

Asian Profile Series: Cambodian Community



Culture

Chaul Chnam Thmey, a.k.a. Khmer New Year Festival, takes place this year from April 14th–16th. This 3-day celebration blends Hindu and Buddhist traditions to welcome the Cambodian New Year. During this time, people clean and decorate their houses, gather with friends and family to exchange gifts, and visit temples to ask for forgiveness and blessings for the new year.

Health

During the Khmer Rouge regime (1975–1979), Cambodia endured systematic and massive human rights violations that included torture, executions, slave labor, starvation, and illness. First generation survivors of the regime experience post-traumatic stress disorder at a rate 6 times higher than the national average.* Decades later, survivors cope with residual distress by practicing Buddhist rituals and techniques of meditation and mindfulness.



*Sonis J, Gibson JL, de Jong JT, Field NP, Hean S, Komproe I. Probable posttraumatic stress disorder and disability in Cambodia: associations with perceived justice, desire for revenge, and attitudes toward the Khmer Rouge trials. JAMA. 2009 Aug 5;302(5):527-36. doi: 10.1001/jama.2009.1085. PMID: 19654387.

Center for Asian Health Equity (CAHE)

Spotlights

Community Partner

Cambodian Association of IL



The Cambodian Association of IL (CAI) was founded in 1976 by a group of Cambodian refugee volunteers responding to the needs of Cambodians resettling in Chicago. CAI provides social services for approximately 5,000 Cambodians in Illinois, most of whom are Cambodian refugees or the children of refugees. Our Center has partnered with CAI on our Chicago Asian Health Survey to identify and address health inequities among Chicagoland's Asian communities.

CAHE Staff

Christina Pin joined our Cancer Prevention team as a Program Manager in August 2020. She facilitates health center implementation of colorectal cancer screening programs. In her free time, Christina likes to play the Roneat Aek, a traditional Cambodian wooden xylophone.

