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MEDIA RELEASE

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Victorian Government Announcements Support Multicultural Young People

The Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (CMYI) has welcomed youth and multicultural focussed initiatives announced by the Victorian Government.

"We are very happy to see a range of initiatives that will help culturally and linguistically diverse young people, in particular the three year funding for the Youth Referral and Independent Person Program (YRIPP) which helps to divert young people, including newly arrived migrant and refugee and Indigenous young people from the Justice System," says CMYI Director Carmel Guerra.

YRIPP is an award-winning crime prevention program that has generated strong partnerships between Victoria Police, legal, youth, multicultural and Indigenous agencies.

YRIPP has been a great success and as part of state budget initiatives the Victorian Government announced funding of \$2.6 million over three years, which will see the service expand to 101 police stations in metropolitan and country areas. The Government estimates that it will help more than 1300 young people in the first 12 months.

"We are also pleased to see that the Government has recognised through budget initiatives the importance of cultural diversity," says Ms Guerra.

"We're happy to see an injection of funding into interpreter services, multicultural festivals, nursing care for newly arrived refugees, multi-faith initiatives and extra funding to teach English as a second language to refugee students."

CMYI has argued for some time that recognising the diverse nature of Victoria with initiatives that support newly arrived young people and culturally and linguistically diverse members of the community can only help to build stronger communities.

Further announcements made by the Government on funding for young people have also been welcomed by CMYI, with support and assistance focussed on education, training and employment options, including in the launch of *A Fairer Victoria: Progress and Next Steps*, with its funding for community development initiatives targeting disadvantaged Victorians.

CMYI is particularly pleased with the funding provided to set up 15 Youth Foundations designed to give young people experience in financial management and options that have been developed that give ownership of decision making on grants for youth projects to young people themselves.

"We welcome the significant funding towards community renewal programs for the Interface Councils on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne, but we'd like to ensure that culturally and linguistically diverse young people have a significant focus within that strategy," says Ms Guerra.

Media: For interviews and comment contact CMYI media advisor Matt Clear of initi8 communications on 03 9755 3252 or 0403 229 094 or matt@initi8.net.au