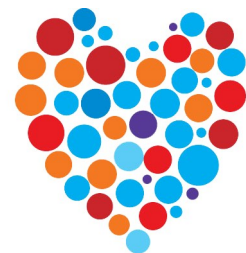


comunilife

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comunilife

Life is Precious™
A Decade of Latina
Suicide Prevention Services

May 23, 2018

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Life is Precious™
Program Sites and Contact information
LIP@comunilife.org

Life is Precious™ Bronx

4419 Third Avenue

Bronx, New York 10457

(646) 367-6678

Hours: Monday—Friday 3:30—7:30 PM
Saturday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Life is Precious™ Brooklyn

113 Throop Avenue

Brooklyn, New York 11206

(646) 367-6382

Hours: Monday—Friday 3:30 to 7:30 pm
Saturday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Life is Precious™ Queens

32-45 Hunters Point Avenue, 3rd Floor

Long Island City, New York 11101

(646) 367-6677

Hours: Tuesday—Thursday 3:30 to 7:30 pm
Saturday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Parent Drop-In Hours

11:30 am to 3:30 pm on days of program operation



Luis H. Zayas, PhD, Dean

Steve Hicks School of Social Work and the Robert Lee Sutherland Chair in Mental Health and Social Policy - The University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. Zayas holds an MSW and a Ph.D. in developmental psychology, both from Columbia University. Zayas has held faculty appointments at Columbia University, Fordham University, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and Washington University. He has lectured to university audiences in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, and the United States. In 2012, Zayas was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

Zayas' primary areas of clinical practice and research has been on human development, child and adolescent mental health, and family functioning with particular emphasis on Hispanic families in the U.S. He has conducted the only study of its kind funded by the National Institute of Mental Health examining the suicide attempts of young Hispanic girls, a youth group with the highest rates of all US youth. Findings from this study have been published in numerous scientific journals and in his book, *Latinas Attempting Suicide: When Cultures, Families, and Daughters Collide*, (Oxford University Press, 2011). Following up on this study, Zayas is conducting presently a study funded by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities comparing the suicide attempts of young Latinas, African American, and White women.

His most recent work has been in examining the effects of deportation on the mental health of U.S.-born citizen-children of undocumented Mexican immigrants, a study funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. His book on this topic is titled *Forgotten Citizens: Deportation, Children, and the Making of American Exiles and Orphans* (Oxford University Press, 2016). As a practitioner, Zayas is involved also in evaluating citizen-children and testifying in immigration courts on behalf of citizen-children and their families as well as children and mothers held in immigration detention in South Texas. As an advocate, Zayas has joined several federal class-action lawsuits on behalf of refugee and immigrant children held in immigration detention and of DACA youth.

Comunilife, Inc.

Latina Adolescent Suicide Prevention Symposium Agenda

Jorge Egoavil
Senior Manager BT Client Partner—NA Oncology
Pfizer

Raquel Ayala
Comunilife, Board Chair

Dr. Luis Zayas
Steve Hicks School of Social Work, University of Texas Austin
Keynote Speaker

Rosa M. Gil, DSW
Comunilife, Inc.
President and CEO

Comunilife Video

Dr. Roberto Lewis-Fernandez
Columbia University/New York State Psychiatric Institute

Nivia Dones
Parent, Life is Precious™ Alumna

The Honorable Luis R. Sepulveda
New York State Senate

Dr. Ann Marie Sullivan, Commissioner
New York State Office of Mental Health

Dr. Gary Belkin, Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

David A. Hansell, Commissioner
NYC Administration for Children's Services

Special Thank You to Pfizer for Hosting the Symposium

LIFE IS PRECIOUS™ HISTORY

The program model for Life is Precious™ (LIP) began in 2006 when the CDC reported that, at 15%, suicide attempts by Latina teens in New York City were significantly higher than any other group of teens. On learning of the statistics, Comunilife's Board felt compelled to do something about it. Conversations with emergency room physicians, mental health providers, elected officials, and at-risk Latina teens and their families resulted in the creation of the first LIP Center in the Bronx in 2008 expanding to Brooklyn in 2009 and Queens in 2015. At the time it was and today remains the only program of its kind in the country. In the last decade, LIP's activities have evolved to include academic support, wellness activities, creative arts therapies and supportive concrete services for families. What has not changed is the goal of ensuring that these at-risk teens do not complete suicide – that they have the foundation to overcome the issues that led to their self-injurious behavior, succeed in school, and develop positive family relationships. Unfortunately, the need for the program has also not changed.

