

CMYI eNEWS – JUNE 2005

Dear,

We hope you enjoy the June edition of CMYI e-News. This newsletter coincides with UN World Refugee Day on June 20. In marking this day, we wish to acknowledge the plight of refugees around the world, and recognise the strength and richness that refugee communities have brought, and continue to bring, to Australia.

If you have any comments, suggestions or feedback about our newsletter, we'd love to hear from you. If you receive the newsletter in plain text format and would like to receive it as an HTML file, please contact our Communications Officer on louise@cmyi.net.au.

Feature article

'A Fairer Victoria': What does this mean for CLD young people?

By Carmel Guerra, CMYI Director, and Louise Olliff, CMYI Communications Officer

On 28th April, the State Government released a major social policy statement titled *A Fairer Victoria: Creating opportunity and addressing disadvantage*. *A Fairer Victoria* sets out actions the Government has indicated it will take to improve access to services, reduce barriers to opportunity, strengthen assistance for disadvantaged groups and places, and ensure Victorians get the help they need at critical times in their lives.

What does *A Fairer Victoria* say about young people?

As the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) identifies, *A Fairer Victoria* includes a 'welcome commitment to strengthening universal and early intervention services to promote and support the wellbeing of children, young people and families.' Strategy 2 of the policy statement, titled *Getting young people back on track*, recognises that young people who lose contact with school and other learning environments often face disadvantage and reduced opportunities later in life.

In response to this, the Government has pledged \$45.6 million on initiatives targeting young people at risk, including new youth mentoring programs, better housing for young people in residential care, additional support for schools to reduce truancy, and stronger Local Learning and Employment Networks to improve pathways and opportunities for young people disengaged from education and training.

Strategy 11 of the policy statement, *Increasing support for mental health services*, includes a commitment to providing an additional \$13.6 million funding over four years to improve community-based mental health services for people who experience extreme or particular disadvantage. This includes \$3.2 million towards increased behavioural intervention services for primary school children with severe problems; a new program for intensive treatment at an earlier stage for young people aged 16-25 years who present with emerging mental health problems for the first time, and; \$1.3 million will be used to establish a program for young men exhibiting violent behaviour, which will seek to address inter-generational violence.

How are the needs of refugee and CLD families addressed?

Strategy 5 of *A Fairer Victoria* deals specifically with providing fairer access to services. This includes an articulated commitment to tackling systemic discrimination and supporting newly arrived refugees.

In terms of addressing systemic discrimination, the proposed actions centre on a \$250,000 initiative to promote diversity and acceptance in key communities through targeted attitudinal change campaigns. Among the four strategies outlined is an *Anti-racism* program run in conjunction with the Victorian Multicultural Commission in rural and metropolitan communities, and; a *Human rights and safety in schools* initiative supporting students in schools who belong to marginalised groups, including students from culturally and linguistically diverse families.

\$4.7 million over four years has been allocated to providing targeted support to Victoria's recently arrived refugees and humanitarian entrants. Six locally based early intervention workers will be funded to work with refugees in metropolitan and regional communities (including Shepparton and Warrnambool) and three community based refugee health nurses will be located in Community Health Centres in areas with high refugee populations.

Actions have also been proposed under the heading *Building stronger communities* to promote schools as community facilities and support new community projects through the continuation of the Community Support Fund's quarterly funding rounds.

The policy statement also identifies the need for increased diversity in appointments to boards and committees. Actions involve increasing the number of suitably qualified people from under-represented communities who are registered for consideration for appointments to government boards and committees. Initially, this will target the three groups that are under-represented in current appointments: Indigenous people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

CMYI views

CMYI welcomes the *A Fairer Victoria* social policy statement. It is the strongest commitment to social policy by government in Victoria for a long time. As a long-term commitment it shows foresight and vision, and provides a platform in which to build co-operative approaches in addressing social disadvantage.

The greatest challenge will be in the translation of this document into reality. Our concern is that *A Fairer Victoria* should also provide an opportunity for debates about the bigger issues including: transport, infrastructure and the future of families.

