

La Crosse County

February 23, 2002

**Hmong Educational Needs Assessment
Young Adult Female – Ages 18 – 25 Years Old**

1. What challenges and issues are you seeing in your local Hmong Community?

Generation gap between elderly and youth:

Elderly don't become part of programs that are held / promoted by youth.

Celebration of generations held by Hmong Organization.

Get elderly out to spend time with youth (families.)

Community days:

Get community to come together to join in on games, discussion groups.

Lack of support for school aged kids by their parents:

Parents don't understand things going on at school.

Communication between school / parents.

Kids get confused with difference in societies:

At School teacher compliments, supports and when at home parents don't compliment, support.

Kids get affected mentally which leads to bad choices in the future.

Kids want to be Americanized (identity crisis) but are physically different and can't blend in.

Being pulled apart.

Parents don't praise when others do.

ESOL programs:

Is it still in need?

Tested before taking standardized tests.

Kids are taught to be quiet and not ask questions. Actually don't need ESOL.

Stereotype, automatically put in ESOL.

Parents sometimes don't understand that they have choices as far as ESOL comes to mind.

ESOL a failure.

Interpreters, liaison etc... are not useful due to lack there of.

Failure of communication between parents / school district.

Pull out / mainstream.

2. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong individuals and families?

Gender issues with parents:

Males / boys more freedom.

Girls / females more responsibilities.

Family relationships.

College girls find it difficult to find compatible partners.

Sexism:

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Young Adult Female – Ages 18 – 25 Years Old (continued)

Males don't want an educated wife, liberated, uncontrollable.
Living away from home creates lack of communication.
Not enough role models.
Young kids have no one to look up to to make good decisions.
All adolescents have been tempted to get boyfriends / get married.
Girls / boys are taught their roles at young age.
Parents find it difficult to trust their kid's role models.

Role models

Kids look up to certain role models.
Kids need people to talk to and trust, eventually over time they come to trust someone and eventually that trusting person becomes their role model.
Try to become individualized.

Parents instill behaviors.

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

Understanding and just being there to talk to them.

Conference with parents and kids:

Parents traditional vs modern:

Traditional - don't understand and don't want to change, more strict.

Modern – more understanding, educated, more lenient.

4. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong businesses and business owners?

No support from communities.

Competing amongst ourselves.

Families have low income, cannot afford to go out to eat.

Some people are greedy, not wanting to spend money.

Being conservative, lived that way always, difficult to change.

5. Could you tell us more about issues or needs for:

The Elderly?

Child Care / Work Issues?

Intergenerational relationships?

The Health of Individuals and Families?

Housing?

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Young Adult Female – Ages 18 – 25 Years Old (continued)

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

Economic issues?

Blacksmith shop, place for elderly to be apart of.

No one to spend time with elderly.

Language gap between young and elderly.

Less respect.

Losing connection with elderly.

Child care:

Take advantage of elders to use them as part of your family, baby sit, help with things.

Health Issues:

Difficulty of medical terminology.

Superstition, afraid of being drugged, given a disease, done wrong on purpose.

Doctors who deal with Hmong people learn the language to communicate with patients.

Hospitals are less strict about doing spiritual ceremonies at hospital rooms

Back in Laos, always keeping busy.

In U. S. do less work, home all the time.

Lack of understanding / life style.

Identity crisis for younger intergenerational groups.

Try too hard to be Americanized and try to forget their culture altogether.

Kids want to fit in, “in” crowd / “out” crowd.

Media express okay to be culturally altogether.

It embarrasses youth.

Elderly don't have respect for youth.

Parents feel youth can't do things so take over.

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

It first comes from your family.

Need family members who understand to discuss things.

Youth want to have freedom like their friends who have parents who are more understanding.

Learn from doing and explain to others.

Some are visual learners.

Some need step-by-step instructions.

Learn things at gatherings.

Go where others go too.

2. What are some educational topics that you or others would like to learn more about?

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment
Young Adult Female – Ages 18 – 25 Years Old (continued)

Others should learn more about the Hmong people.
Have Hmong courses available at universities due to population.
Schools need to develop diversity issues, programs involving Hmong culture, etc...
Classes to teach Hmong language.

