

## Language Access Plan for Casa de Luz

### Objective:

To ensure all teens, families, and individuals, regardless of their primary language, feel welcomed, valued, and supported through bilingual and culturally inclusive programming, as well as access to essential resources and services.

---

## Key Changes Implemented

1. Bilingual Programming:
  - Transitioned programs to support both English and Spanish languages.
  - Ensured all materials, activities, and communication were accessible in both languages.
  - Hired or trained staff to be bilingual and culturally responsive.
2. Culturally Relevant Activities:
  - Integrated events and lessons that reflect Latino/Hispanic cultural experiences.
  - Encouraged participants to share their personal stories and cultural traditions.
3. Teen Leadership Opportunities:
  - Created leadership roles for teens to mentor younger students.
  - Provided platforms for teens to lead discussions, activities, or cultural events.
4. Updated Signage and Resources:
  - Installed bilingual English/Spanish signage throughout the Hub to create a more inclusive environment for Spanish-speaking families.
  - Adapted program resources and communications to accommodate the growing number of Spanish-speaking students in afterschool programs.
5. Language Unity through ESL Programs:
  - Embedded ESL programs as a core component of youth initiatives, helping Spanish-speaking students improve their English skills.
  - Encouraged students to maintain their Spanish while helping others learn the language, fostering deeper relationships and building unity within the community.
6. Comprehensive Hub Services:
  - Expanded bilingual access at the Hub to provide families with essential resources, including:
    - Food pantry services to address food insecurity.
    - Case management support tailored to help families navigate challenges and connect to additional resources.
    - Emergency resources such as hygiene products, diapers, and household items.
    - Outreach events that build community connections and provide access to educational, health, and social services.
  - Ensured bilingual staff availability during operating hours to serve both English- and Spanish-speaking community members.

## 7. Safe, Inclusive Environment:

- Established all programs and services as spaces where participants can practice English while celebrating their Spanish language and heritage.
  - Facilitated group activities and community events that encourage collaboration and connection across language barriers.
- 

## Impact

- **Increased Participation:** Attendance and engagement across programs have grown since implementing bilingual and inclusive changes.
  - **Enhanced Connection:** Families and teens feel the Hub and its services reflect their identities and meet their needs.
  - **Community Building:** Participants actively mentor, support, and build relationships across age groups and languages.
  - **Empowerment:** Participants report increased confidence in both English and Spanish, a stronger sense of cultural pride, and a deeper feeling of belonging.
  - **Expanded Resource Access:** Bilingual services at the Hub have ensured equitable access to critical resources like food, case management, and emergency items, strengthening the community's trust and engagement.
- 

## Commitment to Language Access and Inclusivity

1. **Ongoing Program Development:**
  - Regularly evaluate feedback to refine bilingual and cultural elements in both programming and Hub services.
  - Develop more activities and resources that incorporate both languages and celebrate cultural diversity.
2. **Staff Training:**
  - Provide continuous cultural competency and bilingual training for staff and volunteers.
  - Recruit bilingual staff who reflect the community's cultural and linguistic makeup.
3. **Outreach and Communication:**
  - Use bilingual flyers, social media posts, and community announcements to reach families.
  - Ensure all Hub communications, both written and verbal, are available in English and Spanish.
4. **Community Engagement:**
  - Partner with local organizations and cultural groups to enhance programming and Hub services.
  - Host bilingual family events to celebrate diversity and strengthen community connections.

---

## Conclusion

Casa de Luz has seen incredible growth and transformation through the power of bilingual programming and inclusive resource access. With updated bilingual signage, comprehensive services at the Hub, a focus on ESL programs, and culturally relevant initiatives, we continue to create a space where teens, families, and individuals feel seen, heard, and valued. By celebrating inclusivity and cultural pride, Casa de Luz empowers youth, supports families, and builds a unified, thriving community.