Most importantly, we are disappointed that there is no consideration of the key issues of disadvantage as they impact on CALD communities, and in particular on children, youth and families "at risk". While we are pleased that the government will fund the newly arrived refugees support workers program, this is only a minimal investment in what requires a holistic and substantive investment from all levels of government.

We would advocate for a "communities of interest" approach to overlay this policy framework, meaning that Government should recognise the diversity and complexity of our community and reflect this through both policy and practice. We urge the Government to look more broadly to be inclusive of our community's diversity in the planning and implementation of this strategy and its initiatives.

To view *A Fairer Victoria*, go to <http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/CA256D8000265E1A/page/Listing-Government+Initiatives-A+Fairer+Victoria+-+The+Victorian+Government%27s+social+policy+action+plan!OpenDocument&l=10-Government%20Initiatives~&2=~&3=~>

What's new at CMYI

NEWLY ARRIVED YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES (NAYSS) INITIATIVE

CMYI is pleased to announce the commencement of the Newly Arrived Youth Support Service (NAYSS), a national initiative funded by the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) and aimed at newly arrived young people aged between 12 and 21 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The initiative will enable funded organisations to assist newly arrived young people by providing Reconnect (early intervention support for young people at risk of homelessness) and JPET (crisis support and access to education, training and employment) services in ways that are culturally and contextually appropriate.

FaCS has initially funded six Round 1 organisations to provide NAYSS services in Victoria, ACT, NSW, Tasmania, Queensland and South Australia. CMYI will deliver NAYSS services in Melbourne's South East. A further process to identify Round 2 NAYSS providers will commence shortly.

CMYI has also been contracted by FaCS to undertake a Lead Provider role within the NAYSS program. This includes the development of a package of information resources for NAYSS providers, an induction and training program as well as mentoring support and advice.

FaCS is to be commended for funding this important initiative and for responding to the service needs of this highly disadvantaged group of young people.

RESEARCHING REFUGEE HEALTH CONFERENCE

The first conference organised by the Refugee Health Research Centre (RHRC) will be held on 16-17 June 2005 at La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria. The focus of the conference will be researching refugee health in Australia. The event is specifically designed to encourage participation and information sharing from researchers working across a range of sectors involved with refugee health and wellbeing, with the hope that the conference will provide the basis for building a strong and active research network in Australia.

Steve Francis, CMYI Policy & Projects Coordinator, will be presenting a case study workshop on the Challenges of Community Based Action Research at this forum. For more information about the conference, go to <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/rhrc-conference> or download the [flier here](#).

NEW CMYI STAFF

CMYI would like to officially welcome a new member to our team, Jacinta Dykes (Multicultural Sports and Recreation Officer). Jacinta replaces Nick Hatzoglou who is now working as the AFL Multicultural Project Officer. The newest member of our sports team, headed by Assunta Morrone and funded by VicHealth will be working in the Hume region and will focus on capacity building within the sector to increase opportunities in the City of Hume for CLD young people.

Jacinta comes to CMYI with a wealth of experience. She has worked on DIMIA funded settlement projects for both the Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre (NSW) and Community Information Whittlesea. More recently, Jacinta took time off work to complete her Graduate Diploma in Education.

If workers in the field are keen to find out more about the project, or if they require some assistance in establishing, supporting and resourcing CLD sport and recreation activities, please contact Jacinta (idykes@cmyi.net.au) or Assunta (amorrone@cmyi.net.au) at the CMYI office.

CMYI WELCOMES CHANGES TO THE CHILDREN'S COURT

From 1 July 2005, changes to the Children and Young Persons Act (1989) will come into effect. These include:

- the age jurisdiction of the criminal division of the Children's Court will increase from under 17 to under 18 years;
- there will be a new procedure for the enforcement of unpaid penalty infringement notices issued to children and young people; and
- there will be a number of miscellaneous changes to the Act which will improve the operation of the criminal division of the Children's Court.

CMYI has been a strong advocate for these changes and welcomes the amendments to the Act.

