In our HOME...

A PROMOTOR(A) PHOTONOVELA
Good morning, son.

Early that morning...

What time did you get in last night? I tried to wait up but couldn't stay awake.

Don't be so nosy mom. I was out with friends and came in late. So what?

But son, you know you need to be home by nine. And didn't you have homework?
Nine? You’re so annoying with that. I told you, I was with friends. Don’t wait up, I’ll be here when I’m done.

Yesterday I got a letter from your school, but it’s in English. Can you tell me what it says?

Um... it just says that they’re changing the menu in the cafeteria. Don’t worry, they keep on sending these things but it’s just nonsense. It’s nothing.

Thanks, son. Hurry and eat before you’re late for school.
What's for breakfast?

Again?
You made chilaquiles last week. Fine. I don't have time to stop by McDonalds on the way to work. Serve me some.

Good morning dear. I made chilaquiles. Eat.

Remember that I need your help this afternoon fixing the door. The lock doesn't work.

Again with the door?
I already told you I would fix it. But this afternoon I'm going out with the guys after work. We're going to see the game and who knows what else, so I can't help you today. Maybe Sunday.

But I need help. What time will you be home?
Don’t worry. Don’t wait up; I’ll get here when I’m done.

I can’t do everything alone. My son Jorge doesn’t listen to me or respect me, and I don’t feel like Roberto supports me like a husband should.

What can I do?
Hi girl! How are you?

Never mind about that now. What’s going on? You look a bit tired and down, is everything okay?

Jorge is growing up fast. He’s almost a man. He’s not as tender and loving with me as he used to when he was a kid, and I know that’s normal when they grow up...

But now he’s disrespectful, doesn’t come home on time and sometimes I feel like he’s not completely honest with me.

Oh Lupe, I forgot you were coming today. We were going to the market and where else?
Why do you think he’s not being honest?

It’s often difficult to get along with teenage sons. That’s an age when they change a lot. But it is also a dangerous age when one, as a parent, needs to be more aware of what is happening in their lives because it’s when they can get themselves into a lot of trouble and risk affecting the rest of their lives.

I don’t know. But, for example, this morning I asked him to translate a letter I got from his school. It felt like he wasn’t telling the truth.

Let me see the letter. I can tell you what it says.
This is a letter from Jorge’s principal.

What does it say?

It says Jorge has skipped several classes this month and it looks like he’s also been having problems with his history teacher, Mrs. Walker. It says that Jorge has been disrespectful with her and doesn’t follow instructions.

The principal wants to meet with you, the parents, before things get worse and they are forced to kick him out of school.

Oh Lupe, I don’t know what to do. Jorge doesn’t listen to me either, so I don’t know how to talk to him. Roberto doesn’t support me on these things...

And even if I wanted to meet with the principal, I don’t know English or how the system works.

Do you remember my friend Maria?
The one that lives in Roseville?

Yes that’s the one. Maria is a promotora with the Campaign for Community Wellness and the Latino Leadership Council.

What is a promotora?

They’re people from in our community dedicated to helping and supporting families with health, mental health and school resources.

But I’m not crazy or sick. What does this have to do with Jorge?

But they provide much more than that. They also help with programs that help parents like you learn skills to better raise their kids, communicate better with them and effectively discipline.

They even help you better understand the school system, access academic programs within the school, be aware of your child’s academic progress and develop better communications between you and your kid’s teachers and principal.
But do they offer all that in Spanish?

Sure, and they even offer programs for youth in which teenagers like Jorge can participate in positive activities instead of hanging out with friends that may have a bad influence or even get involved with gangs.

I didn’t know about those services or about the promotoras. How can I start using them?

If you have internet, you can go to www.bienestarcomunitario.com to see more information. But if you prefer, you can call my friend Maria. She manages the promotores programs, so she can put you in touch with the best person and resources to help you.

Do you have Maria’s number?

Sure, it’s (530) 320-5353.

Thank you so much Lupe. You’re always there for me...

I’ll call her today.
Hopefully you can help me.

