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Eat Walk Sleep Discuss: Building a Multi-Dimensional Participatory Relationship

Heather-Lyn Haley
University of Massachusetts Medical School

Et al.

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Eat Walk Sleep Discuss: Building a Multi-Dimensional Participatory Relationship

Heather-Lyn Haley¹, Suzanne Cashman¹, Mick Godkin², Meredith Walsh²,³, Nang Maung²,⁴, Toy Lim³, Sarah Tracy⁵, Clara Savage⁶, James Madison II⁶
1 UMass Medical School Dept of Family Medicine and Community Health, 2 Worcester Refugee Assistance Project, 3 UMass Graduate School of Nursing, 4 UMass Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, 5 UMass Medical School Class of 2014, 6 Common Pathways

A multi-faceted relationship has developed between UMass Worcester and the Worcester Refugee Assistance Project (WRAP). The relationship has its roots in student engagement, and has grown to include faculty, students and community members in a range of community-based participatory activities, which can be shaped in response to needs as they are identified and defined.

Familiarity

Students from all three schools have developed familiarity with the refugee population through both curricular experiences and learning community service projects, improving their confidence in providing culturally competent clinical care.

Exploration

WRAP member Yaw Yaw takes a new aerobic exercise at Teen Health Night.

Research

Eat Walk Sleep Healthy Living Curriculum has been adapted from Khmer using community-based participatory research methods with WRAP advisory board and community members, UMMS faculty and students, and Common Pathways.

Understanding

Medical student John Richiedei ’15 gives a WRAP member a little boost at the Quinsigamond Health-sponsored Costume Drive and Halloween Party.

Trust

Common Pathways is the Community Health Network (CHNA8) for Central MA, a local coalition of public, non-profit, and private sectors working together to build healthier communities through community-based prevention planning and health promotion. They sponsored two summer conversation series designed to strengthen communities and enhance self-efficacy - the work together led to their collaborating on Eat Walk Sleep curriculum adaptation project, where they provided crucial assistance with adaptation and the intervention process.

Community partnerships

Common Pathways supported volunteer service for local healthy activity events – ice skating, rock climbing, costume drive and party for Halloween.

Sponsored two student fellowships at WRAP

Student learning community sponsored volunteer service for social healthy activity events – ice skating, rock climbing, costume drive and party for Halloween.

Funded research on adaptation of healthy living curriculum originally developed by Cambodian community to meet needs of WRAP members.

A PA student, premed student, and group of UMass Med students from several learning communities volunteer at Family Health Night for refugees from Burma, funded through Learn and Serve MLK Semester of Service student award.

A Burma Youth Organization member teaches community adults about accessing oral health resources in Worcester and importance of taking care of our mouths.

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Co-sponsored training on mental health care for trauma survivors

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<th>Overview</th>
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<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td>Meredith Walsh (GSN GEP2) begins the Burma Youth Organization (BYO), a youth development project for refugees from Burma ages 15 to 24. The goal of the program is to help participants gain life skills that will help them with schoolwork, employment, higher education and other paths to successfully navigating American life with their dual identities. As a founding board member of WRAP, she also helps develop advisory committee comprised of refugees. A soccer team is also formed, meeting twice a week, bridging regional differences between refugees and proving plenty of volunteer work driving kids to games.</td>
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<td>Meredith Walsh as L&amp;S liaison begins Family Mentoring Program, ESL and tutoring, drivers' education classes, and a weavers' group. Liaisons from several agencies meet regularly; this cross-agency work creates connection, info/resource-sharing between WRAP and African Children's Education Program. Family mentors identify need for education re: healthy foods vs local habits.</td>
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<td>Spring 2011</td>
<td>Learn and Serve MLK Semester of Service Student award. Nang Maung (GSBS), Sarah Tracy (MS2) and Michael Richardson (MS2) work with BYO to plan and host Family Health Night. More than 150 members of the Burmese refugee community come to learn about family planning, nutrition, oral health, fitness and bicycle safety. BYO teens experience leadership and volunteerism firsthand.</td>
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<td>Nang Maung as L&amp;S liaison strengthens ESL classes, peer tutoring, and relationship with Mass College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, which now places pharmacy student service learners at WRAP in the fall and PA students in the spring. WRAP programs now include babysitting classes.</td>
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<td>Summer Community Conversation series: three conversations for professionals re: refugee mental health needs and resources. Leads to formation of working groups on: public awareness, transportation, mental health training.</td>
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