



Culturally-Relevant Adolescent Nutrition Care

Health Start School-Based Clinics

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MCC Introduction & Overview

Since 1969, Minnesota Community Care has been a safety-net health care provider for historically marginalized & underserved communities.

Minnesota Community Care provides full-service healthcare for all people, regardless of income or insurance status.



Mission: *Strengthening the well-being of the community through healthcare for all.*



Health Start School-Based Clinics

A multidisciplinary approach to addressing health equity and educational opportunity for all children

NURSE PRACTITIONERS

CLINICAL THERAPISTS

HEALTH EDUCATORS

REGISTERED DIETITIANS

- Identify unmet needs
- Screen for risks and SDOH
- Treat medical conditions
- Provide preventive health care
- Assess for referral

- Assess trauma history
- Screen for mental health conditions
- Provide treatment plan and therapy
- Assess for referral

- Assess health literacy
- Listen to their story
- Provide information
- Teach skills
- Assure understanding
- Assess for referral

- Assess health status, family history, food access, cultural food preferences
- Provide motivational interviewing, Nutrition education & counseling, Medical Nutrition therapy
- Recruit for Fit Team
- Assess for referral

PILLARS

1
PATIENT-CENTERED
HOLISTIC CARE

2
TRAUMA INFORMED
ENVIRONMENT

3
STRENGTHS-BASED
APPROACH

4
EQUITY AND
ACCESS

School Based Nutrition Services

2 Registered
Dietitian
Nutritionists

1 Certified
Fitness Trainer

1:1 Nutrition Education
& Counseling
Medical Nutrition Therapy

Fitness Training

9 Clinics
St. Paul Public
Middle &
High Schools

Telehealth

WHO

WHAT

WHERE



Nutrition Services Mission & Vision

Mission:

To provide **compassionate**, effective, youth-centered & **culturally-relevant** nutrition services, including Nutrition Counseling and Medical Nutrition Therapy within a multidisciplinary care team, which equip & **empower young people to adopt healthy habits** that become permanent, health-enhancing behaviors.

Vision:

For all adolescents to grow to their highest possible state of health & wellbeing via **optimized nutrition** & regular physical activity, thereby **interrupting intergenerational cycles of poor health & disease**.

Hmong Population in Minnesota

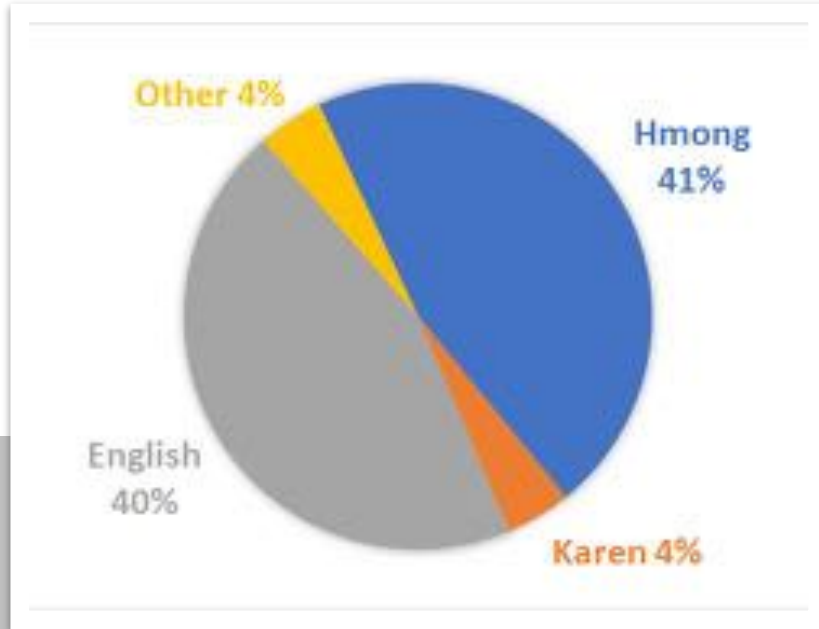
A very brief overview:

- The journey of Saint Paul's Hmong population to Saint Paul began more than 46 years ago following the Vietnam War in 1975.
- The Hmong — a distinct ethnic group with ancient roots in China—began coming to Minnesota in 1975 as refugees from the destructive wars that had ravaged their homelands in Laos.
- Today, there are more than 66,000 Hmong in Minnesota, and the Twin Cities metro is home to the largest concentration of Hmong in America.
- Saint Paul is enlivened with the vibrant traditions and culture of the Hmong people.