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

Diversity training required.
Have information on Hmong people in text available.
Knowledge of Hmong makes professors / teachers more comfortable with talking about that issue.
Professors / teachers required to take culture sensitivity classes.
Advertise for teachers to come to UW-L to learn about Hmong culture.

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

La Crosse is a good size city that one goal is for entire Hmong community to work together.
If we don't work together, it will be difficult for our kids to work together in the future.
We can't rely on each other.
Need financial, people support to get together to do things.
University organizations are good models that work.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Young Adult Male – Ages 18 – 25 Years Old

1. What challenges and issues are you seeing in your local Hmong Community?

Hmong kids do bad stuff, drugs, gangs, play around.

Communication b/w us and elders. Communication b/w children and adults not solid. Cultural gap, parents dictate things, not as welcome to children's suggestion, which leads to kids breaking out when first have freedom.

Most of our parents don't want to change, they want to stay where they are comfortable.

Academic struggle for youth.

Problem:

Parents inability to help academically.

Lack of resources, money.

Lack of help and lack of understanding from school counselors.

Lack of positive role models. Don't have anyone coming back to connect with the youth.

Culture adds to communication.

2. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong individuals and families?

Hmong kids not involved, no guidance at middle school and high school.

Facing the question, "What is Hmong?" everyday, struggle to define self and fit in.

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

There hasn't been any?

Same efforts seen, but not effective enough.

These organizations need to involve more diverse groups, individuals, not just Hmong youth.

No diversity, no challenge.

No one is willing to do things by themselves.

What is success?

Is it economic, community, etc...

Why there isn't bilingual education?

Racism, face on a daily basis.

What can we do to preserve cultures?

4. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong businesses and business owners?

Hard to get customers with narrow product / services.

We don't have any real successful business.

Why not?

Don't have money.

Businesses got to address or target the whole community. Diversify customer base.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Young Adult Male – Ages 18 – 25 Years Old (continued)

5. Could you tell us more about issues or needs for:
- The Elderly?
 - Child Care / Work Issues?
 - Intergenerational relationships?
 - The Health of Individuals and Families?
 - Housing?
 - Educational programs (K-12 experience, drop out problems, college preparation for high school students, older adults, continuing education classes)?
 - Economic issues?

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

Have to do with hands on, nothing beats that.

Informal education.

Have to have the mentor. Need more mentorship, apprenticeship earlier in life.

More diverse opportunity as far as mentorship and apprenticeship.

2. What are some educational topics that you or others would like to learn more about?

Secret war in Laos

Bilingual, Hmong language at / for elementary and middle school level.

Workshop / class on cultural and generational issues, to help and assist communication process.

Teach respect for each other's position and roles.

Class on disadvantage of early marriage for Hmong youth.

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

Curriculum infusion of Hmong history and culture. Make it mandatory for school students.

Bring in speaker.

Having seminars / workshops.

Formulate a way to bridge the communication gap.

1. Are there any additional thoughts you would like to share with us?

Needs to be an end product to what we are doing.

Need programs and educational resource.

Have to incorporate bicultural understanding and communication in order to preserve the culture.

Gender:

Need respect for both partners; vise versa.

Need to teach and encourage young ladies to speak-up for themselves.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment
Young Adult Male – Ages 18 – 25 Years Old (continued)

Men need to teach one another to listen to women.

Need self-education.

Need to encourage young ladies to be self-sufficient and efficient.

Need to educate young people on young / early marriage.

Teach respect for culture views.

Marriage not an escape.

Provide whole picture for young people.

Educate parents on life of young people and their struggle.

Educate every one on consequences of life decisions.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adolescent 18 And Under

Introductions: Tell your name and what you would ordinarily do on a Saturday.

Joe: running or watching cartoons with two year old daughter.

Donny: sleeping in.

Gre: with friends

Suki: play on computer, watching T.V., playing ball in the basement.

Danny: showering.

Molly: doing laundry.

Vicki: sleeping.

Luke: sleeping.

