FOREWORD

This infographic policy brief illustrates that the Bienestar (well-being) of one-half of Texas Hispanic families and their children are at risk from achieving the American Dream of middle-class status. Like most Texas families, future opportunities and a better life for their children is a driving Hispanic goal. Parents have expectations that their children will enter adulthood with social capital assets evidenced by their achievement of a quality education, a comfortable paying job, good health, and a strong family and positive community relationships.

A strong family is determined by education level, economic and health status, and neighborhood environment. These indicators are interrelated, with each enabling or challenging parental capacity to provide a thriving child development support environment. The development foundation established from ages 0 to 8 is the cornerstone for subsequent life stage(s) successes.

The strong work ethic and resiliency of Hispanics, civil rights progress in eliminating overt racial policy barriers, and increasing access to education have resulted in family strengthening improvements. However, Texas public policy-making and institutional barriers still contribute to weaken of the Hispanic family support structure resulting in perpetuating barriers to opportunities for their children.

Certainly, parents have the primary responsibility for assuring the safety and ongoing developmental foundation of their children for productive adulthood. However, the family's social and economic environment and associated risk factors shown here are extensive. The view that the parents and their children can simply pull themselves up from their ‘bootstraps’ is unrealistic given the state's inequitable public policies and minimal human capital investments – in schools, job training, health care, neighborhood infrastructure development, etc. In addition, regressive tax policies, unbalanced tax credits to business interests, inadequate consumer protections, voter suppression, and immigration policies further worsen opportunities for economic mobility.

1 Detailed information and data in this infographic brief are drawn from the report, “The Bienestar (Well-Being) of Texas Hispanic Children. Copy request can be made to juan@ix.netcom.com.
The often referenced ‘Texas Way’ to policy-making does not support the adage, “equality of opportunity” for all Texans. It seems that the state’s population shift to a people of color/Hispanic majority has the state increasingly defaulting to racialized policy-making; i.e., - more population diversity and high immigrant in-flow yields more restrictions and less human capital investment.

Regardless, the state’s policy making approach produces inequalities that place children at-risk and impede their ability to develop a strong foundation for future success. Hispanic’s and their allies are working to change this situation. We argue that real change, not having another generation of Hispanic children growing into ‘low-income/poverty’ adulthood; will only result from Hispanics acquiring political power that produces a difference policy-making culture.

Juan H. Flores
INTRODUCTION

Problem: The bienestar (well-being) 1 of 2 or 2.3 million Hispanic children are at-risk of becoming another generation of low-income families. Their future as well as Texas’s economic prosperity are at-stake. Strong families and equitable public policies are critically important to effective child development and positive social, economic and health results into adulthood.

STRONG FAMILY STRUCTURE

- **EDUCATION**: Both parents are high school graduates or have a college degree or a professional trade skill.
- **ECONOMIC SECURITY**: Families have living wage employment, leave benefits, health insurance, retirement fund and home ownership.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT**: Neighborhood has physical characteristics, quality schools, amenities and safety.
- **HEALTH**: Health care access, preventive health behavior and good health.
The first **5 to 8 years** of life are the foundation for building strong physical, cognitive, intellectual, social, emotional, speech and language skills. These skills are **KEY** to advancing educational, career success, higher incomes, asset accumulation and good health. The opportunities for each life-stage are increased forming the foundation for middle-class and greater success.

**STRONG FAMILY**
Married, educated and in good health with economically secure & robust neighborhood

**INFANT DEVELOPMENT**
(0 - 3 years)
Social & emotional language/communications. Cognitive (Learning, Thinking, Problem-Solving) skills

**ADULTHOOD**
Middle class with family income of ≥ 300% of FPL

**EARLY CHILDHOOD**
(4 - 5 years)
Acceptable Pre-reading, math skills & appropriate school behavior

**TRANSITION TO Adulthood**
Lives independently & has college or has a family income of ≥ 250% of FPL

**MIDDLE CHILDHOOD**
(6 - 12 years)
Basic reading, math skills & social-emotional skills

**ADOLESCENCE**
(13 - 17 years)
High school graduate w/GPA ≥ 2.5, no crime conviction & not a parent
The history of Texas's minimalist approach to policy-making has led to limited human capital investments, and unequal opportunities for many of its citizens. In particular, for low-income and people of color. It has contributed to generations of poor and low-income families, and middle-class economic status.

For many Hispanics, the results continue to be lower education, cheap labor, poor health, and stagnant economic mobility.

