

Appendix 3

Local Focus Groups Summaries

Brown County

1. Please think about your life experiences and how you learn best. How and where would you like to learn in your community?

Info. gathered from adults:

1st Part:

- Class instructions/curriculum
- Learn best by reading
- Having hands-on
- Repetition/learning from others
- Quiet environment
- Motivation by challenges/role-models

2nd Part:

- Public/private institutions
- Churches

Info. gathered from youth:

1st Part:

- Learn best by setting goals
- ESL programs (helped this particular person to read and helped expand student's English vocabularies)
- Encouragement/support by parents
- Learn by listening and reacting

2nd Part:

- School may be the learning tool that exists, but not necessarily just in the classrooms. It's the outside of classroom activities that teach the most about life.
- Learn in the Hmong community-would like to learn how to be a Hmong talker.
- Hope to expand learning experiences in the various parts of the community.
- Want to educate themselves in all aspects of the community, not only to benefit themselves but also to help the Hmong community.
- Would like to learn how to accept people for who they are. Would like to learn this from parents or relatives for they have been this student's idols since she was a little child.

2. What challenges and issues are you seeing in your local Hmong community?

Info. gathered from adults:

-Language barriers:

- *English language
- *Hmong youth are losing the Hmong language, which is causing lots of

miscommunication.

- Community lacks partnerships with other agencies/businesses.
 - *Poor relationships with the majority community.
 - Ie: Boys and girls Club in La Crosse allows the Hmong community to utilize their facility for free (just Hmong).
- Conflicts between parents & children, for example, relationships/communication.
- Offer evening activities for Hmong adults.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Young Hmong teenagers getting married.
- Hmong gangs killing other Hmong gangs.
- Communication problems between parents and their children.
- These conflicts can cause children to lose interest in school or to join gang activities.
- Some Hmong parents do not understand the struggles and challenges that their children face each day.
- Limited resources and jobs that Hmong parents face. Limited English speaking skills and writing skills prohibit them from finding decent jobs.
- Environment and community in which Hmong people live are main factors that contribute to the challenges and issues they face.
- Dropping out of high school due to early marriages.
- Idea of forgiveness and unity: many different clans constitute the Hmong community, but people generally stick to their own.
- People are different and the Hmong culture needs to accept that more.
- We complain about the racist views against us, but have been hypocritical ourselves.

3. What has successfully worked for your local Hmong community in the past to address these challenges and issues?

Info. gathered from adults:

- Nothing's been successful yet.

Info. gathered from youth:

- The Hmong community feels that it has a voice to be heard due to many that have become citizens of the U.S---many have obtained their U.S. citizenship due to the Citizenship law.
- Still experiencing poor housing.
- More people graduating from colleges.

4. What are the challenges facing Hmong individuals and families?

Info. gathered from adults:

- Family relationship/communication.
- Employment---difficult to find good paying jobs.
- Financial and lack of education.
- Lack of education to provide support for their children
Ie: tutoring (to help their children to do their homework)
- Marriages are experiencing conflicts especially in the areas of communication and support.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Hmong manners that the youth have to follow.
- Hmong language—it's hard to speak it.
- Getting along with each other.
- Finishing college and finding a decent job.
- Support for the family.
- Early marriages.
- Finishing high school.
- Parents expressing their emotions----not many parents are able to freely express their emotions.

5. What are the challenges facing Hmong business and business owners?

Info. gathered from adults:

- Relationship between Hmong businesses and the City of Green Bay ie: Green Bay inspectors.
- Customers are mostly Hmong so need to attract the majority population.
- Lack of public advertisements.
- Lack of funding.
- Lack of education.
- Vandalism.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Not making profits.
- Hmong businesses need to be known more within the community.
- All the legal aspects of starting your own firm.
- Business competitions among one another. Ie: there are many Hmong grocery stores.

6. Could you also tell us about issues or needs for:

a. The Elderly:

Info. gathered from adults:

- English barriers, perhaps have movies/news translated or with subtitles.
- Develop more activities for the elderly.
- Health care: developing a Hmong nursing home would be nice----due to food, culture, language, care, etc.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Need to understand and accept their children's friends.
- Need to know more about the American community.
- Language barriers.
- Elderly Hmong often feel confine and subject to ridicule by Hmong youth for not knowing and acting like the American way (style).
- Difficulties adjusting to the American culture/environment.
- Losing respect from the younger generation.
- Healthcare and retirement benefits.
- Unable to get around by themselves.

b. Entrepreneurs/Economic Development Needs:

Info. gathered from adults:

- same as #5

Info. gathered from youth:

- Start up loan program.
- More economic resources.

c. Families:

Adults shared the same concerns as previously discussed.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Get along with each other.
- Too much differences between the young and old generations in the areas of religion, career, school and family values.
- More support needed.
- Need to develop more reliable resources for parents and children.

d. Child Care/Work Issues:

Info. gathered from adults:

- Need more funding
- Need more education so there would be more licensed Hmong care takers.
- Facility for daycare.
- It's not like in Laos where there were more family members living in one household.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Youth need to work to help support the family.
- Don't see as a major concern for child care because of the extended family support.
- More Hmong day care centers.
- More funding.

e. Intergenerational Relationships:

Info. gathered from adults:

- Need to strengthen communication and relationship among the younger generation and the older generation.
- Education is needed to all generations so they can understand each other's views ie: the Hmong culture.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Adults need to understand their kids and vice versa.
- Intergenerational marriages: the husband is very traditional and the wife is young and not traditional. This has created some conflicts and lots of miscommunication.
- Need to accept the differences that exist between each person's needs and desires.

f. Health of Individuals and Families:

Info. gathered from adults:

- Need more health/life insurance.
- Doctors need to be more aware or educated about the Hmong culture.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Family needs to take care of each other.
- Need to regularly see their doctors (usually do not go unless they have to).
- Health insurance.
- Not receiving the necessary medical assistance needed.
- Can't afford medical or dental check-ups.
- Hmong elders rely more on Hmong herbals than the clinics.

g. Housing:

Info. gathered from adults:

- Too much discrimination.
- Due to large families, there are very few big houses.
- Need to do more education on tenant's rights.
- More financial for renting or buying homes.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Not enough room for family to live in.
- Need more clean places for children to live in.

- Some locations do not welcome Hmong families due to their large families (when buying a home).
- More loan programs to help families buy homes.

- h. Educational programs (K-12 experience, drop out problems, college preparation for high school students, older adults, continuing education classes):

Info. gathered from adults:

- More staff of color/Hmong teachers for role-models. (school age children)
- ESL programs. More testing needed to appropriately place the students.
- More funding for citizenship classes.
- ESL classes for adults.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Employment trainings.
- Develop more educational programs for students of color-----more guidance in high school is needed.
- Motivational workshops.
- College prep. workshops.
- Develop more English classes to people who do not speak or write English.
- Offer more after school programs for students to receive additional help in their school work.

7. What are some of the educational topics you or others would like to learn more about?

Info. gathered from adults:

- Need more education on laws/rights, especially, when dealing with children ie: 18 yrs. old (What can you do?).
- Public funding
- Government funding for buying a home.
- What's important when filling out a loan application.
- Banking, especially, in the area of trust. Many do not feel safe to put money in the bank.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Hmong's struggle journey to U.S.
- Vietnam War
- Hmong culture and other culture.
- Learn how to read and write in Hmong.
- Learn how to do your own taxes.
- Learn other languages such as Japanese, Chinese or Laotian.
- Would like to see the public schools teach other cultures or add other cultures to their curriculum.

8. What would be the best way for you to learn about those topics?

Info. gathered from adults:

- Develop sign up sheets so that classes can be tailored to the interested topics.
- Invite experts to speak to the community about different topics (host workshops).
- Coordinate career workshops.

Info. gathered from youth:

- Have knowledgeable people come in to talk about their areas.
- Schools/classes.
- Host conferences.
- Summer programs such as boy scouts have.
- After school sessions for people to learn.

9. Are there any additional thoughts you would like to share?

Info. gathered from adults:

- More funding for extra-curriculum activities, ie: facility for the Hmong community to use.
- Parks for Hmong sports.
- More land for gardening.
- More upper level positions for Hmong.
- Offer more education training for Caucasians to learn about the Hmong culture and its people.
- More recognition for the Hmong veterans.
(currently, the Hmong veterans do not receive any government funding)

Info. gathered from youth:

- More education about the Hmong culture for the majority community.
- To be more Americanized.

FOCUS GROUP DEMOGRAPHICS

Date of the Meeting: February 23, 2002

Site Location: UW-Green Bay

Facilitator: Ka Youa Kong

Number of participants at the site: 23

Number of men: 6

Number of women: 6

Number of male youth: 4

Number of female youth: 6

Number of Hmong participants: 22

Number of other Southeast Asian: 0

Number of people under the age of 20: 6

Number of people 20 to 30: 7

Number of people 30 to 40: 3

Number of people 40 to 55: 3

Number of people 55 to 65: 3

Number of people 65 and older: 0