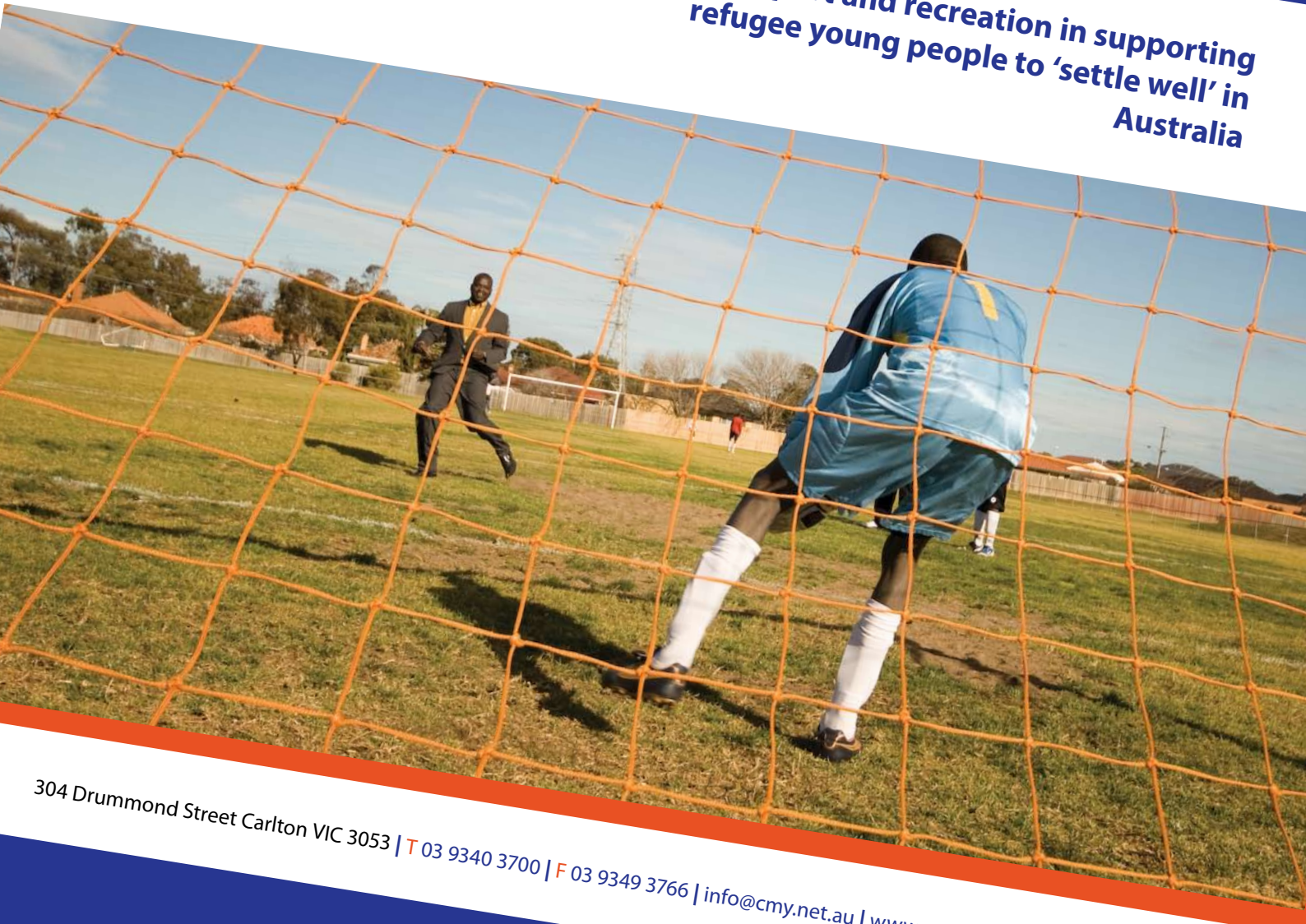




REFUGEE YOUTH ISSUES PAPER

Playing for the future

The role of sport and recreation in supporting
refugee young people to 'settle well' in
Australia



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Playing for the future: The role of sport and recreation in supporting refugee young people to 'settle well' in Australia

Published by The Centre for Multicultural Youth
304 Drummond Street, Carlton (Melbourne), Victoria 3053, Australia

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Copies available from www.cmy.net.au/allcmypublications



About CMY

The Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) is a community based organisation that advocates for the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. In supporting young people, CMY combines policy development and direct service delivery within a community development framework. This approach gives CMY strong connections with young people and their communities while enabling positive change on a local, state and national level.

Sector Development Team

Playing for the future was developed in 2007 through the work of CMY's Sector Development Team and was funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. The Sector Development Team aims to build capacity in the refugee settlement support sector to facilitate improved outcomes for refugee young people and their families. In addition, the Team aims to build the capacity of mainstream services at the local level to increase their engagement with young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds, particularly in areas of increasing refugee settlement. On a policy level, the Team aims to identify, articulate and make recommendations based on settlement issues arising for refugee young people at the local level, within settlement services and from our on-going direct work with newly arrived communities.

Multicultural Sport and Recreation Project

CMY's Multicultural Sport & Recreation Project aims to increase the number of ongoing sporting opportunities for newly arrived, refugee and migrant young people. CMY addresses the health inequalities of these population groups by supporting the sport, government and community sectors to be more inclusive and to create and foster sport and active recreation opportunities for this target group. CMY works towards creating a sport and recreation sector inclusive of diversity; providing assistance to State Sporting Associations, Regional Sports Assemblies, leisure centres and local government in the development of diversity and inclusion policies and strategies, and working towards the empowerment of newly arrived refugee and migrant young people to access sport and recreation options.

For more information about the work of CMY, go to www.cmy.net.au

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1 | executive summary

I play for fun and for the future.

Sudanese young woman, 18, on why play sport

Since 2000, there has been much discussion and various government initiatives focusing on sport and recreation programs for newly arrived young people. Sport and recreation is often identified as a high priority area for refugee and migrant young people, yet there has been limited evidence-based research or critical thinking into how or whether sport and recreation actually is an effective settlement tool. For example, how much has the 'settlement through sport' agenda been influenced by the shifting demographics of Australia's humanitarian program and the significant proportion of the intake made up of young African men? What do we know about the impact of sport and recreation on settlement outcomes? Has the increasing interest in sport and recreation as settlement detracted from broader structural issues that impact more heavily on settlement outcomes, such as education, housing, employment and health? And how are young women's needs being addressed in all of this?

Within this context, *Playing for the future* was developed out of a forum held in April 2007¹ and a series of subsequent consultations with workers, community members and young people. The paper draws on the extensive experience of the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY). This includes the work of CMY's Multicultural Sport and Recreation Program, operational since 1998, and the Program Team, who provide direct support to newly arrived young people and their families in three regions of Melbourne.

Playing for the future explores the role of sport and recreation in supporting refugee and migrant young people to settle in Australia, and follows on from the publication of *Settling in: Exploring Good Settlement for Refugee Young People in Australia* (O'Sullivan & Olliff 2006). *Settling In* provided some context for thinking about how Australia develops policy and programs that support good settlement outcomes for young people who arrive under the government's humanitarian program. In consultations undertaken for *Settling In*, sport and recreation was identified as a priority for newly arrived young people, and its importance in terms of the settlement process was emphasised by workers and young people alike. Yet experience in the sector suggests that there are many barriers to participation, and inclusive sport and recreation programs for new arrivals are often provided in an ad hoc and unsustainable way.

This paper seeks to explore the concept of sport and recreation as a tool for 'good settlement'². In particular, it argues that targeted sport and recreation programs can provide a site for trust building, facilitate settlement and transitional support, act as a diversion strategy, and provide an opportunity for young people to develop skills that are transferable to other parts of their lives. For young people recovering from the trauma of the refugee experience, sport and recreation can have therapeutic benefits, promote health and wellbeing, and be an entry point to broader participation. Finally, sport and recreation can provide an opportunity to build understanding between and within communities, and facilitate inclusion for newly arrived young people who are socially isolated and coping with the difficulties and dislocation of the settlement experience itself.

¹ A Refugee Youth Policy Forum/Multicultural Sport Network Meeting was held on 4th April 2007 at CO.AS.IT in Carlton with the theme *Social inclusion: Sport and recreation as a tool for 'good settlement'*

² For a full discussion of what is meant by 'good settlement', refer to *Settling In* (CMY, 2006). This report can be downloaded from www.cmy.net.au/AllCMYPublications

However, while identifying the many benefits of sport and recreation in terms of settlement, *Playing for the future* also argues that sport and recreation should not be seen as a 'cure all'. Sport and recreation programs can only ever facilitate positive outcomes for refugee young people in the context of a society that addresses the other barriers to their full participation and integration³ – ensuring there are appropriate education and employment pathways, accessible and affordable housing and health services, families and communities are supported, police and the justice system are fair and responsive, diversity is celebrated, and social exclusion is systemically tackled.

Moreover, not all sport and recreation programs or competitions have beneficial outcomes for those

participating. This paper documents good practice in terms of sport and recreation program delivery for newly arrived and refugee young people. It similarly identifies some of the barriers to participation that need to be considered in planning and implementing targeted programs. These barriers include issues around cost, transport, parent/guardian support, language, access to facilities, and young people not knowing how and where they can play.

Finally, *Playing for the future* includes recommendations for ways forward in creating inclusive and sustainable sport and recreation opportunities that facilitate positive outcomes for refugee young people in terms of their social inclusion, health and wellbeing.

CMY recommends:

Funding sustainable sport and recreation programs through:

- The creation of a dedicated funding stream;
- Supporting young people's participation through a small grants scheme;
- The recognition and resourcing of sport and recreation within settlement services.

Developing better linkages between the sport, recreation, settlement and community sectors through

- Convening an inter-departmental meeting of key stakeholders.
- Facilitating social inclusion of newly arrived communities through
- Supporting bi-cultural workers and resourcing community development approaches;
- Encouraging supportive parents through a health literacy initiative targeting newly arrived families.

Improving access to sport and recreation facilities in local areas through

- Ensuring local government leisure services are accountable for equitable access to facilities;
- Exploring ways for school facilities to be more accessible to local communities after hours.

An inclusive sports sector through

- Embedding inclusive practices in State Sporting Associations;
- Piloting a mentoring initiative at the local club level.

Further research be undertaken into

- The impact of sport and recreation on settlement outcomes for young people;
- Active recreation as a tool for 'good settlement'.

³ See glossary for definition of integration, which should not be confused with assimilation.

2 | glossary of terms

The following terms are referred to throughout this paper. This glossary provides some definitions and context around their meaning.

Integration

Although it comes with some baggage, integration is one concept that has been used in research to define the goal of a well-settled person or community and may provide a useful starting point in defining the goals and evaluating the outcomes of Australia's humanitarian program.

Integration, as defined in Valtonen (2004:74), is

the ability to participate fully in economic, social, cultural and political activities, without having to relinquish one's own distinct ethnocultural identity and culture. It is at the same time a process by which settling persons become part of the social, institutional and cultural fabric of a society.

Integration, in contrast to the idea of assimilation, infers the full participation of new arrivals in the country of settlement without necessitating a loss of identity or a one-way process whereby refugees and migrants are simply absorbed into their new surroundings. Integration assumes that there are multiple parts, identities, communities and so on, that make up the whole society, and that new arrivals are able to contribute and become active citizens of a cohesive and diverse community. (Olliff & Mohamed, 2007, p.3)

Newly arrived young person

A young person who was born overseas and has lived in Australia for a relatively short period of time. The Federal Government defines 'newly arrived' as someone who has been in Australia for 5 years or less. Other definitions vary according to the length of time it is considered to take to effectively resettle (up to 10 years). In this paper, we refer to newly arrived young people using the Federal Government definition.

Refugee

The United Nations 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, to which Australia is a signatory, defines refugees as people who:

are outside their country of nationality or their usual country of residence; and are unable or unwilling to return or to seek the protection of that country due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion...

The UN Convention provides a restrictive definition centred on proving a well-founded fear of persecution. For example, the definition does not include people fleeing environmental disaster or economic deprivation, even where they must flee in order to avoid death.

