

Outagamie County

Hmong Needs Assessment Report
Outagamie County
Karen Dickrell, reporting
February 27, 2001

Karen Dickrell, the Family Living Educator/Department Head, conducted two focus group discussions in Outagamie County. Two interviewers were also contacted to collect data from their clientele, (teen parents and WNEP) at the time of this report, that data was not available.

Focus Group Discussions were held:

February 7, 2002 Catholic Charities

Menasha (which is Winnebago County,
Support group is run multi-county - we
Have a blurring of county lines...)

Women's Support Group
(Eight Hmong females)

Age: 40 - 55 1
 55-65 5
 65 or older 2

February 26, 2002

EvenStart Literacy Program

Appleton

Alliance Center, Appleton Area

School District

Parents (sixteen hmong female,

One hmong male,

Plus one Caucasian- female staff)

Age: 20 -30 8
 30 - 40 6
 40 - 55 4

(age is gvestmention)

Responses to the Questions have been combined and follow:

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

**Hmong American Partnership*

**Thompson Community Center (Hmong Elder Program)*

**Alliance Center (Appleton Public Schools)*

**Radio programs (public radio 88.1 FM Sat. 5-7 p.m.)*

**Need interpreters regardless of where the programs are offered.*

**Church*

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

**Not enough interpreters*

**Some interpreters are not competent enough to do the job.*

**Our children are interpreting for us and that is not always a good thing.*

**Grieving - loss of a spouse*

**Mental Health Issues*

**Language barriers*

**Transportation to programs that I'd like to participate in, the bus is not always the easiest when traveling with many children.*

**Setting up doctor appointments*

**Need more professional services available by Hmong providers (i.e.: teachers, doctors, health professionals)*

**Loss of jobs...some families have worked 20 years at Anchor Foods and now they have lost their job. They never got any more education, so their language skills are not good, and they are limited in getting a new job.*

**More demand for food and clothing at the Food Pantry and Community Clothes Closet. I have to wait a long time sometimes when I go there for food/clothes.*

**Understanding the laws of the United States*

**Finding good paying jobs*

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

**Mental Health Professionals help with grieving, dealing with suicide, loneliness. Also helps control self not to go to the casino.*

**My children look up to me so I know I need to set a good example.*

**Not enough interpreters for doctor's and dentists.*

**Would like more flexibility to use translators in different offices, can go from one system to another. (Referring to health care systems not being compatible) i.e.: Touchpoint and Affinity.*

**Appreciate the services of DHHS - Mental health services and Catholic Charities.*

**EvenStart program connects us with services and we are learning important things. (This is a family literacy program that is jointly sponsored by Appleton Area School District, Fox Valley Technical College, and a federal grant.)*

- *side note: one of the staff at EvenStart said how much their Hmong families enjoy "Mrs. Bubbles" who comes in for family fun night with 4-H activities. Also appreciate the 4-H agent support for the 4-H club they have created, scholarships for camp, etc. The group that was interviewed did not include parents from the youth in the 4-H activities.*

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

- *Financial challenges, not enough money for all our needs*
- *Lack of education to get a good job*
- *Language*
- *Feel hopeless and helpless due to the lack of language barriers and transportation.*
- *Children keeping Hmong culture in an American society*
- *Parenting in America with our Hmong traditions*
- *Academic success for our children*
- *It is hard to learn as we get older, we aren't dumb, we are adults, but sometimes we feel really dumb.*
- *Transportation is a problem for many of us*
- *Can't read important documents*
- *Need to depend on others for interpretation of information.*
- *Financially can't afford to buy the homes we'd like to buy*
- *Money for all the activities my kids want to be involved in*
- *Can't drive*
- *We depend on professionals*
- *Bus transportation/service is hard to take, confusing routes, etc.*
- *New families not knowing where to go for help and assistance when they move here.*

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

- *Need friendly greeters*
- *Need customer services*
- *Often not enough parking spaces at the Hmong grocery stores*
- *Aren't enough Hmong services. Mainly grocery stores, some insurance, we need more businesses! Takes money to get started.*
- *Hmong stores offer WIC vouchers and that is good*

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

**Parenting*

**Cooking classes - how to make American foods we get at the food pantry.*

**House cleaning - what do kinds of products are safe to use, what can mixed together, what is dangerous.*

**Support group to share different ideas*

**Painting walls, what to do, how to choose paints*

**Language classes*

**Sewing classes - using sewing machines*

**Gardening - types of plants, what can you spray, what to do about bugs and disease, what can we do to make sure our Hmong plants will grow here*

**Like to get together with people and just share ideas.*

**Cooking classes are good, but don't use a lot of recipes, we don't like to follow measurements and don't always have all the ingredients. Best if it is simple recipes with 2-3 ingredients that we can remember.*

**Home decorating - what looks good*

**Children are grown, I'm a grandparent and don't feel I have much to do for children. (Grandparenting role in a changing environment)*

**Working parents, children are home alone and I worry*

**How do we make good decisions for our family?*

**Understanding more about taxes*

**Using our brain...how can I learn easier? It is so hard.*

7. What are the best ways for you to learn about these topics?

**Face-to face*

**Classes*

**Radio*

**Some TV, but most of us don't have Cable*

**Like demonstrations, hands on*

**I don't remember well, so I need help with remembering
what I've learned, I'm getting old*

**If you have videotapes put them at the Hmong American
Partnership, Thompson Community Center and the Hmong Rental
Video stores, but make them free.*

Teen Parent Interviews
Appleton Area School District
Mary Stromfjord, Teen Parent Coordinator
Appleton West High School 2/27/02
Outagamie County

Three teens participated.
All three teens are married.
One teen is pregnant, other two already have their baby.

Ages: 17 - 2 18 - 1
Three Hmong Females

1. How and where would you like to learn in your community?

Hmong American Partnership (2)
School

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

Writing in Hmong
Gangs

Language

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

Hmong American Partnership
Help was available when needed
Support from the family

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

Speaking Hmong at home

Financial problems

Religion

Families getting along

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

Don't know (2)

Finding bigger buildings for the business

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

American Culture

Better understanding of our own Hmong Culture

Advanced education

Nursing careers

Family stories of how our ancestors came to United States.

7. What are the best ways for you to learn about these topics?

Need for support groups (all three)

Newspaper

TV

Newsletters

7. Other Issues:

Understanding child development
Getting along with each other
Child care (2)
Understanding parents
Financial issues
We need good paying jobs
Our elderly have financial problems
Need for more help from the government
Housing—we need bigger homes available for our families
Job openings are scarce