



CHOSEN CIRCLES

HOW HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS NAVIGATE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING

MBOOTH:HEALTH





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INTRODUCTION

Health disparities in the United States have long posed a significant threat to marginalized communities, with Hispanic/Latino Americans being particularly affected. Despite being one of the largest and fastest-growing populations in the United States—65.2 million people as of July 2023, representing 19.5% of the total population—Hispanic/Latino Americans face substantial challenges in accessing quality health care. These communities often find themselves overlooked and underserved in the health care system.

Hispanic/Latino adults are less likely than other Americans to have health insurance and receive preventative care. Many encounter numerous barriers, including language and cultural differences, higher poverty rates, and occupational health risks, all of which contribute to poorer health outcomes.

In the face of these obstacles, Hispanic/Latino Americans are taking charge of their own health. Many are proactively conducting their own research before agreeing to treatments and seeking inclusive health information from nontraditional sources. This shift reflects a growing awareness of and engagement in personal health matters, driven by the necessity to address systemic neglect.

Building on previous Chosen Circles reports focused on [Black and LGBTQ+ Americans](#), we conducted a national survey in July 2024 to understand how non-traditional sources of health information are empowering and mobilizing health behaviors among marginalized, under-engaged communities. This report offers vital insights into how Hispanic/Latino Americans navigate health information today, and outlines strategies for health marketers and communicators to effectively engage these important health consumers.

These findings are essential for health care agencies, pharmaceutical companies, and other organizations seeking to engage Hispanic/Latino communities with accurate—and potentially lifesaving—health information. By understanding the unique needs and preferences of this community, we can take a significant step toward reducing health disparities and improving outcomes for Hispanic/Latino Americans.



We approach this work with humility, understanding that one research project won't provide all insights needed to address the gaps in health information. Our aim is to ignite dialogue, foster learning and inspire action.

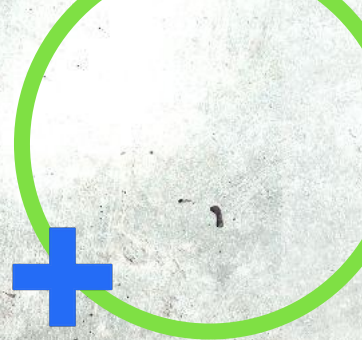
Hispanic/Latino Americans are grappling with a significant health information gap amid an acute scarcity of trusted and culturally relevant health resources.

In response, they are creating their own circles of trust—dynamic and highly curated groups of people and sources that support them in navigating health information and decision-making.

WE CALL THEM CHOSEN CIRCLES.



THE HEALTH INFORMATION GAP



Traditional health care providers and industry are failing to connect with Hispanic/Latino Americans, leading them to seek health advice and information from alternative sources. Many face **significant challenges in accessing and trusting health information** from traditional sources, driving them to pursue other avenues for critical health guidance.



THE ACCESS GAP

Many Hispanic/Latino Americans encounter significant barriers to accessing health information and care, largely due to systemic inequalities. Among those we surveyed, economic instability, lack of reliable transportation, and insufficient health care access contribute to these challenges. It is essential to recognize that these issues stem from structural factors, highlighting the need for systemic change to improve access to health.

**MORE THAN
1 IN 3
HISPANIC/LATINO
AMERICANS**

(37%) say they **felt stressed, anxious or worried they couldn't get the health information they needed** in the past year
VS. 28% TOTAL U.S. POPULATION AND 24% WHITE AMERICANS



SOCIAL FACTORS CREATE SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS

ECONOMIC STABILITY

47% could not afford recommended health actions

NEIGHBORHOOD + PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

39% did not have access to transportation, and **26%** did not have a safe place to live or go in order to follow recommended health information

EDUCATION/HEALTH LITERACY

38% could not understand the health information

HEALTH CARE + QUALITY

38% did not have health insurance, and **36%** did not have access to health care support/services

DIGITAL ACCESS

28% did not have access to internet or digital tools necessary for obtaining health information
2X MORE THAN WHITE AMERICANS

THE ACCESS GAP HAS A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICAN HEALTH

