



**Toward our Healthy Selves:
A Toolkit to Explore Mental
Health and Well-being in the
Vietnamese American
Community**

DIEM NGUYEN, PH.D., MPH, M.Ed.
THE VIETNAMESE HEALTH BOARD

1



The Vietnamese Health Board (VHB)

Established in 2017, the VHB is a grassroots driven organization. Our mission is to act as a trusted resource, bridging our community's concerns related to health issues and the healthcare systems, while advocating for tools to enhance our community's capacity to prevent illness, respond to emergencies, and build a healthier community.

2

**Mental Health
Toolkit Purpose**

- To respond to the community's urgent need and request for addressing mental health problems.
- To adapt best practices to create a mental health toolkit that is culturally and linguistically accessible (Vietnamese and English) for the Vietnamese American community.
- To develop a common language and tools to support community members in exploring their mental health more openly and with less fear of shame and stigma.
- To provide community conversation circles to test and refine the tool kit.

3



Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR) Approach

- **Community driven and iterative design process**
 - Involves community leaders, behavioral health specialists, and community members
- **Grounded in community needs and assessments**
- **Development of the toolkit follows an iterative process**
 - **Development and Review Phase** - Working extensively with community leaders, behavioral health experts and researchers
 - **Translation and Review Phase** - Working with two separate teams to translate and review to ensure cultural and linguistic relevance
 - **Pilot and Refinement of Toolkit Phase** - Testing the toolkit with community members to gain feedback for revision

4



5

Community Mental Health Toolkit

- Framing mental health within a social, cultural, historical context – acknowledging the impacts of both historical traumas and new layers of stress.
- Focus on four common mental health conditions in the VN community: stress, anxiety disorders, depression, and PTSD
 - Self-checklist of symptoms
 - Checking in with ourselves
- Suggestions and tips for self-care
- Suggestions and tips for building and strengthening social connections and relationships
- Community resources



6
