

SOMOS — Promoting Community-Led Solutions in Sexual Health Education

Meeting People Where They Are

Beginning in 2018, Caring for Colorado set out to understand why some communities continued to experience high rates of unintended pregnancies among young people, at a time when unintended pregnancy rates were falling dramatically across the state. Working with the Tri-County Health Department, we observed that Latina populations in Pueblo and Commerce City continued to experience high fertility rates among adolescent girls.

Rather than funding existing pregnancy prevention programs or developing a new approach, Caring for Colorado chose to work directly with young Latinas and their families to better understand the root causes of early pregnancy. We partnered with the Curious Company and local Latina leaders in Pueblo and Commerce City to reach deeply into the Latina community and hear from them directly. After nearly a year of listening and dialogue with young people, using a human-centered design approach, the program SOMOS emerged. SOMOS—Spanish for “we are”—is a youth-designed program that supports young Latinas and the adults in their lives to build stronger



Facilitators and participants in Adams and Pueblo County.



bonds, and open communication on topics that are often difficult to talk about, such as family expectations, personal values, young people’s hopes and dreams and, importantly, opening up dialogue about sex, relationships, bodily autonomy and reproductive health.

SOMOS is a Latina-led, two-generation program that brings





Participants during a session in Adams County. Upon completion of the program, a graduation ceremony is held to celebrate the participants!

Latina youth and trusted adults together for meaningful conversations about issues that can be hard to navigate. The goal of SOMOS is to build knowledge and personal agency to support healthy relationships. This includes exploring values bodily autonomy, consent, setting boundaries, practicing self-advocacy, and increasing overall knowledge about sexual and reproductive health.

The curriculum is delivered over 10 sessions by trained community facilitators who focus on bringing together young women and their caregivers—mainly their mothers—in safe, welcoming spaces. These sessions help build practical skills for navigating the teenage years and offer developmentally appropriate and medically accurate information.

In 2023, ReproCollab expanded SOMOS by partnering with Vuela for Health, a respected community-based organization, to serve as the long-term implementation partner. This partnership aims to scale SOMOS into other Latina communities

across Colorado. Today, the program continues in Pueblo and Commerce City and has expanded into Aurora, Glenwood Springs, Rocky Ford, and Denver.

Our vision is to keep building on this momentum—scaling SOMOS to reach more Latina youth and families, and helping close the gap in culturally responsive, community-led sexual health education.

A High-Touch, Community-Rooted Program

SOMOS is a relationship-centered program led by *Promotoras de Salud*—trusted community health workers, also called facilitators, who provide culturally relevant education and resources. Rather than reaching large numbers, SOMOS focuses on deep, personal connections between youth, caregivers, and facilitators. It is designed for small group settings, where trust and meaningful dialogue can flourish. To date, Caring for Colorado has invested over \$2 million in the development and implementation of SOMOS.

Total Investment and Participants in SOMOS, 2018–2025

PHASE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	PARTICIPANTS	INVESTMENT
Development Phase			\$1,353,097
Human-centered design process led by the Curious Company and trusted Latina Leaders in Pueblo and Commerce City	Youth & Adult Focus Groups	595	
Community outreach and focus groups	Youth and Adult Interviews	103	
Two pilot programs to refine the model	Youth and Adult Participants in Pilots	121	
	Total	819	
Implementation Phase			\$657,000
Vuela for Health adapts the model to community needs	Youth Participants	221	
Facilitators trained in SOMOS sessions and in participant recruitment	Adult Participants	187	
Expansion to new communities	Facilitators Trained	32	
22 SOMOS Sessions held statewide as of August 2025	Total	440	
Total Investment			\$2,010,097

The Promise of SOMOS: Approach and Evaluation Results

SOMOS has been evaluated throughout its development. The most recent evaluation, led by Claudia Amura, PhD, MPH at the Colorado School of Public Health and Latino Research and Policy Center, offered valuable insights into how the program continues to evolve in response to community needs and feedback.

Findings indicate that the program is making a significant difference: participants shared that they gained a deeper understanding of sexual and reproductive health, including key concepts like consent and personal autonomy, which helped them feel more informed and empowered to make decisions that support their wellbeing.

Many also shared that they felt more confident discussing complex and often sensitive topics—such as healthy relationships, future planning, goal setting, and physical health—because they had practiced communication approaches and had been given shared language to have these conversations within their families.



Adult participants demonstrated significant growth in their understanding of the unique experiences and needs of LGBTQ+ young people, which helped shift perspectives and foster stronger intergenerational support.

In addition to these evaluation findings, it is also emerging that former SOMOS participants are especially well-positioned to be trained as Promotores de Salud, as they bring lived experience and community trust—qualities that make them uniquely capable of recruiting for and delivering the program.

Vuela for Health continues to receive strong, consistent, and positive feedback from participants about the value of SOMOS. Families report that the program builds bridges across generations, and parents continue to participate and actively encourage others in their community to join future SOMOS sessions.

The Future of SOMOS: Expansion and Adaptation

Vuela for Health will serve as Caring for Colorado’s long-term partner in implementing SOMOS and will continue to evolve the program as community needs and circumstances change. In 2026, Vuela for Health will initiate a pilot program to expand SOMOS offerings to include 4th and 5th graders, as requested by parents. Vuela for Health integrates the SOMOS curriculum into other health programs it provides, including discussions about mental health and safety within immigrant communities.

At the start of SOMOS, the creators hoped that SOMOS would become a movement promoting health within the Latina community that would result in positive generational change. Today, as more facilitators are trained and more young people and their families participate in this unique program, we believe SOMOS can and will achieve these aspirational goals.

We are proud that SOMOS remains a source of strength, connection, and hope—grounded in lived experience, responsive to local needs, and powered by the people it was built for.



Thank you to the Vuela for Health team, the facilitators, and all the community members for leading SOMOS. A special thank you to the participants that have shared their story with us—we are grateful.