

Exemplary Practices for Engaging Hispanic/ Latino(a) Youth in Computer Science

Exemplary Practices

Building on research and evidence-based practice, this list is designed to increase the number of Hispanic/Latino(a) youth in computer science.

- 1. OFFER CULTURALLY TARGETED RECRUITMENT AND PROGRAMMING**
 - a. Use recruitment strategies designed to make Hispanic/Latino(a) youth feel welcome and valued
 - b. Incorporate cultural values, strengths, and celebrations into activities and curricula
 - c. Include activities to strengthen ethnic identity
 - d. Include strategies that build on the resources of bilingual (Spanish-English) and English language learners
 - e. Provide youth access to role models and mentors who share their cultural background
 - f. Help youth navigate competing expectations across their home, peers, school, and community
 - g. Build on what youth are interested in

- 2. FOSTER FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**
 - a. Meaningfully engage families to increase buy-in, and build knowledge and social networks
 - b. Educate family members and other key adults to build a network of support and encouragement



Computer science (cs) is a scientific and engineering discipline that encompasses the study of computers and the investigation of the principles and practices behind developing hardware and software solutions, applications for solving problems across diverse arenas and the impact of technology on society, including a wide branch of study focused on human-computer interaction – the use of software by humans. A good explanation of what cs is not comes from the Department of Computer Science at George Washington University, “Computer Science is not about the using of software, such as spreadsheets (like Excel), word processors (like Word) or image tools (Like Photoshop)... It is not about expertise in computer games, it is not about writing content in websites, and it is not about assembling computers or knowing which computers are best buys.”



- c. Provide bilingual and culturally competent staff to connect with and receive regular input from family members

3. CAREFULLY SELECT AND TRAIN STAFF MEMBERS

- a. Use program volunteers and staff with firsthand experience of Hispanic/Latino(a) youth in their community
- b. Require regular training of program volunteers and staff on how to maintain a culturally competent program
- c. Make sure some program staff members are bilingual
- d. Use social science research to inform staff training
- e. Train staff in cs content knowledge, as well as on how to find curricular resources and get technical support
- f. Develop a network of support across cs teachers and staff

4. INCLUDE COMPUTER SCIENCE RELATED CONTENT

- a. Teach cs concepts and principles
- b. Teach an algorithmic way of thinking
- c. Work with a computer scientist who offers meaningful guidance

5. ADDRESS THE IMAGE OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

- a. Teach that cs is more than just computer programming
- b. Challenge the widely held belief that cs is not for everyone
- c. Teach about the field of cs – vision and grand challenges



For the complete version of the *Exemplary Practices* with examples and references, visit the CSCP website: www.cscproject.org.

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