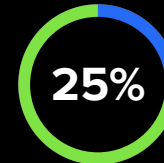
NEARLY
1 IN 4

HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS

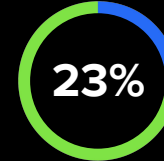
report **difficulty accessing relevant health information for critical issues**

NEARLY 2X MORE THAN WHITE AMERICANS

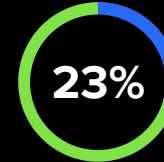
CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING INFORMATION ACROSS KEY HEALTH TOPICS



CANCER SCREENING AND TREATMENT



CHRONIC ILLNESSES



MENTAL HEALTH

THE TRUST GAP

Historical and ongoing discrimination within health care settings has significantly impacted trust levels of Hispanic/Latino Americans. A significant trust gap exists among Hispanic/Latino Americans regarding traditional health care providers. Many do not view health care providers as trusted sources of health information, and this skepticism extends to various traditional sources, which are often perceived as unhelpful. Addressing these concerns and rebuilding trust within these communities is essential for improving health outcomes and ensuring that individuals feel empowered to seek the guidance from traditional health care sources.

1 IN 2

HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS

(52%) **do not include health care providers** as a top source of health information

13% HIGHER THAN THE OVERALL U.S. POPULATION TO SAY THIS



TRADITIONAL HEALTH SOURCES ARE PERCEIVED AS UNHELPFUL

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES **40%**

GOVERNMENT HEALTH AGENCIES **33%**

PHARMACISTS **25%**

DOCTORS/HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS **22%**

HOSPITALS **19%**

MORE LIKELY THAN ANY OTHER RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP TO RATE DOCTORS/HCPs AS UNHELPFUL VS. 15% TOTAL U.S. POPULATION

THE TRUST GAP IS CAUSING HEALTH INFORMATION TO BE IGNORED

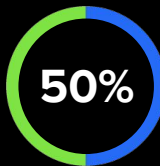
MORE THAN
1 IN 3

HISPANIC/LATINO
AMERICANS

(35%) have ignored
health information from
traditional sources

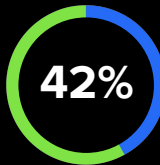
THE REASONS WHY ARE CLEAR

COMPLEXITY



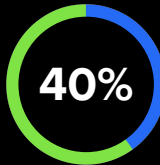
find the information **hard to understand due to unfamiliar words or language** that doesn't resonate with their community

LACK OF RELATABILITY



feel the examples or **stories aren't relevant** to their experiences or community

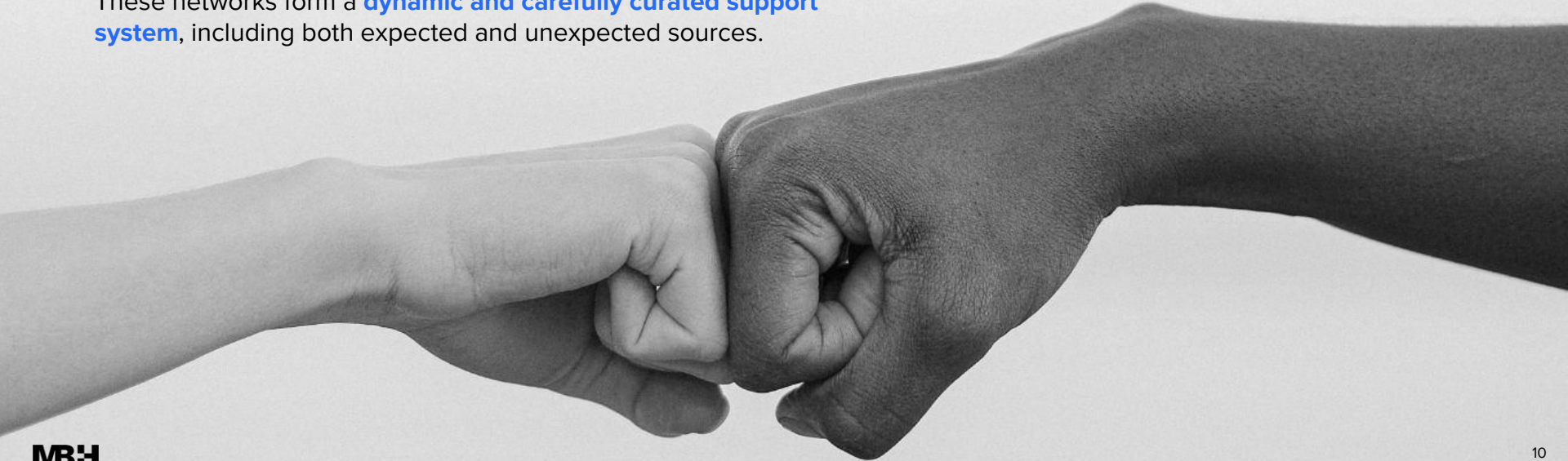
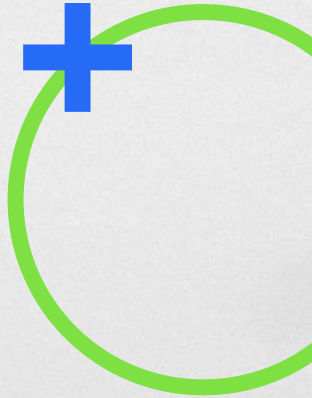
STIGMA



