

ADANN SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROJECT
Research Brief: Understanding Regional Context
REGION 4 Southeast ADA Center



Background

The Spanish Language Outreach Project (SLO) is a new five-year collaborative national initiative of the ADA National Network (ADANN), ten regional ADA Centers, and the ADA Knowledge Translation Center. The first stage of the SLO project (2022-2023) aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the context of Spanish-speaking communities and assess their ADA-related information needs through research and expert consultation nationally and within each of the ten regions.

Region 4 Summary

This research brief reports on the key findings from the ADANN Region 4, Southeast ADA Center. Region 4 includes the states of Tennessee, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. As of 2021, the population is approximately 67 million people, with Florida and North Carolina having the highest percentages of Hispanics or Latinos at 26% and 10% respectively. In each state, more than 7% of the Hispanic population had a disability.

Data and Methods

Using a participatory process, the project team identified community members and conducted semi-structured interviews. Participants interviewed included 6 community members, all located in Tennessee. Most of the participants were female and had minimal knowledge about the ADA. Most of the interviews were conducted in Spanish. Community members were associated with disability organizations, community resource centers and non-profits with each having roles such as parent, promotora, director of programs or person with disability.

Findings and Key Highlights

In Region 4, language barriers related to lack of information, documents, and materials in Spanish, lack of bilingual staff in entities and organizations that provide services and programs, low quality and availability of translation services, inaccessible information in Spanish, and lack of cultural competency. Participants also shared that there is a common fear of deportation due to undocumented status, having an illegal status, or feeling intimidated by federal or state entities. Additionally, the Spanish-speaking community does not know about the available services, especially those for people with disabilities and mental health. Immigration status is also a significant barrier for the Spanish-speaking community as it can impact how people look and receive support and services. Last, accessing information through any virtual media can be difficult for some people in the community, especially older generations.

Barriers

Lack of information in Spanish
 Bilingual staff
 Accessibility of information
 Interpretation services
 Fear
 Lack of awareness
 Disability awareness and education
 Immigration
 Technology

"I have lost many opportunities for my child because of the language, because I am not that good in English, the information, maybe I have received it, but I can't understand."

"I feel like I have a blindfold on, I don't know where to go or the resources available."

"It was eye opening to me, I didn't know all the struggles. After working with a disability group I feel there is some kind of responsibility in sharing that awareness with someone."

Access to Information

Social media
 Word of mouth
 TV and radio

"WhatsApp groups is huge, they all communicate through that, they post in their stories, and they share events, chains of information, etc."

"Personal connections are huge. Once you make a connection people feel more comfortable asking questions for resources."

Recommendations

Recommendations include more training for the community, educational sessions, partnerships with local organizations, and dissemination of information that is applicable and easy to understand for the community. Specific strategies included:

- Trainings and support group sessions in the community
- Specific support for mental health
- Educational sessions on disability rights
- Partner with community leaders
- Include organizations that already have created trust in the community and work with them to deliver the information.
- Utilize different modes of dissemination
- Make information applicable and easy to understand

SUGGESTED CITATION: Herrera, A., Garcia-Torres, M., Gonzalez, O., Waitkuweit, K.H., Parker Harris, S., Gould, R., & Harniss, M. (2023). ADANN Spanish Language Outreach Project Stage One. Research Brief. Understanding the Regional Context: Southeast ADA Center, Region 4. Chicago, IL and Seattle WA: ADA National Network Knowledge Translation Center.

FUNDING: This information was developed under grants from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) NIDILRR grant numbers 90DPAD0004 and 90DPAD0005. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of ACL, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

CONTACT:

Southeast ADA Center.
 Website: <https://adasoutheast.org/>
 Email: adasoutheast@syr.edu
 Phone: 1-404-541-9001

ADA National Network.
 Website: <https://adata.org/>
 Email: <https://adata.org/email>
 Phone: 1-800-949-4232