



The Impact of Ethnic Identity and a Caring Culture on Adolescent Development



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Questions and Hypothesis

Questions

What is the culture of care, and what are the components of a culture of care? How does the culture of care promote a positive ethnic identity (a component of the culture of care)? What is positive ethnic identity, and how does compensate for insecure attachment? What is the relationship between ethnic identity and attachment?

Assertion

The culture of care serves as a protective factor against problem behavior that lead to school suspension and/or expulsion among Latina/o adolescents who are identified as insecurely attached.

Abstract

- Addresses the impact of problem behaviors, particularly for a population that has become the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, the Latino population.
- Explores how the Culture of Care can foster a positive ethnic identity for insecurely attached adolescents who exhibit problem behaviors.
- Applies the theoretical lenses of Ainsworth's (1970) attachment theory and Phinney's ethnic identity theory (1992). Best practices for school psychologists are discussed

Literature Review

Background Information

- By the year 2020, Hispanic youth representing over 20% of the total 5 to 17-year-old population (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Despite their increasingly strong presence, Hispanics face various challenges such as low educational attainment and increased dropout rates (Peguero, Portillos, & Gonzalez, 2014).
- Problem behaviors can derail educational progress for the Latina/o population, affecting their development (Peguero & Bracy, 2015)
- Under Zero-tolerance policies, Hispanic youth are three times more likely to be suspended, expelled, and referred to court than European-American youth who commit the same infractions (Poe-Yamagata & Jones, 2007).

Definition of Terms

- *Problem Behavior*: behaviors that depart from regulatory norms, among youth.
- *Acting out behaviors* are problem behaviors; they are actions that exhibit physical aggressiveness; violation of school, class, or societal rules; outbursts; truancy; disrespect for authority (Lam, 2003).

Theoretical Foundations

Ainsworth's Attachment Theory (Ainsworth, 1970; 1978); (Main 1986)

Mary Ainsworth (1970) described attachment as an affectionate bond between child and primary caregiver. In an effort to induce and observe attachment behaviors of infants, Ainsworth designed the Strange Situation. The infants' responses to the Strange Situation were classified into one of three categories of attachment:

- (1) **secure**
- (2) **insecure avoidant**
- (3) **insecure ambivalent**

Main & Solomon (1986) replicated Ainsworth's initial study and added a fourth attachment style. Main & Solomon (1986) chose the term "**disorganized/disoriented**" when infants exhibit many diverse behaviors and could not be easily classified as secure, insecure avoidant, or resistant-ambivalent.

Phinney's Theory of Ethnic Identity Development (Phinney 1990; 1992; 1993; 1996)

Three Stage Model:

- Stage 1: Unexamined ethnic identity
- Stage 2: Exploration of one's own ethnicity
- Stage 3: Ethnic identity achievement

