

[NEWS](#) | POSTED APRIL 18, 2013

Effects of Arizona's Immigration Law on Latino Youth and Families: Researchers Assess the Health and Well-Being of Latino Youth and Families Following the Law's 2010 Passage

PRESS RELEASE / 2013 SRCD Biennial Meeting: Embargoed for Release on April 18, 2013

Published
Thursday, April 18, 2013 12:01am

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PRESS RELEASE

In 2010, Arizona passed an immigration law (S.B. 1070, the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act) that gave state police unprecedented power to detain individuals unable to prove their U.S. citizenship when asked. At a symposium during the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), researchers will examine the effect of the law on the health and well-being of Latino youth and families.

Nearly 30 percent of Arizonans self-identify as Hispanic or of Latino origin, according to Census data. In the United States, Latinos constitute one of the fastest-growing ethnic groups nationwide, with nearly 15 percent of the population identifying as Hispanic or of Latino origin. Since the enactment of S.B. 1070 in Arizona, several other state legislatures have passed similar policies, including Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina, and Utah. In addition, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a key part of S.B. 1070 in a recent ruling that allows police to make a reasonable attempt to determine the immigration status of a person in custody; this provision went into effect last fall.

Among the questions that will be addressed during the symposium:

- How does awareness of the law affect young adolescent Latinos' self-esteem and their likelihood of engaging in risky behavior?
- How has passage of the law affected perceptions of community safety, stress, and hopefulness among families living along the U.S.-Mexico border?
- How has the law's passage affected health and public service use in a high-risk group of Mexican-origin teen moms?

The symposium will also include a discussion with a leading expert on Latino immigrant youth. She will speak to the scientific importance of these studies and how they might inform policies going forward.

The symposium will take place in the Washington Convention Center, Room 617, on Saturday, April 20, from 12:30 to 2 p.m.

Researchers: Russell B. Toomey, Carlos Santos, Cecilia Menjivar, Adriana Umaña-Taylor, Elizabeth Harvey-Mendoza, Laudan B. Jahromi, Kimberly Updegraff, Arizona State University; Carola Suarez-Orozco, University of California, Los Angeles; Andrea Romero, University of Arizona; David R. Williams, Harvard University