Some things to note about refugees:

- Refugees have escaped situations that have endangered their lives and their psychological health and wellbeing. Refugees seek a new life in Australia not due to free choice, but in order to be protected.
- Refugees have to leave their country under extreme and harsh circumstances, which does not allow them the benefit that migrants have in financially and psychologically preparing for life in another country. They have often lost family, seen and experienced atrocities, spent years in refugee camps or in transition from one country to another, and ultimately suffered a high level of trauma. Refugees rarely have the chance to make plans for their departure: to pack their belongings or to say farewell to their friends and families. They often have little idea about the country in which they are resettling and the nature of the society there. (CMY, 2005)

Social inclusion/exclusion

There are many and varied definitions of social inclusion and social exclusion. For the purposes of this paper, we refer to Donnelly & Coakley (2002, viii-ix):

Social inclusion is about making sure that all children and adults are able to participate as valued, respected and contributing members of society. It is, therefore, a normative (value based) concept—a way of raising the bar and understanding where we want to be and how to get there.

Social inclusion reflects a proactive, human development approach to social wellbeing that calls for more than the removal of barriers or risks. It requires investments and action to bring about the conditions for inclusion, as the population health and international human development movements have taught us.

Recognising the importance of difference and diversity has become central to new understandings of identity at both a national and community level. Social inclusion goes one step further: it calls for a validation and recognition of diversity as well as a recognition of the commonality of lived experiences and the shared aspirations among people, particularly evident among families with children.

This strongly suggests that social inclusion extends beyond bringing the 'outsiders' in, or notions of the periphery versus the centre. It is about closing physical, social and economic distances separating people, rather than only about eliminating boundaries or barriers between us and them.

Sport and recreation

VicHealth (2007b) define sport as:

...physical activity that is competitive, organised, involves rules and may be participated in either individually or as a team. This definition refers primarily to those participating in sports as amateurs.

The definition of recreation used in this paper pertains to active recreation, which VicHealth (2007b) define as:

...generally unstructured activity that individuals freely pursue in their uncommitted time (leisure time) for a personal sense of enjoyment that also benefits their physical, social or emotional wellbeing.

This definition can include activities such as hip hop dancing, camps, excursions, creative art and photography workshops, drama and so on.

Young person

The UN defines 'youth' as someone between the ages of 15 and 24 years inclusive. In Australia, government and non-government services commonly expand this definition to include 12 to 25 year olds, and this is the definition referred to in this paper.

It should be noted, however, that the concept of youth is understood differently across cultures as it relates to life stages, roles within the family and other social expectations.

3 | methodology

In developing this discussion paper, CMY used a number of methods to consult with sport and settlement providers and young people, and to engage with current literature and international thinking around sport and recreation in the context of settlement. The methodology used included:

Social inclusion: Sport and recreation as a tool for 'good settlement' forum

A Refugee Youth Policy Forum/Multicultural Sport Network Meeting was held on 4th April 2007 at CO.AS.IT in Carlton and was attended by over 60 participants. The forum provided an opportunity for representatives from a cross-section of sporting associations, community groups, local council and settlement services to discuss good practice in providing sport and recreation opportunities for newly arrived and refugee young people. The forum included a panel of seven representatives from refugee and migrant communities who spoke about effective strategies for engaging both parents and young people, as well as a keynote speech by Monash University's Brett Hutchins.

Consultations with service providers

Following on from the Sport and good settlement forum, a series of consultations and a follow-up forum (on 27 June 2007) was held with key stakeholders and service providers from the community sports and leisure sectors. An email requesting input from participants at the forum was sent out, and 11 workers responded with written responses. Feedback was also sought through the Southeast Multicultural Youth Action Group (MYAG), Southern Integrated CALD Network, AMES IHSS Consortium, and CMY's Policy and Program teams.

Survey of refugee young people

A survey of 25 young people (aged 13-21 years) was undertaken at a multicultural basketball program held at Springers Leisure Centre in Keysborough during the 2007 Easter school holidays. The program was targeted and attended predominantly by young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Teams participating in the competition came from a wide area of metropolitan Melbourne, from the West, North and Southeast.

The survey was administered verbally. 18 of the respondents were female and 7 were male. The average age was 16.7 years. The majority were from African backgrounds, with two from Southeast Asia. 88% of respondents had been in Australia 5 years or less. Results from this survey are included in the appendices.

Review of literature

A review of Australian and international literature was undertaken to explore definitions and frameworks for understanding sport and recreation in the context of settlement. (See references for full bibliography.)

Experiences of CMY Multicultural Sport and Recreation Project

CMY's Multicultural Sport and Recreation Project was initiated in 1998 and the experiences and resources developed through this project were a key source of information for Playing for the future. A specific consultation was held with the CMY Sport and Social Health Team with staff providing input into the recommendations.

4 | background

This section provides some background to the issue, including an overview of some of the issues relating to refugee young people and resettlement (Section 4.1). Section 4.2 provides statistics on participation levels for refugee and migrant communities in sport and recreation, and Section 4.3 gives an overview of the policy context in which sport and recreation programs for this target group are funded and delivered.

4.1 Resettlement and refugee young people

The refugee experience is by definition traumatic and characterised by persecution, displacement, loss, grief, and forced separation from family, home and belongings. This displacement has a profound impact on the individual, family and community. Many refugee young people⁴ and their families will have experienced some or all of the following:

- Forced departure from their country of origin;
- Conflict, organised violence and human rights abuses; and
- A dangerous escape from their country of origin, travelling long distances, sometimes by foot and in cramped conditions (RRAC 2002, p.4)

Those who are unable to return home often spend many years in a country of first asylum, which is usually another developing country (e.g. Kenya or Thailand). For some young people, the majority of their lives have been spent in transition countries⁵ and this profoundly impacts their identity and settlement experience in Australia.

New arrivals from refugee backgrounds are likely, as a result of their pre-migration and migration experiences, to face common difficulties in adjusting to a new life in Australia. Young refugees also have needs that are distinct from those of older refugees. As well as adjusting to life in a new country, recovering from trauma, navigating education, employment and complex bureaucratic systems, refugee young people must also negotiate family, peer, individual and community expectations within the context of adolescence.

Figure 1 reflects the phases of resettlement that many young refugees go through. Phase 1 is characterised by relief mixed with high expectations, feelings of being disoriented and confused, and numbness and anger. Phase 2 occurs when a young person's desire for quick adjustment has not been realised and awareness of the challenges to be met can be overwhelming. Phases 3 and 4 are largely dependent on the settlement support and acceptance that young people experience, and this is where the support and links gained through participation in inclusive sport and recreation programs can be extremely important. The extent to which a young person is able to build on strengths and effectively negotiate systems will determine whether they experience a growing sense of mastery and comfort in Australia, or alienation and marginalisation.

Despite the immense challenges of settling in a new country, it is important to recognise that refugee young people often make remarkable progress and bring a wealth of resources and strengths to the Australian community. The refugee experience can bring about qualities such as resilience and resourcefulness, adaptability, a strong commitment to family and community, and a strong desire to achieve educationally. Newly arrived young people often have broad international knowledge, multilingual skills and awareness of many cultures and communities.

If well supported in the transition period, refugee young people have demonstrated their strong capacity to be able to rebuild their lives, achieve their goals and contribute dynamically to the broader Australian community.

⁴ See glossary for definitions of newly arrived, refugee, and young person

⁵ The United Nations reports that, as of 2003, the average duration of time spent in a refugee camp was 17 years (www.unhcr.org)

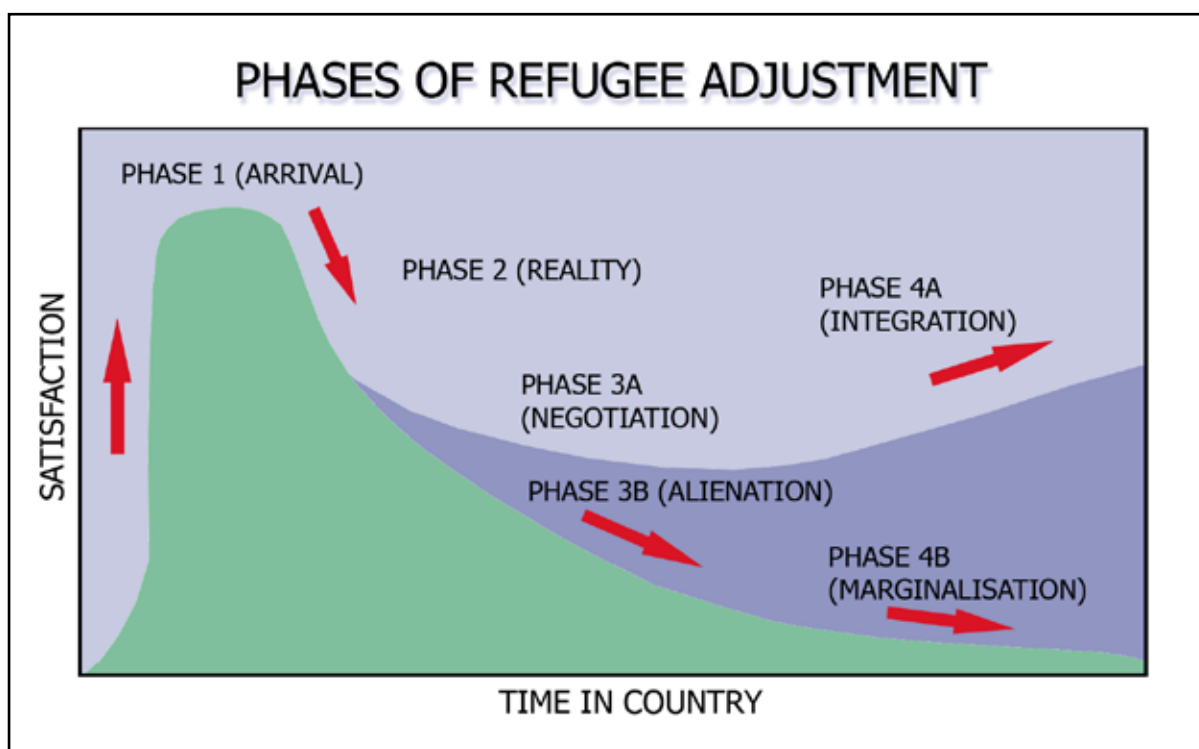


Figure 1: Phases of refugee resettlement

(Source: Adapted by CMY from Minnesota Centre for Victims of Torture, URL)

4.2 Involvement of newly arrived and refugee young people in sport and recreation

Many of these kids have fled their country of birth and arrived in Melbourne to stay with surviving family members. They've got some big issues to sort out in their lives and playing sport gives them time out...

Rhonda Hernandez, Northern MRC (VicHealth 2007a, p.2)

While the high demand for sport and recreation programs for newly arrived and refugee young people is frequently cited by workers, less clear is what their patterns of participation actually are. A recent report by Cortis, Sawrikar & Muir (2007) documenting the involvement of culturally and linguistically diverse women in sport in Australia suggests that participation rates are substantially lower for those born in non English-speaking countries (see **Figure 2**). This data does not, however, show a breakdown by age group or visa type.

A recent Australian Bureau of Statistics report focusing on Migrants and participation in sport and physical activity (2006), while also not broken down by age or visa type, does support anecdotal evidence that refugee young people are under-represented in structured sport (see also Keogh 2002). However, higher participation rates in non-organised sport (**Figure 3**) reflect the importance of informal, social games that are often played in parks between friends, at community events and so on. These social games are commonly how sport is played overseas in refugee camps and other countries, though there are potentially different issues at play for young people participating in these kinds of activities in Australia (e.g. issues around accessing grounds). Non-organised sport, while extremely important and valuable, is also likely to have a different function in terms of settlement support because of its limited potential for linking young people into wider social networks and to workers who can provide information and support.