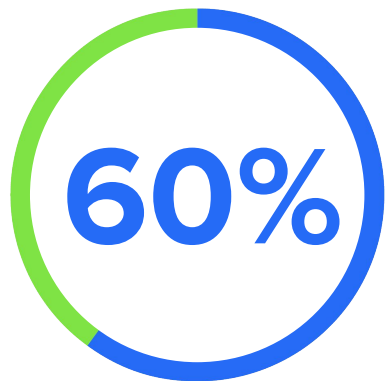
Say they **felt stigmatized** by the health information they received

THE RESPONSE: CHOSEN CIRCLES

Hispanic/Latino Americans are creating personal networks of trusted information sources to navigate health decisions. These networks form a **dynamic and carefully curated support system**, including both expected and unexpected sources.



THE INFLUENCE OF CHOSEN CIRCLES



of Hispanic/Latino Americans created **personal networks of trusted people and resources** to make health decisions*

MORE THAN
2 IN 3

HISPANIC/LATINO
AMERICANS

(67%) say they
**seek health information
from sources outside of
traditional channels**

**MORE THAN ANY OTHER
RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP**



A DYNAMIC NETWORK OF SUPPORT

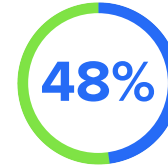
THE INFLUENCE OF INFLUENCERS



(26%) of Hispanic/Latino Americans say **online influencers** they follow are useful sources of health information **THIS RISES TO 36% AMONG HISPANIC/LATINO MEN**



THE FAMILY EFFECT



of Hispanic/Latino Americans seek health information from **family members** for opinions on what is best for their health

THE THERAPIST



of Hispanic/Latino Americans turn to **mental health therapists and counselors** for emotional support when making health decisions. This is noteworthy, considering the historical stigmatization of mental health within these communities



THE COMMUNITY IMPACT



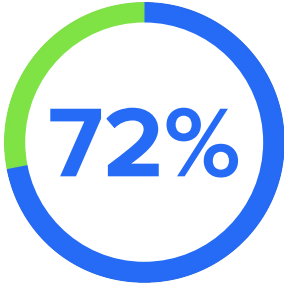
(36%) turn to **friends and neighbors** to learn about relevant health information



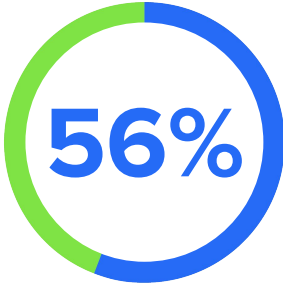
AND A **VITAL SOURCE** OF **EMPATHY + CULTURALLY RELEVANT** **HEALTH INFORMATION**

Hispanic/Latino Americans say they are more likely to turn to their Chosen Circle than to traditional sources for health advice and information that is:

