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Hadley Presents

Hadley and NEI Launch Cooking Workshops in Spanish

Presented by Ricky Enger

Ricky Enger: Welcome to Hadley Presents. I'm your host, Ricky Enger, inviting you to sit back, relax, and enjoy a conversation with the experts. In this episode, we discuss information and services available for blind and low vision Spanish speakers. And our guests are Hadley's Chief Program Officer, Ed Haines, and Director of the National Eye Health Education Program, Devina Fan. Welcome to the show.

Ed Haines: Thanks, Ricky.

Devina Fan: Thanks, Ricky.

Ricky Enger: Awesome. I am really excited about today's topic, and I know that a lot of fantastic information is going to be shared, so I'm anxious to jump right into it. Before we do that though, let's just do a couple of quick intros and that way we all know who everyone is and what they do, and we'll get started. Ed, you've been on the program before, so let's just get a quick intro from you for people who don't know your voice or what you do at Hadley.

Ed Haines: Sure. Thanks, Ricky. My name is Ed Haines and I'm the chief program officer at Hadley, and we have wanted to offer our content in Spanish for a long, long time. So, I'm super excited to be talking about this partnership with the National Eye Institute. This is going to be a great conversation.

Ricky Enger: Oh, I so agree. I'm really looking forward to it. Devina, tell us a bit about yourself and what you do with the National Eye Institute.

Devina Fan: I'm the director of the National Eye Health Education Program, which we call NEHEP at the National Eye Institute, NEI. And so NEHEP educates professionals and the public about the importance of eye health, and we focus on the importance of early detection and treatment for eye diseases, the benefits of vision rehabilitation, and populations at high risk of eye diseases and vision loss.

Ricky Enger: Gotcha. And I think that's one of the biggest pieces when somebody's experiencing vision loss, is that they're searching for information. What's available? How do I learn new skills? Are there ways that I can prevent my vision from getting worse? All of those things. And so, I'm really happy to be able to talk about that process for our Spanish-speaking population. So, with that, why don't we jump right in? Ed, I know you have some great questions, so let's do it.

Ed Haines: Sure. Thanks, Ricky. Just for context, Devina, I wonder if you could just tell us a bit about vision impairment in the Hispanic community in the United States. Why is it important to focus on this population and why is this important to the National Eye Institute?

Devina Fan: This is absolutely an important issue for us at the National Eye Institute. The Hispanic and Latino community in the US has some of the highest rates of vision loss and blindness caused by eye diseases like diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma. And since diabetes is relatively common in the Hispanic and Latino community, it's important to learn about how you can help yourself, your family, your friends, neighbors, patients live the healthiest life possible. So, people who may not know that they have diabetes or whose diabetes isn't well controlled, can have complications like vision and eye issues, blood circulation in the feet, and other complications. But the good news is that people with diabetes can control their blood sugar with eating healthy foods, being physically active, and taking prescription medication. So, controlling blood sugar and addressing diabetes is the first step to preventing vision loss. Seeing an eye doctor regularly is an important next step as well.

People with vision impairment can live full independent lives. Vision rehabilitation can teach you, your loved one, or your patient, the skills to continue to do the things you need to do, you want to do, and enjoy doing. And so NEI's mission is to eliminate vision loss and improve quality of life through vision research. NEI is committed to fostering diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and accessibility in all our activities. And so NEHEP's planning group members and NEHEP's network of partner organizations are key people NEI collaborates with to ensure we provide culturally appropriate, linguistically appropriate, and accessible information to the public. So as part of this work, we think it's important to educate the Hispanic and Latino community on the importance of getting comprehensive dilated eye exams, which can help find many of the eye diseases early, which they're often easier to treat and have resources available in a person's preferred language.

Ed Haines: It really sounds like we just haven't done enough to offer the right information in Spanish in general. And I saw on your website a statement that said eight out of 10 members of the Hispanic community who have glaucoma don't know they have it. That's a pretty powerful statement. So, what initiatives has the National Eye Institute put into place to address this obvious need for information and services in Spanish?

Devina Fan: This year, NEI launched more than 130 new web pages in Spanish on NEI's website to better serve the US Hispanic and Latino community. Since Hispanics and Latinos are at higher risk for certain eye conditions, it's important for this community to have access to easy-to-use, actionable, and culturally relevant eye health information. So, we focused on transcreating, which I'll get to in a second, webpages that provide information about a variety of eye diseases and conditions, several of which Hispanics and Latinos disproportionately, like glaucoma and diabetes. Many of the web pages that we transcreated are related to vision impairment as they provide information about conditions that cause vision impairment, vision rehabilitation, and treatments.