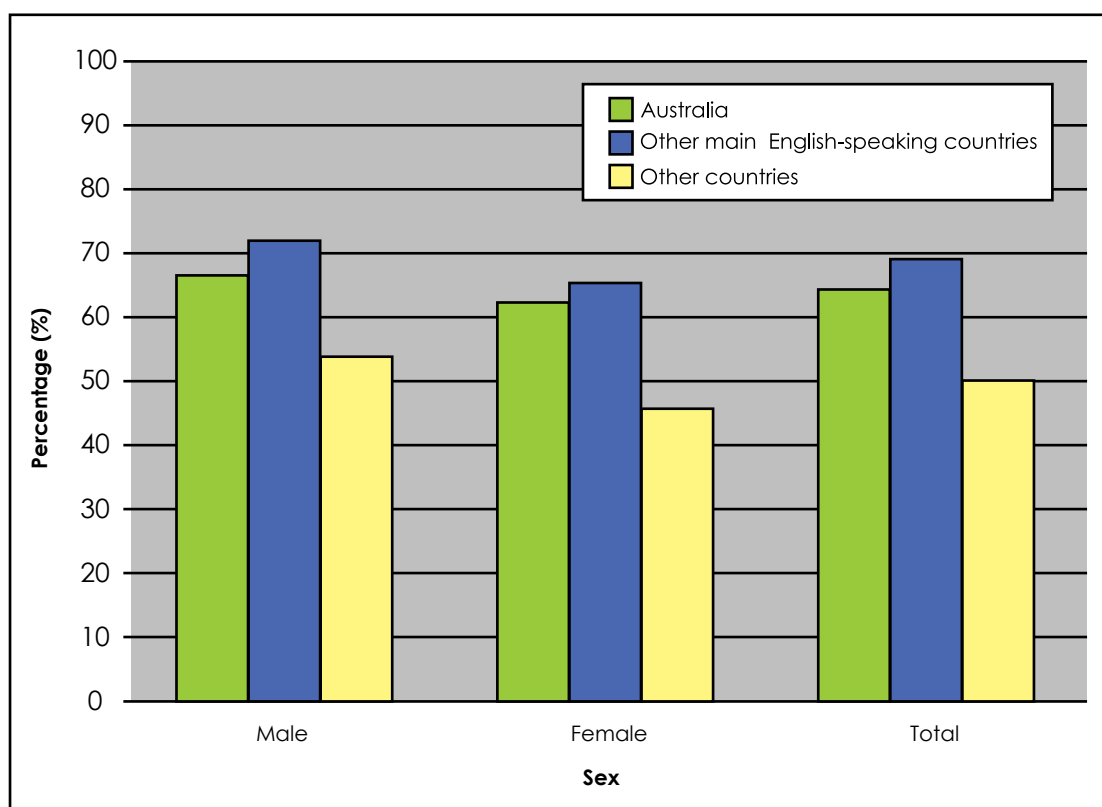


Figure 2 Proportion of the population involved as players and non-players by birthplace, persons, Australia, 2004

(Source: Cortis, Sawrikar & Muir 2007, p.11)

4.3 The policy context

The policy context for the provision of sport and recreation opportunities to newly arrived and refugee young people is complex as responsibility does not fit within any one service area. For example, responsibility for inclusive sport and recreation opportunities could potentially lie with (federally-funded) settlement services, the sports and leisure sector (particularly around structured activities/competitions), community- and ethno-specific organisations, state and local government (for access to grounds and facilities, public health initiatives etc).

In terms of settlement services, a recent articulation of the goals of humanitarian settlement services involves a commitment to “helping new arrivals participate in the community as soon as possible after arrival. Settlement services funded by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs provide assistance to help new arrivals become accustomed to life in Australia. These services focus on building self-reliance, developing English language skills, and fostering links with mainstream services” (Commonwealth of Australia 2006, p.3).

	Organised (%)	Non-organised (%)
Oceania and Antarctica	56.4	72.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	53.8	75.7
Americas	50.6	77.8
North-West Europe	48.7	76.7
Southern and Central Asia	46.2	83.2
South-East Asia	36.9	90.2
Southern and Eastern Europe	26.1	84.1
North-East Asia	25.4	89.7
North Africa and the Middle East	17.2	87.8

Figure 3 Participation in organised and non-organised sport by region of birth, Australia, 2002

(ABS 2006, p.10)

In terms of how settlement services link in with sport and recreation programs as part of these goals, there are no systemic programs or funding sources that support refugee and newly arrived young people's participation in sport and recreation. The Federal government's Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Services (IHSS) program does not fund the delivery of sport and recreation activities per se, but rather IHSS providers link new arrivals into existing local services (including sport and recreation opportunities) based on identified need. Case workers in IHSS work with families as a unit and do not have a specific youth focus⁶. Referrals to sport and recreation are not reported against.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship's Settlement Grants Program (SGP) funding is targeted at those who have exited the IHSS and been in Australia for six months or more. For example, Australian Lebanese Welfare provides casework, community education and group work to Arabic-speaking youth. SGP-funded services can provide group work activities that include sport and recreation components, although funding generally does not cover the costs of program delivery (equipment, venue hire, etc).

The sport and leisure sector, which obviously have the skills and resources to run sport and recreation programs, have varied commitments to accessibility and inclusiveness. For example, some State Sporting Associations (SSAs) have been proactive in addressing barriers to participation for refugee and migrant young people (such as developing diversity and inclusion policies, targeted programs, liaison officers, staff training), however this is not a widespread practice across all sports and leisure providers. Government funding, for example, is not contingent on SSAs being accountable for implementing access and equity strategies. Local leisure services are frequently outsourced to companies that use business models (user-pay) which do not naturally lend themselves to resourcing inclusive programs and services for disadvantaged groups.

On a state level, The Department of Victorian Communities addresses health inequalities for marginalised groups through their Go for Your Life initiative (www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au) and through the provision of grants such as Strengthening Communities, Support for Grassroots Sports and Our Club, Our Future Sporting Uniforms Grant (www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au). However, several of these grants are short-term pilot projects and it is very difficult to create

⁶ A pilot phase for youth specific community guides in IHSS is about to be trialled in the Southeast region of Melbourne. This has great potential to facilitate links between newly arrived young people and local sport and recreation providers.

sustainable long-term outcomes or to get these initiatives re-funded through other avenues.

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) also provides a number of excellent funding pools that include refugee and newly arrived communities as target groups. These include the Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation Scheme, Building Bridges Scheme, and Active Participation Grants (www.vichealth.vic.gov.au). These grants have funded a number of targeted programs (e.g. Maribyrnong City Council's Newly Arrived Migrant & Refugee Young People's Recreation Project, Banyule City Council's Bridging Gaps with Basketball), although they are also not long-term funding grants.

At a local level, programs targeting refugee and newly arrived young people tend to be funded through ad hoc and short-term grants. Funding sources include: philanthropic (e.g. Sports without Borders; www.sportswithoutborders.org.au), state sporting associations (e.g. the AFL Multicultural Program), related local and state government grants (e.g. VicHealth or local council grants), or tied to programs such as the FaCSIA-funded Newly Arrived Youth Support Service (NAYSS) and Reconnect initiatives. Many ethno-specific sports clubs or organisations have found it difficult to secure funding through available grant programs. For example, the Longhorns Basketball Club in the Western region of Melbourne has been operating for three years without any sustained financial support. The Club is run by volunteers and involves around 100 young people from refugee backgrounds.

It should be noted that all levels of government are governed by the Commonwealth Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society (1998). This Charter has been endorsed by Commonwealth, State and Territory Government and the Australian Local Government Association, so represents a nationally consistent approach to the delivery of culturally responsive government services. The Charter states that: "Access and equity policies aim to ensure that government services meet the needs of people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds so they can participate fully in economic, social and cultural life" (Commonwealth of Australia 1998, p.1). What this means in terms of practice is varied. For example, some local councils have been more proactive in addressing access and equity issues, such as recognising and addressing barriers to refugee communities accessing sport and recreation facilities, however this is not the case across all local government areas.

5 | what role does sport and recreation play in the settlement process?

The high demand for sport and recreation activities for newly arrived young people is often cited by workers and agencies, yet little has been documented about the role sport and recreation plays in the settlement process.

The following outlines some of the reasons why sport and recreation is popular among newly arrived and refugee young people, the benefits that can accrue from inclusive and accessible programs (Section 5.1), and provides some case studies and examples of good practice (Section 5.3 and examples throughout). This section also includes discussion of the barriers to participation (Section 5.2), as well as the limitations of using sport and recreation as a tool for 'good settlement' (Section 5.4).

5.1 How can participating in sport and recreation assist young people to 'settle well' in Australia?

Playing sport and participating in physical recreation offers important opportunities to enhance health and wellbeing.

As well as promoting well-documented health benefits (such as reduced risk of cardiovascular disease), participation can offer a social and political space in which to cultivate cultural diversity and promote social inclusion. [Figure 4] contains a summary list of the personal, socio-cultural and economic benefits of sport and recreation.

These benefits mean that enabling equal participation and dismantling any barriers that exist for different groups is important not only for individual wellbeing, but also for social cohesion and national economic performance.

Cortis, Sawrikar & Muir, 2007, p.1

The benefits of participating in sport and active recreation have been well documented in studies (see VicHealth website). Figure 4, for example, shows some of the potential benefits of participation, ranging from personal through to socio-cultural and economic benefits. While these (potential) benefits are applicable to young people from any background, the common settlement experiences⁷ of newly arrived young people mean that sport and recreation can also provide additional support as young people negotiate their past, present and future in Australia.

These attributes include:

- Sport and recreation as a site for trust building;
- Sport and recreation facilitating settlement and transitional support;
- Sport and recreation as a diversion strategy;
- Sport and recreation as a capacity building opportunity;
- Sport and recreation as a therapeutic outcome;
- Sport and recreation as an entry point to broader participation;
- Sport and recreation promotes health and wellbeing;
- Sport and recreation as a way to build community understanding.

⁷ Refer to Section 4.1 on Refugee young people and resettlement

Personal benefits	Physical health Stress management Self-esteem Academic performance Sense of achievement, meaning and life satisfaction
Socio-cultural benefits	Social interaction and community strengthening Reduced antisocial behaviour and crime Promotion of ethnic and cultural harmony Strengthening families Promoting community involvement, pride and empowerment Offering access for the disabled or disadvantaged Promotes ethical behaviour models National cohesion
Economic benefits	Cost-effective health prevention Fit, productive workforce Business growth Reduces costs of crime Tourism Employment International representation and influence

(Adapted from Collins and Kay (2003:28-33).
Cited in Cortis, Sawrikar & Muir 2007, p.42)

5.1.1 Sport and recreation as a site for trust building

Sport and recreation activities—including activities like dance, camps, excursions, etc—provide an ideal site for trust building with young people from newly arrived and refugee backgrounds. Sport is a familiar activity in which young people readily participate. This provides fertile opportunity for those delivering services to engage with young people and build trust, having a significant flow on effect for young people’s help-seeking during settlement.



Case study: Tom*

Tom, 14, was referred to a youth worker at a local multicultural youth service due to conflict he was experiencing both at school and at home. Tom and his family had been in Australia for six months at the time he was referred. Tom was getting into fights at the English language school and his parents were fearful for his safety and the safety of those around him. He was also quite isolated.

Mark, the youth worker, found it extremely difficult to engage with Tom at first, who had limited English and also appeared resistant to talking about what was going on. Mark decided to persist and change his approach by taking Tom to a local park to kick a soccer ball around as a way of making him feel more comfortable at the beginning of each session. While they could communicate only minimally at the park, Mark found this an extremely useful way of building rapport and found Tom was more willing to talk when they got back into the office and a telephone interpreter was engaged.

Mark considers that soccer has been an extremely important tool in supporting and working with Tom. Not only has it helped their relationship, but playing in a local park also led to Tom connecting with other young people who joined in their casual games. In fact, after a year of working with Tom and his family, Mark has noticed that Tom has now made a number of good friends through soccer and is actively engaged in a team made up of other newly arrived young people. When a local service recently ran a soccer competition during the school holidays, Tom was confident enough to approach Mark to get assistance in registering a team, and took a leadership role in getting the team to participate on the day.

While involvement in soccer seems to have had an extremely positive effect on Tom, Mark has also seen some of the barriers newly arrived young people face in getting involved in sport. For example, on a number of occasions Tom and his friends have been told to leave local sports grounds (access to public space), cost and language have been major barriers to linking him in with a local club, and access to transport has been an ongoing issue.

Despite these barriers, Mark says soccer has helped to ground Tom. It has helped him to make friends and when he is playing his parents feel more confident that he is safe. Although there are lots of things that Tom still needs to work through, he has begun to connect to the wider community in a more positive way.

* Names and some details have been changed

5.1.2 Sport and recreation facilitating settlement and transitional support

Sport and recreation can be an effective component in providing settlement support for newly arrived young people. Opportunities to play sport or participate in fun activities in familiar and supportive environments can also provide a site whereby information about other services and systems in Australia can be shared among participants and through trusted workers.

Figure 5 shows the results of a survey of 25 young people taking part in a multicultural basketball program⁸. Participants were asked to indicate their top three reasons for participating in sport from a list of eight possible responses. Interestingly, when the results are broken down by those who have been in Australia for up to 2 years and those who have been in Australia for more than 2 years, the top reasons for participating in sport are noticeably different. That is, the role of sport in providing settlement support—in terms of information and support from coaches and language acquisition—is more clearly a motivating factor for more recent arrivals (Figure 6).