Young Refugee Resettlement News

Kate O'Sullivan, Refugee Youth Policy Officer

NEW COMMUNITIES SETTLING IN VICTORIA

The focus of DIMIA's Humanitarian Program in the coming year will be on a number of African nations. Victorian youth and settlement services will soon be supporting young people from a number of communities that are new to Australia. Many of these young people will have spent years in refugee camps and have experienced terrible events, requiring extensive support to resettle in the Australian context. It is important that as a service system we begin to plan for their needs.

DIMIA will have a focus on the following countries and communities:

Processing country	Cultural background of humanitarian applicants:
* Tanzania	Burundis and some Congolese
* Guinea	Liberians
* Ghana	Liberians and Sierra Leoneans
* Kenya	Sudanese (mostly Special Humanitarian Entrants)
* Egypt	Sudanese (reduced numbers)

Source: DIMIA African Newsletter- Feb 05

LANGUAGE NEEDS OF NEWLY ARRIVED COMMUNITIES

There are a diversity of languages spoken within newly arrived communities, especially those coming from countries where there has not been a centralised government regulating the education system. While interpreting services in Australia will seek to employ interpreters in relevant community languages, this can be difficult in the early stages of settlement. Many overseas-born people will speak more than one language – sometimes five or six. If an interpreter is unavailable in a particular language, it is useful to seek information about other languages spoken, while remaining sensitive to the client's wishes and concerns. For example, being forced to speak in a language associated with an oppressive regime can be highly distressing.

Where a client is concerned about confidentiality within a smaller community, try requesting a telephone interpreter from another state and changing the client's name to protect their identity. It can also be useful to reassure the client that the interpreter is as much for your needs (to understand and communicate effectively) as their needs, which can relieve the sense of burden the client may feel around their English proficiency.

Translated material may be of great value to some young people, but it is also relevant to think about translations for parents and family members. That being said, few of the languages listed below are written languages. Where a language does exist in written form, often few of the speakers will also be literate in that language. Oral communication is often more effective in this situation.

Be aware that there may be some discrepancy between the preferred language of a young person and that of their family members. This may be related to the countries they have spent most the time in, and the young person's access to education in that language.

Rwanda – Most people speak Kinyarwanda, some Kiswahili. Need to distinguish Hutu from Tutsi community in language request.

Burundi – Most people speak Kirundi, some Swahili. Need to distinguish Hutu from Tutsi community in language request.

Sierra Leone – Tenme, Mende, Limba, Bassa are the most widely spoken languages. Most people speak Krio as a second language. It is the dominant language of younger people. Many other ethnic group languages, of which a few can be written.

Democratic Republic of Congo or DRC (Note: DRC was Zaire, and is a different country to Congo) – Lingala, Bembe, some Kinyarwanda, Swahili, Zande, or French (very few).

Liberia – Most people speak Liberian English (a pigeon English). Also Kpelle, Vai, Mano, Madingo, Loma, Kru, Gio and some Guinea languages.

Note: Liberian English speakers may find it offensive to imply there is difficulty understanding their English. Liberian English has many different words and phrases from Australian English, so assistance may be required to help in clear communication. There will also be a wide variance within the community in relation to literacy even where a person's spoken language may be fluent.

Sudan – Dinka, Nuer, Bari, Shilluk, Toposa, Juba Arabic and many other smaller language groups.

Note: Many cultures add 'Li' or 'Ki' to the beginning of a word to denote a language, e.g. Kiswahili is the same as Swahili.

Sources: <http://www.ethnologue.com> and DIMIA, 2005.

Postcard from Greater Dandenong

Zara Bautista, Reconnect Youth Worker (Dandenong)

- **Young Sudanese Connectedness with Families Forum**
CMYI's Reconnect program has been involved through the Multicultural Youth Action Group with setting up a forum involving Sudanese elders and services that are directly affected by the issue of young Sudanese and connectedness with family. The forum will meet on an ongoing basis to discuss issues and strategies relating to young people leaving home. The forum involves representatives from the Sudanese community, SER MRC, WAYSS, SCAAB, Foundation House, Taskforce, Centrelink, Victoria Police, DHS, AMES, secondary schools, Equatorian Community Association, South Sudanese Baptist Fellowship and School Focused Youth Services.