Khou (note taker): sleeping or working at Kwik Trip.

1. What challenges and issues are you seeing in your local Hmong Community?

Internally:

Respecting one elders. Kids these days are not respecting them b/c of different viewpoint.

Using our language. Our first language is Hmong, but for those of us born here, we speak more English than Hmong.

Gangs.

Read and write Hmong.

Too much expectation from parents: Become a lawyer or doctor. Our parents pressure. They want a good reputation for the family.

Dating. Our parents want us to only go out with our own people and not other races.

Externally:

Guns and other weapons.

Extracurricular activities most Hmong kids have better things to do than be with Hmong kids. I want more Hmong students to be more optimistic about joining sports.

Violence.

Having an education. Most Hmong kids don't have motivation to continue education b/c of the parents. They didn't have an education and so they think its better to just stay home.

Understanding needs. Hmong people speak Hmonglish at school and get criticized by our teachers or other students.

Too much homework by teachers causing us stress and discouraging us from liking school.

Cooperating with other races. Hmong always have bad feelings with white people.

Sometimes whites think they're higher than us. They talk higher than us.

Holmen, hick town, six families that are Hmong and high school is difficult. I'm the only Hmong kid in show choir.

It seems I'm getting all the attention b/c I'm the only Hmong student in basketball.

2. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong individuals and families?

Family challenges:

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adolescent 18 And Under (continued)

Responsibility. Getting older and needing to have more responsibilities from our parents.
Reputation. The family name to uphold. The community is so close that one person could ruin the whole family. When I do something not right or stupid, my dad, he always gives me lectures. The Hmong community knows him so well.

Facilitator. Part of this issue is the need for privacy.
Yes, if you get in trouble with the law everyone knows b/c your parents tell them.
The parents want kids to become something real high, not a music career. Be a doctor or a lawyer.

It's kind of like they're living your life for you b/c they didn't have the chance. They discourage you from doing other things. I love sports and they criticize me. Volleyball, you're too short. Basketball, you'll never excel. Focus on something else.
Biases from coaches. My coach sees me as this soccer player only b/c they have this bias. Not all Hmong kids play soccer better. In my football team, he wants me to be the one who kicks the football b/c he sees me as that. I don't really want to. Coaches are racist. It discourages Hmong from joining sports.

Facilitator clarification. You're saying that your parents discourage creativity. They emphasize security more than creativity.
Yes.

Individual challenges:
Being the girl and oldest. Cook, clean, baby sit. At funerals, they sit around and we cook and then they eat before we can.
Being a guy and second oldest, I cook and clean. An oldest son can learn to cook / clean etc... but it's also a preparation in case the father dies and the son needs to take over.
Feeling responsible for family. Pressured by parents to find jobs. Needing to be on good behavior to retain good family reputation.

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

Focus groups like this one.
Dennis Tucker and his clubs for Hmong people. Clubs at our school that he comes to.
Hmong focus class. A class for Americans to come and learn about us and know our sacrifices and our past.
Hmong language class to get other people involved and learn our language.

Facilitator clarification: Most people are mean b/c they're dumb, not mean. A lot of racism could be wiped away with knowledge? Yes.

I hate it when teachers make us speak English when we speak in Hmong.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adolescent 18 And Under (continued)

Facilitator: What messages to you get from this? How do you feel?
It's our culture. It feels like they are trying to take away our culture.

Facilitator. Talk more about your employment problems.
Pressure to find a good job even as a teen.

Facilitator. What feelings do you get approaching a job or working a job? Managers are nice when you're new and get really mean. I don't care about, "I'm Hmong". It doesn't matter about my race. I don't think they'll discriminate me b/c of the Equal Opportunity Law.

Facilitator. What jobs are you interested in as teenagers?

Mall.
Clothing store (GAP), retail.
Peer education.
Working with people, little kids.
No fast food.

Facilitator clarification. It sounds like reputation is influencing the jobs you feel you should get.
Yes.

4. Tell me about the best anything of your life. The best class, the best teacher, the best event, etc..., that really influenced your learning.

