Health Equity: Rural Public Health and the Amish Community

Objectives

- Identify strategies to assist your agency in creating partnerships to advance health equity in the Amish population
- Develop self-awareness of potential bias and how it could impact practice
- Identify how cultural beliefs may impact health practices
- Develop an understanding of how you can guide policies and programs to positively affect special populations in your community
Who are the Amish?

- Branch of Mennonites
- Anabaptists
- Established in late 1600’s
- Came to North America in early 1700’s
- Lifestyle: same for all settlements, regional variations
- Values: humility, suffering, nonviolence, separation
- Pennsylvania Dutch
- Different types of Amish
  - Swartzentruber, Old Order, New Order

Old Order Amish

Roles and Relationships

- Men
- Women
- Teens
- Children
- Family

Social Structure

- Non-Amish are referred to “English”

- Church
  - Hierarchy
    - Bishop, Deacons, Ministers

- Pay all taxes except Social Security
Amish Demographics: Wisconsin

- 33 counties have an Amish population
- 141 Church Districts
- Approximately 18,050 Total Population
- Nationally, the plain population is expected to double every 20 years (Donnermeyer and Cooksey 2010)

Amish Demographics: Tri-County

- Green Lake- Approximately 1,360 Amish (7% of total county population)
- Columbia- Approximately 625 Amish (1% of total county population)
- Marquette- Approximately 378 Amish (3% of total county population)

Our Tri-County Amish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amish Farm</th>
<th>Amish School</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Amish Farm Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Amish School Image" /></td>
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</table>
The Auction Building is located outside of Kingston, WI. The Auction Building serves as a point of sale outside of home sales. Items up for auction include plants, flowers, woodworking products, fruits, vegetables, and fall decoratives.

Tri-County Produce Auction Building

General Health Care Issues

- “Amish Aid”
- Contracts with local providers
- Lack of preventive care
- Immunizations
- Poor dental care
- Poor nutrition
- Alternative medicine
- Travel to seek medical care

B&W Treatment

Used for burn and wound care, usually with burdock leaves. Amish communities have a designated “Burn Team.” Acknowledged therapeutic benefits. UW and other healthcare collaborations.
### Health Issues Among Tri-County Amish

- Genetic Anomalies
- Childhood Injuries
- Mental Health Issues
- Cleft Lip/Palate
- Congenital Heart Defects

### Community Resources Sometimes Accessed by Tri-County Amish

- Shriners’ Hospital
- Birth to 3 Program
- Dental Services
- Mental Health Counseling
- WIC
- Medicaid

### Green Lake

- Communicable Disease Follow-up
- Health Education
- Injury Prevention and Preparedness
- Care 4U Medical Clinic
  - Community Immunization offered every other month by Public Health
- Well Water Test Kit Available

### Marquette

- Communicable Disease Follow-Up
- Health Education
- Injury Prevention and Preparedness
- Home visits for immunizations
- Well Water Collection and Testing
- Fluoride Varnish and Supplements
- New Baby Checks

### Columbia

- Communicable Disease Follow-Up
- Health Education
- Injury Prevention and Preparedness
- Home visits for immunizations
- Well Water Collection and Testing
- Fluoride Varnish and Supplements
- New Baby Checks
Care 4U Clinic

- Located in Dalton, WI
- Opened September 2008
- Provides primary medical services for Tri-County Amish
- Clientele is currently 60% Amish, 40% English

www.care4uclinic.org

Care 4U Clinic

- Midwifery homes/birthing centers located in Dalton and Montello
- Clientele is approximately 60% Amish
- Midwives are English and hold professional licensure

Midwifery Services
Midwifery Services

Partnerships & Collaborations

- What, Why, Who?
  - Buggy ID Project
  - Horse and Buggy Driver’s Manual
  - Church Health Service Dental
  - Amish Community Meetings
Tips and Strategies for Creating Partnerships

- Get to know your Plain Community
- Identify Elders/Key Community members
- Outreach to postpartums
- Offer services
- Subscribe and submit articles to publications
- Educate the medical community
- Be culturally sensitive
- Involve Law Enforcement, Emergency Management, and Human Services to advance health equity

Establishing Good Relationships

- Use a friendly approach
- Be an advocate
- Discuss and don’t assume
- Accept decisions
- Utilize existing relationships

“They don’t care how much you know, they just want to know how much you care.”
-Amish Elder

References

- Miller, David M. Personal Interview. June 17, 2016
- Roberts, Chris Personal Interview. June 17, 2016
- Manns, Mary Personal Interview. June 17, 2016
Resources

- Editable version of Horse and Buggy Driver’s Manual (can be edited for your own county’s use)

- Quick Reference Guide- Buggy Operators and Motorists (2 pg. pamphlet)
  - http://www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/Portals/11/BUGGY%20DRIVERS%20MANUAL%20BROCHURE.PDF

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Questions?