



**CLIENTS** Pregnant or parenting young women in high school

**NUMBER** 13 youth/families

**ETHNICITY** Asian or Pacific Islander, Black/African American, White/Caucasian

**INCOME** 100% low income

**DIAGNOSES** Anxiety, Depression, Substance Abuse Disorder, PTSD

### Still Children Themselves

*“While it may seem counterintuitive, the mothers being served are still children themselves. These support groups and the linkages they form to receiving individual therapy strongly support their mental health functioning while laying a solid foundation for the mental health functioning of their newborn infants.”*

*-Hua Xiong-Her, LMFT*

### INTENSIVE SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES FOR HMONG YOUTH

- Served 92% minority youth (Hmong and African American)
- FREE support group expanded access to low-income and uninsured youth
- Culturally-matched, licensed mental health provider strongly increased participant engagement
- Opened access to on-site individual therapy
  - 3 of 4 recipients are uninsured



## PAJ



AMHERST H.  
**WILDER**  
FOUNDATION

ESTABLISHED 1906

Here for good.

### PROBLEM/CHALLENGE

Paj is a 16-year old mom with a 9-month-old baby. She attends Agape High School. Along with a major adjustment to motherhood, she is currently navigating a conflict between her family and the father’s family regarding parenting styles, their relationship, and the larger family dynamic.

### INTERVENTION

Paj started to attend a support group led by a Wilder mental health provider. This group is held at her school and is a complementary program to individual therapy. The support group lasts for one hour per week for six weeks.

### SUCCESS

Funds provided through RCCMHC enabled Wilder to provide the safe space of a support group where Paj has been able to discuss her feelings and desires among peers. Paj has learned coping skills. She has learned decision making strategies such as “how to weigh her options.” She has also learned how to get connected with resources. The mental health facilitator reports that Paj has made “significant progress by attending group every week, asking questions, and expressing herself.”

## Ramsey County Children's Mental Health Collaborative (RCCMHC) Funded Services

**FUNDED AGENCY:** The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, founded in 1906, is a non-profit social services organization located in Saint Paul, Minnesota. We combine direct service, research, and community initiatives to address the needs of vulnerable people in our community.

**FUNDED PROGRAM/SERVICE:** Intensive School-Based Services for Hmong Youth

**PROGRAM/SERVICE DESCRIPTION:** RCCMHC funds supported mental health provider-led support groups for Hmong and/or African American pregnant and parenting students at Agape High School as a complementary program to individual therapy. This work included a Wilder-facilitated support group for one hour per week for six weeks.

**LENGTH OF GRANT TERM:** October to December 2016

**AWARD:** \$1,000 (full award used)

**CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATION PARTNER(S):** SPSS/ Agape High School

**DATA COLLECTION:** Wilder utilizes treatment plan progress for individual therapy and observation/ informal group interviews for support groups.

**IMPACT AND OUTCOMES:** (and how they relate to RCCMHC vision and goals)

**RCCMHC Vision: Every Child in Ramsey County Will Function at the Highest Possible Level of Mental Health.** RCCMHC funding expanded access to low-income and uninsured youth and increased engagement by providing a mental health provider who was culturally-matched and “non-school staff.”

**Goal A: Cross-System Collaboration.** Wilder's provider and the school social worker spend time each week before group to discuss goals, strategies, and topics for discussion. After each group, they process together how it went and identify areas for adjustment/future focus. Throughout the week on an ongoing basis, the school social worker keeps the Wilder provider up-to-date on participants' progress and any incidents she should be aware of.

**Goal B: Health Equity.** The groups are targeted toward low-access groups, including cultural/ethnic minorities and pregnant/parenting teens who are at risk for disparities in mental health functioning.

**Goal C: Whole Family Wellbeing.** In group, there is a concerted focus on the parent's relationship with their partner, with their family, and especially on the parent-child relationship. They discuss how their functioning and goals impact their child, and their familiarity with mental health services remove barriers to seeking future care for themselves and/or their child.

**LESSONS LEARNED:**

**Community Based/ Culturally Responsive Success:** Agape school originally used their social worker to offer support groups but the majority of participants were Hmong and felt uncomfortable opening up to someone who was “school staff” and not Hmong. After Wilder provided a “non-school staff” culturally-matched mental health provider... engagement and participation greatly increased.

**Need to Sustain and Expand.** Agape School would like to continue hosting groups and there is expanded need for individual therapy- if funding can be secured. We would strongly advocate to expand the program to additional local high schools, including Central, Washington, and Harding, as they have expressed an interest for Wilder to provide similar Hmong mental health support groups for their students.