

CMYI eNEWS – DECEMBER 2004

Welcome to the second CMYI e-newsletter.

We are happy for you to forward this e-newsletter on to your colleagues and networks, but we would appreciate it if you have received this newsletter from someone else that you take the time to individually subscribe to our mailing list. This ensures you will receive all subsequent CMYI e-newsletters.

To subscribe, simply click on the 'subscribe' link on the newsletter or go to www.cmyi.net.au and click on the 'subscribe' link on the homepage.

For your information, the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues will be closed from the 24th December 2004, and will reopen again on the 10th January 2005. All of the staff at CMYI would like to wish you a safe, happy and peaceful end of year break.

Feature article

Ignoring the Needs of Young People: A Change in Government Policy?

Government Policy Change: Bureaucratic Impact

Following the recent re-election of the Coalition government, a number of troubling changes have occurred which signal a possible change in government policy towards young people. These relate primarily to the loss of the Minister for Youth, and more specifically changes within the Department of Family & Community Services (FaCS) that have resulted in departure of the previous Departmental Secretary, and the shift out of FaCS of key youth programs such as JPET (which has been shifted to the Department of Employment & Workplace Relations – DEWR) and the Youth Support Allowance initiative.

The separation of youth programs between FaCS and DEWR reinforce the impression that there is now no co-ordinated focus on young people within the Federal Government. We see the loss of the Minister for Youth (now a Parliamentary Secretary role) as a downgrading of young people as a priority issue for government.

Impact on Young People

CMYI detects a pattern emerging in the focus of government policy on the needs of children (the early years/preschool/child care debates) or school aged children to the exclusion of young people outside the post compulsory age group. While of course, this focus on early years is necessary and important, we have found that for many refugee and migrant young people, the difficulties of resettlement and successful involvement in community life occurs in the years between 15 and 30. As Carmel Guerra, CMYI Director notes, "...the needs of this group are a primary responsibility of the Australian community as a whole. We must not allow the needs of these young people to be forgotten or ignored".

The Demise of the New Arrival Youth Support Service (NAYSS)

Ironically, the 2004 May Federal budget recognised refugee young people as a group requiring special attention. The DIMIA Settlement Review for example clearly identified a serious service gap for new arrival and refugee young people in accessing mainstream government services. Mainstream JPET and Reconnect service providers were therefore allocated funds in the budget to create a new program targeting new arrivals in a seamless and co-ordinated holistic program initiative for young people between 12- 21 years of age. The New Arrival Youth Support Service (NAYSS) was well received and welcomed in the sector, but we are now concerned as to how this initiative will be implemented within the new departmental restructuring.

CMYI Concerns

CMYI believes that the Departmental restructuring process combined with a broader government agenda on youth policy has unwittingly created a program gap for this group of young people that has resulted in the disabling of this important program. The true victims are of course a very vulnerable group of young people who do not have a voice in this process at all. The separation of the JPET and Reconnect programs into two different Departments creates a silo effect that the new arrival initiative was trying to avoid. Cross-Departmental initiatives do not as a rule work well in addressing or focusing on the needs of disadvantaged or marginalised groups.

Call for a Commitment from Government

CMYI calls on the Federal Government to stand by its budget commitment and ensure that this important settlement initiative is delivered and maintained as originally intended.

What's new at CMYI

CMYI ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2003-2004

The CMYI Annual Report of Activities 03/04 was launched on 2nd Dec by Hon. Jacinta Allan, Minister for Youth. With over 70 participants attending, the event was successful and fun way to celebrate the past year with our partners from the sector. Roger Holdsworth from the Youth Research Centre, University of Melbourne gave a stimulating keynote speech on Youth Participation who challenged the sector to think about the real meaning of youth participation in the current social and political climate. He encouraged workers to think about how to promote the *meaningful* involvement of young people. A question was also raised about how Western models of youth participation sit with non-Western concepts of family, community and elders.

