

Barriers to Services

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In light of recent immigration enforcement policies, the apprehension to call the police due to the fear of deportation has become more salient for many Latina survivors.

- Immigrant Latinas may fear deportation while seeking help from social services^[13].
- Specifically, immigration status is often identified as a barrier for immigrant Latinas to seek services^[36].
- In a recent study, immigrant Latina survivors reported a decrease in the likelihood of calling the police due to heightened immigration enforcement policies and increased fear of deportation^[47].
- Latina survivors report that immigration status is often used as a control mechanism to ensure that they do not leave the abusive situation^[13, 36, 42].
- The strength of this control tool is amplified by the current realities of heightened deportation and immigration enforcement^[47].
- A survey of over 500 foreign-born Latina women found that 14% of participants reported experiencing problems in accessing IPV services due to immigration issues, some reporting they were denied IPV services for lack of proper identification^[55].
- Threatening Latina survivors to take away their children if they leave their partners was an especially powerful strategy used by men against undocumented, non-English speaking women^[44].

In addition to immigration, studies have found that low awareness of resources for IPV, language and cultural differences act as significant barriers to Latina survivors' ability to access services.

- There is little awareness of IPV services and options among Latina survivors^[56].

Casa de Esperanza has chosen to use "@" in place of the masculine "o" when referring to people or things that are either gender neutral or both masculine and feminine in make-up. This decision reflects our commitment to gender inclusion and recognizes the important contributions that both men and women make to our communities

- » Women report a lack of knowledge about available resources in the community as a common barrier to services^[40].
- » One study found that only 1 in 4 Latin@s had heard of IPV protective orders^[57].
- » Another study with immigrant Latina survivors found that many women initially believed the abuse they were experiencing was a “normal” part of marriage^[58]. It was only after migrating to the U.S. that they became aware of a way of life in which abuse was not the norm and felt empowered to seek help for ending their abuse.
- Lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate services is also a barrier for many Latina survivors, as it is for women from many other racial/ethnic groups.
 - » A study found that 1 in 3 shelters did not have any Spanish-speaking staff.
 - » Only half of the participating shelters offer child-related services.
 - » Additionally, many of the problems stemming from diverse cultural values were not respected and went unresolved^[59].