speak Spanish at home
- Methods
  - OLS Regression & Logistical Regression Using Stata 15
  - SVY: command to account for complex survey design
  - Listwise Deletion

## Results



## Results



## Discussion and Limitations

- Violence has a negative effect on mental and behavioral well being among Latinx youth
  - In support of H1: Victimization, particularly witnessing violence, strongly associated with negative mental and behavioral outcomes
- The mediating effects of health care services predicted in H2 were not observed in these analyses
  - The lack of care, or “needed care but could not get it” was independently associated with negative outcomes
- Future research should consider a prospective longitudinal design with Latinx sample, sensitive to ethnicity and family immigration history

## Implications and Future Work

- Latinx youths’ exposure to violence is associated with mental and behavioral health
- By providing measures on access to care, our findings provide valuable insights into this area
- Policies should consider ways to improve Latinx access to health care and help families maintain those bonds that support mental and behavioral health

## Acknowledgements

- Dr. Lisa Kort-Butler
- Dr. Julia McQuillan
- Jennifer Andersen, M.A.