Transcreating and transcreation is a relatively new term that blends the words translation and creation. And so, in a nutshell, transcreation is taking a concept in one language like English and recreating it in another language like Spanish. A successfully transcreated message would invoke the same emotions and carries the same message in the translated language as it does in the original language, but in a way that resonates with the audience. The public can access NEI's new Spanish content using a link at the top of NEI's webpages. There's a globe and it says Español at the top.

And so, this year for Healthy Vision Month in May, we focused on both the Black and Hispanic communities, highlighting ways families can team up and learn how to protect their vision. As part of this campaign, NEI created resources in Spanish, including social media messages, graphics, and information about free and low-cost eyecare. NEI plans to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month this year from September 15th to October 15th by highlighting achievements of eye care professionals who identify as Hispanic or Latino or Latina. And by sharing information with Hispanic and Latino communities about eye health to ensure they have the information they need to keep their eyes healthy. And NEI also collaborates with partners such as Hadley to cross-promote Spanish content to help reach Spanish-speaking communities with important eye health information.

Ed Haines: I love that idea of transcreation because if a message isn't culturally relevant, it's not going to come through. Anybody who has Google translated into another language knows that it can come out wrong. So, speaking of universal things that are culturally relevant, let's talk a little bit about Hadley's cooking series. Could you speak a little bit about the need to share practical help and practical tips to people with vision impairments who speak Spanish?

Devina Fan: Since Hispanics and Latinos are at a higher risk for certain eye conditions, this puts them at greater risk for vision impairment. Therefore, we have a need for practical resources like Hadley provides. Hadley and NEI noticed that limited resources exist on vision impairment in Spanish. So NEI and Hadley, we decided to work together to translate one of Hadley's most popular workshops on cooking into Spanish. And NEI prioritizes creating materials in both English and Spanish and partnering with national organizations to maximize our reach to priority audiences.

And Hadley's cooking series has such practical tips for people with vision impairment, and that's what I love about the cooking series. Even with limited vision, the videos teach you how you or a loved one or a patient can prepare meals safely in the kitchen with practical tips like using cutting boards that have color contrast like light and dark, or how to use knives safely, how to put away knives safely, how to use different lighting in your kitchen so that it shines on what you're doing and not in your eyes or producing any glare. How to pour hot water safely and how to use your stove top and oven safely.

And so, eating healthy and being able to continue doing what you love to do, like cooking, will help improve general health for the whole family and teach kids healthy habits early on. Going back to diabetes, controlling diabetes will prevent health complications and improve heart health and other conditions commonly found in people with diabetes. And being able to continue cooking the healthy foods you love to eat in your own kitchen is one way to do that.

Ed Haines: No, that's absolutely right. I mean, when you have vision loss and you haven't developed compensatory skills, that really limits your dietary options. Can't use your stove, now you're limited to your microwave. And if you do have diabetes or heart disease or anything else that requires you to keep track of your diet, it becomes really difficult. So, we did start with the cooking series because it is one of our most popular. I think food is just a universal interest and how to prepare food. So, what are the plans that the NEI has to get the word out about this initiative and make sure those who could most benefit know that the help is here?

Devina Fan: NEI will highlight Hadley's cooking series in Spanish on our social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, during Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15th to October 15th. And after this time as well. We'll also plan to highlight the series in our Eye Health Connection e-newsletter in September, as well as link to it from strategic places on NEI's website. NEI is launching a new Spanish social media strategy, which involves using boosted posts, increasing Spanish post frequency, and working with strategic partners to reach Spanish-speaking audiences. NEI will include Spanish cooking series as part of our resources that NEI promotes throughout the strategy.

Ed Haines: Well, that's wonderful. I'm sure it'll be successful. For me, at least, lastly, is there anything else you'd like to share about this initiative to the Hispanic community?