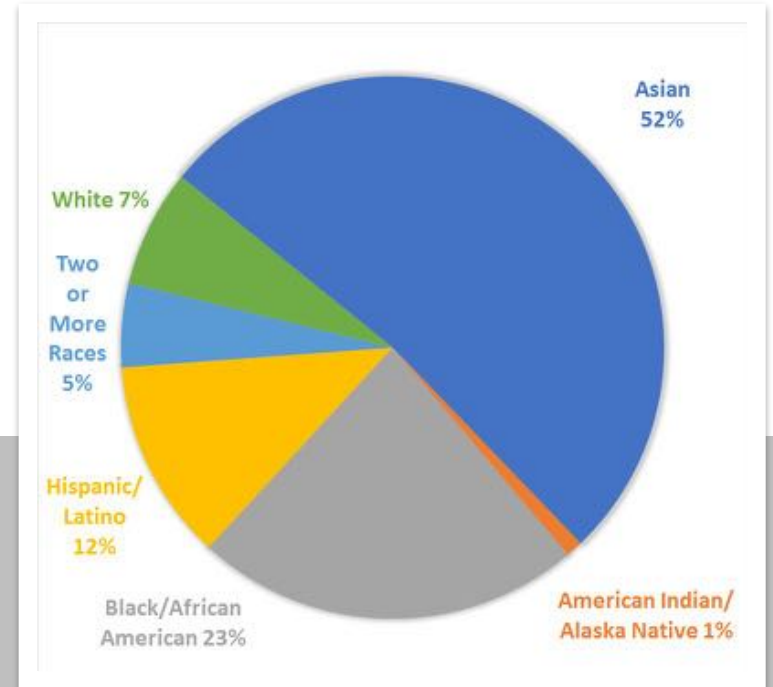


Harding High School Demographic Data:

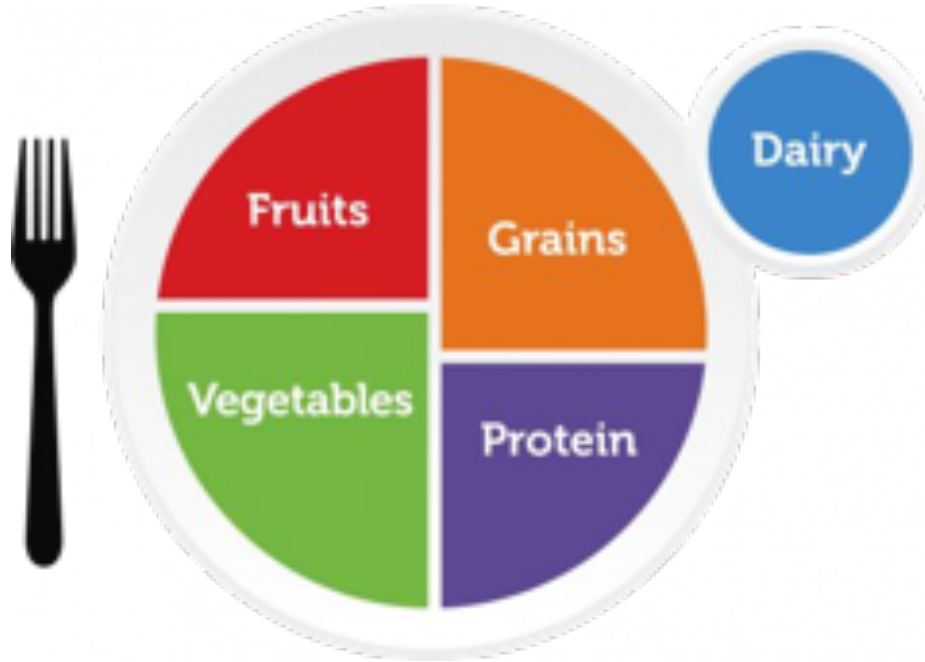
Language Spoken at Home:



Race / Ethnicity:



Original USDA MyPlate



Pros:

- Simple
- Encourages balance & variety

Cons:

- Lacks examples of foods found in each group
- Implies that food groups should be separated at meals

Typical MyPlate Examples



Students Say:

The doctor told me I have to stop eating rice and noodles to be healthy.

My meals don't look like that.

My family doesn't eat healthy foods. They only cook greasy Hmong foods.

Which fruits are the healthiest? Is mango okay?

I can't eat what my family makes if I want to lose weight.

We don't eat kale, so I don't think we eat healthy food.