In 2015 suicide was the second leading cause of death for Latina teens in New York State and the third leading cause of death for children ages 9 to 14. A 2016 report issued by the CDC stated that 18.5% of Latina teens in NYC seriously considered suicide and 13.2% attempted suicide in 2015. Updated statistics will be released in June 2018.

We know that LIP works. Since 2013, Comunilife has partnered with Columbia University/New York State Psychiatric Institute to evaluate the program with the goal of establishing it as an community defined, evidenced based program. With funding from the New York Community Trust we have completed the fidelity testing and developed a program manual and are about to embark on the next phase of the evaluation process.

To date, 289 Latina teens have been evaluated. The research shows that for every month a teen participates in Life is Precious™ her level of suicide ideation decreases. Most importantly, not one of the 289 at-risk Latina teens who has participated in LIP has completed suicide.

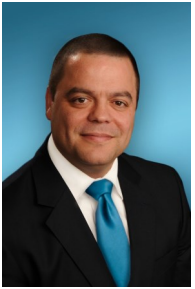


Ann Marie T. Sullivan, M.D., Commissioner New York State Office of Mental Health

Since June 2014, Dr. Ann Marie Sullivan has served as the Commissioner for the NYS Office of Mental Health, a large, multi-faceted mental health system that serves more than 700,000 individuals annually. It operates psychiatric centers across the State, and oversees more than 4,500 community programs. Dr. Sullivan has guided the transformation of the state hospital system in its emphasis on recovery and the expansion of community based treatment, reinvesting over \$60 million in community services. Working closely with all mental health providers and health plans, she is responsible for the movement of the health benefit for the seriously mentally ill into managed care (October 2015). This new Health & Recovery Plan benefit is embed in the Medicaid benefit critical recovery services including crisis respite, peer, educational and employment supports. She has been instrumental in expanding services for the mentally ill in prisons and the much needed community based continuum of care for the seriously mentally ill leaving prison and returning to their community.

As Senior Vice President (SVP) for the Queens Health Network of the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation, Dr. Sullivan was responsible for Elmhurst and Queens Hospital Centers. Along with ensuring the seamless integration/coordination of services across the Network, Dr. Sullivan aligned and helped implement key corporate programs including Care Management Initiative on the inpatient units and in the emergency services; the launching of best practices to improve patient safety; and the integration of behavioral health and medical services.

Dr. Sullivan grew up in Queens, NYC and graduated from NYU and its School of Medicine and completed her Psychiatric Residency at NYU/Bellevue Hospital in 1978. She has enjoyed an extensive career in public psychiatry and has lectured and published on best practices in community care. Dr. Sullivan, who is an active advocate for her patients and her profession, is a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and has served as the Speaker of the American Psychiatric Association's Assembly and on its Board of Trustees. She is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, a member of the American College of Psychiatrists and the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry.



The Honorable Luis R. Sepúlveda **New York State Senate**

In April 2018, NYS State Senator Luis R. Sepúlveda was elected to represent the 32nd District in the Bronx (Parts of Melrose, Claremont, East Tremont, Soundview, Hunts Point and Parkchester). Previously he represented the 87th Assembly District, in the Bronx, for six years. This diverse senate district includes sizable populations of Latinos, African-Americans, and Southeast Asians, particularly from Bangladesh.

He sought economic justice, including reinstating the NYS Lottery scholarship program; seeking alternatives to financially crippling college student debt; raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour; and providing for paid family leave to help the struggling working class.

Senator Sepúlveda supports diversity in the state workforce; fighting gun violence by providing more mental health services and training for teachers; allowing for the recall of public officials; driver's licenses for immigrants; and offering Halal food options during school lunch.

The Senator continuously advocates for more funding for community health and mental health services. His efforts to raise the visibility among legislators and key opinion leaders of the alarming suicide rate in the Latina teen population proved fruitful most recently when Gov. Cuomo announced formation of the New York State Suicide Prevention Task Force.

