

**W**hich characteristics are found in families of successful women? Do similar characteristics exist in Hispanic families or do these differ?

### Characteristics of Effective Families

Several research studies show that certain characteristics exist in *all families* whose children find success. These were present across all ethnic groups. These include:

- (1) *a sense of control over their lives*—Parents believe they can help with their daughter's academic tasks. They are not frustrated with their present situation. Even when their income is rather low, they express hope for the future. They listen to their daughters' concerns and help others in need.
- (2) *they communicate high expectations*—They talk with their daughters about what they expect from them. They stress the importance of an education. Parents believe in active participation in school

projects. They look for ways to help them complete tasks. Through these actions, they communicate to their daughters that they must meet their obligations.

- (3) *the family has a family dream for future success*—Parents often speak about the future, how things are changing for the better. Their words of hope provide support and encouragement. These words also demonstrate their faith in their daughters' abilities.
- (4) *they view hard work as the key to success*—The families explain the role of hard work and effort in achieving success. They promote "doing your best" in any task to be done. If the work completed is not of high quality, they ask their children to redo it.
- (5) *rules for behavior exist and are clear*—These rules help the children learn that certain behavior is not tolerated. The daughters learn that breaking rules results in negative consequences.
- (6) *parents frequently communicate with teachers*—usually, the mother will

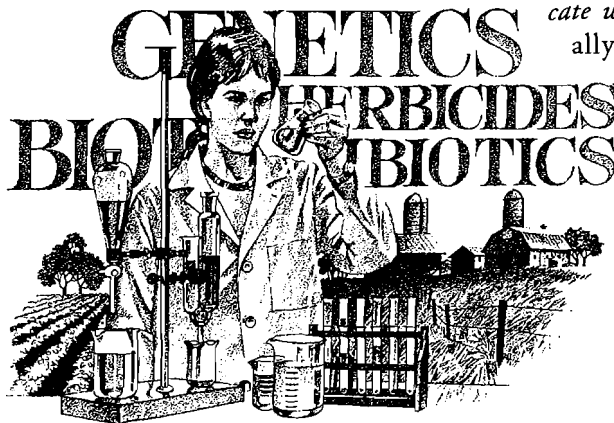
make school visits. She will frequently ask, "What can I do to help my child?"

### Notable Among Latino Families of Achieving Women

In general, strong and united families, as well as support are very important. Specifically, what Latino parents do to help includes:

- (1) *hold non-traditional beliefs regarding women*—They know that women can become doctors, lawyers, architects, etc. They allow the girls to participate in school groups that "push" them to learn mathematics, engineering concepts, or about space.
- (2) *they help the daughters to find their voice*—The parents allow them to express opinions or make suggestions (with respect). They also ask them to speak up for themselves. For example, if unhappy about the service provided, they should complain or ask for results. If they need information, they should request it themselves.

These families *both* support and push their daughters!



## Hispanic Parents Support Their Daughters' Success