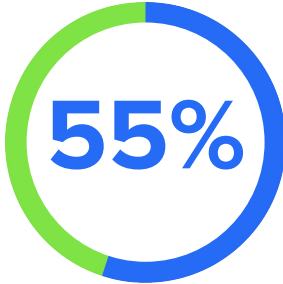
COMPASSIONATE

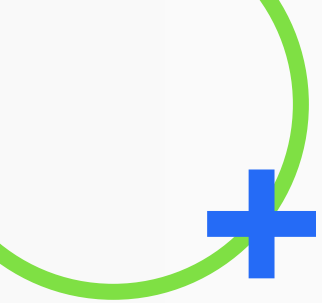


CULTURALLY RELEVANT



RELATABLE





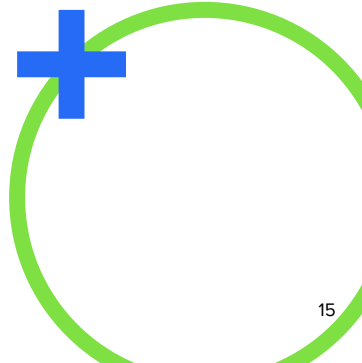
FAMILY DYNAMICS AND HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICAN HEALTH

Family is central to Hispanic/Latino culture and significantly impacts health decision-making. This emphasis on familial bonds often extends to extended family, friends and neighbors, creating a **strong multigenerational support network** that helps navigate health challenges and choices, ultimately shaping the well-being of entire communities.

A POWERFUL FORCE IN HEALTH DECISION-MAKING AND VALIDATION

MORE THAN
2 IN 5
HISPANIC/LATINO
AMERICANS

(41%) say it is important to get **approval or advice from family and friends** before accepting a health recommendation from their health care provider or doctor
VS. 35% OF TOTAL U.S. POPULATION
AND 30% OF WHITE AMERICANS





HISPANIC/LATINA WOMEN: ENGAGED FAMILY HEALTH LEADERS

Hispanic/Latina women are leading the charge in health information sharing within their families and communities, actively seeking and disseminating relevant resources to support their loved ones. They curate networks of support, share experiences and validate information to empower others in making informed health decisions. Despite their vital role, traditional health information providers often overlook them, leaving Latinas feeling ignored and misrepresented, underscoring the urgent need to prioritize their contributions to health communication.

THE STAKES ARE HIGH

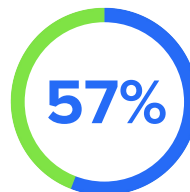
NEARLY HALF

OF HISPANIC/LATINA WOMEN

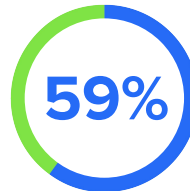
(42%) say they have **felt stressed, anxious or worried** they could not get the health information they needed

(45%) say they have felt **misrepresented and ignored** by traditional health information

CHOSEN CIRCLES ARE CRITICAL



say they **get health opinions from a variety of different sources**, not just their HCP



say they turn to their personal networks of trusted people for **culturally relevant health information**



HISPANIC/LATINO MEN: EMERGING INFORMATION NAVIGATORS

Hispanic/Latino men, often viewed as less engaged with health care, are redefining their roles as active health information seekers within their families and communities. Despite challenges in trusting traditional health systems, they are increasingly turning to alternative sources for compassionate and digestible health information. As they become more involved in health decision-making, understanding their unique preferences and challenges will enable health care providers and industry to better meet their needs and improve health outcomes.

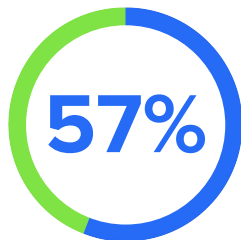
ENGAGED BUT LACK TRUST

2 IN 3

HISPANIC/LATINO MEN

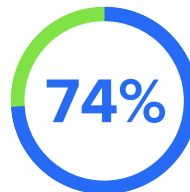
(68%) say they have looked for health information from **sources other than their doctor or traditional health information sources**

THIS RISES TO 76% FOR HISPANIC/LATINO FATHERS

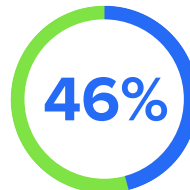


say they ignore health information because they **don't trust where it's coming from**

CHOSEN CIRCLES FILL THE GAP



say they **go to their personal network for empathy and compassion-led health advice and information**