Psychology. Our teacher asked us to share our problems and everyone cried. A good learning environment is a caring environment.

Reading the book Lies My Teacher Told Me in which we went beyond the classroom and learned things we normally would not have in school.

Self teaching, not having a teacher to critique you or tell you what's right and wrong, but letting you explore on your own and develop yourself.

Learning another language b/c you learn more than just the language. You learn the culture and the people.

Music. Teacher is a comedian who makes us laugh. I love that class.

A big part of learning is loving the subject and having teacher acceptance.

5. Talk about the stuff you'd like to learn in college or high school.

Our culture.

The Hmong culture family tree. Everyone's related in some way in our culture. Clan family tree. Which relation is by marriage and which relation is blood.

Pre-history.

The Hmong people from China. OUR HISTORY (it's so blurred). #'s into Laos = 1850 fleeing Chinese persecutions.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adolescent 18 And Under (continued)

Khou's own notes for thought:

Our past in China.

Our origins.

Our relations with Chinese.

Descriptive labs, videos, projects more incorporated into the classroom, oral history.

Khou's note: I basically wrote down literally almost word for word the things they said so my notes are more "quotes" than actual summaries.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adult Male

Facilitator: Chue Thao
Recorder: Tony Yang

1. What challenges and issues are you seeing in your local Hmong Community?

Education:

- Hire Hmong professionals in the field of education (K-12, higher education).
- Teach Hmong language / history in K-12 and higher education.
- Parenting education to Hmong families.
- W2 program created challenges for Hmong (no education / employment training).
- Offer Hmong adult education to learn English.
- Tutoring programs for K-12 and higher education.
- UW-Extension needs to offer credit course for adult education.
- UW-extension needs to promote their programs / services (hire Hmong staff in this capacity).
- Lack of Hmong leadership in political arena.

Employment:

- Employment training skills.
- Hire Hmong professional in city, state, health care and local agencies.
- Provide Hmong cultural training to public and private sectors to there will be no discrimination toward Hmong.
- Public and private sector needs to provide equal opportunity and equal pay to Hmong.

2. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong individuals and families?

- Adolescent problems.
- Need Hmong professionals in school, legal system, and law enforcement.
- Parenting education (how to raise children and knowing parent / teen legal rights).
- Language barriers (Hmong parents don't speak the language).
- Generation gaps / conflict (youth lack of Hmong culture knowledge).
- Job search skills for adult and teen.
- More funding to support low income families to send their children to higher education (after high school).
- Domestic abuse (spouse abuse, child abuse) provide more educational training to Hmong families in this area.

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

- HMAA.
- Schools.
- Hmong Senior Center.
- GED at WWTC.
- Hmong teachers.
- Hmong professionals (need more).
- Workshop, conferences, etc...

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adult Male (continued)

4. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong businesses and business owners?

Lack of training for Hmong small business / business owner.
More funding to support Hmong small business.
Banks need to provide loan opportunity to Hmong business owner.
Other community business need to accept Hmong made products.

5. Could you tell us more about issues or needs for:

The Elderly?

Child Care / Work Issues?

Intergenerational relationships?

The Health of Individuals and Families?

Housing?

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

Economic issues?

Elderly:

Transportation services.

More funding to support Hmong elder programs.

Health education training to Hmong elders.

Need more accessible facilities in the community for Hmong elders.

Entrepreneurs / economic development need. Refer to #4.

Families:

Need more family planning.

Parent education.

Youth prevention programs.

Early marriage prevention.

Child care:

More funding to support Hmong working families in providing child care for their children.

Training for Hmong to become child care providers.

More Hmong child care facilities.

Intergenerational relationship:

Lack of Hmong cultural training to Hmong youth.

Role reversal. Make it difficult for Hmong parents to support their children.

American culture training to Hmong parents.

Health of individuals and families:

Health education.

Provide home nursing to Hmong elders.

Transcultural training about Hmong culture to health care providers and services.

Hire Hmong professional.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adult Male (continued)

Housing:

Assessable loan for Hmong to buy home.
Education training in regard to landlord / tenant rights.
Provide equal opportunity in renting.