CMYI staff also provided a snapshot of key initiatives including our Youth leadership and mentoring programs, our Multicultural Sport & Recreation project and an insight into our direct client work with refugee young people. The Annual Report is now available for download from the CMYI website, www.cmyi.net.au

CMYI-SELLEN RESEARCH REPORT – PATHWAYS AND PITFALLS: REFUGEE YOUNG PEOPLE IN AND AROUND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GREATER DANDENONG

In late-2003, CMYI undertook a research and community consultation project in the City of Greater Dandenong in partnership with the South East Local Learning and Employment Network (SELLEN) to explore the transition pathways of newly arrived young refugees from English Language Schools/Centres into mainstream education, training and employment. The report outlines best practice in the delivery of ESL programs for new arrivals, gaps and barriers in programs, and presents a number of recommendations.

The research report, titled *Pathways and Pitfalls: Refugee young people in and around the education system in Greater Dandenong*, was launched by the Hon. John Pandazopoulos, Minister Assisting the Premier on Multicultural Affairs and Member for Dandenong, on the 10th December. Copies of the report and recommendations are downloadable from the CMYI website.

MULTICULTURAL SPORTS AND RECREATION DIRECTORIES

CMYI's Multicultural Sports Unit has compiled a number of multicultural sport and recreation directories for CLD young people. The directories contain activities and venues that are CLD inclusive. The directories are organised by local government area, and have been compiled for the cities of Greater Dandenong, Casey, Maribyrnong, Hume, Yarra, Banyule and Manningham.

These directories are available online at www.cmyi.net.au, or by contacting Assunta Morrone at CMYI (amorrone@cmyi.net.au).

YOUNG LEADERS OF TODAY PROGRAM, OCTOBER 2004

In October, CMYI, in partnership with the Australian Red Cross, trained thirty young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to have a stronger voice in the local community. The *Young Leaders of Today* program is a week-long program that aims to promote social harmony through inclusiveness and the provision of real choices and opportunities for CLD young people. It also aims to provide young people with the opportunity to gain leadership skills and confidence, and to enhance their participation in community life.

The Minister for Youth Affairs, the Hon. Jacinta Allan also met with the students to hear about a range of issues. For more information about the *Young Leaders of Today* program, contact Anna Hutchens, CMYI's Leadership and Mentoring Project Worker, at ahutchens@cmyi.net.au

Refugee settlement news

Kate O'Sullivan, Refugee Youth Policy Officer

RECENT HIGH COURT DECISION ON ASYLUM SEEKERS

The High Court has recently ruled that it is constitutional for Australia to indefinitely detain asylum seekers who arrive without prior authorisation. Members of the court did not indicate whether or not the Federal policy of mandatory detention was ethical or in line with Australia's human rights obligations, but that it was legal within the bounds of the existing constitution. As a response, some groups have called for a Bill of Rights for Australia to ensure human rights are enshrined in the constitution. Others have suggested a change to the migration act would suffice, should an alternative asylum seekers processing system be created. For more information go to the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre website at <http://www.rilc.org.au/policylaw.htm>

16-24 YEAR OLDS ENTITLED TO INCREASED LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

A new DIMIA policy has increased the entitlement of young people to access an additional 400 hours of English classes under the Special Preparatory Program (SPP) and a further 510 hours under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). The SPP offers additional hours of tuition in a specially tailored, supportive environment to eligible humanitarian entrants who have been assessed as having special needs arising from their pre-migration experiences (e.g. torture, trauma and low levels of schooling).

To qualify for this program, the young person must: hold a humanitarian visa; be aged between 16-24; have between 0-7 years of education (full-time, uninterrupted, equivalent to education in the Australian system). This policy will provide a further option for some older adolescents. However, those between 16-18 years have to apply to an English Language Centre or school ESL program and be unable to access a space before becoming eligible for additional SPP hours. They must also enrol before they turn 18. For further information, contact your local AMEP provider or go to <http://www.immi.gov.au/amep/links1.htm#vic>

A COMMUNITY CELEBRATES

On Sunday 14th November, over 400 members of the Hazara Afghani in Melbourne's South East came together in Doveton to celebrate Eid-al-Fitr, the end of Ramadan. The Eid-al-Fitr is a joyous day of thanksgiving for Muslims for the health, strength and the opportunities of life that Allah has given. With a range of theatrical and musical performances, dancing and speeches to keep the audience entertained, there was a strong festive spirit.