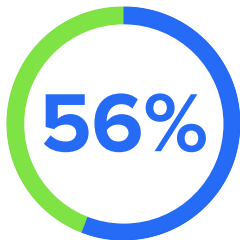
say it's important to get approval/advice from family/friends before accepting a health recommendation from their HCP
THIS RISES TO 54% FOR HISPANIC/LATINO FATHERS



HISPANIC/LATINO GEN Z: NEW RULEMAKERS

Hispanic/Latino Gen Z is redefining health information engagement, driven by a strong sense of agency over their own health and well-being. This generation actively seeks out accessible and relatable health information, frequently sharing it within their social networks for discussion and validation. While family continues to play a significant role in health decisions, Hispanic/Latino Gen Z often acts as advocates and caregivers, influencing health-related discussions and decisions among older family members. Their social-first approach represents a notable shift in how health conversations are initiated and navigated. This peer-to-peer exchange of information fosters community and empowerment among young Hispanics/Latinos, underscoring the urgent need for more inclusive and culturally responsive health resources.

LEAST RELIANT ON HCPS



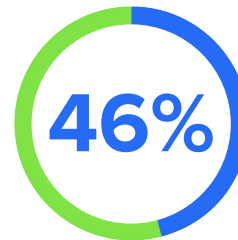
of HISPANIC/LATINO GEN Z does not include health care providers as a top source of health information

SOCIAL NETWORKS ARE CRITICAL

MORE THAN HALF

(56%) say they **get health information from TikTok** and nearly 1 in 5 get health information on WhatsApp
COMPARED WITH 20% OF THE TOTAL U.S. POPULATION AND 33% OF HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS OVERALL

CHOSEN CIRCLES DRIVE ACTION

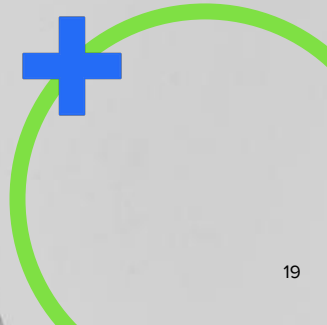


have taken steps to address their mental health based on health information they saw on social media
VS. 37% OF THE TOTAL U.S. POPULATION

BRIDGING THE GAP: ADVICE FROM HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS

HOW GOVERNMENT + INDUSTRY CAN BETTER MEET THEIR NEEDS

The best way to understand how to better meet the health information needs of Hispanic/Latino Americans is to ask them. So we did just that—and **uncovered key insights for effectively reaching them with health information** that resonates and provides real value.





IT'S NOT ONLY WHAT YOU SAY, IT'S WHO SAYS IT

Hispanic/Latino Americans prioritize health information from relatable sources who share their cultural identity and lived experiences. Those we surveyed want to hear from “people like me”—members of their communities whose backgrounds and experiences align with their own, offering crucial relatability across various health issues. This underscores the importance of personal connection, shared experiences and cultural understanding in delivering effective health communication.

SO WHO IS THE RIGHT MESSENGER?

SHARED EXPERIENCE

46%

want to get opinions from **people who have personally experienced** the same health issue as them

PEOPLE LIKE ME

44%

want health information from people who share the **same identity** components as them (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.)

PERSONAL CONNECTION

34%

want to get health perspective from someone they **personally know and trust**

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

23%

want health information from someone **understands their culture and traditions**
NEARLY 2X HIGHER THAN WHITE AMERICANS, AT 12%



GO BEYOND BASIC

When it comes to health information, Hispanic/Latino Americans are seeking something more than traditional approaches. Our survey reveals unexpected factors that drive engagement, emphasizing the importance of interactive, personalized and culturally relevant content. This data underscores the need for health communicators to adopt a more dynamic and engaging approach to meet the diverse needs of these communities.

FACTORS TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTH INFORMATION

INTERACTIVE

56%

say they are more likely to engage with health information when they can ask questions and get responses

PERSONAL INTERESTS

46%

prefer health information related to their personal interests or hobbies

VS. 44% TOTAL U.S. POPULATION, 39% OF WHITE AMERICANS

HUMOR

32%

say they are more likely to engage with funny health content

VS. 27% TOTAL U.S. POPULATION AND 23% OF WHITE AMERICANS

POP CULTURE

27%

say that health information connected to pop culture resonates more with them

VS. 22% TOTAL U.S. POPULATION AND 17% OF WHITE AMERICANS



FOCUS ON MY FEED

Social media is a vital source of health information for Hispanic/Latino American communities, who rely on these platforms at significantly higher rates than the general population. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram are especially popular, while WhatsApp is emerging as a key resource for sharing health information with friends and family. To reach Hispanic/Latino audiences effectively, communicators must embrace these platforms, delivering credible, relatable and shareable content that meets communities where they are.