Would it be better if I ate sandwiches instead of the Hmong foods my parents make?

That's not how we eat.



Some Strengths of Traditional Hmong Food Culture

1. Dishes are flavored by ginger, lemongrass, garlic, citrus, fresh herbs, and other foods with health benefits
2. Gardens/small farms and participation in local farmers' markets are popular
3. Boiling, stir frying, and steaming are common cooking methods
4. Food has a role as a community builder / social activity
5. Nutrient dense leafy greens are featured in many dishes

No one should be made to feel that their culture's food is inferior, unhealthy, or inadequate.

Historically, nutrition and medical education have lacked cultural perspective, promoting this belief.

Ramsey County Nutrition Resources



Usual Plate

- ½ plate rice/noodles
- ¼ plate meat
- ¼ plate vegetables

Phaaj Peb Naj Nub Noj

- ½ taig mov lossis fawm
- ¼ taig nqaj
- ¼ taig zaub



Healthy Plate

- ½ plate vegetables
- ¼ plate rice/noodles
- ¼ plate non-fatty meat

Phaaj Zoo Rua Peb

- ½ taig zaub
- ¼ taig mov lossis fawm
- ¼ nqaj ntshiv

Have **more** of these:



Have **less** of these:



Hmong Healthy Eating Plate

"A healthy and sustainable eating pattern considers personal preference, cultural tradition, budget, and nutrition."

Plate includes familiar foods and encourages appropriate ratios

A healthy and sustainable eating pattern considers personal preference, cultural tradition, budget, and nutrition.

Emphasizes foods to include more of instead of foods to restrict

Provides tips for estimating portions to better connect with recommendations

Healthy Eating Bowl for Hmong American Recommended Foods

Our calorie needs are about 2,000 calories a day*. Below are the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines to your daily recommended amount of each food group.

- Fruits** 2 cups: Mango, banana, berries, grapes, orange, apple, peach, pineapple, avocado, cucumbers, or other exotic fruits such as jackfruit or dragonfruit.
- Vegetables** 2 1/2 cups: Broccoli, lettuce, bok choy, spinach, cauliflower, cabbage, tomato, bamboo shoots, green beans, carrots, or mushrooms.
- Grains, Bread, Cereals** 6 ounces: Cooked rice, cooked noodles, cooked potato and 1 slice of bread.
- Protein** 5 1/2 ounces: Recommended to eat fish and/or seafood at least 3 times per week. For healthier choices try lean skinless chickens, tofu, or pork. Other sources of protein: 1 egg, lean meat, cooked beans, edamame, seeds, or nuts.
- Dairy** 3 cups: Low fat/skim milk/lactose-free milk/unsweetened calcium fortified plant milk, cheese, or yogurt.

*not including discretionary calories

Our Hmong American Plate

Eat More

- Whole Grains
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Lean Proteins
- Low-Fat Dairy
- Drink Water

Know Your Portion Sizes

- Flat/Cupped Hand = 1 Cup
- Palm = 3 oz. of Meat
- Thumb Tip = 1 Teaspoon
- A Thumb = 1 oz. of Cheese
- Handful = 1-2 oz. of Snacks

Examples of each food group that were identified by Hmong survey participants as commonly eaten foods

Making it Real

Dishes served at the **Union Hmong Kitchen** in Minneapolis: Protein choice with purple rice, lettuce wrappers & pickled vegetables



Pork & Ginger Stir Fry with
Rice, Bok Choy & Pepper Dip



Healthy Plate Examples

Boiled Chicken & Greens
Soup Served with Rice



Chicken Larb Lettuce Wraps
with Fresh Herbs, Pickled
Vegetables, and Rice

Curry Noodle Soup
with Egg and Herbs



Fresh Herb
Stuffed Fish



Spicy Bamboo
Salad



Green Papaya Salad
with String Beans and
Tomato



Hmong Village
Market



Nutrition is for everyone.

There is no one right way to eat –
All foods can be part of a healthful diet.

Additional Resources/Closing Thoughts

"...the maintenance of the healthful aspects of the Hmong food habits should be a focus of food and nutrition-related programs supported by public and nonprofit agencies."

Hmong Food Helps Us Remember Who We Are: Perspectives of Food Culture and Health among Hmong Women with Young Children <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2009.10.011>

"Remember, you have cultural strengths to help you be healthy."

https://www.ramseycounty.us/sites/default/files/Health%20and%20Medical/Public%20Health%20Initiatives/healthcare_connections_patient_handout.pdf