This was one of the first years the Hazara community, which is largely made up of young people, was able to look forward to the future. Many Hazara young people have battled with depression while enduring three years on a temporary protection visa with reduced rights to education, language and support services. Some are now being granted permanent visas and are finally able to plan for their future. Some will seek to visit family overseas for the first time in many years, having been unable to leave the country without forfeiting their right to return.

We hope generalist and settlement services will seek to actively engage with the Hazara community to assist them now to establish strong roots and stability here. There are many people still struggling and in need of support, with their cases for a permanent visa still undecided. Congratulations to the community on its strength in the face of adversity.

Postcard from the South East

Hala Chamas, Refugee Alternative Pathways Officer, South East Region

CMYI's JPET program in the South East focuses on the City of Greater Dandenong and also outreaches to the City of Casey. The City of Greater Dandenong has the highest numbers of youth settlement in Victoria, with 31 per cent of all youth settlement numbers. The City of Casey is seeing increasing settlement by newly arrived young people and their families, with 5 per cent of all settlement numbers in Victoria.

The key issue being explored in this region by the program are employment pathways for refugee young people. Programs currently being trialed will provide tailored experiences of employment, as well as life skills support, so that refugee young people will become more "job ready". CMYI's JPET program is working particularly with those young people who are disengaged from education, training or employment, and uses creative strategies to re-engage refugee young people into positive pathways.

A recent example of this work was a community art project that was undertaken for Refugee Week in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong Multicultural Youth Project and CMYI's Reconnect Young Refugees Program. In the lead up to Refugee Week, 22 refugee young people from the Noble Park English Language School and the South East Region MRC homework club, produced four murals depicting their journey to Australia. The young people exhibited great talent, creativity and resilience as they actively participated in the creation of the artwork. The mural was displayed at AMES and Noble Park English Language School and spoke to people about the way that young refugees feel about their homeland as well as communicating their hopes for a peaceful future in Australia.



What's new in the sector

NEW RESOURCES, EVENTS, CONFERENCES

Details of upcoming events, conferences and new resources in the CLD youth sector. If you have an event or resource you want promoted through this newsletter, please send details to info@cmyi.net.au

The Multicultural Cup (AFL Football) will again be held in March 2005 and organisers are looking to involve more teams this year. If you have any contacts with young people from these newly arrived communities in your area that you think would be interested in playing in the competition, contact Assunta Morrone, Multicultural Sports Officer at CMYI at amorrone@cmyi.net.au or call 9349-3466

Guide to CLD specific services for youth in the western metropolitan region of Melbourne: Created by Melbourne Citymission's School Focussed Youth Service (SFYS) and the Western Refugee Pathways Group, this guide is a mapping of existing services for CLD youth in the western metropolitan region of Melbourne. The guide can be downloaded via http://www.sfys.infoxchange.net.au/resources/public/metro_west.chtml

The Better Way: Refugees, detention and Australians: An alliance of 30 Victorian-based church and welfare agencies, 'Justice for Asylum Seekers' (JAS), has produced a brochure that presents, simply, improvements to the current detention system which will improve the lives of asylum seekers. The information is a summary of detailed policy work, which in turn, is based on existing programs for asylum seekers already living in the community. For (free) copies of this report, go to: http://www.thebetterway.info/mc_mediacentre.htm. Posters are also available.

"Now you behave!" - Youth Shopping Centre Protocol. Over the last few years there has been an increasing trend to develop guidelines to clearly define what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour by children and young people in local shopping centres. Some of the provisions have unnecessarily infringed on the rights of children and young people who visit shopping centres. A project team based at the University of Western Sydney has developed a youth shopping centre protocol. For more information go to <http://www.yapa.org.au/pubs/shoppingprotocol.pdf>

A number of **fact sheets** have been produced by the AMEP Research Centre to provide Adult Migrant English Program teachers with information on areas of professional concern. The sheets on the influences of prior learning, and country profiles for Sudan, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Iraq may be of relevance to workers engaging with refugee young people in a range of settings. For more information go to: <http://www.nceltr.mq.edu.au/pdamep/factsheets.html>

Department of Human Services, Human Services Directory (HSD). The HSD database is now fully functional and available over the Internet for all to access at: <http://humanservicesdirectory.vic.gov.au>. If you are experiencing any difficulties contact ssd.admin@data.com.au or phone (03) 9320 9070

New government website for young people. The Victorian Government has launched a new website that aims to improve young people's access to government and awareness of both on-line and physical youth services in Victoria. The site, www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au includes information on: Careers & Employment; Education & Training; Managing Money; You & Your Community; Voting & Your Rights; Government Stuff; Speak Out, Stand Out; and Competitions & Downloads.