Education programs:

K-12 more positive curriculum / extra activities for Hmong kids.
More funding for drugs, tobacco and gang prevention.
Teach Hmong language in public schools and higher education.
Need more Hmong professionals.

1. Please think about your own life experiences and how you learn best. How and where would you like to learn in your community?
2. What are some educational topics that you or others would like to learn more about?

Leadership development / training.
Neighborhood networking programs.
Hmong community and councilman must get involved with issues concerning Hmong families.

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

Workshop, seminars, conferences.
Outreach programs.
Brochures and flyers.

1. Are there any additional thoughts you would like to share with us?

Hmong T.V. program in public T.V.
Comprehensive assessment of Hmong needs.
Hmong professional in media / news.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adult Female

1. What challenges and issues are you seeing in your local Hmong Community?

Lack of Hmong language, history, and culture courses as part of the education system. The school system (public school, university) needs to incorporate these courses into their curriculum. Our children need to enhance their knowledge of the Hmong culture and language to continue to appreciate and preserve them. Other children will also benefit from these courses. The public school must implement the Hmong courses at the grade levels as they did with Spanish, French, and other languages. We have Hmong teachers who are employed by public school to fulfill these needs.

2. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong individuals and families?

What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong individuals and families?
Parents are under educated and need more English skills. Some parents are depending on their children for English translation and often times children do not show respect to their parents. It is also hard to discipline children when they know more English than the parents.
Our children are struggling between two cultures. When they are at school and with their peers they are Americans, but when they are with their family and are at home then they are Hmong. Those children that were born in the U.S. are questioning their family relationships and bondage. Sometimes they wonder why their family is different such as not spending time as "family time" or "having allowance" like their American friends' family. Why their family does not show physical affection toward each other in public. It is a challenge for parents and children when the expectations are different and not met.

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

Not aware of programs that can help
School/HMAA's programs targeted at at-risk students e.g. PRIDE.
Parenting classes through Family Resources. Not many families are using their services. More outreach is needed.
HOPE organization through UW-L. This group started many Hmong activities that have been very beneficial to the community.
Conferences and Workshops. Not many Hmong families can attend due to financial issues.

4. What are the challenges and issues facing Hmong businesses and business owners?

Lack of starting funds. Is government funding available?
Lack of trainings or programs to help people start a business or to keep an existing business going with many competitors.
Lack of information to run a business.
Lack of programs to find funding to help people start businesses.

Hmong Educational Needs Assessment Adult Female (continued)

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

How?

- Hand-on activities with many practices
- Visual learning
- Verbal learning
- Small group—more interaction
- Funding to support learning activities
- University student support services program
- Sit close to the teacher

Where?

- In town
- High school
- W.W.T.C.
- UW-L

2. What are some educational topics that you or others would like to learn more about?

- Nutrition, exercise, and appearance classes with child care services
- Hmong story classes (e.g. Hmong paj ntaub)
- Basic English (writing and reading) classes
- Want UW-L to consider having a Social Work master degree program in its institution
- Hmong language courses at all the university institutions

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

- Workshops/trainings
- Classes
- Support group

1. Are there any additional thoughts you would like to share with us?

Without funding or scholarship, it will be very difficult for Hmong families to attend courses offered through UW-Extension due to financial hardships and their needs may not be met.

Please share results with programs/agencies that are serving the Hmong population

Hmong Needs Assessment Demographics Report, LaCrosse County

Focus Group Demographics

Date of the Focus Group Meeting: February 23, 2002

Site Location: UW-La Crosse

Facilitator: 5 facilitators and 5 recorders

Number of participants at the site 45

Number of men 18

Number of women 19

Number of male youth 5

Number of female youth 3

Number of Hmong participants 45

Number of other Southeast Asian 0

Number of African American 0

Number of Caucasian 0

Number of Other 0 describe:

Number of people under the age of 20 10

Number of people 20 to 30 10

Number of people 30 to 40 10

Number of people 40 to 55 10

Number of people 55 to 65 5

Number of people 65 and older _____

(Age to be determined by the best estimate by the facilitator)