SOCIAL MEDIA: A CRITICAL CHANNEL WITH RISING INFLUENCE

47%

of Hispanic/Latino Americans say they **have shared health information** on social media

46%

say they have **sought medical advice** based on information they saw on social media

Hispanic/Latino Americans say they have **gotten health news and information on social media in the past year**

43% **YouTube**

33% **TikTok**
2X AS LIKELY AS WHITE AMERICANS

33% **Instagram**
3X AS LIKELY AS WHITE AMERICANS

13% **WhatsApp**
3X AS LIKELY AS WHITE AMERICANS



ACTION **FOR IMPACT**

Health communicators and marketers have a crucial obligation to change how we deliver health information to Hispanic/Latino Americans. This begins with a deep understanding of the complex dynamics that influence health decision-making and behaviors within these diverse communities.



DIMENSIONALIZE THE AUDIENCE

The Hispanic/Latino community is not a monolith.

Hispanic and Latino communities encompass a rich tapestry of cultures, languages and experiences from more than 20 nations. Factors like ethnicity, gender, geography, religion and socioeconomic status profoundly shape health decisions and interactions with the U.S. health care system. Effective health communication must recognize this diversity. Consider the contrasting health journeys of a young Dominican-American man in California and a Mexican-American mother in rural Texas: While both may face bias and health inequalities, their specific needs and experiences are distinct.

To create impactful health information, we must prioritize these varied experiences in our strategies. This means centering research and insights that authentically reflect Hispanic/Latino perspectives and engaging a variety of community voices. By investing in tailored information that addresses unique needs from the outset, we can create health communications that inform, build trust and nurture lasting connections.




Inclusive health information requires a deep understanding of Hispanic/Latino experiences and tailored strategies to address the needs of individuals.

RECOGNIZE CULTURE + CONTEXT

To effectively engage Hispanic/Latino communities, communicators must move beyond a one-size-fits-all approach.

Culture and context are crucial in health communications, demanding more than mere translation from English to Spanish. It requires a deep appreciation of the rich cultural nuances and social dynamics that define these diverse communities. Many Hispanic/Latino Americans value health information from sources that resonate with their cultural identity, yet often feel overlooked in current health communications.

We must recognize the unique cultural contexts and social factors that shape health behaviors and decision-making. By incorporating emotional appeal, humor and cultural relevance, communicators can build trust and create more engaging, relatable content for Hispanic/Latino communities. This culturally responsive approach empowers individuals to make informed health choices and ultimately improves outcomes.



Cultural responsiveness
and context are key to
building trust and credibility,
leading to more effective
health communication



Leveraging social media's influence can provide a stigma-free space for open dialogue and community-driven health engagement

FOSTER STIGMA-FREE SPACES

The importance of “people like me” and supportive online communities in delivering stigma-free health information cannot be overstated.

Social media and online influencers play a crucial role in reaching Hispanic/Latino Americans, offering relatable, accessible alternatives to traditional health care channels. These digital platforms create safe havens for seeking advice and support without fear of stigma or judgement.