 - **Wilderness Group**
Following from the success of the February wilderness adventure camp that was run by CMYI Reconnect and REFS Wilderness with a group of young Sudanese men, plans are underway for follow-up activity days and a 3-day camp to the snow. The trial of this wilderness therapy model will be documented.

 - **Transition model for secondary schools**
CMYI Reconnect Youth Refugees is involved in the second phase of a transition model trial that has been developed to assist CLD young people who have exited other schools due to behavioural issues, and those coming from English language schools, make a smooth transition into secondary schools. The model incorporates students sharing their experiences in a group setting and providing skill development and support to the young people.
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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@cmvi.net.au

NEW RESOURCES

- **Faces of Australia** is a 16 page educational resource aimed at upper primary and lower secondary schools to help young people discover more about Australia's cultural diversity. It was produced by DIMIA and first appeared on 18 March 2005 as a supplement to the Canberra Times. Faces of Australia is in a youth-friendly, "Tabloid" style newspaper format filled with colourfully presented topics and classroom activities exploring Migration, Citizenship, Religions, Diverse cuisines, Sport, Indigenous facts and combating Racism. Faces of Australia is now available from DIMIA Victoria's Settlement Information Unit; please call Lucy on (03) 9235 3351 to order this free resource. Alternatively, the electronic edition can be downloaded from the DIMIA website: www.immi.gov.au/search_for/publications/faces_of_australia/index.htm
- **Are Refugees at Increased Risk of Substance Misuse?** A discussion paper published by the Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre (NSW) reviews existing literature on substance misuse amongst refugees, models that have been developed to account for substance misuse, and surveys undertaken to assess the extent of substance misuse in particular refugee populations. To access the discussion paper, go to: <http://www.damec.org.au/Resources/Publications/publications%20master.htm> or email manager@damec.org.au.
- **Working with Young People from Small and Emerging Communities in NSW** - This guide helps community workers understand some of the issues young people from these communities face when settling in Australia, and outlines the community services and programs available to support workers in the field. Go to the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW website, <http://www.eccnsw.org.au/?page=publications>. (Source: Multicultural Mental Health Australia's magazine, 'Synergy' n.1, 2005 p17)
- **Transitions and Risk: New Directions in Social Policy** – a collection of papers and abstracts from the February conference have been published online through the Centre for Public Policy at the University of Melbourne. Go to: <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference2005/Abstracts.html>
- **Building Stronger Communities** – website designed to support stronger communities in Victoria by informing and connecting people involved in community strengthening projects across Victoria, and assisting those who want to find out more about community strengthening approaches. Go to: <http://www.communitybuilding.vic.gov.au/>
- **TAKING PARTICIPATION seriously** – a resource for organisations wanting practical advice about how to involve children and young people in activities, events and decision-making about issues that affect their lives. Access through the NSW Commission for Children and Young People website <http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/publications/taking.html>
- **Children, Youth and Environments online journal**. Free peer-reviewed online journal hosted by the University of Colorado. To access, go to: www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/15_1
- **Long Journey, Young Lives** – an online interactive documentary about young refugees and their journeys to Australia. http://abc.net.au/longjourney/index_flash.html

EVENTS

- **World Refugee Day (WRD) on 20 June** is fast approaching and UNHCR has launched a new WRD page on its local website www.unhcr.org.au/WRD2005. The theme for World Refugee Day in 2005 is 'courage'. The website includes information about WRD events in Australia.
- **More or less poverty and inequality? The Howard years assessed.** The Centre for Public Policy, in conjunction with the Brotherhood of St Laurence, will be running a free morning seminar on Monday June 20th, 10am-midday. Leading Australian commentators Dr Michael Keating and Associate Professor Alison McClelland will be joined by Rosanna Scutella from the Brotherhood of St Laurence to discuss what exactly has happened to inequality and poverty under the Coalition government. Venue: Room 212, 2nd Floor, 234 Queensberry Street, Carlton. The seminar is free to attend but RSVPs are necessary and places are limited. To RSVP, contact Jacinda at the Brotherhood of St Laurence: jkleidon@bsl.org.au. (Source: Centre for Public Policy News, 30/05/05)