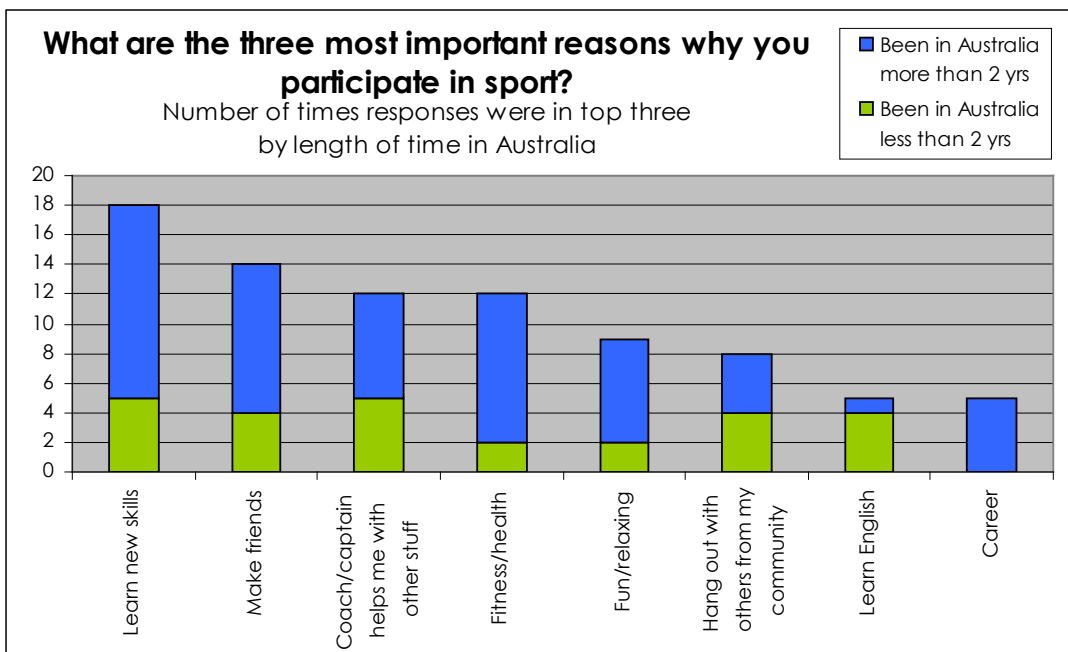


Figure 5 Most important reasons for playing sport

⁸ See Appendix for full details

Respondents who have been in Australia < 2 years (n = 8)		Respondents who have been in Australia > 2 years (n = 17)	
Reason	# who included in Top 3	Reason	# who included in Top 3
I participate because it's fun and the coach/captain helps me with other stuff	5	I participate to learn new skills	13
I participate to learn new skills	5	I participate for fitness/health reasons	10
I participate because it's a good way to make friends	4	I participate because it's a good way to make friends	10
I participate because it helps me to learn English	4		
I participate so I can hang out with other young people from my community	4		

Figure 6. Top two reasons given for participating in sport by length of time in Australia

5.1.3 Sport and recreation as diversion

Sport is an important element in the lives of families and young people prior to settlement—sport is played in villages and refugee camps—however because of a number of barriers, young people don't have the same access to sport when they first arrive in Australia, so there is the risk that they will drift towards other less desirable activities.

Endalkatchew Gage, Multicultural Youth Worker, CMY

I tell parents if they are reluctant about their young people participating, "At least you know where your kids are. Coz they're either going to be out in the streets hanging out, or at the leisure centre/basketball court. Which would you rather they were doing?"

Claudia Abakah, Multicultural Youth Liaison Officer, CMY

Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds can feel disconnected from their family, community and peers as they search for their own sense of place in Australia.

This search can sometimes lead young people to come into contact with risk-taking behaviour. Diversionary activities such as sport and recreation may prevent some of this contact and give young people a sense of belonging. Participation does not, however, guarantee a diversionary outcome. Sport and recreation programs need to be structured and coordinated with locally based services that can address issues as they arise both on and off the field.

5.1.4 Sport and recreation as a capacity building opportunity

Sport and recreation can be used to explore real life issues and challenges, particularly as they relate to the dislocation and tensions inherent in the settlement process. Often viewed as a microcosm of life, the sporting field provides an environment whereby actions and consequences can be explored. Support workers can use the competitive environment to draw parallels between what happens on the sporting field and in other areas of life, such as school. In the same vein, targeted recreation programs such as men's/girls' groups, camps and creative arts programs, can provide a space for young people to develop a range of life skills and explore their own strengths and personal development. This process does, however, require skilled workers who have gained the trust and respect of young participants. A range of issues can be addressed when viewing sport and recreation in this way, including: communication, conflict resolution, racism/tolerance and self esteem.

5.1.5 Sport and recreation as a therapeutic outcome

The major impact of trauma is a break in connection, a confounding of the individual's belief that human beings can be trusted, or are predictable... and the most important pathway to recovery is connection. Using fun interventions can restore trust and faith in humanity. Recreational and group activities (i.e. fun) are not only an engagement tool, they are in fact therapeutic interventions.

Chris Hortin, Multicultural Youth Worker, CMY

Providing accessible sport and recreation opportunities can be important for newly arrived young people who have experienced significant trauma prior to arrival in Australia. Many refugee young people have spent prolonged periods in refugee camps and conflict zones and may not have ever had opportunities to play as other young people have. Having the opportunity to

Case study: Longhorn Basketball Club

The Longhorn Basketball Club was founded in 2003 and is based in the Western region of Melbourne. The club is volunteer-run and involves around 100 mainly-Sudanese young people. Manyang Berberi, a coach and founder of the club, is well respected in his community and has built the club around a strong philosophy of ensuring its members are well supported and encouraged in other parts of their lives. For example, Manyang believes that participating in structured sport requires commitment and discipline, and the students who join must attend school if they want to play in the club. Manyang, who is currently studying Sports Administration and Business Administration at University, not only shares his skills and knowledge with club members, but also provides a strong role model for the young people who participate.

play—which is so important in the formative years of a person's life—provides a space for young people to form connections and take some time out from the difficult issues they invariably face during settlement and in recovering from the impact of trauma.

The importance of fun as a motivating factor for participating in sport was also reflected in the survey of 25 young people. When asked an open question about why they participated in sport/recreation, the main responses centred on fun and enjoyment.

Some of the responses included:

- **It's great fun.**
- **I play for fun and for the future.**
- **It's fun, and it keeps you fit (which is a bonus).**
- **I just like it.**
- **Make friends, have fun, keep fit.**

5.1.6 Sport and recreation as an entry point to broader participation

I want to play basketball with anyone. It doesn't matter if they're Sudanese. After I know them, it's fun.

Sudanese young woman, 16, on what kind of sport she would like to play

Sport and recreation represents a practical and accessible entry point for addressing the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and providing links between and within communities. Newly arrived young people may start by participating in an ethno-specific or targeted multicultural program, but after gaining confidence can more easily be linked into other participation opportunities, such as mainstream sports clubs or competitions and different recreation activities.

Figure 7 provides a visual representation of entry points for newly arrived and refugee young people into sport and recreation and broader participation.

Do we need ethno-specific models?

CMY has found that young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds identify with other young people from a similar background or experience and that this is an important factor in achieving participation. This does not mean that young people want to ONLY play with other young people from a similar background, but that recognition should be given to the importance of young people being able to play with peers who they feel comfortable with and who can provide mutual support. This may mean young people want to play with others from the same cultural or language background, or with those who have shared life experiences (e.g. with others who are newly arrived in Australia).

Australian Lebanese Welfare (ALW), for example, have found that ethno-specific models, rather than compounding isolation, provide an important vehicle for young people to gain the confidence to participate in wider community activities. ALW cite models where

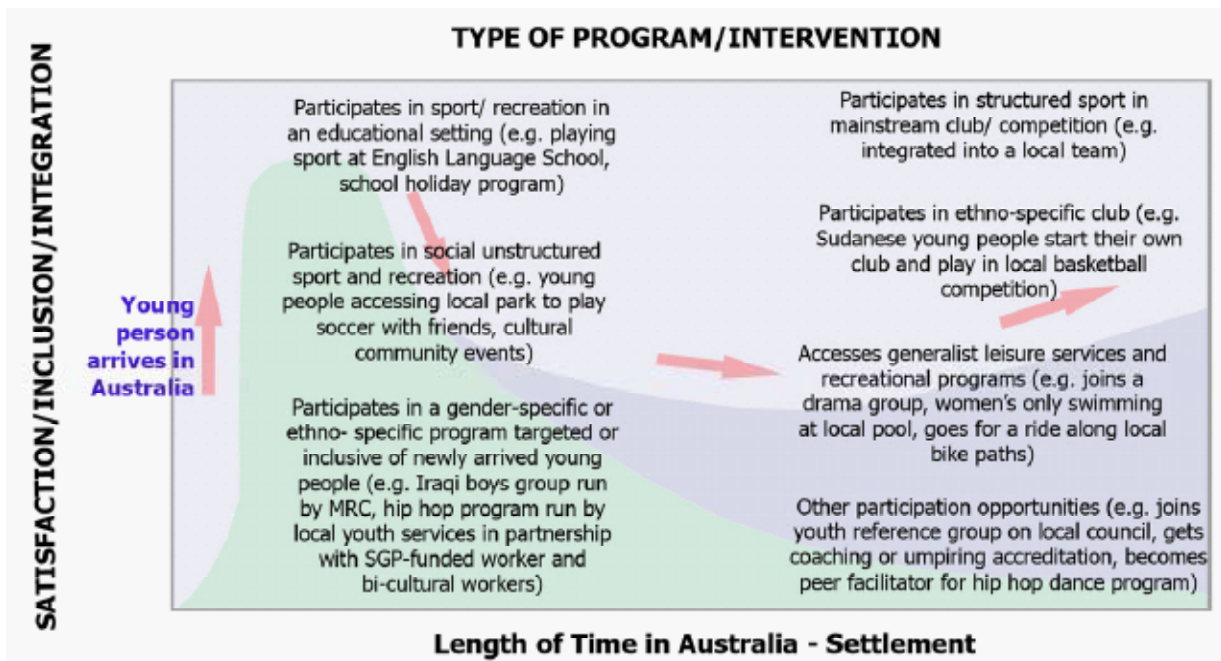


Figure 7 Sport and recreation as an entry point to broader participation

groups have begun with a particular ethno-specific makeup but have broadened out over time to incorporate a range of cultural backgrounds as evidence that this is a developmental and evolving process.

CMYs experience has also been that ethno-specific models do not necessarily have a 'use-by date', whereby newly arrived young people move from playing with those from similar backgrounds into mainstream teams, clubs or programs. Once friendships/connections are established, it is only natural that young people will want to continue to play together, whatever their background!

5.1.7 Sport and recreation promotes health and wellbeing

I want to be healthy, and sport is good for me.

Sudanese young woman, 18, on why she plays basketball

Participating in a sports club or recreation activity has been shown to have positive social and psychological effects. These include increased self-esteem, better development of life skills, and increase in academic achievement. People seek participation in sport and recreation for three key reasons—fun, fitness and friends, all of which contribute to our overall wellbeing (VicHealth 2006).

For refugee and newly arrived young people who may not have had the opportunity or time to play prior to settlement, participating in sport or recreation has many additional health benefits, particularly in terms of mental health. For young people going through the difficult process of settling in a new country – where they have to learn new systems, a new language and juggle the expectations of family, friends and community – feeling positive about the future and their potential is extremely important. Playing sport in a supportive environment can provide a 'time out' from the many challenges of settlement and a space where young people can do something they are familiar with. As Nelson Mandela so aptly put it, *"sport speaks to people in a language they can understand."*

Case study: it started with All Nations...

Born in Afghanistan, Amanullah came to Australia in December 2005.

"At that time, in my country, it was very difficult for life. I didn't play sport in Afghanistan because I didn't have time - 6 days a week, 13 hours a day, I work, I make carpet. No time for sport, no time for holiday, no time for a picnic. I love soccer in Australia. Soccer is the best sport in the world. Soccer is a very hard sport - you have to train hard to play well and we have been meeting for some months now 3 times a week. We still do that even though the competition is over. Playing soccer is healthy and good for life in the future. When I first arrived in Australia, I had a lot of time. I stayed home for 3-4 months because I didn't know anyone and I didn't know where I could go. Now I find lots of friends from soccer training. I play with different people from different nationalities.

I played left defender for the Harmony team in the All Nations Tournament as part of the competition in the south. It was wonderful. I am looking forward to doing umpire training this year. This will let me earn some money in the sport I love."

