TuSalud

Peer-Led Program Improves Mental Health in New Latina Mothers

Most participants reported high satisfaction with the Alma Program and experienced decreases in depression, anxiety and stress.

January 31, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

The Renée Crown Wellness Institute's Alma Program at the University of Colorado Boulder, is working to improve mental health among new Latina mothers, according to a University news release.

Findings from the Alma program published in Science Direct show promising advances in addressing perinatal depression and anxiety among Latina mothers.

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by Renée Crown Wellness Institute (@crowninstitutecu)

Rates of depression during the perinatal period in Latina mothers range from 12% to 59%, compared with 10% to 15% in the general population, according to a study published in PubMed Central. Yet few Latinas receive adequate follow-up care or treatment due to barriers such as stigma, language differences and discrimination.

Developed by researchers, mental health professionals, community members and parents, Alma supports expectant and new parents and provides them with the skills needed to overcome challenges and alleviate depression, anxiety and stress during and after pregnancy.

Offered in both English and Spanish, the program centers on behavioral activation, an evidence based intervention that focuses on increasing engaging and pleasurable activities in a person's life to improve mood and well-being.

Alma aims to address barriers to care by providing culturally responsive guidance and emotional support via peer mentors with lived experience. Peer mentorship has been shown to build trust, reduce stigma and increase responsiveness to mental health care, according to the release.

"Alma builds on this evidence, fostering strong cultural alignment through its focus on 'poner de su parte'—a preference among many Latinx individuals that emphasizes taking an active role in one's recovery," said Anahi Collado, PhD, an assistant research professor at the Crown Institute and the program's principal investigator, in the release.

Mentors help participants identify personal goals, schedule mood-enhancing activities and empower them to prioritize their recovery.

Most participants reported high satisfaction with the program and experienced decreases in depression, anxiety and perceived stress. What's more, significant clinical improvements occurred early in the program, highlighting the need for early intervention before depression and anxiety symptoms escalate.

"This is about giving mothers tools that work right away and empowering them to take an active role in their mental health," Collado said. "The early gains we're seeing show that culturally responsive, peer-led interventions can make a real difference—even in a short amount of time."

To read more, click #Mother or #Pregnancy. There, you'll find headlines such as "Telehealth Use

Remains Low in Rural Areas," "Deadly High Blood Pressure During Pregnancy Is on the Rise" and "Brain Changes Observed During Pregnancy."

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.tusaludmag.com/article/peerled-program-improves-mental-health-new-latina-mothers