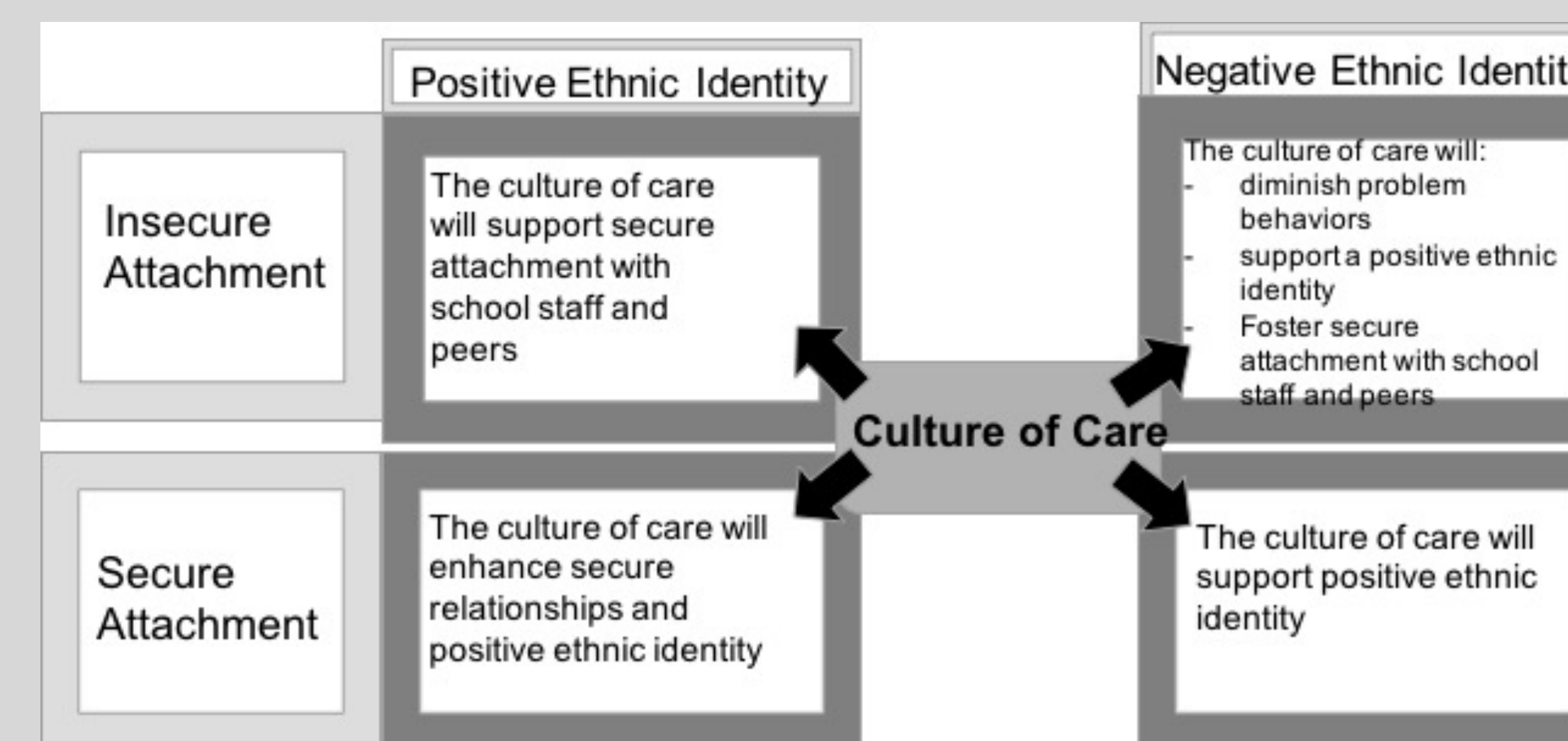
To develop a positive ethnic identity, an adolescent must develop a clear sense of self (roles and values), possess a sense of belonging to the group, hold positive attitudes about his/her own ethnic group membership, and participate in activities that support a certain level of ethnic involvement.

Proposed Integrative Model

Culture of Care

When students are provided with environments that foster a culture of care where ethnic groups and bilingual identities are accepted, students with insecure attachment can develop a positive ethnic identity.

A focus on healthy positive relationships provides students with the opportunities to engage and build the necessary skills to be successful.



