Valeria Cordova

Cross-Cultural Psychology

Hugs as Greetings in Latin America and in Hispanic Families

Physical affection is something that Hispanics are taught to value and cherish since they are very young, so it’s deeply ingrained into our culture and daily lives. Because of this, hugs and, sometimes kisses depending on the country, are the default greeting in most social situations like meetups, dinners, get-togethers and more, but not including school. In Latin America, the thought process is as follows:

* If it's one of the following people, hug:
  + Parents
  + Siblings
  + Aunts and uncles
  + Grandparents
  + Close friends
* If it’s a close friend of your parents, hug if you are not meeting for the first time
  + If you are prompted after being introduce hug hello, otherwise
* Generally, if they are older, hug if you have met more than once
* If you are meeting someone for the first time, hug goodbye