AMES Youth Program Participant, Noble Park



5.1.8 Sport and recreation as a way to build community understanding

... sport and recreation has the potential to help smooth what can be a dislocating experience of migration by offering familiarity and facilitating community connections. Sport can provide a forum through which to express and promote diversity; celebrate, maintain, revive and affirm cultural difference; challenge stereotypes and enhance intercultural relations

(Taylor, 2001; Hanlon and Coleman, 2006; Coakley, 2001).

Cortis, Sawrikar & Muir, 2007, p.3-4

Sport brings people together and can be used as a tool to build better understanding within and across communities. An example of such a model is the All Nations Soccer Competition. This annual round robin competition brings together a variety of communities, and includes a social component with barbeques and family activities organised after the matches. Players and supporters are brought together and the competition provides a backdrop for these social activities. An achievement of the All Nations model is that it brings players and people from different cultures and backgrounds face to face, requiring them to play against and with one another despite their differences.

Case study: Upfield Soccer Club

... Like most first official training sessions, there is a lot of excitement in the changing rooms. Stories of summer exploits are relayed in five different languages, thus making this gathering resemble a United Nations meeting. But all the diplomacy stops when Theo Myrskos, the club president, Chirsto Fokianos, a senior board member, and head coach Gurkan Topal enter the changing room to officially begin the season.

After all the warm pleasantries are exchanged, Christo launches into a speech that can only be given at a club as ethnically diverse as Upfield, home to players from ten different nationalities. His address is mainly catered to the new players who are looking to join the Upfield family. "It's important that any newcomer that comes to Upfield understand that their history has no relevance to their ability," Christo says, his face stern but eyes full of empathy for these young refugees, some of whom have left terrified family members back in Iraq and Palestine. "Upfield treats everybody as an individual and we succeeded for many years because of it. Everyone is welcome and we are happy to have anyone as long as they keep their history aside and just focus on playing soccer".

It is this belief that forms the charter of Upfield S.C. Many players who wear the blue and white of Upfield profess that this team is not merely just a soccer club, but another family for youngsters who fled the terror and bloodshed of countries such as Iraq, Palestine and El Salvador.

"A soccer team that is rooted with good people, that doesn't promote conflict and political agendas will always create a bonding environment," Christo says. "For a first time immigrant that wants to get involved with what Australia has to offer, Upfield is a great starting point".

... Mohammed is one of the many Iraqi refugees who found solace in Upfield. Amongst them are Sunnis, Shias and Christians, historic religious enemies who are currently caught up in the bloody sectarian violence back home. For these Iraqi players, the current situation in their country has not affected the warm relationship they share with each other. Through the club these players discovered they have more in common than they first realised. "We are here to play soccer in peace and make more friends," Mohammed says. "The players socialize a lot and we always have a laugh before the session starts. It also teaches you how to make friends and interact with others".

Excerpt from "Playing for Keeps" by Saeed Saeed (www.saeedsaeed.com.au)

Published in Soccer International (April 2007 edition)

5.2 Barriers to participation

Barriers to participation for refugee and migrant young people have been well documented in previous studies (see Wilson 1998; Keogh 2002), and while these barriers are commonly experienced by young people from a variety of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, they do not deal specifically with the settlement context.

In the survey of 25 young people undertaken for this paper, a question around what young people found most difficult about participating in sport suggested that barriers vary with length of time spent in Australia. **Figure 8** below highlights how responses reflect the different barriers for those who are more newly arrived, and how these barriers shift over time as young people become more familiar with systems and opportunities, but also

with the stresses and tensions of settlement. That is, those who had been in Australia two years or less were more concerned with not knowing the rules or where to play, while those who had been in the country more than two years listed having other commitments and parents/guardians not being happy with their participation as the biggest difficulties. Transport was an issue regardless of length of time in Australia.

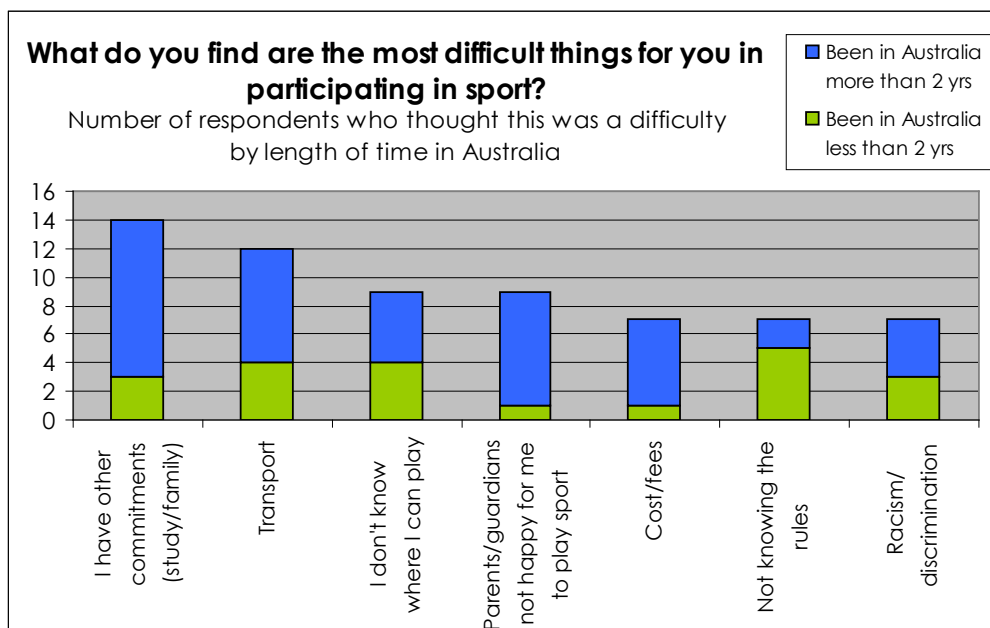


Figure 8 Barriers to participating in sport

The following provides a summary of some of the barriers to participation as they particularly relate to refugee and newly arrived young people in the settlement context. They are broken down into structural, mediating and personal barriers (Cortis, Sawrikar & Muir 2007, p.27).

Structural barriers

Structural factors relate to the availability and appropriateness of physical and social environments, such as facilities, transport and support networks.

Unsustained once-off programs

A recurring theme through consultations and the forum was the frustration of securing funding for sustainable ongoing programs. With no dedicated funding stream for sport and recreation programs targeting newly arrived young people, successful programs that are run are often short-term and project-based. Where there are youth workers working with refugee and newly arrived young people (e.g. through SGP, Reconnect and NAYSS), the difficulty lies in justifying the cost of running a sport/rec program to funding bodies. So while a worker's time may be covered for running group programs, finding money to cover the overhead costs of hiring facilities, finding coaches/teachers, transport to and from activities, equipment, and so on, is often a major barrier.

Sustainability is a big issue - often programs that run are short-term and are reactive to what's going on in a community. So if there's a problem, agencies will come in and run a program for a few months or years, and then leave. But the need for that activity is ongoing.

Youssef Mohamed, Organiser, African Cup

Lack of inclusive and accessible programs for refugee and newly arrived young people

Linked to the previous issue, there are limited opportunities for newly arrived young people to participate in targeted sport and recreation activities that are inclusive and accessible. Providing sport and recreation opportunities to this target group requires a recognition that a 'one size fits all' approach is not always appropriate, and factors such as cost, cultural appropriateness, transport, language, and a lack of familiarity with systems and structures, are barriers that newly arrived young people face that many Australian-born young people will not (see Section 5.3 Good Practice).

We have 200-300 young people in our community who have no plans; their diaries are empty. They're just waiting for an opportunity to participate in a regular activity.

Chitlu Wyn, Foundation House (Karen Burmese Community)

Referral of young people into sport and recreation programs through settlement services

Unclear referral mechanisms for linking newly arrived young people into sport and recreation opportunities is another structural barrier. IHSS providers, who work with families on arrival for up to six months, are not required to report on the referral of young people into sport and recreation programs⁹. And while sport/rec referrals do take place, they are generally not recorded or prioritised, especially in a family model whereby the needs of young people are often filtered through priorities set by parents/guardians. As noted earlier, the introduction of a trial of youth-specific community guides within IHSS in Melbourne's Southeast may facilitate greater linkages in this regard.

Programs funded under the Settlement Grants Program (SGP) that do use sport and recreation as tools for engagement are not generally funded to work with young people under the IHSS program and are reliant on referrals from IHSS. In some areas, referral between IHSS and SGP-funded youth services do not routinely take place.

Making successful referrals also requires resources and a recognition that simply giving a newly arrived young person information about a program or service and then expecting them to turn up is unlikely to be a successful strategy. Physically taking a young person (and possibly parent/guardians) to a leisure centre, youth program or service, will give the young person an opportunity to find out how to get there, what the activity is likely to involve, and introduce them to workers, other young people and systems. Although more resource intensive, such an approach is more likely to result in young people accessing sport and recreation opportunities in the future.

Linkage between targeted sport and recreation programs and mainstream programs and competitions

Pathways for young people to further their involvement in structured sporting competitions are not always easily accessible. Often young people will have the opportunity to participate in one-off grassroots community tournaments or play casually in the local park, but they don't know how to go about joining a club. At the same time, many clubs are looking to recruit talented players and are aware that this target group are an untapped resource, but they don't know where to start as far as making contact and recruiting players. CMYs experience has shown that someone working in a linkage capacity has the potential to increase participation of refugee young people in sport.

As a recent example, several young men playing in an ethno-specific competition at Friday nights in Melbourne's Southeast had expressed to the project worker that they were keen to take their sport to the next level but didn't know what to do. The project officer made contact with the State Sporting Association and found out about several local clubs who were looking to recruit boys to their clubs. The worker invited coaches and club officials down to the Friday night matches as 'scouts'. The talent of the players was easily recognised and several of the young men were invited to join the clubs. Additional work then had to be done by the project worker to access financial support for the young men to pay registration fees, purchase uniforms etc.

Currently, a linkage or transitions model such as this does not exist and this kind of linkage role falls on the shoulders of caseworkers (who often know little about sporting structures) or multicultural development officers at Sporting Organisations (who are usually overloaded already).

⁹ Referral points are generally related to health, trauma, education, employment services etc

Access to transport

Transport is a major issue for newly arrived young people accessing sport and recreation opportunities. This is particularly the case for those settling in areas where public transport infrastructure is limited, such as in interface council areas or in regional settlement locations. Where parents do have access to private vehicles, sport and recreation is often not a priority in terms of driving young people to and from activities.

Access to public space and facilities

So many times the boys get together and go down to the local parks to play soccer with their friends, but before they even have time to put their shin pads on, people show up and yell at them to get off the ground because they are going to be training or playing a match. The boys don't understand what they have done wrong and they get upset by being yelled at.

Chitlu Wyn, Foundation House (Karen Burmese community)

Restrictions around accessing community halls, soccer fields and basketball courts (which is exacerbated by factors such as a lack of local facilities accessible to the general public, public liability insurance and drought), can limit young people's participation in sport and recreation, particularly for informal, social participation. In some local areas there are very limited youth-friendly facilities and spaces to begin with (e.g. youth drop-in or recreation centres), let alone facilities that are accessible to and inclusive of refugee and migrant young people (e.g. facilities where women's only activities can be run).

For ethno-specific clubs, the cost of accessing facilities —such as hiring a basketball court or using a soccer field —can be prohibitive when teams are made up of newly arrived and refugee young people who have limited financial resources.

An informal kick-around at a local park has resource implications if the field is assigned to a registered club by a local council for a tenancy fee. Access to casual players may be denied or questions asked about who is responsible for organising the activity if it infringes on the use of the field by the club. These arrangements may act as an almost imperceptible barrier to a newly arrived refugee who identifies an open space suited to play, but not the governmental system that determines its ownership, cost and maintenance.

Brett Hutchins, Monash University, CMY Forum Keynote Speech

Mediating barriers

Organisational policies and social stereotypes, which might impede participation.

Lack of inclusive practices in existing sport and recreation providers

Taylor (2002) also found a degree of incongruence between rhetoric and practice in sporting organisations. She found that 72 per cent of sport associations saw themselves as open to cultural diversity, yet few of these (12 per cent) could cite specific policies that encouraged diversity in practice. Taylor found that soccer clubs were most likely to have policies in place (30 per cent), with softball the least likely (4 per cent). This suggests a tendency for sporting organisations to see themselves as open to diversity but failing to match this by putting structures in place.

