

# Resilience and Resistance Strategies

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Although the literature in the field has begun to highlight how IPV affects Latina survivors and their children in negative ways, a few studies have focused on the strengths and resistance strategies used by the women.

- Latina survivors report multiple strategies to survive abuse. Among them<sup>[50]</sup>:
  - » Avoiding (placating batterer, walking away, talking batterer down, and encouraging counseling for the batterer)
  - » Defending (protecting one's body, fighting back, locking self in room, and teaching children to call the police)
  - » Spiritual or psychological (joining a support group and maintaining a relationship with God)
  - » Social or familial (maintaining relationships with supportive people, not involving family members to protect them, and support/advice from other battered women)
  - » Escaping (moving to an undisclosed location, disguising themselves, and saving personal money)
- Self-esteem has also been identified as a protective factor against IPV for Latina women<sup>[51]</sup>.
- Strategies for staying safe used by Latina survivors have included<sup>[52]</sup>:
  - » keeping important phone numbers nearby to use for help-seeking
  - » keeping extra supplies of basic necessities on hand
  - » hiding important papers
  - » creating an escape plan

*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.*

- Other strategies reported by Latina survivors who had used violence against their partners<sup>[53]</sup>:
  - » Religion
  - » Dialoguing with partner
  - » Using threats
  - » Hobbies or studying
  - » Exercising
  - » Flight
  - » Calling police
  - » Divorce
- An in-depth study with Latina survivors living in a rural community identified multiple aspects of resiliency following IPV. In their stories of survival, they spoke of uncovering their internal strengths and courage, their love for their children and being in solidarity with other survivors of IPV<sup>[54]</sup>.
  - » Children were a predominate source of resilience for mothers to seek support and heal from IPV in order to provide them with a future without violence.
  - » In solidarity with other women experiencing IPV, women noted the importance of providing support and sharing information with other survivors.

**Commentary:** Regardless of their immigration status, Latina survivors of IPV demonstrate remarkable resilience and resourcefulness in addressing their plight. These strengths should be investigated further and used in programs and services that attempt to assist them.