Don’t worry. If you’re willing to invest the time and energy to improve your family’s situation, we’re here to help and support you.

Thank you...

The first step is to better understand the situation with Jorge and his school.

We’re going to help you set up an appointment with the principal and the history teacher so that you can learn directly from them what the problems are and better understand what we have to do.

But I don’t understand English or how to work with the teachers.

Don’t worry. That’s why you have me, and we also have other promotores in the schools who can help us. I’ll help you set up the meeting and together we’ll prepare a list of questions and topics we want to address with the teacher and principal.

Thank you for your call yesterday and for letting me visit today.
I didn't know I could do that.

Yes, it's really easy. Tell me more about how Jorge treats you.

Well, he stays out really late and he doesn't obey. He disrespects me and talks to me like if he were talking to a maid instead of his mother. I don't know what to do.

Can I ask you a very personal question?

Feel free.

Your husband, Roberto, how does he treat you?

Roberto works hard and provides for our family. I love him very much, but sometimes I feel like he doesn't support me. He goes out a lot with his friends and he doesn't help when Jorge disobeys.

If you want, I can go with you to the appointment, help with interpretation and see what resources the school has to help you. That way you can build a better relationship with the teachers and know if there's a problem before you get another letter.
Well, sometimes a little rough, but that’s because he’s tired after work and has a lot on his mind.

Is it possible that Jorge may be learning how to behave with you based on how he sees your husband treating you?

I hadn’t thought of it that way, but there are a lot of similarities between the ways they both talk to me.

It could also be that Jorge is learning how to mistreat or disrespect other women in his life... including his teacher and principal.

It’s a habit that will affect his future too, when he’s married or has daughters.

You are right. What can I do about it?
Well, I have two suggestions for you. First, I know Roberto loves you very much and might not even be aware of how he treats you and how that affects Jorge. I suggest you talk to him.

Find a time when he’s not tired from work or in a hurry to go somewhere. Talk to him, share your point of view and ask him to help you improve Jorge’s future.

I’m a little embarrassed, but I’ll try to do it.

The second suggestion is that you attend the Parents Project. It’s a series of classes that can help you identify how to best deal with problems with your kids, teach them and improve their future.

It’s only once a week, so I would recommend that you invite Roberto to join with you.

Thank you, it sounds like a good opportunity to learn how to interact with Jorge and give him a better future.
What a goal! No, it's not that. The door can wait...

Yes, finally! And what a game, they almost lost.

That's good... Roberto, do you have a few minutes?

Yes, I know... you want me to fix the door. I'll do it in a bit.

No, it's not that. The door can wait...

I wanted to talk to you for a bit.
What's wrong dear?

Jorge is not doing well in school.

What happened?

I received a letter from his school telling me that he's not turning in his homework and that he's being very rude with his teacher.

Well, you know how they are...they treat him different because he's Latino. Jorge is a good kid, they just don't see that because of their prejudices.

I don't think that's it. I've also noticed how much he's changed lately. He doesn't treat me well either and he doesn't obey me. And every day it feels like things are getting worse.

You're his mother. Don't let him talk to you that way.
ROBERTO, I KNOW YOU LOVE ME, AND I KNOW THAT YOU WORK REALLY HARD ALL DAY AND EVEN SOME NIGHTS TO PROVIDE FOR US. BUT SOMETIMES YOU TALK TO ME IN THE SAME WAY, AND I THINK THAT JORGE SEES THAT, LEARNS AND THINKS THAT HE CAN TREAT ME, HIS TEACHER AND OTHER WOMEN IN THE SAME WAY.

DEAR, I DON'T TREAT YOU THAT WAY AT LEAST NOT ON PURPOSE.

I KNOW YOU DON'T MEAN TO, BUT IT HAPPENS AND IT MAKES ME FEEL INFERIOR, BUT IT ALSO AFFECTS HOW JORGE TREATS OTHERS.

HE'S STILL GROWING AND LITTLE THINGS LIKE THAT CAN REALLY AFFECT THE TYPE OF MAN HE'LL BECOME AS WELL AS HIS FUTURE.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I'LL TALK WITH HIM ABOUT THIS SO THAT HE UNDERSTANDS HOW TO APPRECIATE AND RESPECT OTHERS.