Cortis, Sawrikar & Muir, 2007, p.36

While some sport and recreation providers have been proactive in embedding inclusive practices into their organisations (for example, the AFL has set up a Multicultural AFL Project), others have been less forthcoming. So while sport and recreation opportunities may be generally available in local communities, they may not be particularly accessible or inclusive of newly arrived and refugee young people. This is particularly the case for young women, whose participation may be dependent on a degree of cultural sensitivity (e.g. being aware and flexible around uniform requirements so as not to exclude young women, being aware of transport considerations and families' fears around the safety of young women).

A lack of awareness or inclusiveness of sport and recreation providers mediates young people's participation in a number of ways. For example, attitudes of staff can make leisure centres or programs unwelcoming and intimidating places for newly arrived young people. Cultural insensitivity (often unintended) and a lack of flexibility in programs can also exclude some young people. Where sports organisations have tried to introduce inclusive practices by employing multicultural development officers, a lack of resources can limit their effectiveness, particularly if all the responsibility for working with multicultural young people falls to this one worker.

It should be noted that being an inclusive club or centre is not just about saying "our doors are open to everyone" and expecting diverse groups to come on in. Sport and recreation providers need to gain an understanding of where they are at in terms of inclusiveness and assess what needs to be done. Fostering a climate of change is more than just simply producing documents and programs. It is about promoting a culture of inclusiveness within the organisation. Staff at all levels should be actively involved in the process and management need to provide structure and practical support to enable change to occur.

Language can create significant barriers when trying to encourage communities to participate, not only when communicating verbally with individuals and groups, but sometimes when you translate resources into another language the words don't translate appropriately. We know of several sports that have unknowingly dissuaded communities by using what English speakers would consider passive terms, such as life guard, beach patrol, sports development officer, sports commission and tribunal in their publications. When translated, these words don't have the dual meanings that they do in English and have very negative connotations for many of these individuals, who have experienced atrocities under oppressive regimes.

Sophie Franet, Co-ordinator – Sport & Social Health, CMY

Resettlement experience—Language barriers, unfamiliar structures etc

An obvious mediating factor in refugee and newly arrived young people's participation in sport and recreation relates to the resettlement experience itself. Young people who are dealing with the demands of settlement—of finding their way within complex new systems and structures, learning a new language, etc—may not prioritise sport and recreation or may simply not know where to play or how to access existing opportunities. This was reflected in the results from the survey of 25 young people (see Figure 8), which indicate that for those who had been in Australia less than two years, not knowing the rules or where to play were some of the biggest challenges they faced. Further to this, young people may have limited understanding of how structured sport in Australia works in general and how to progress to higher levels of competition.

We are all more than ready to jump [when it comes to participating in sport], but we don't know how to jump. We just need someone to approach us and ask us to join in.

Karen Burmese young man, 18 (through interpreter)

Parent/guardian support

A major mediating factor to young people's participation is around parent/ guardian support (Keogh 2002; Wilson 1998). Parents/guardians are often fearful for the safety of their young people, particularly young women, and may be reluctant to allow young people to be involved in activities they are unfamiliar with. Parents/guardians may not understand the potential benefits of sport and recreation in terms of health and wellbeing, and may want their young people to focus more on study or work. In addition, many programs rely on parent support to ensure participants can get to venues and cover costs, and families that are newly arrived often have many other competing commitments that make this involvement impractical. As one forum participant describes:

It seems to me that the main barrier to refugee and migrant young people participating in sport and recreation is not having the parents implicated to support and encourage children's participation in the activity.

Refugees or migrants families don't see sport as a priority. It comes far behind housing, education, employment and understandably they are not ready to spend on it. On other hand, in the Australian sport community most of the sporting clubs are run by parents (coach, committee, referee, transport) and without parents' availability, a car for transport and money to join the club and pay for the equipment, children could miss out on the opportunity to participate.

Philippe Roussel, CMY Forum participant

Culture of sport in Australia and overseas

The culture in which mainstream sport is played in Australia can mediate newly arrived and refugee young people's involvement considerably. For example, some sporting environments in Australia (such as club competition) may involve a culture of drinking alcohol after/during games, swearing, sledging or aggressive competition. To a newly arrived young person who is unfamiliar with the cultural nuances of sporting environments, such behaviour may not only be culturally inappropriate, but also may be perceived as quite insulting and/or threatening.

On the flip side, cultural expectations of how sport is played overseas may not readily translate into the Australian sporting environment. For example, there may be strong cultural understandings or expectations about young women's participation in sport. Games overseas may be played in a much more unstructured and flexible way (for example, players turning up at different times and joining in when they arrive).

In our culture, there is very little that is more inappropriate or insulting than being sworn at. It is a mark of great disrespect. Having come from an oppressed society, we are very sensitive to and easily upset by such things.

Karen Burmese young man, 17 (through interpreter)

Everyone always mentions that we are late to training and events and stuff, but no one seems to understand that until we came here, we have never lived by a clock, never wore a watch. It takes a lot of getting used to.

Sudanese young man, 15

Racism/discrimination

Racism and discrimination within sport – and in the Australian community more broadly – is a mediating factor that may deter young people from participating. If young people feel targeted or unwelcome, they are unlikely to want to participate in sport and recreation programs outside their own friendship group or ethnic community.

Consultations indicated that racial discrimination within sport is prevalent. The types of racism ethnic young people experience include verbal and physical abuse, ostracism and exclusion. Two examples of this are young ethnic people being referred to in derogatory terms or not receiving equal playing time.

Young people experienced racial discrimination from within clubs and during sporting contests and the perpetrators included coaches, parents, spectators and other participants. Often when incidents of verbal abuse are not addressed satisfactorily within the sporting environment, they lead to physical violence.

Parents can also experience racism, as illustrated in the example of a Vietnamese father who accompanied his daughter to a netball competition and found the other parents reluctant to talk to him. As a result, the parent was unwilling to return and the young woman subsequently changed sports.

Wilson 1998, p.27

Personal barriers

Individual barriers such as a lack of time, money, skills, fears about safety, and poor self-image

Lack of time, other commitments

Newly arrived young people are often extremely busy. Many are learning a new language, have family commitments such as accompanying parents/ guardians to appointments, assisting with interpreting, looking after younger siblings, and have considerable study and work pressures. For young people with disrupted education who have to cope with the demands of the Australian education system and their high expectations to achieve academically, the pressures of 'catching up' can mean

many extra hours of homework and out-of-school-hours learning. Refugee young people are often working part-time as well as studying and may be contributing to family finances or sending money to family overseas. The many responsibilities and commitments of young people mean that they may not have time to participate in sport and recreation programs.

Financial constraints

Financial pressures are often severe for refugee families, particularly when families are paying off overseas debts or sending money to relatives in refugee camps or countries of origin. Refugees usually arrive with no possessions or financial assets and have to start their lives again. Therefore, the considerable costs associated with sport and recreation activities (membership fees, transport, weekly fees, clothing and equipment) can often be too much for a family to cover.

Not knowing the rules

In terms of structured sport, young people who have spent time in refugee camps may never have been exposed to the kind of recreational activities or sports played in Australia. For example, refugee young people are unlikely to have seen or heard about Australian Rules Football before coming to Australia, let alone learnt the rules or played before. Having the skills and knowledge to participate in a sport is something that is acquired, and therefore programs introducing games and teaching basic skills are essential to facilitate newly arrived young people's involvement.

5.3 Good practice

A comprehensive study has been published around inclusive practices in sport and recreation (CMY & Gary Henshall & Associates 2005). To access the Report into Good Practice Sports Inclusion Models for young people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities go to www.cmy.net.au/allcmypublications#r. 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.

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!

Cultural awareness

- When planning a program, be aware of the importance of religious events or community activities that young people may prioritise (e.g. church service, Saturday morning language classes, or fasting for Ramadan);
- Work around important community events or, better still, find ways to integrate your program into the community (e.g. hold a family fun day for Eid);
- Contact your local Migrant Resource Centre for a list of important cultural festivals and religious practices for communities in your area.

Involving families and communities

- Work with bi-cultural community workers who can provide cultural support and role modelling, as well as build trusting relationships with families;
- Employ bi-cultural workers or mentor refugee young people to become leaders (coaches, referees, captains etc);
- Translate information to distribute to young people and parents/guardians;
- Call families (with interpreters where needed) and talk to them about the program;
- Hold a community meeting using interpreters to discuss your proposal. To maximise success, go to established groups;
- Invite family members and community leaders to see the program first hand;
- Promote the program and recruit young people through schools, English Language Schools/Centres, ethnic media, community organisations and Migrant Resource Centres;
- Informed consent is essential. Provide first language information to families. Access generic translated parent consent forms for activities via the CMY website (www.cmy.net.au/allcmypublications#p);
- Given many families seek greater connection with one another, try running family events that have activities for young people of different ages as well as family members.

Cost

- Make activities free or less than \$5;
- 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;
- To reduce costs, form partnerships with agencies offering in-kind or financial support.

Transport

- Try to provide transport or meet at a local point, close to public transport and familiar to the young person (such as their school or the railway station);
- Make sure activities finish before dark so that young people can get home safely. This is important for young women for whom it may be culturally inappropriate for them to be unaccompanied after dark.

Choice of activities

- Activities need to be non-threatening. Some newly arrived young people may not have developed the knowledge or the skills to enable them to participate in certain activities. Ensure an instructor is provided for young people that may need assistance.
- Mixing Genders: Some cultures do not allow boys and girls to participate together. For example, asking young women and men to hold hands can be inappropriate. Split the group or run separate girls' and boys' activities.
- Clothing: Some cultures have more strict dress codes. Families may feel comfortable with young people participating as long as they can maintain cultural dress codes. Simply ask about what is okay. If an activity requires special equipment or clothing make sure that you can provide it, or let people know what is required well in advance.

Communication

- Be aware of the type of language you are using and keep it as simple as possible. Even Australian jargon, such as 'give it a go', could confuse a young person who is more recently arrived;
- Don't presume that everyone has a good level of knowledge about the activity. Concepts such as 'swimming between the flags' could be totally unfamiliar to a newly arrived young person;
- Check about the level of English that is spoken and understood by the group. Ask for ideas from participants about the meaning of key terms and concepts (in a non-testing or competitive way);
- Encourage questions and requests for help;
- Use visual aids, demonstrations and body language to help communicate your message;
- Try not to "dumb down" your language by speaking in broken English, in an accent or shouting.

5.4 Limitations in using sport and recreation as a tool for 'good settlement'

Barriers to participation and involvement in community-based activities include cost, parental support and language, as well as difficulty in understanding how Australian sports organisations and competition structures work. To this list must be added limited employment opportunities, difficulties in navigating government bureaucracies, and problems in accessing educational resources and services. The fear and experience of racism and discrimination, as well as social isolation and cultural displacement complicate matters further. Faced with this scenario, sport and recreation cannot solve these problems. There is no quick fix on offer here. These activities can be but one part of a much broader community engagement and settlement program. Unless this is kept clearly in mind, there is an ever-present danger that sport and recreation will remain of limited use, or at worst, work against the objective of effective community settlement.

Brett Hutchins, Monash University, CMY Forum Keynote Speech

Having outlined the potential benefits of sport and recreation in terms of settlement, barriers to participation and good practice, it is important to emphasise that sport and recreation should not be seen as a 'cure all'. Sport and recreation programs can only ever facilitate positive outcomes for refugee young people in the context of a society that addresses the other barriers to their full participation and social inclusion¹⁰—ensuring there are appropriate education and employment pathways, accessible and affordable housing and health services, families and communities are supported, police and the justice system are fair and responsive, diversity is celebrated in welcoming communities, and social exclusion is systemically tackled.

It must also be noted that sport in particular can be a site of tension and conflict. The internal logic and structure of sport is competitive, systematically demanding winners and losers. Sport is based on the principle of them and us, and these opposing positions are what create the drama and excitement of sport. However, viewed from the perspective of community building and cross-cultural understanding, it can also act as a barrier to fraternity, friendship and mutual acceptance (Hutchins 2007). To address the negative aspects of competition, programs need to be prepared and run competitions where participants are clear that the aims of the project are not as much about winning or losing, as about learning and gaining new skills.

In the same vein, recreation opportunities where the key focus is fun—such as camps, hip hop dance programs, arts and storytelling workshops, excursions, cooking and life skills—can be just as effective (if not more effective) in terms of settlement support as structured sport competitions, where there are rules, teams, winners and losers.

¹⁰ See glossary for definition of social inclusion/exclusion.

6 | recommendations and conclusion

Hitherto, however, the use of sports and recreation as an effective tool in combating the myriads of problems confronting [...] migrant youths and in enhancing the process of their integration into the societal system in Australia has not been fully exploited by concerned organisations.