Application of Integrative Model

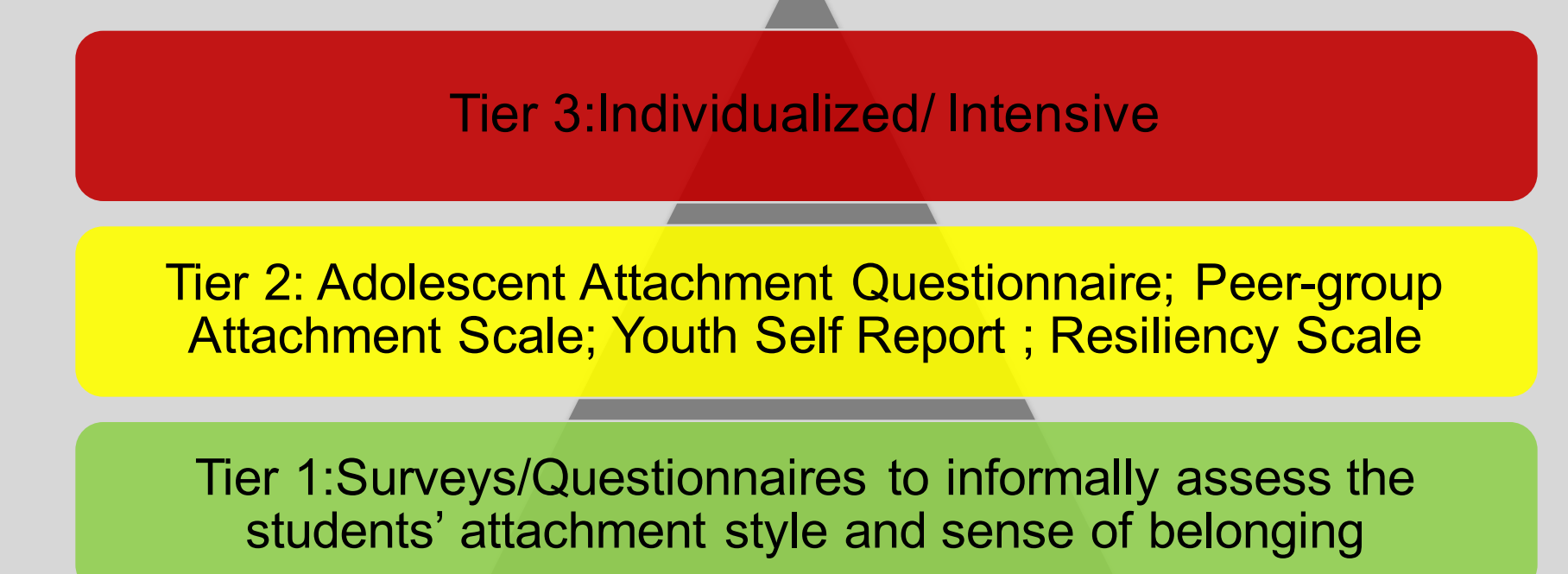
The integrative model can be applied to adolescents of Latino ancestry. Without a caring culture, insecure attached adolescents are at greater risk of exhibiting problem behaviors that lead to suspension. Additionally, they are more likely to have poor academic achievement, poor relationships with school staff and peers, and an unsupported ethnic identity development. When there is no support for positive ethnic identity development and secure attachment, an insecurely attached adolescent is more likely disengage academically or discontinue their education altogether.