AfricanOz website, www.africanoz.com.au, includes information on programs, services and events happening for African communities in Australia.

PROJECTS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Information and updates on new projects, programs and services in the sector. If you are involved in a project that you would like others in the sector to know about, send details to info@cmyi.net.au

New Multicultural Music Project: The *Culture Shock* project is an open invitation to musicians and artists from multicultural and multicultural backgrounds to submit their music for a national music compilation. Entries must be in by Friday 24th December. The project is designed to provide support and awareness for young multicultural and multilingual musicians and artists residing in Australia. *Culture Shock* is coordinated by the National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council. For more information contact: Andrew Apostola, Culture Shock Coordinator on (03) 9654 6337 or go to www.nembc.org.au/cultureshock

The Australian Centre for Youth Literature (ACYL) is committed to the promotion of books and reading for young people, through its unique events-based program and advisory work. The Centre develops and runs a range of programs about reading designed to enthuse children and teenagers and professional development events to inspire and support teachers, librarians and literacy professionals. For more information contact: ACYL on (03) 8664 7014 or email: acyl@slv.vic.gov.au

The Homeless World Cup Soccer Camp. Every 2nd Wednesday from 2-4pm at Atherton Gardens, Napier Street, Fitzroy. Soccer skills, coaching, matches, guest appearances and fun at this fortnightly camp open to anybody who wants to play soccer, keep fit and make new friends. Registered participants will receive a gift bag and be eligible for selection for the Homeless World Cup in New York, USA next winter. For information, contact Martin Hughes or George Halkias at the Big Issue on 9663 4533.

Summer Course for Young People at AMES: AMES is offering a summer course for young people in January 2005 for people aged 16 to 24 who are newly arrived in Australia. The course will include: excursions, computer training, English for Driving and using the Street Directory, information about the law in Australia, study skills and ILC, report writing and conversation and sports day. The course will be held in the City, Footscray, Noble Park and Dandenong. The program will use 50 hours of SPP or AMEP funding for eligible students. There are no fees for eligible students. This is a DIMIA funded project. For further information, contact participating AMES locations, or go to www.ames.net.au

The National Prescribing Service and Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia is offering **community grants to promote Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) among consumers of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.** If your organisation or group works with multicultural communities in Australia, you are invited to apply for a grant to assist members of your community: become more active partners with their doctors and pharmacists in managing their medicines more effectively; gain the knowledge and skills needed to engage in decision making about medicines; know where to find and how to use reliable and credible information about medicines. Grants are available from \$300 - \$500 (plus GST). Please contact Jennifer Davis on (02) 8217 8700 for further information.

IN THE NEWS

Multicultural youth issues in the media – what are some of the issues that are making it into the news? If you come across media articles you think should be highlighted in this newsletter, please forward to info@cmyi.net.au

Increase in racial bullying

In their most recent newsletter, Kids Help Line have identified a 60% increase in calls relating to racially motivated bullying of CLD young people in the previous year. In a Post- September 11th and 'War on Terror' environment, KHL look at the impact of this bullying on Muslim and Arab children and young people and explore ways to empower them. <http://www.kidshelp.com.au/research/newsletters.html>

CMYI's electronic newsletter: Tell us what you think

We hope you enjoyed reading CMYI's second electronic newsletter. We decided to introduce this new electronic format so that news and information could be more easily and regularly shared within the sector at lower costs and using fewer trees! We hope this new format will continue to provide a useful forum for up-to-date information for workers and organisations on issues relating to CLD young people.

In order for us to ensure this newsletter is as accessible and useful as possible, we would appreciate it if you could take the time to respond to the following brief survey: [<link>](#)