



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota

Foundation

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Shared Values: Health and Community

Shaping Minnesota's Future with New Americans



About the program

“Shared Values: Health and Community — Shaping Minnesota’s Future with New Americans” was developed in partnership with Twin Cities Public Television’s Minnesota Channel to build awareness of social connectedness as a determinant of health. Social connectedness is especially important to the mental health and healthy social adjustment of new Americans.

The program features the exciting community-building work of nonprofits in the Twin Cities and around Minnesota. It explores how individuals and communities become more interconnected and healthier when there are strong social support networks and opportunities for people to work and bond together. The focus is on immigrant integration and health — it is not a program about immigration reform.

Viewers will meet some of Minnesota’s newest arrivals from Southeast Asia and Africa and join them as they learn about their new community. See what a Somali-led organization in Owatonna is doing to help newcomers and long-time residents better understand each other. The program also features the progress of a diversity coalition in Faribault to identify common goals across cultures and create visible, tangible community improvements that benefit all its residents.

“Shared Values: Health and Community” is part of Healthy Together: Creating Community with New Americans, a Foundation grantmaking initiative designed to reduce health inequities for immigrants and improve the health and vitality of the entire community. The Foundation awards grants for projects that foster positive interactions and cross-cultural understanding between newcomers and the receiving community, strengthen the capacity of immigrant-led organizations and their attention to health, and address immigrant social adjustment and mental health.

About the Foundation

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation’s purpose is to look beyond health care today for ideas that create healthier communities tomorrow. By addressing key social, economic and environmental factors that determine health — beyond genes, lifestyle and access to health care — the Foundation’s work extends beyond the traditional reach of the health care system to improve community health in the long term and close the health gap that affects many Minnesotans. Since it was established 23 years ago, the Foundation has become the state’s largest grantmaking foundation to exclusively dedicate its assets to improving health in Minnesota, awarding more than \$25 million.

The Foundation combines grantmaking with public awareness and policy support, and leadership development to create long-term health improvement in Minnesota’s communities.

The Foundation is a member of and subscribes to the principles and practices of the Minnesota Council on Foundations.

We are dedicated to working collaboratively with others in the community. Fulfilling the vision of healthier communities for all Minnesotans will require the participation of many organizations and individuals. We’re committed to sharing the lessons we learn along the way.

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*The multicultural considerations presented here are drawn from work done by the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs under the Foundation’s grantmaking initiative Healthy Together: Creating Community with New Americans.

“Investing in Our Communities: Strategies for Immigrant Integration,” published by Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees in 2006, is a succinct, easy-to-understand guide that offers a historical perspective on immigrant integration, as well as the demographic, economic, and social imperatives that drive the need for integration today. It features an immigrant integration framework that identifies key stakeholders in the two-way integration process, six pathways to integration, and ways in which integration benefits both the newcomers and the receiving society. Visit www.gcir.org/publications/toolkit.

Advisory committee

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals who helped develop the program and discussion guide.

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Jose Gonzalez, *Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees*

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Keith Parker, *Twin Cities Public Television*

Magui Rubalcava, *Four Freedoms Fund*

Daranee Petsod, *Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees*

David Scheie, *Touchstone Center for Collaborative Inquiry*

Planning your screening

The success of your screening starts with planning. A few questions to consider:

- Would a planning committee be helpful in organizing the event and attracting participants?
- Who do you want to have attend?
- Who will facilitate? (see section on facilitation)
- Will you need interpreters?
- What time and location will be most convenient for your attendees?
- Can you provide transportation and/or childcare?
- Will you serve food? Multicultural food can be a great draw for attracting a diverse audience.
- What action steps would you like to generate with the screening?
- Who are key partners who can help with some follow-up action steps?

Checklist

Use this checklist to help you plan your event.

Pre-event

- Develop planning committee
- Show DVD at first committee meeting
- Develop objectives for screening
- Define audience
- Secure facilitator(s)

- Secure interpreters
- Determine location and date (pick location conducive to attracting attendees and ensure there are no competing events on that date)
- Begin promotion through planning committee and interpreters
- Determine if/what food will be served and make arrangements — food is a great ice-breaker
- Determine what other services will be offered (transportation, childcare, etc.)
- Widely publicize your event (word of mouth, flyers, website/blog, advertisements/local newspaper calendars, church bulletins)
- Manage registrations and inquiries
- Gather event materials (name tags, handouts, extra paper, pens)
- Do a pre-event run-through (ensure AV system is working, etc.) with facilitator(s)
- Have adequate staff/volunteers/committee members to manage event
- Secure note-taker
- Have successful event!

Post-event

- Communicate thank you's
- Share action steps/event notes with participants
- Fill out and submit evaluation forms to the Blue Cross Foundation
- Follow up on action steps that come out of event

Topic: Shared space, events and projects

- ➊ What kinds of places does the community have for people coming together?
- ➋ What are some ideas for creating more spaces/activities for exchange?
- ➌ What are some examples of tangible benefits of working together in the community, or what are some ideas for them?
- ➍ What are some ways we can build a better community now?

