

## Winning Tactics: Good practice principles in the field

September 2010

On Tuesday 22 June 2010, CMY held a special Refugee Week sport forum with 'Winning Tactics: Successful projects involving young refugees and migrants in sport'. The aim of the forum was to showcase programs that had been successful in building relationships with local newly-arrived and refugee communities, and to share what they had learnt.

The programs profiled below were presented at the Winning Tactics Forum. They all demonstrate the benefits of extending a hand to newly-arrived communities and how the application of principles of inclusion and good practice can enhance opportunities for young people and their communities, as well as providing benefits for the clubs themselves.

### Good Practice Principles

The following is an overview of some of the main themes relating to good practice in planning and delivering inclusive sport and recreation activities to refugee and newly arrived young people, as identified in *Playing for the future: The role of sport and recreation in supporting refugee young people to 'settle well' in Australia* (CMYI 2007).

#### Basic principles

- Maximise choices available to young people;
- Create a safe, supportive environment. Allow for challenge in a non-threatening way;
- Be as predictable as possible and provide information about the activity you are running and what will happen;
- Acknowledge previous skills and experiences – build on knowledge;
- Work in partnership (with sport, community, multicultural, settlement services) to maximise effectiveness and draw on different expertise;
- Make it fun!

#### Other principles that support good practice include:

- Cultural awareness – eg planning your program around community or religious events, such as Ramadan
- Involving families and communities, by working with bi-cultural workers who can talk to families about your program
- Making activities financially accessible (cost), for instance by selecting low cost activities and forming partnerships with agencies offering in-kind or financial support
- Making activities physically accessible (transport), by making sure activities finish before dark so that young people can get home safely
- Choice of activities: this includes some thinking around clothing required, whether the activity requires boys and girls to have physical contact, and not assuming that young people will be familiar with an activity.

- Communication may involve using visual aids, demonstrations and body language to help communicate your message. If you produce material, you need to keep it simple and use visuals rather than text when possible.

## Models of Inclusion

### Learning for Life Project in Werribee (Lifesaving Victoria)

This learn-to-swim course involves 20 children from the Hoppers Crossing/Werribee CALD community to learn to swim and gain vital water safety education through its 'Swim and Survive' swimming program. The program has enrolled the help of two young women from Burma who act as community liaisons to encourage newly-arrived families to brave their fear of the water. As well as potentially saving lives (many of the people who drown in Victoria every year are newly-arrived migrants) this program has broadened the cross-cultural skills of the swimming pool staff, and provided an opportunity for parents and children to have fun together.

### Good Practice Principles

- Involve families and communities
- Work with bi-cultural workers

### Healthy Living Program in Berwick

In Berwick, Claude Olivares (Youthworks Victoria) and Phil Start (City of Casey Youth Services) have developed partnerships with Chisholm TAFE, Heritage School and the Seventh Day Adventist Church to teach unaccompanied minors basic cooking skills (such as how to cook rice and pasta). The young male participants, who arrived in Australia without family, often share houses. This means having to cook for themselves, a new experience for young men who typically would not even have been allowed in the kitchen in their family home. The Healthy Living Program teams up cooking classes with soccer practice. Participants undertake both the theoretical and practical elements of cooking and food handling over a 10 week period, after which they receive their food handling certificate from Chisholm Institute of TAFE. After spending the first half of the day undertaking lessons, the activities moves outside and a number of friendly soccer matches take place between RMP young people and teams in the local Narre Warren area. The final three weeks of the program will be an organised soccer matches in a tournament-style format.

### Good Practice Principles:

- Work in partnership (with sport, community, multicultural, settlement services) to maximise effectiveness and draw on different expertise;
- Make it fun!





## Inner North Soccer Stars in Collingwood

Paraic Grogan from the Jesuit Social Services manages the Collingwood Soccer All Stars and Fitzroy Soccer Lions soccer programs for young people of refugee backgrounds who live in the Collingwood and Fitzroy housing estates. The programs have been running for four years, through a partnership with two Victoria Police officers in the City of Yarra. As the funding for Paraic's position is coming to an end this June, Paraic has worked hard at linking the young players to local clubs. The Yarra Jets from Clifton Hill has been particularly welcoming, taking 54 young people from the Collingwood and Fitzroy housing estates. One of the lessons learnt from this program is that supporting newly-arrived young people of financially disadvantaged backgrounds takes work and effort: it may include providing scholarships for club membership fees, accepting that transport to games can be an issue for some players, and looking at new ways to deal with conflict and possible racism on the field. Clubs may shy away from 'going the extra mile' to make themselves accessible for newly-arrived young people, accepting African, Arabic or Asian young people only if they are players of an excellent standard (instead of just your average boy or girl who loves soccer)

### Good Practice Principles

- Select low cost activities that young people and their families may access themselves in the future;
- Where possible, make exceptions for young people who are enthusiastic and committed but who cannot afford to pay;
- Form partnerships with agencies offering in-kind or financial support.

## Inter-AMES Football Carnival

The Western Bulldogs and AMES have been running the Inter-AMES Football Carnival for three years, attracting to footy young people from Ethiopia, Burma, Vietnam, China or Sudan. Students from AMES Education Footscray, St Albans and Werribee compete in the annual carnival, which is held as part of Refugee Week celebrations. On June 24th, Werribee AMES defeated a combined Footscray/St Albans side at Whitten Oval, kicking 4.2 (28) to 3.4 (22). The teams are coached by local Victoria Police officers, and this year an AMES All-Star team was chosen from players in the Carnival to then play against an Indigenous team during NAIDOC Week in July. As well as developing football skills, the aim of the carnival is to help the community in the West learn more about the refugee experience and celebrate the contributions of refugees and asylum seekers to the area.

### Good Practice Principles

- Work around important community events
- Promote the program and recruit young people through schools, English Language Schools/Centres, ethnic media, community organisations and Migrant Resource Centres;

## Basketball Tour

Emmanuel Golong, Wicthiel Tut and Thieb Gam Hothnyang are on quite a ride: selected by Australian Basketball Digest (with support from Connections UnitingCare) to go to the US to show off their basketball skills on the college circuit, they spent six weeks playing in major cities, hoping to be spotted by a talent scout. They are now back in Melbourne studying and trying to raise funds to return to the US. As well as an eye-opening trip and a dream come true, this has reinforced in them the importance of education, as US colleges would not accept players, however good they may be, who have not completed high school. A message they are now spreading through education and information sessions to other young people in refugee and migrant communities around Melbourne.

## Good Practice Principles

- Provide cultural support and role modelling
- Invite family members and community leaders to see the program first hand

## For more information, please contact:

CMY Multicultural Sport & Recreation Program on  
(03) 9340 3700 or [info@cmy.net.au](mailto:info@cmy.net.au)