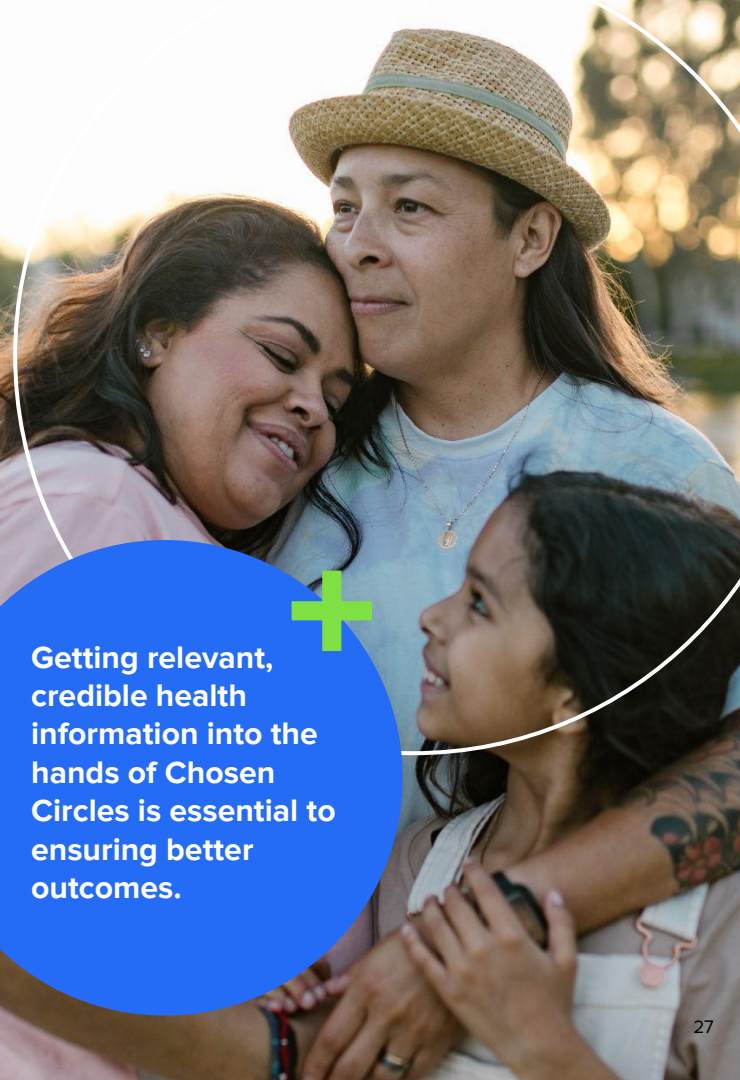
Health marketers should leverage these digital ecosystems to share culturally relevant health information and promote positive behaviors. From Facebook groups to Instagram stories to gaming platforms such as Twitch for younger men, there are numerous opportunities to connect with Hispanic/Latino audiences in comfortable environments. By partnering with authentic voices and nurturing engaged online communities, we can create powerful channels for health education, support and action.

EMBRACE THE CHOSEN CIRCLE

Supporting Hispanic/Latino Americans' health choices demands engaging the personal networks they trust for information and guidance.

While health care providers and experts are important, they can fall short for those who lack confidence or trust in these sources. As a result, Hispanic/Latino Americans increasingly turn to Chosen Circles to support health decision-making. These personal networks, deeply embedded in Hispanic/Latino culture, include family, friends and even online influencers. They profoundly shape health beliefs, expectations and behaviors, often validating or challenging recommendations from health care providers. As a result, these Chosen Circles have become powerful forces in health decision-making, influencing how individuals perceive and interact with the health care system.

To reach Hispanic/Latino communities effectively, health marketers must identify authentic, trusted messengers within these circles and empower them with relevant, credible health information. This approach shifts our role as health communicators from leaders to enablers, fostering healthy dialogue and choices within Hispanic/Latino communities. By embracing Chosen Circles, we can ensure that vital health information reaches Hispanic/Latino Americans through channels they trust, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.



Getting relevant, credible health information into the hands of Chosen Circles is essential to ensuring better outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

M Booth Health partnered with **Savanta**, a global data, market research and advisory company with expertise in health care, communications, and consumer behavior research.

Savanta conducted a survey of 2,530 demographically diverse adult American consumers. Respondents were representative of the U.S. Census for age, gender, race and ethnicity, and were age 18+ between July 12, 2024, and July 24, 2024. The margin of error on a probability sample of this size for the study total is +/-2%. Margin of error by race/ethnicity group is +/-4%. For all results, statistical significance is set at the 95% confidence level.

The surveys were administered online with device-agnostic design. Savanta uses a rigorous screening and data quality process, including removal of duplicate IP addresses, removing straightliners and speeders, removing pasted text, including logic checks in the survey, and manually reviewing open-ended responses.

MBOOTH:HEALTH

Savanta



CHOSEN CIRCLES

HOW HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS NAVIGATE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING

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