'Lanre Bolarinwa, ABM Worldwide Sport, CMY Forum Participant

This discussion paper has highlighted some of the benefits of creating inclusive sport and recreation opportunities in supporting refugee young people to 'settle well' in Australia. The difficulty in proposing ways forward is that responsibility for creating sustainable and accessible opportunities does not clearly sit with any one stakeholder. That is, a range of strategies are required—from resourcing settlement workers to deliver programs as an effective means of engagement, to supporting bi-cultural workers and volunteers from within communities to access facilities and utilise their own skills, to supporting young people to participate in mainstream competitions through the promotion of inclusive sporting clubs and associations.

The following recommendations were developed through consultation with a range of service providers (sport, community, settlement):

6.1 Funding sustainable sport and recreation programs

6.1.1 Creating a dedicated funding stream

There is a significant need for increased funding and grant opportunities for sport and recreation initiatives that target young people from refugee and newly arrived backgrounds. Whether programs are delivered through community, settlement or sporting bodies, a funding pool should be created for grants that support different participation models (e.g. improved access to mainstream, ethno-specific clubs, settlement workers delivering programs in partnership with sporting bodies, or multicultural programs).

Such a funding stream should take into consideration the realistic resources required to plan, develop and deliver effective programs. The VicHealth Participation Grants provide a good funding model in this regard, as they resource planning and community consultation stages as well as enabling a realistic amount of time for program delivery.

Federal and State Departments with a stake in the provision of both sport and recreation and settlement services¹¹ should meet to consider how such a

funding stream can be created and coordinated (see recommendation under Linkages).

From our experience, we are often involved in discussions or consultations regarding the issue of access and inclusiveness in sport and recreation. Yet we still haven't seen any outcomes or action from this – volunteers are still under-resourced and shoulder most of the burden. They burn out. We still can't get access to equipment, grounds, and training for coaches/ referees/etc. We know the issues. Now we need the resources!

Representative, Soccer club with majority refugee young people

I would like to strongly recommend that the CMY should copy the successful model of the Active After-school Communities Program (AASC)¹² which coordinates and provides funding for primary schools for the organisation of sports after school hours. The schools are allowed to select suitable sports program and contract deliverer who designs and conducts the program to specification.

'Lanre Bolarinwa, ABM Worldwide Sport, CMY Forum Participant

¹¹ For example, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Sport and Recreation Victoria, VicHealth, and the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

¹² The 'Active After-school Communities' is an after school hours structured health and physical activity program that emphasises safe and fun experiences that is delivered nationally to primary schools and Child Care Benefit approved After School Hours Care Services. The cornerstone of AASC is the involvement of the local community in the delivery of the program. For more details, go to: www.ausport.gov.au/aasc



6.1.2 Supporting young people's participation through small grants

In overcoming the financial barriers many newly arrived and refugee young people face in accessing sport and recreation opportunities, the State Government of Victoria, through the Department for Victorian Communities, should consider further supporting the expansion of the Sports Without Borders (SWB) initiative (www.sportswithoutborders.org.au) and the Our Club, Our Future - Sporting Uniform Grants Program 2007. SWB is currently funded through philanthropic donations and was formed out of an agreement between Swinburne University of Technology, the Hellenic Sports Association (ATHLOS) and the Victorian Multicultural Commission. With enhanced financial resources, such small grants programs can be instrumental in assisting refugee and newly arrived young people with limited resources to access existing mainstream competitions and programs.

6.1.3 Recognising and resourcing sport and recreation within settlement services

The importance of sport and recreation opportunities for newly arrived young people should be recognised through settlement services. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship funding requirements should recognise and resource the provision of group work programs—including sports, arts, personal development, etc—as effective engagement and referral tools for SGP-funded services. An example of a funding model that incorporates brokerage money to run group programs is the FaCSIA-funded Reconnect and NAYSS initiatives.

At the moment, settlement providers funded through SGP aren't funded to work with IHSS families. However, given the importance of sport and recreation for newly arrived young people, youth-specific organisations SHOULD be funded to run activities with young people in IHSS (first six months), especially those on SHP visas as a priority, as sport and rec helps link young people in with other services/support.

Zara Bautista, Multicultural Youth Worker, CMY

6.2 Developing better linkages between the sport, recreation, settlement and community sectors

6.2.1 Convening inter-departmental meeting of key stakeholders

Federal and State Departments with a stake in the provision of both sport and recreation and settlement services should convene an inter-departmental roundtable meeting to co-ordinate a whole-of-government approach to ensuring sport and recreation opportunities are inclusive and accessible to newly arrived and refugee young people. This should include stakeholders from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, and from the Department of Victorian Communities – Sport and Recreation Victoria, VicSport, Victorian Multicultural Commission and VicHealth.

6.3 Facilitating social inclusion of newly arrived communities

6.3.1 Supporting bi-cultural workers and resourcing community development approaches

While bi-cultural workers and volunteers from within communities have been recognised as vital to the success of sport and recreation programs in engaging refugee and newly arrived young people, funding and resourcing rarely reflects the time and commitment needed for successful and sustainable community development approaches. That is, the resources required to ensure bi-cultural workers can get accreditation if required (as umpires, coaches, etc), young people are mentored, workers and volunteers can access facilities, expertise and resources, form partnerships with sports associations and clubs, and so on, needs to be factored into program planning and supported through appropriate funding.

Other potential avenues for tapping into the skills and strengths of bi-cultural workers is for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to support the development of Youth Traineeships and school-based apprenticeships within the sports sector for young people

from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Within sporting associations, CMY is working with AFL SportsReady to adapt their Indigenous Employment Program to CLD communities. This may be a useful model for other sporting associations to follow.

Realistic funding - how many bi-cultural youth workers are funded to work 2 or 3 days a week? But the reality of the work is that it's more like a 7-day-a-week job if you are from a community and you're working with that community. There needs to be greater understanding by funding bodies of the demands of the role of the ethno specific worker on the ground, and the significant after hours times allocated to supporting their communities.

Ahmed Ahmed, Jesuit Social Services, CMY Forum Panel Member

Trust can be developed by involving key figures from the community - agencies should tap into these untapped community resources (people with skills, knowledge, etc.) as this both empowers the community and builds trust.

Dr Khairy Majeed, MRC Northeast, CMY Forum Panel Member

Training of CALD and refugee young people in all areas of sport and rec i.e. umpires, coaches, players, administration etc

Health Promotion Officer, ISIS Primary Care, Hobsons Bay

6.3.2 Encouraging supportive parents through health literacy initiative

Organisations running sport and recreation programs should follow best practice in working with refugee young people and their families (see section 5.3). Bi-cultural workers can help to bridge the gap and engage parents/guardians around young people's participation in activities. However, a multilingual resource should also be developed as part of health literacy initiative to promote the benefits of sport and recreation for young people. The resource (e.g. an information flyer or media campaign on ethnic radio) should be widely available for services to use as a tool in promoting activities that engage newly arrived and refugee young people and their communities.

Building trust with parents is key... Need to provide education for parents to enhance their understanding and awareness about the importance of sport for children.

Dr Khairy Majeed, MRC Northeast, CMY Forum Panel Member

Parents sometimes don't understand the need and benefit of sport/ recreation/arts as a re-settling tool. More work can be done in getting information to parents (via community language radio and newspapers) about the needs and benefits. Otherwise parents may have the mistaken belief that sport/recreation takes away time from doing homework.

Chi Vu, Western Edge Youth Arts

6.4 Improving access to sport and recreation facilities

6.4.1 Ensuring local government leisure services are accountable for equitable access to facilities

Difficulty accessing facilities has been identified as a major barrier to refugee and newly arrived young people's participation in sport and recreation. As an access and equity issue, local government leisure services should take leadership in addressing the barriers that prevent marginalised members of local communities from accessing local grounds and facilities and ensuring equitable access to resources.

This includes ensuring that leisure services staff receive appropriate cultural awareness training, and policies are in place addressing diversity and inclusion. The client base and staffing of leisure services should also reflect the diversity of the local community (e.g. hiring bi-cultural workers and supporting their accreditation/training needs will facilitate not only greater access for refugee and migrant young people, but also strengthen and empower local communities).

For leisure services that are outsourced using business models, successful tenders should be required through funding agreements to ensure that services provided are accessible to the local community (including refugee and migrant young people) and that the demographic profile of service users reflects the demographic profile of the local community.

State sporting bodies and local government should be accountable for being inclusive of refugee and migrant young people. So if local government are funded to provide services and make facilities accessible to local communities, this should be reflected in statistics and participation rates. Are refugee and migrant young people using local services? If not, why not?

Chris Hortin, Multicultural Youth Worker, CMY

Supporting ethnic communities to access venues/ facilities - local councils charge high rates for access to sports grounds, which excludes some communities (e.g. in Flemington, council sponsored soccer team so they changed their name to Flemington Eagles, then they got a \$4000 electricity bill from council for using the field) - need to work around this.

Ahmed Ahmed, Jesuit Social Services, CMY Forum Panel Member

6.4.2 School facilities accessible to communities after hours

One strategy for addressing the shortage of accessible sport and recreation facilities in local areas, and the high demand placed on these by different interest groups, is for the Department of Education and Training (DE&T) and the Department of Victorian Communities to explore a statewide strategy for opening up school facilities after hours to local communities. Issues around how school facilities are managed after hours, insurance and public liability, are areas that will need to be considered through this strategy. However, schools that have been proactive in engaging local communities by adopting a 'school as community hub' approach may provide useful models that can be replicated in other regions (e.g. Carlton Primary School in the City of Yarra).

6.5 An inclusive sports sector

6.5.1 Embedding inclusive practice in state sporting associations

Embedding inclusive practice into State Sporting Associations (SSAs) has the potential to increase the accessibility of structured sport to newly arrived and refugee young people. One way to encourage SSAs to be accountable for access and equity is for (State Government) funding to be tied to certain benchmarks – such as ensuring all SSA staff receive cultural awareness training, diversity and inclusion policies are developed and implemented, bi-cultural workers are supported to become administrators, coaches and referees, programs are developed and implemented for targeted groups (e.g. events for newly arrived young people and their communities that lead to further participation opportunities), and data collection captures the diversity of members/client base. Moreover, SSAs need to ensure that inclusiveness is not left to a single Multicultural Development Officer, but is embedded into the whole organisation and the work practices of all staff.

AFL and Cricket Victoria go to the school so young people can get the feel for the sport, this is more effective than taking five or six kids to a cricket club. You need to present the sport at their level.

Ahmed Ahmed, Jesuit Social Services, CMY Forum Panel Member

Inclusion training for all sports to develop grassroots understanding of (sometimes subconsciously formed, rather than intentionally created) barriers.

Ellie Pietsch and Kate Don, Women Sport and Recreation Victoria

6.5.2 Piloting a mentoring/buddy project at the local club level

At a local club level, a sports club mentoring/buddy project should be piloted to document how refugee and newly arrived young people can be linked into local sports clubs through the training and support of youth sports leaders (i.e. young people already involved in a club providing peer support to facilitate inclusion of refugee and newly arrived young people). Such a project, which facilitates social connectedness as well as the participation of newly arrived young people in sport and recreation, could provide a model that could be applied across many different sport and service areas.

In the scope of my study I recently imagined a type of mentoring program between volunteer young leaders (Sport Support Leaders) in sporting clubs to take in charge of a young refugee/migrant each and facilitate their inclusion in their club. The families would be involved by an agreement to support the project. The young leaders would be recruited and trained by the agency (Migrant resource centre or CMY for example) around leadership, cross-cultural communication, decision making etc...

It would be a one year commitment and if the sport support leader wants to leave the club he/she makes sure (with the help of the club) that someone else will take his/her role.

This system has the advantage of lowering the needs of CALD parents by assisting the young refugee/migrant with transport (young leader parents, roster in the club etc.) and by reducing the cost of equipment and fees (with funding and club support).

Philippe Roussel, CMY Forum participant

6.6 Further research

6.6.1 Sport and settlement

This paper provides a starting point in terms of critical thinking around sport and recreation as a tool for 'good settlement'. However, it is recognised that much more comprehensive research is necessary in order to inform best practice and understanding of how sport and recreation impacts on settlement. Research that explores the outcomes of participation in sport and recreation for newly arrived young people, and particularly for young women, as well as provides some critical analysis of how sport and recreation programs fit within a broader settlement service system, will be instrumental in informing future social policy and funding directions.