Opportunity Myth

"Americans raised at the bottom are likely to stay there." 7

I spiritual/Cultural

Political Power

State Rights

Limited Government

Individual Responsibility

Ownership of Success or Failure

Lower Taxes

Policy Impact

Business Friendly
Inadequate Human Capital Investments
- Education
- Health Care
Education and Income Gaps
High Low-Wage Employment
Regressive Taxation
Imbalanced Resource Budgeting
Civic Engagement Suppression
Immigrant Barriers
Local Government Burdens

Decades of Disparities

Poor National Performance In
- Overall Well-being
- Education
- Poverty
- Income Inequality

Inadequate Consumer Protections
Racial and Ethnic Inequalities
Family In-stability
Inequality/Discriminatory Lawsuits

Results

HISPANIC FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

Changes to the traditional American family structure of married household families and the widening income and wealth-gap is obstructing economic mobility. Families strength is weaken if their resource capacity is limited, regardless of their adherence to standards of personal and parental responsibilities. It intensifies the challenges to build strong families that further facilitates a protective and supportive child development environment.

Hispanic families represent 34% of all Texas families and accounted for 64% of the state’s total family growth between 2000 & 2013. Over one-half of these families have limited resource capacity which results in added risks to effective child development and their future.

Texas Total Population
27,695,284
Median Age 34 (2014)

- Married = 47%
- Separated = 3.9%
- Divorced = 8.5%
- Never Married = 37%
- Female Single Head Household = 25%

ALL HISPANICS
39% = 10,690,376
Hispanic Median Ages
- All = 27
- Native = 19
[Non-Hispanic White Median = 41]

HISPANIC LANGUAGE USE
- Speak English = 93%
- Speak Spanish = 76%
- English Very Well = 43%
- English Only = 24%
- English Not Well = 12%
- No English = 7%

IMMIGRANTS
- 4.2 million Immigrants
- 1.5 million Naturalized
- 1.3 million Lawful Residents
- 1.7 million Unauthorized
- 3.0 million are Hispanic Origins
HISPANIC FAMILY RESOURCE CAPACITY

The resource capacity of Hispanic families are 1 to 4 times less compared to Non-Hispanic whites across asset indicators in education, employment, neighborhoods and health.

EDUCATION
- Families with Bachelor’s Degree = 10%
- Husband-Wife No High School Diploma = 43%
- Single Female Head Household No High School Diploma = 37%

EMPLOYMENT
- 55% Husband-Wife Employed
- 21% Female Head Household Employed
- 60% Employed Husband-Wife Have High\School or Less Education
- 56% Employed Female Head Household Have High School or Less Education

INCOME
- Family Median Income = $41,343
- Families Below Poverty = 24%
- Low-Income ≤ (200%FPL) = 55%
- 65% of All Texas Families Below Poverty Are Hispanic
- 52% of All Texas Single Head Households Below Poverty Are Hispanic
- 50% Work in low-wage occupations
- Hispanic Women Earn 45 Cents of Dollar Paid To White Males

NEIGHBORHOOD
- 10 of 50 U.S. Metropolitan Areas with Highest Exposure to Poverty & Hispanic Concentration are in Texas
- Dallas, Tarrant, Harris & Bexar County in Top 24 U.S Counties with Highest Income Inequality
- Home Ownership and Renters = 57% & 43%
- Home Value Greater Than $125,000 = 29%
- Monthly Home Costs of 35% or More as of Percent Household Income = 32%
- Disproportionate Availability and Access to Quality School and Built Neighborhood Public Infrastructure and Amenities

HEALTH
- 39% (ages 16-64) Without Health Insurance
- Unauthorized Immigrant Adults with No Health Insurance = 71%
- Private Employer Sponsored Health Insurance = 35%
- Disproportionate Health Disparities
  - Diabetes, Obesity, Breast & Cervical Cancer
  - Prenatal Care Access
  - Access to Regular Health Care Source
- Projected to Exceed All Populations in Prevalence of Most Chronic Diseases
The bienestar (well-being) of over one-half or 2.3 million Hispanic children does not look promising. The children live in families that are not strong measured by educational achievement, economic status, health, family structure and neighborhood environment. They are at risk of becoming another generation of Hispanic adults who will be undereducated, have limited job skills, lower incomes. They will not achieve ‘real’ middle-class status - at status that would give financial security from income and asset accumulation that provides them with resources and choices in supporting their children's development.

**Texas Total Child Population**

7,477,897 (2014)

**CHILDRA IN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES**

- 34% = 2,278,889
  - 88% of Children are Native-Born
  - Approximately 80% of Children are Hispanic

**CHILDREN RAISED BY GRANDPARENT**

- 4.2% = 319,514
  - 48% Grandparents wholly responsible for grandchildren are Hispanic

**CHILDREN RAISED BY SINGLE PARENT**

- 54% approx 2,383,000
  - 54% of Children raised by Single Parent are Hispanic

**HISPANIC CHILDREN**

- Between 2000 & 2010 Growth Averaged 17% across 12 states
- Hispanic child Population averaged 41%
- Statewide White children decreased by 7% while Hispanic increased 37%

- 0-3 years = 56%
- 4 years = 50%
- 5 years = 54%
- 6-10 years = 50%
- 11-13 years = 49%
- 14-17 = 48%
CHILD FAMILY RESOURCE ENVIRONMENT