Devina Fan: NEI is a proud partner with Hadley on this initiative. We are excited that new Spanish language resources are available for people with vision impairment, other care partners, and healthcare professionals to share. We look forward to tracking progress on the series, measuring success over time. This will help us optimize our process and make changes down the road for future Spanish initiatives. And also, just a reminder that there are resources available that can support people with vision impairment. And that's why NEHEP has a vision rehabilitation program area that educates the public and professionals about resources available that will improve quality of life and encourage learning of new skills to encourage you to learn the skills you need to continue to do the things that you love to do, want to do, and need to do. And if you're a healthcare provider, please encourage and connect your patients to these resources and share them with your colleagues to share.

And if we've learned anything in the past several years, living through this global pandemic, it's resilience. How to be resourceful and make use of the best of what we have, including online resources in rural and urban settings, speaking up about the disparities and working collaboratively to find solutions, setting differences aside to unify on a common goal and really the need for kindness to care for one another. There are more virtual support groups now than before the pandemic.

I was first trained as a community health promoter while serving in the Peace Corps and experienced firsthand working alongside other community health promoters from the community to address their community health issues and continued to promote the community health promoter model. So, community health promoters or community health workers or in Spanish, “Promotores de salud”, are trusted members from the community served. Have a deep understanding of the community and are such an important link between health and social services to the community. The trust that they have enables and bridges across communities to help to get access to services and ultimately improves the quality of life for a person.

So, I'd encourage working together with community leaders, like community health workers, “Promotores de salud”, who are already connected to the community, have built trust in the community. Work alongside each other as partners. It's so important in getting the word out. And “Promotores de salud” are frontline public health workers who are from the communities they serve, like I mentioned, partners. And also partner with people with vision impairment, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, parent-teacher associations, and tailor the outreach effort and health education to fit the needs of the community. Who does the community trust? How does the community receive trusted information? What messages resonate with one community might not resonate as much with another, but another message would? And working together with people in the community you're trying to create educational materials or programs for, and bridging resources to people whose native language is other than English or people with vision impairment. And working collaboratively from the beginning.

And so, to just give a quick example. For example, glasses. There's different translations into Spanish for glasses depending on what region, what country you're from. It can be “lentes, gafa, anteojos,” it's just different. Some communities might resonate with one, how you say glasses, and others might say, "Oh, that sounds a little different or funny." It doesn't resonate as much. So that insight is really working together with the people that you are trying to provide resources for or bridge resources. And so, they're able to provide that insight to you.

In closing on that collaborative effort, we look forward to hearing your feedback on the new Spanish resources, how they work for you, your family, your neighbor, your patient, anyone, and adapting it to fit your needs. We invite you to partner with us in creating material that is culturally appropriate, linguistically appropriate, and accessible. And I learned in my time living abroad, working alongside and together with community health promoters, “poco a poco,” which is little by little, “y paso a paso,” and step by step. We can encourage, walk alongside each other and partner with people with vision impairment, who speak another language other than English, that there are resources that can teach you how to continue doing the things you need to do, you want to do, and really love to do. It will just be different.

Ricky Enger: Yeah, absolutely. I'm so happy that you emphasize just that collaborative approach because I think that's so important. We will have links to everything that we've mentioned here in our show notes. And of course, you can contact Hadley as well if you're looking for the link to a website or anything that we've mentioned here. So, if people are hoping to provide feedback, whether it's for Hadley's content that's being shared or for anything that NEHEP is doing for that matter, what's the best way that they can give that feedback?

Devina Fan: Well, we welcome your feedback. We have a general email. It's 2020@nei.nih.gov. That's 2020@nei.nih.gov.

Ricky Enger: Excellent. And people can just send their thoughts into that general mailbox about anything that they want to provide feedback for. And of course, if you are providing feedback to Hadley, you can do that by sending an email to feedback@hadley.edu. And once again, we will have links to all of these resources in our show notes or you can give us a call and we'll be happy to provide that for you. Any final thoughts before we wrap it up here from either of you?

Devina Fan: Thank you so much for having me on the show and just the opportunity partner. I feel like I talked a lot. And so, I really appreciate you having me on the show.

Ed Haines: Ricky, I'm just really excited that Hadley's involved in this, and I look forward to further involvement in the future.

Ricky Enger: Excellent. Well, thank you both so much for spending a little time with us and I am really, again, so excited to see people accessing these resources, getting that much needed information. Thank you again.

Got something to say? Share your thoughts about this episode of Hadley Presents or make suggestions for future episodes. We'd love to hear from you. Send us an email at podcast@hadley.edu. That's P-O-D-C-A-S-T@hadley.edu, or leave us a message at 847-784-2870. Thanks for listening.