Traditional Beliefs on Health and Medicine
- Hmong beliefs about the causes of illness fall into 3 basic categories: natural causes, spiritual or religious causes, and other causes which include a broad range of types such as curses.
- According to the Hmong belief system, many aches and pains, depression and more serious symptoms of mental illness are caused by having lost souls.
- Many Hmong feel that blood maintains balance in the body and that withdrawing blood will weaken the body.

Familial Structure
- Hmong populations belong to clans. Clans are Hmong family groups, and the clan name is the family name.
- Many Hmong households contain multiple generations living under one roof.
- It is common for Hmong families to care for their elderly at home.

Gender
- Traditional Hmong usually do not shake hands with women.
- Traditionally, it is considered inappropriate for opposite genders to sit too close to one another when conversing.

Personal Space & Social Gestures
- The handshake may be a new concept to the traditional Hmong person. Handshakes are generally not used.
- Traditional Hmong elders, especially men, do not want strangers to touch their heads, or those of their children, due to religious beliefs and personal values.

Communication Styles
- When talking to a Hmong person, he or she may not look directly at you or engage in eye contact. Traditionally looking directly into the face of a Hmong person or making direct eye contact is considered inappropriate.
- When communicating with a Hmong family, one should always ask for the head of the household which is usually the father and/or oldest male.
- When under pressure some Hmong might say “okay” or “yes” but actually mean “no”.

Religion
- Hmong who practice Animism and Shamanism believe a spiritual world coexists with the physical world.
- Hmong believe in reincarnation.

About ECHO
The mission of ECHO is to leverage partnerships to deliver vital health, safety, emergency and civic engagement information to help the ever-changing, diverse population integrate and become successful in our communities.