6.6.2 Active recreation

While there has been some research undertaken into newly arrived and refugee young people and their participation in sport, and there are some funding streams available (e.g. Sports Without Borders, VicHealth grants), less work has been done to document the outcomes, barriers and benefits of newly arrived young people's participation in active recreation programs (e.g. creative arts, life skills programs, girls' groups, music and drama). Certainly, there is substantially less funding available for targeted active recreation programs than there are for sports. Further research into this area could strengthen our understanding of how to support the personal development and wellbeing of refugee young people during settlement.

6.7 Conclusion

Playing for the future has documented how inclusive and accessible sport and recreation programs play an important role in supporting newly arrived and refugee young people to 'settle well' in Australia. And while these programs should not be seen as a cure all, they nevertheless have the potential to promote the health, wellbeing and social inclusion of refugee young people in Australia. The challenge now is in creating an environment that recognises and resources sustainable and inclusive sport and recreation opportunities that harness and build on the strengths of young people



Sport has the power to change the world, the power to inspire,

The power to unite people in a way that little else can.

Sport has the ability to give hope where there was once only despair.

It breaks down racial barriers.

It laughs in the face of all kinds of discrimination.

Sport speaks to people in a language they can understand.

Nelson Mandela, World Refugee Day 2006

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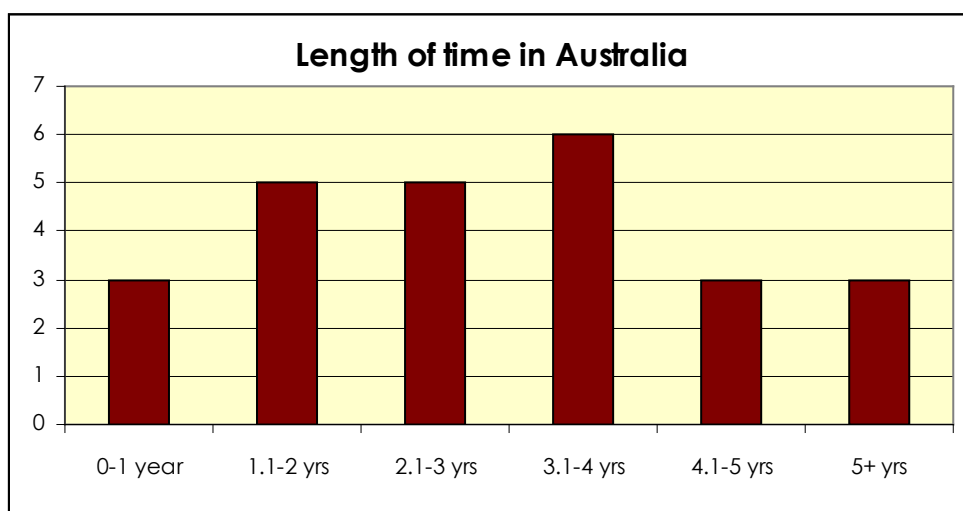
8 | appendix

Sport and Settlement Survey Results

A survey of 25 young people (aged 13-21 years) was undertaken at a basketball program held at Springers Leisure Centre in Keysborough during the Easter school holidays in 2007. The program was targeted and attended predominantly by young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Teams participating in the competition came

from a wide area of metropolitan Melbourne, from the West, North and Southeast.

The survey was administered verbally. 18 of the respondents were female and 7 were male. The average age was 16.7 years. The majority were from African backgrounds, with two from Southeast Asia. 88% of respondents had been in Australia 5 years or less.



Q. 1 What sport/rec activities have you been involved in over the last year?

All of those surveyed played in some sort of team or had been engaged in sport/rec activities over the last year.

Unsurprisingly, 24 mentioned playing basketball regularly (the survey was undertaken at a basketball competition held in the school holidays). Other sports mentioned included:

7 = Soccer 5 = Volleyball 2 = Athletics 1 = Badminton
1 = Tae Kwando 1 = Netball 1 = Dancing

Q. 2 Why do you participate in sport/rec?

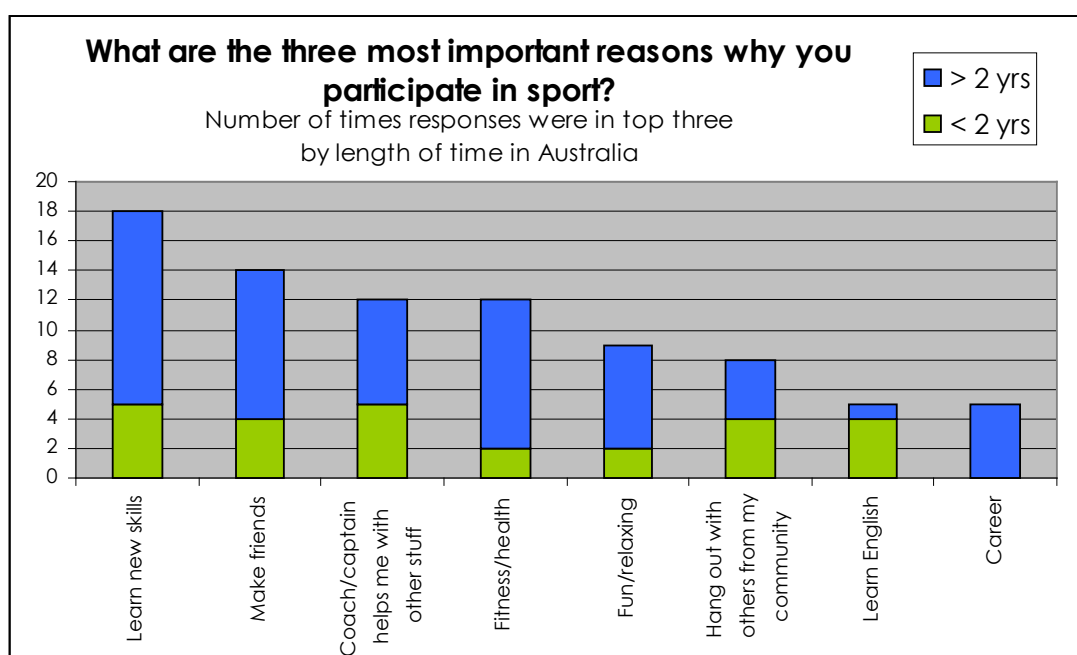
When asked an open question about why they participated in sport/recreation, the main responses seemed to be because "it's fun", or because "I like it". Quotes included:

- It's natural. I like it.
- It's great fun.
- It's fun, and it keeps you fit (which is a bonus).
- I just like it.
- I love sport so much.
- I like it and I'm tall.
- I play for fun and for the future.
- I want to be healthy, and sport is good for me.
- Because I'm tall. Basketball is for tall people and it's a good sport.

Q. 3 Which of the following are the THREE most important reasons that you participate in sport?

The top three reasons given for participating in sport were (see appendix for full list):

1. I participate to learn new skills.
2. I participate because it's a good way to make friends.
3. I participate because it's fun and the coach/captain helps me with other stuff.
3. I participate for fitness/health reasons.



Interestingly, when the responses are broken down by those who have been in Australia for up to 2 years (n = 8), and those who have been in Australia for more than 2 years (n = 17), the top reasons for participating in sport were noticeably different. That is, you can see more clearly how participating in sport/recreation helps during the initial settlement period in terms of support (I participate because it's fun and the coach/captain helps me with other stuff), language acquisition (I participate because it helps me to learn English) and social connectedness (It's a good way to make friends, and I get to hang out with other young people from my community).

Top Two reasons Given by Length of Time in Australia

Respondents who have been in Australia < 2 years (n = 8)		Respondents who have been in Australia > 2 years (n = 17)	
Reason	# who included in Top 3	Reason	# who included in Top 3
I participate because it's fun and the coach/captain helps me with other stuff	5	I participate to learn new skills	13
I participate to learn new skills	5	I participate for fitness/health reasons	10
I participate because it's a good way to make friends	4	I participate because it's a good way to make friends	10
I participate because it helps me to learn English	4		
I participate so I can hang out with other young people from my community	4		

Q. 4 If you could do/play any kind of sport with anyone, what would it be?

Although responses to this question were quite varied, some interesting themes emerged. Grouped by theme, some of the responses included:

I don't care who I play with

- I want to play with white people, either for or against. It's a good way to meet people.
- I want to play basketball with anyone - it doesn't matter if they're Sudanese. After I know them it's fun.
- I'd like to play basketball, and I'd be happy playing with anyone.
- I want to play in any team; I want to meet new people and get skills.
- I only want to play basketball. I am happy as long as it's a friendly, good team.
- I want to play with mixed nationalities but my own age group.

Level of competition is important (want to play in bigger/higher comp)

- I want to play more competition basketball in a bigger comp.
- I want to play basketball in any team, but I want to play in top competition.
- I'd like to play basketball in the European league.

I want to play with my friends

- I'd like to play netball with friends.
- I'd like to play volleyball in a competition with my friends.
- I'd like to do running, with my friends.

Want to learn a new game or play a sport I'm not already playing

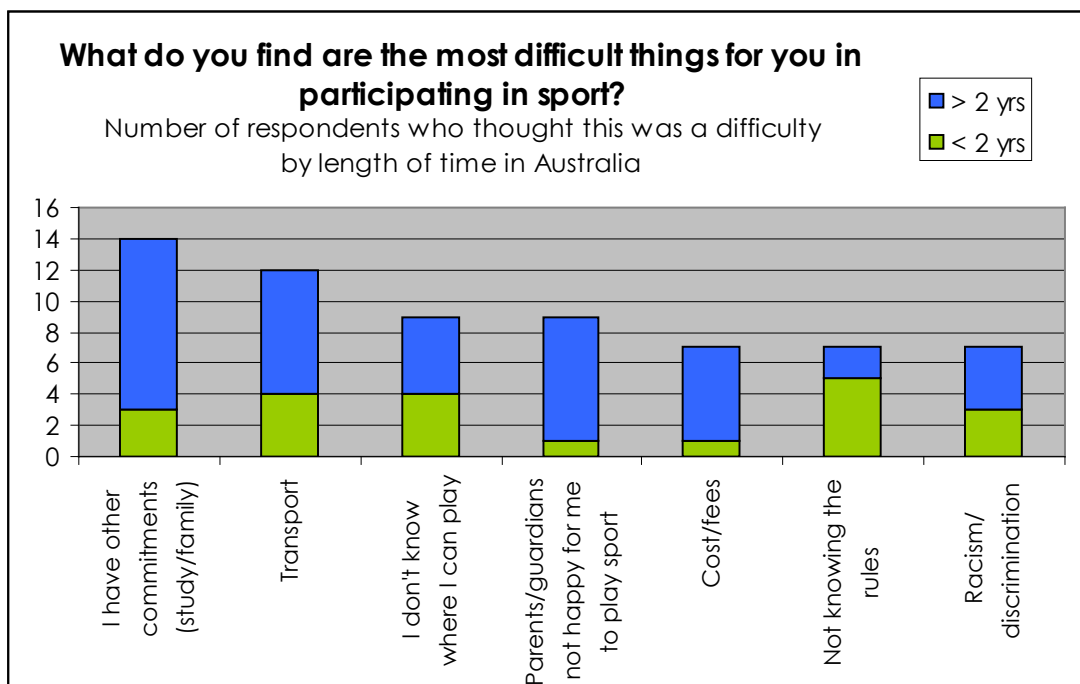
- I'd like to know how to play hockey and cricket.
- I want to play tennis or footy in a competition. Doesn't matter who, just people in same age group.
- I'd like to play in a soccer competition

Q. 5 What do you find are the most difficult things for you in participating in sport?

The top three difficulties indicated by respondents were:

1. I have other commitments (study/family).
2. Transport.
3. I don't know where I can play.
3. Parents/guardians are not happy for me to play sport.

Other difficulties mentioned (but not listed) were: language, fitness, and having to get up early.



Like with the reasons for participating in sport/rec, the barriers varied with length of time spent in Australia. Those who had been in Australia two years or less were more concerned with not knowing the rules or where to play, while those who had been in the country more than two years listed having other commitments and parents/guardians not being happy with their participation as the biggest difficulties. Transport was an issue regardless of length of time in Australia.

Top Two Difficulties by Length of Time In Australia

Respondents who have been in Australia < 2 years (n = 8)		Respondents who have been in Australia > 2 years (n = 17)	
Reason	# who agreed	Reason	# who agreed
Not knowing the rules	5	I have other commitments (study/family)	11
I don't know where I can play	4	Parents/guardians not happy for me to play sport	8
Transport	4	Transport	8