The Senator worked closely with Mayor de Blasio in 2014 to secure funding for universal pre-kindergarten in New York City, and he sponsored legislation to allow undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses.

Senator Sepúlveda is a member of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus, serving as its 2nd Vice Chair and as a co-chair of its Subcommittee on Criminal Justice Reform. Additionally, he is an active member of the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force. He earned his bachelor's from Hofstra University and his law degree from Hofstra's Maurice A. Deane School of Law.

Life is Precious™ **Milestones**

- 2006 Comunilife receives seed funding from the New York State Office of Mental Health to conduct focus groups on the issue of Latina adolescent suicide.
- 2008 Life is Precious™ Bronx opens with funding from the New York Community Trust
- 2009 Life is Precious™ Brooklyn opens with support from Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez (NY #7)
- 2012 Life is Precious™ enters into a collaboration with El Museo del Barrio bringing increased arts to the program
- 2013 With funding from the New York Community Trust, Comunilife partners with Columbia University/New York State Psychiatric Institute to conduct an empirical evaluation of Life is Precious™ with the goal of establishing the program as an evidenced based model of care.
- 2015 Life is Precious™ Queens opens in Long Island City
- 2017 Comunilife establishes Proyector Vida, with funding through NYS Senators Jeffrey Klein and Marisol Alcantara, to provide outreach and education activities to schools in Washington Heights, Manhattan.
- 2018 Life is Precious™ celebrates its tenth anniversary

Thank you to all the elected and appointed officials, foundations, corporations and individuals who have supported Comunilife and the Life is Precious™ program for the last 10 years.
We would not have been able to provide this life saving work without your support.



Gary Belkin, MD, PhD, MPH
Executive Deputy Commissioner of
Mental Hygiene
NYC Department of Health & Mental
Hygiene

Dr. Belkin is the Executive Deputy Commissioner of Mental Hygiene in the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The Division of Mental Hygiene has driven the framework and implementation for an NYC wide approach to innovate for mental health called ThriveNYC, which is changing the conversation about mental health as a public health priority. He manages policy, planning, services development, and implementation for prevention, promotion and treatment efforts across NYC. Before his current role Dr. Belkin was the Medical Director for Behavioral Health in the Health and Hospitals Corporation of the City of New York, which operates 11 public hospitals in New York City.

Dr. Belkin has also served as Chief of Psychiatry (Interim) at Bellevue Hospital and has lead policy development in urban health settings, with an interest in advancing innovative approaches to public mental health. As an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at New York University School of Medicine, he was the founding Director of the NYU Program in Global Mental Health.



Roberto Lewis-Fernandez, PhD

Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Columbia, Director of the NYS Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence, and the Hispanic Treatment Program, and Co-Director of the Anxiety Disorder Clinic, at NYS Psychiatric Institute.

Roberto Lewis-Fernández MD is Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Columbia, Director of the NYS Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence, and the Hispanic Treatment Program, and Co-Director of the Anxiety Disorder Clinic, at NYS Psychiatric Institute. His research develops culturally valid interventions and tools to assess illness experience and help-seeking expectations, enhance patient engagement, reduce misdiagnosis, and overcome disparities in the care of underserved cultural groups.

He is Chair of the Cultural Committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, President of the Society for the Study of Psychiatry and Culture, President-Elect of the World Association of Cultural Psychiatry, and past President of the American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry.

He was a member of the NIMH Council and Chair of the DSM-5 Cross-Cultural Issues Subgroup. He chairs the DSM Review Committee for Internalizing Disorders and co-chairs the ICD-11 Working Group on Culture-Related Issues.



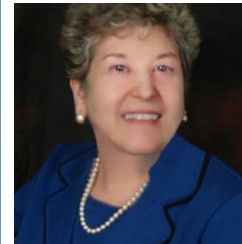
**David A. Hansell, Commissioner
NYC Administration for Children's Services**

Mayor de Blasio appointed David A. Hansell Commissioner of the Administration for Children's Services in February 2017. He has committed his career to serving vulnerable communities and expanding opportunity for low-income individuals and families. An accomplished manager, he has decades of experience in social services work across the public, private and non-profit sectors.