THANK YOU.

AND I'LL ALSO TRY TO BE MORE AWARE OF HOW I TREAT YOU AND BE A better EXAMPLE TO JORGE.

I LOVE YOU SO MUCH.

ME TOO.
The door?

No, not yet...I'm going to start going to a class to learn how to better support and raise Jorge. It's only once a week for a couple of months. If you are interested...

Jorge is my son as well. If I'm not working those nights, I'll go with you.

You're such a good father.

I'll be better. Now I'll go talk to Jorge.

One other small thing...

The door?

And afterwards...the door?
Good morning son.

Hi mom.

Yesterday I spoke with your teacher and she said that you have history homework. Did you do it?

Yes, I finished it this weekend. A classmate of mine is in that youth group you told me about from the Latino Leadership Council. We got together on Saturday and did it together. We’re also starting to study for a test we have on Friday.

That’s good to hear. Hurry up and eat before you’re late.
Good morning. You want breakfast?

Yes please. Do you want me to start the coffee?

I already started it, thanks, but if you want you can bring me a couple of plates so I can serve us.

The youth group is organizing a day at the waterpark this Sunday. Is it okay if I go with them?

You like that group?

Yes, a lot. They have a lot of fun activities like that trip. But also the following weekend they’re helping clean up a neighborhood park and last month they helped plant vegetables in a community garden. They all get along really well and I have a good time with them.
THANKS MOM. IT’S GETTING LATE. I HAVE TO HEAD OUT, BUT I’LL SEE YOU TONIGHT.

BEFORE NINE...

YES, I KNOW MOM, BEFORE NINE.
And a better future.

Unfortunately, my immediate future is that I have to be at work, but thank you for breakfast.

Yes, there are still problems once in a while, but nothing like before. The classes helped me a lot, and with your support and love, I think we've created a better environment for him.

It looks like things have been improving over the last couple of months.

And a better future. Unfortunately, my immediate future is that I have to be at work, but thank you for breakfast.

Bye dear, see you this afternoon.

Before nine?

Such a joker! Hurry up or you'll be late.
Three months ago I felt lost, not knowing how to deal with problems in the family. I was stressed, a little depressed and felt like I was drowning without finding a way out.

With help from the promotores and the Latino Leadership Council, I feel like I can finally take some control over my problems and start moving my family toward a more positive path, and give my son the future he deserves. The truth is that it’s not all perfect, but every day things improve a little more.

If you or your family needs help, call Maria at (530) 320-5353.

She and her group of promotores can help you. They helped me.
FOR LATINOS LIVING IN PLACER COUNTY, it is often difficult to access needed services or simply know where to go when one needs help or advice. The Latino Leadership Council’s promotores can help you.

The promotores program is a free service that can help you in the following areas:

**PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH**
Promotores can provide information on a variety of health topics and help you access the resources and help you need.

Celina Salas (916) 802-2260
CelinaS@LatinoLeadershipCouncil.org

**SOCIAL PROGRAMS**
Programs to help children and teenagers avoid problems with gangs, in school or with the authorities. The programs also help give parents the skills and tools needed to help their children succeed.

**The Parent Project**
A program for parents with teenagers who are facing problems with gangs, schools or having other behavioral issues.

Leticia Martínez (916) 208-6790
LeticiaM@LatinoLeadershipCouncil.org

**Drug and Alcohol Prevention**
Programs that can help teens and adults avoid substance abuse.

María Córdova (530) 320-5353
MariaC@LatinoLeadershipCouncil.org

**Youth Activities**
Positive activities and programs for children and teens.

Jorge Gonzalez (916) 532-5532
JorgeG@LatinoLeadershipCouncil.org

**PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS**
If you need assistance accessing resources in your children’s schools, our promotores can help you navigate the school system and receive the educational support your children need.

Alma Navarrete (916) 759-2907
AlmaN@LatinoLeadershipCouncil.org