	Positive Ethnic Identity	Negative Ethnic Identity
Insecure Attachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active coping • Poor attachment bonds with caregiver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low self esteem • Avoidant behaviors • Emotional and behavioral difficulties (e.g., easily distressed, defiance, aggression) • Unexamined ethnic identity • Poor academic achievement
Secure Attachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy relationships • Representation of others as supportive, helpful and positive • Coping skills to manage problem behavior • Strong sense of self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some problem behaviors • Poor sense of self • Poor sense of belonging

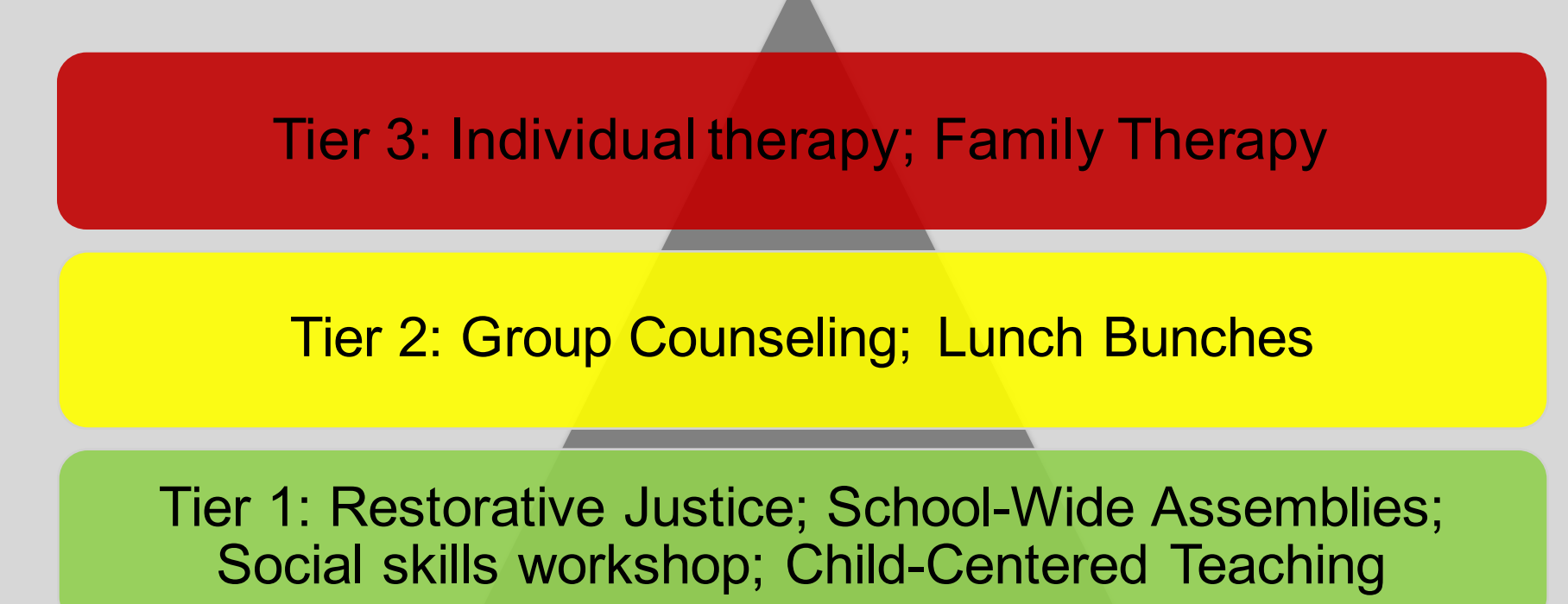
Best Practices

Response to Intervention (RTI)

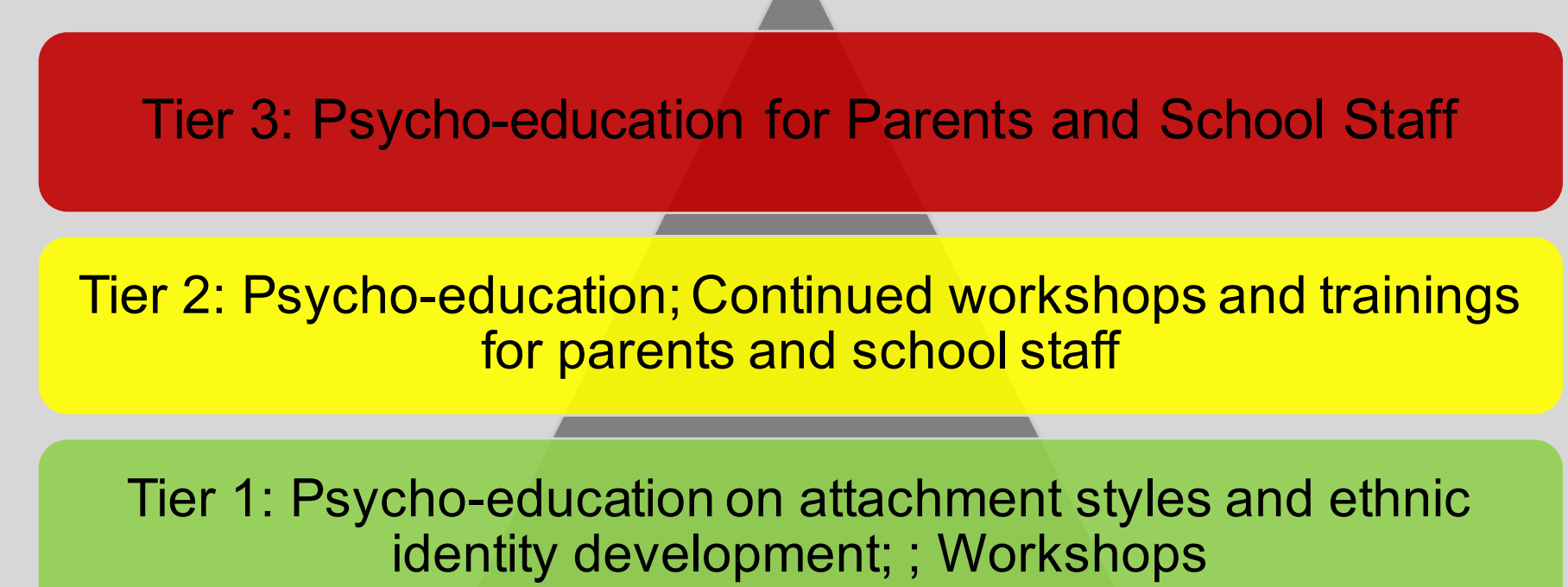
Assessment



Interventions



Consultation



Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the integrative model and the theories referenced, school psychologists can diminish problem behavior by:

- Promoting the Culture of Care; Child-Centered Teaching
- Supporting ethnic identity at school
- Increased sensitivity to ethnicity
- Implementing small shifts in disciplinary practices

References

Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Phinney, J. S. (1990). Ethnic identity in adolescents and adults: Review of research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(3), 499-514. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.108.3.499

Valenzuela, A. S. S. (1997). *Subtractive Schooling: US Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. New York: State University of New York Press.