Desired outcomes: Participants can share ideas and identify spaces in their community to engage and exchange ideas, with some specific examples and action steps.

Topic: The future

- ➊ What is your vision for the community in the next 10 years?

Desired outcome: Participants will have the opportunity to creatively visualize healthy communities together.

Additional resources

For additional resources on immigrant integration and social adjustment, visit our website at www.bcsmnfnfoundation.org and click on “Explore the Issues>Social Determinants of Health>Immigrant Integration and Health.”

For step-by-step instructions on planning and carrying out exciting, successful community forums that will educate the public, build consensus, focus action or influence policy, see the “Fieldstone Alliance Nonprofit Guide to Conducting Community Forums: Engaging Citizens, Mobilizing Communities” book by Linda Hoskins and Carol Lucas.

Topic: Being purposefully inclusive

- 1 What are some examples of deliberate approaches to immigrant integration that you believe have worked well in this community or in other communities you've lived that could be expanded or replicated?

Desired outcome: People will come away with new ideas and energy for creating community.

Topic: Immigrant integration as a two-way street

- 1 What kinds of examples from the DVD did you note of immigrant integration as a two-way street?
- 2 What are some examples of what newcomers are doing to adjust and become engaged in their new community?
- 3 What can established residents do to welcome newcomers?
- 4 What are some benefits, including health benefits, entire communities experience when two-way integration occurs?

Desired outcome: Participants will come away with a better understanding of social connectedness as a determinant of health and the responsibility of a two-way process.

Topic: Social connectedness and health

- 1 How does having a more cohesive community contribute to a stronger, healthier community?

Desired outcome: People will come away with a better understanding of social connectedness as a determinant of health and community well-being.

Tips for successful facilitation

The screening is a launching pad for a facilitated discussion. The facilitator's role is to provide a safe place for people to share feelings, thoughts and ideas. He or she needs to encourage broad participation by the audience, invite different perspectives and manage conflict when there is disagreement or tension. It can be helpful to have several facilitators of different ethnicities who represent your audience. Be sure the facilitator brings skills and experience in moderating discussions, views the program in advance, is familiar with the event venue and has some starter questions that are appropriate for your audience.

Multicultural considerations*

For the DVD to serve as a catalyst and tool to promote cross-cultural understanding and community building, your local screenings should include multicultural audiences. Communities gain when there is broad representation in problem solving. An asset-based approach brings the recognition that everyone has talents, innovation and resources to contribute. When diversity is part of the mix, the result is a richness of perspectives, creative problem solving, and a greater possibility for a sustained solution.

Interpretation

Interpreters function as language interpreters. They may also serve as "cultural translators," if your planning committee would like them to play this added role, they agree and are introduced at the meeting as providing both services. The process of interpretation slows the conversation and will require that you allot more time for the facilitated discussion. It also gives an opportunity for people to think about what they will say beforehand. In cross-language conversations, listening rather than talking is emphasized, which often results in thoughtful, rich conversation.

Interpreters as well as bilingual immigrant leaders in your community can also help recruit non-native English-speaking participants to your screening. They can describe the purpose of the screening and help with logistics. This may require multiple conversations to explain and confirm plans. If unaddressed, these factors can become barriers to participation.

Framing the discussion

Prior to showing the DVD, here are a few tips for a productive discussion:

- ❶ Have everyone introduce themselves.
- ❷ Involve your group in establishing ground rules for discussion. Some rules to consider:
 - a. Be respectful
 - b. Have one person talk at a time
 - c. Agree to disagree
- ❸ Establish that it is appropriate to have participants ask each other for more clarification on points others make, but that it is not okay to judge.
- ❹ Plan how you will intervene if disrespectful behavior occurs.
- ❺ Outline the purpose of the program/DVD and the screening objectives.

After showing the DVD, consider the following:

- ❶ Have participants discuss their reactions to the program in small groups — preferably multicultural with interpreters if needed — for 5 minutes.
- ❷ Have participants share their one-to-one reactions and comments with the group (see starter questions).

- ❸ Use the starter questions to keep the conversation on track.
- ❹ If the conversation goes off track, it's the facilitator's job to remind the group about the goals for the discussion and have another "starter question" ready for redirecting the conversation.

Discussion questions

Because there are stages to immigrant integration in a community, the facilitated screening should be viewed as one conversation in a series, not a stand-alone. Here are several starter questions and comments for you to consider for early conversations.

Topic: Adjusting to a new place.

- ❶ What is your experience in either adjusting to living in a new community or helping someone adjust to a new community, either as an individual or through an organization or community activities?
- ❷ What are some values that are shared across cultures? (E.g., children, education)
- ❸ What are some ways to focus discussion and activities around these values?

Desired outcomes: Get the conversation going, involve people and begin to build some understanding of life experiences, both similar and different. Participants will come away with a better understanding of how shared values can be a connector for people and serve as a jumping-off point for deeper relationships and civic engagement.