- Female head of household poverty rate 58% & 84% low income
- Married poverty 22% & 54% low-income
- 1,037,000 low-income children live in mixed-status immigrant families
- U.S. born children in families with incomes 200% below FPL twice that of children in immigrant families
- Children in immigrant families have larger labor force (70%) participation and secure employment (31%) rate than U.S. born families of 54% & 26%

- 2.2 million (32%) Texas children living in high housing cost-burdened families
- Among Hispanics 37% with high housing cost-burden
- Hispanic comprise 56% (1,267,000) all children in high housing cost-burdened families
- Hispanics represent 77% (1,020,000) all children living in concentrated areas of poverty
- Among Hispanics, 30% are in concentrated poverty areas, & 46% in low poverty areas

- 1.5 million (22%) Texas children in families where head householder lacks a high school education; 84% (1,279,000) are Hispanic.
- Comparatively, 5% of White households are without a high school education as opposed to 37% and 10% for Hispanic and Black households respectively.
- 2 million (29%) Texas children in families where no parent has year round full-time job; 55% (1,150,000) are Hispanic
- 33% (1,150,000) Hispanic children in families who lack adequate year round full-time employment
EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT PIPELINE PROFILE

HISPANIC ENROLLMENT
- Early Education & Pre-Kinder = 65%
- Elementary = 54%
- Middle School = 52%
- High School = 50%

(53%) or 2,668,315

HISPANIC ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS
- Economically Disadvantaged = 78%
- Title 1 Students = 78%

(67%) or 2,073,605

HISPANIC ENROLLMENT PRE-ELEMENTARY
(57%) or 365,702
- Early Education = 46%
- Pre-Kinder = 66%
- Kindergarten = 53%

HISPANIC SPECIAL PROGRAM ENROLLMENT
(64%) or 2,063,680
- Bilingual/English Second Language = 90%
- English Language Learner = 91%
- Career & Technical = 49%
- Gifted & Talented = 41%
- Special Education = 49%
- Immigrant = 60%
- Migrant = 98%

Texas Public School Enrollment 2013-2014
5,151,925

HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
- Hispanic High School Completion Rate = 69%
- Hispanic High School Drop-Out Annual Rate = 31%
- Average Math, Science, Reading 4th & 8th Grade Gap between Hispanic and White Students = 24 points
- College Readiness of Hispanic High School Students = 32%
- Hispanics College Entry Rate After Graduation = 46%

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY
- Hispanic College & University Enrollment in 2013 = 33%
- Economically Disadvantaged Hispanics Entering College = 49%
- Hispanics likely to have completed a College Degree in 2013 = 18%
- Hispanics 7th graders achieving a certificate or College Degree from Pipeline ending 2015 = 11%
References

1. Bienestar is defined as a perceived quality of life status among individuals, families and communities affected by social, environmental, and systemic factors – a concept of holistic wellness.
2. The Social Genome Model, originally developed at the Brookings Institution and base at the Urban Institute, is a collaborative effort of the Brookings Institution, Child Trends, and the Urban Institute.
CONCLUSION

State policies matter in their impact on family well-being. They impact areas such as school access and educational success, family economic mobility, healthy families, youth development, family relationships, and child safety. Texas policy-making falls short in most areas for Hispanic families.

Significant barriers to building wealth and future opportunities for their children weaken Hispanic families. Nearly 2.3 million Hispanic children are at risk of facing the same disadvantaged position or worse than their parents. Therefore, another generation of their children will be at-risk from achieving greater economic mobility and middle-class status. Not surprisingly, they will represent the majority of client recipients of most of the state’s chronically underfunded and often restrictive social welfare and health programs.

Hispanics would prefer not to merely survive on limited social and health welfare programs. Instead, they want to work in building their resource capacity to enable their children in economically successful families; live in supportive communities; and meet developmental, health and educational milestones.

Texas needs to change its conservative policy-making approach which is better defined as a Texas policy-making culture that limits human capital investments and economic mobility opportunities. Whereas, policies that level the playing field through human capital investments targeting education, neighborhood economic development, health care, and job training would demonstrate ‘real’ change. In addition, establishing policies that facilitate and not obstruct civic engagement.

It’s apparent that new paradigms, policies, and program approaches are needed to address the disproportionate inequalities Hispanics families continue to experience from state policy making. Texas Hispanics capacity to influence the state minimalist policy-making approach and its negative impacts on their bienestar requires:

- Increased civic education and engagement, concurrent with more organized pro-active versus reactive policy involvement positions.

- Concerted strategies that address structural problems that underlie most issues; e.g., policy-making that limit human capital investments,
recessive tax laws, or revenue and budget approaches that undercut equity and prosperity.

• Support from ‘applied’ policy analysis of legislative and regulatory rule-making impacts and development of legislative and regulatory proposals.

• A statewide Hispanic policy strategy that builds both ‘resource and political capacity’ to influence policy making, and involves on-going assessment of progress.

Public policies matter, and change will be insufficient without Hispanic policy influence.
Strong Families Ensure Children Are Succeeding in School and Growing Healthy