



Con Mi **MADRE**
Mothers & Daughters Raising Expectations

CON MI MADRE

Programming

conmimadre.org

MISSION:
CON MI MADRE
INCREASES THE
REPRESENTATION OF
HISPANIC WOMEN IN
POST-SECONDARY
SCHOOLING THROUGH
EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SUPPORT
SERVICES TO
DAUGHTERS AND
THEIR MOTHERS.

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Middle School Program (6th-8th grades)

Activities designed for middle school girls to help them maintain academic success, build self-esteem, and encourage the dream of higher education. Because research indicates that a strong support system improves the child's, Con Mi MADRE seeks to strengthen the parent-child bond and to begin influence girls and their parents early. Early intervention allows Con Mi MADRE to help families understand the benefits of college and helps them to set goals and make real changes to support their daughter's education.

Mother-Daughter Conferences are held on Saturdays and focus on maintaining grades, dealing with peer pressure, developing healthy self-esteem, setting goals, and the benefits of a college degree. Four hours events are held 3-4 times a year.

Con Mi MADRE staff and University of Texas School of Social Work interns host bi-monthly School-Based **Campus Meetings** at targeted middle schools. Campus Meetings, which girls attend during the school day without their mothers, are in an informal setting that keeps staff apprised of the girls' plans, activities, and concerns and helps reinforce important messages discussed at the conferences. Staff provides Academic Advising during these meetings to girls.

Girls who are in good standing can receive a special invitation to attend the **Summer Leadership Conference**. This chaperoned activity is held on The University of Texas at Austin campus, where students spend the night in a college dormitory. Middle school girls learn teambuilding skills, build tools for good self-esteem, and discuss topics like teen pregnancy that can derail them from academic success.

High School Programming

Once girls enter high school, the focus shifts to preparing girls to apply for and enter college. Activities for high school girls focus on the college process and provides direction on becoming a competitive college applicant; being prepared academically for college; selecting the right college and the application process; and the pursuit of critical scholarships.

High school girls attend **Mother-Daughter Conferences** held on Saturdays during the school year. Topics include the college application process, writing admission and scholarship application essays, taking entrance exams, career choices, and identifying college financing. High School students attend **School-Based Campus Meetings** held on their school campus during the school day. Campus Meetings topics for these older girls include stress reduction techniques, healthy choices, handling school issues, and assimilation issues. Con Mi MADRE provides students with individual Academic Advising during these meetings.

Senior Mentor volunteers are matched with incoming seniors and help the family make decisions about college, fill out the college application, and financial support applications. Mentors work with families throughout the high school senior year.

Con Mi MADRE offers summer and school year **College Academies** for seniors to help with the college entrance process. Activities include researching colleges, and writing essays and resumes. In addition, students attending schools where College Forward provides services, receive ACT/SAT strategy classes along with their other services.

College Exploration campus visits help girls and parents choose the right college. Each year, Con Mi MADRE takes girls and their mothers on three to four college visits during school holidays and summer.



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SUCCESS STORY:

ARYANI M.

...I THINK THAT WITHOUT THE ASSISTANCE FROM THE PROGRAM I WOULD HAVE NOT HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE. I DON'T THINK I REALLY WOULD HAVE KNOWN MUCH ABOUT THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS OR LEARNED TO HAVE A DESIRE TO CARE ABOUT MY FUTURE IN THE WAY THE PROGRAM ENCOURAGES GIRLS TO DO. ALSO, THE RELATIONSHIP WITH MY MOTHER VASTLY IMPROVED BEING A PART OF THE PROGRAM. I THINK IT WAS THE PROGRAM THAT HELPED SAVED OUR RELATIONSHIP.

Students attending the **Summer Leadership Conference** get a glimpse of what they can expect in their new college student lifestyle. Spending the night in a UT dormitory under the supervision of adult chaperones offers a good transition to college life and introduces girls to various degree and career paths.

Active Junior and Seniors can receive **Financial Assistance** to cover SAT/ACT testing and college application fees. Active seniors are eligible for need and achievement-based scholarships. Each year, graduating seniors receive thousands of dollars in scholarships directly from Con Mi MADRE.

Healthy Living Program

Countless research indicates that solely addressing academic issues will not keep girls in school and on a college-bound path. Teen pregnancy, mental health issues and obesity have all been proven to negatively affect on academic achievement, The Healthy Living Program is an integrated approach to addressing physical and behavioral health barriers that limit academic achievement and pursuit of higher education. The program addresses teen pregnancy prevention, self-esteem, nutrition and fitness, mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence. Con Mi MADRE weaves this concept throughout all activities including Mother-Daughter Conferences, Campus Meetings, the Summer Leadership Conference, and the Parent/Family Engagement Series.

Con Mi MADRE offers **Individual and Family Case Management and Counseling** for girls who are facing academic or personal challenges that are affecting their ability to learn. This service is provided by qualified Con Mi MADRE staff and graduate-level social work interns.

To promote fitness, Con Mi MADRE hosts mother-daughter **Walking/Running Groups** led and motivated by a trained mother-daughter team. Teams train for 5K runs together.

Mothers and daughters also receive **Food and Nutrition Education**, including a culturally-appropriate approach to nutrition to encourage positive dietary changes and improved food safety habits.

The Con Mi MADRE **Healthy Living Camp** offers a series of activities throughout the summer for 6th and 9th grade girls. These activities can include canoeing, rock climbing, swimming, golf, tennis, walking/running, dance, yoga, and other enjoyable pursuits that get girls moving.

Parent Development Program

Because strong connections between home, school, and community effectively reduce barriers to student achievement, Con Mi MADRE programming includes a large parental involvement component.

During the summer, parents attend the **Parent/Family Engagement Series** to explore topics related to being an active force in their daughter's education. Parents can learn about the benefits of a college education for their daughter, effective parenting skills for raising adolescents and teens, and assimilating to a new culture while preserving the family's rich Hispanic heritage. Parents learn about raising daughters in a modern world, such recognizing depression in teens, cutting, talking to their teens about delaying sexual activity and preventing pregnancy, and identifying the signs of substance abuse.

Service Learning requirements provide girls and their mothers with opportunities to spend time with each other while making a difference in their community. Con Mi MADRE expects girls and their mothers to volunteer in meaningful community service projects. Con Mi MADRE staff arranges 8-15 opportunities for the teams during the year.



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SUCCESS STORY:

MELISSA M. FOR ONE WHOLE YEAR, CON MI MADRE HELPED THIS STUDENT'S MOTHER STUDY FOR HER US CITIZENSHIP TEST. AFTER MOM BECAME A US CITIZEN, MELISSA AND HER SISTER WERE MOTIVATED TO BECOME CITIZENS THEMSELVES. THEY APPLIED AND BECAME US CITIZENS SHORTLY AFTER MOM DID. MELISSA WAS ONE OF OUR TOP SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS AND IS NOW ATTENDING DUKE UNIVERSITY.

College Persistence

*Con Mi MADRE helps girls to be successful once they are in college, too. In partnership with Austin-based non-profit **College Forward**, staff offers post-high school support to college-bound Con Mi MADRE graduates.*

Local alumni, girls attending college out of town, and their mothers attend Bienvenidas a Casa (Welcome Home) workshops in June and December. Topics include: parental support of their daughter throughout college and budgeting and college financing issues.

College Forward, an Austin-based non-profit, provides support to Con Mi MADRE students through their college persistence program at their college campus.

Staff gets local students together four times a year in the **Hermanas Unidas** events. Students share with other alumni their successes and help find solutions to obstacles.