



## OMG! IHPR/GirlScouts txtng 2 gt latina grls 2 xrciz

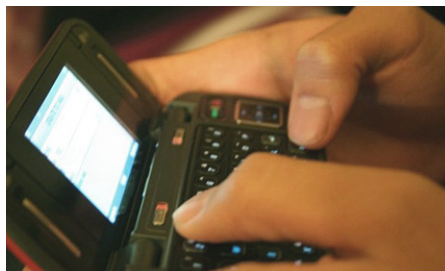
Through teen-friendly text messaging and Girl Scouts, a new partnership led by the IHPR aims to increase fitness among Latina girls in San Antonio.

The “Physical Activity Partnership for Girls” teams local universities with community groups to try to boost activity and reduce sedentary behaviors among Latinas ages 11-14 through text messaging, Girl Scout troop activities and community outreach.

“We think using ‘kid-popular’ technology and the partnership of academics, community leaders and Girl Scouts will increase the activity of Latina girls, who have higher obesity rates than other youths,” said IHPR researcher Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina, who directs the partnership, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

### Partners include:

- The IHPR at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio
  - UTSA (Health & Kinesiology, Electrical & Computer Engineering)
  - Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas
  - The Edgewood Family Network in San Antonio
- These agencies will work together to



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understand what impacts Latina girls’ activity through parent focus groups, in-depth interviews and media surveys.

Girl Scouts also will create photo essays and maps of their activity environment.

Project partners then will design a culturally competent intervention to inspire Latina girls to do an hour of moderate-to-vigorous activity a day and reduce sedentary activities.

Girl Scout troops will be randomized into regular programming or the new intervention, which will deliver health messages through cell phone texts, troop leaders and outreach.

“We think this technology-savvy, collaborative project can boost activity, enjoyment of activity and cardiorespiratory fitness among local Latina girls,” said Dr. Parra-Medina. “If it does, this program can be used by Girl Scouts across the nation.”

### Esparza joins IHPR team to aid Girl Scouts project

Laura Esparza, the newest member of the IHPR research team, is a key player in the new IHPR-Girl Scouts project to improve Latina girls’ health.



Laura Esparza

Esparza, whose research focuses on increasing fitness in underserved youths and women, served as a Girl Scout volunteer for nine years and developed the annual “It’s a Girl Thing!” event to promote healthy lifestyles among Girl Scouts.

She also helped UTSA conduct a community-based lifestyle intervention.

She joined the IHPR from UTSA in October 2009.

Now she’s the project coordinator for the IHPR-Girl Scouts project, responsible for partnership development, community engagement and helping design intervention strategies.

“I’m excited to be able to contribute to such a worthy community project,” said Esparza, who has a master’s degree in health and kinesiology from UTSA. “We really can improve the health of teen girls.”

## IHPR Articles and Presentations

### Articles/Reports:

- ▶ **Parra-Medina D**, Wilcox S, Wilson DK, Addy CL, Felton G, Poston MB. Heart Healthy and Ethnically Relevant (HHER) Lifestyle trial for improving diet and physical activity in underserved African American women. *Contemporary Clinical Trials*, Sept. 22, 2009.
- ▶ **Summit Report**. Inaugural *Salud America!* Scientific Summit, San Antonio, Texas, Sept. 9-11, 2009.

### Presentations:

- ▶ Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Inaugural *Salud America!* Scientific Summit.” Various presentations, welcome addresses and moderator roles at the Inaugural *Salud America!* Scientific Summit, San Antonio, Texas, Sept. 9-11, 2009.
- ▶ Luis Velez, Deborah Parra-Medina, Patricia Chalela, IHPR. Moderators, Inaugural *Salud America!* Scientific Summit, San Antonio, Texas, Sept. 9-11, 2009.
- ▶ Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Preventing Obesity among Latino Children.” Webinar series from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Center to Prevent Childhood

Obesity, “Let’s End the Childhood Obesity Epidemic,” Sept. 24, 2009. Watch the [webinar](#) or view the [slides](#).

- ▶ Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. Respondent, Southern Obesity Summit, Austin, Texas, Oct. 5, 2009.
- ▶ Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Improving Hispanic Life Through Research and Health Promotion.” National Hispanic Heritage Month event sponsored by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Rockville, Md., Oct. 7, 2009.
- ▶ Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Reducing and Preventing Breast Cancer among Latinos.” Institutes of Medicine (IOM) Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Oct. 11-12, 2009.

### IHPR researchers present at APHA Annual Meeting

Also, find out what IHPR Director Amelie G. Ramirez said to help [reduce childhood obesity](#) among Latinos and what IHPR Research Instructor Sandra San Miguel [revealed about the relationship](#) between Latina breast cancer patients and their families at The American Public Health Association’s 137th Annual Meeting, Nov. 7-11, 2009, in Philadelphia.