From 2009 to 2011, he served as Acting Assistant Secretary and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. At HHS, Hansell helped oversee a division with an approximately \$50 billion annual budget, with responsibilities including child welfare, economic support, early childhood education, and special population programs. In his role, Hansell helped implement the "Fostering Connections to Success Act" to improve services for older youth in foster care and enhance educational continuity. At NYS, Hansell was Commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, where among other things he helped achieve a historic level of household participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) through the Working Families Food Stamp Initiative, and helped reform NYS's child support programs to heighten compliance and increase payments to custodial parents and children. He has also served as Chief of Staff in the NYC HRA, and in various leadership roles at the NYC DOHMH, where he managed a portfolio of HIV treatment and prevention programs.

During the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, he was the Director of Legal Services and Deputy Executive Director of Gay Men's Health Crisis. He was a former aide to two U.S. Senators, and began his career as a sixth grade teacher.

Hansell has served as a consultant to several non-profit, government, and philanthropic organizations on a diverse array of health and social services policy and advocacy issues. Just prior to coming to ACS, he was Head of KPMG's Health & Human Services Center of Excellence. Commission Hansell is a graduate of Yale School of Law and Haverford College



**Rosa M. Gil, DSW, President and CEO
Comunilife, Inc.**

Dr. Rosa M. Gil is the Founder, President and CEO of Comunilife, Inc. She has had a distinguished career in the fields of health, mental health, social services and higher education. Dr. Gil served as a Mayor's Health Policy Advisor. She is the former Chairperson of the NYC Health and Hospital Corporation, Executive Director of Woodhull Medical Center and Metropolitan Hospital, Senior Vice President of Generation and Northern Manhattan Health Network; Senior Vice President Mental Hygiene Services at the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation and Executive Deputy Commissioner for Families and Children Services at the NYC Human Resources Administration. Dr. Gil is the former University Dean for Health Sciences at the City University of New York.

Some of her accomplishments include prevention and wellness initiatives; expansion of primary care; implementation of Medicaid managed care in New York City; increased access to health insurance; creation a continuum of supportive housing for seniors, persons living with HIV/AIDS and mental illness; creation of NYC's first Medical Respite Housing Program and the nationally recognized Life is Precious™ Program for Latina teens at-risk of suicide; and the development of a Multicultural Relational Approach for Diverse Populations™

Dr. Gil has been appointed to numerous Federal, State and City commissions and boards including the NYS Suicide Prevention Council, The Board of Health (NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene), NYC Community Services Board (NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene), NYC Mayor's Supportive Housing Task Force, NYS Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness, The Commission of Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century (The Berger Commission), and The Minority Women Panel on Health Experts (U.S. Public Health Services). Dr. Gil is on the Board of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and EmblemHealth and a member of the President Carter Mental Health Task Force.



“Gracias a LIP la vida de mi hija ha cambiado para bien porque ahora socializa mucho más. El programa la ayuda mucho emocionalmente y en su desarrollo artístico”.

A couple of months ago, I was depressed. Now, the only time I cry is when I'm happy. LIP has been the greatest thing I've ever done.

“Cuando comenzo al programa en el 2011, mi hija estaba muy mal. Ella no quería estudiar, estaba en la calle...Gracias a LIP, mi hija hoy está estudiando en la Universidad. Yo me siento muy orgullosa de ella.”

“When my daughter started the program in 2011, she was having a very difficult time. She did not want to study, she would spend time on the street...Thanks to LIP, my daughter is a college student. I feel very proud of her.”

“Gracias a Life Is Precious, yo estoy tranquila porque en el programa la ayudan a hacer la tarea, a atrabajar en arte y en música, y a concentrarse en hacer cosas productivas”.

“Thanks to Life Is Precious, I feel more calm because in the program they help her with her homework, she works on art and music, and she focuses on productive endeavors.”

Because of LIP, I no longer want to use my wrist to paint. Now I use paper. I paint my heart away.

When I would wake up, my days would be dull and weak. Thanks to LIP my days are much happier. This group is amazing. It has helped me in so many ways.

“Thanks to LIP, I learned to have various viewpoints on life to better others around me. As well as having the opportunity to have a second chance in life.”