- The Australian Catholic University School of Philosophy is proud to present the 2005 **Free Public Lecture Series on "Torture"**. The Wednesday Lectures will run for six weeks starting at 6.30pm:
 June 15 "Thinking the Unthinkable" Raimond Gaita
 June 22 "Torture as Terrorism" Jeff Sparrow
 June 29 "Torture: Its Meaning" Peter Coghlan
 July 6 "Why Wash?" Barry Hill
 July 13 "The Law and its Transgressions" Hilary Charlesworth
 July 20 "Effects and Recovery" Jorge Aroche
 No booking required. Venue: The Christ Lecture Theatre Australian Catholic University, St Patrick's Campus 115 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy. For Information ph: 9953 3160 or email: jasmin.chen@patrick.acu.edu.au

CONFERENCES

- **Diversity in Health 2005.** The conference will describe the latest physical and mental health priorities related to the challenges faced by the community, carers, clinicians, service providers, planners and policy makers in their efforts to provide high quality health for Australia's multicultural community; Highlight innovative research, practices, programs, and partnerships between health management systems, providers, government, legal systems, social service agencies, and patient health status; and Emphasise prevention and intervention strategies relevant to diverse cultures. Dates: October 17-19, 2005. Venue: Hilton on the Park, Melbourne. For more information contact the Conference Secretariat on (03) 9347 6622 or diversityinhealth@amf.net.au.
- **Victorian Transcultural Mental Health Research Conference 2005.** The main aim of the inaugural Transcultural Mental Health research Conference is to enable Victorian researchers and postgraduate students to share research findings, discuss transcultural research methods and explore possibilities for collaboration. Call for abstracts close on 27 May. The conference is to be held on Thursday 25th August, 2005. For more information go to the Victorian Transcultural Psychiatry Unit website (<http://www.vtppu.org.au/>) or call (03) 9417 4300.

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

PROJECTS

- The Human Rights Consultation Committee has published a community discussion paper - **Have your say about human rights in Victoria**. The paper asks ten key questions and provides some discussion around these questions to encourage community debate and participation. It also provides some background information regarding the main issues around developing a framework to better protect and promote human rights in Victoria and overseas models. The Committee has called for submissions, which are due by 1 August 2005. For more information contact the Human Rights Consultation Project on 1300 368 918, email HumanRights@justice.vic.gov.au or visit the website at www.justice.vic.gov.au/humanrights
- A **Discussion Paper on developing a Charter of Rights for Children in Care** has been prepared to inform children and young people in care, their parents, the out of home care sector and the wider community about some key issues relating to a charter. The Office of the Advocate is keen to hear different views on developing the content of a future charter or any matter raised in the Discussion Paper. A Feedback Form has been prepared to assist people in their submissions. Both documents are available from the Advocate's interim website: <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/advocate>. Hard copies of the discussion paper can be obtained by contacting the Office (telephone: 9616-7549 or email robyn.brooke@dhs.vic.gov.au).

PROGRAMS

- New **African Community Development Centre** opens in Footscray. A new centre accommodating 14 African community agencies under the umbrella of the African Community Development Centre and assisting communities across the Western Region has opened in Footscray. New arrivals will be able to find information and service agencies wishing to work with African communities will be able to make contact more easily. The centre was opened by Minister John Thwaites on 30 May. The Centre is located at 93A Paisley Street, Footscray, or call (03) 9689 2055.

FUNDING

- **Challenge ya!** The Foundation for Young Australians has funding available for young people (12-25 years) wanting to turn their ideas into action. Details and entry forms available from www.youngaustralians.org or call 1800 252 316 or (03) 9670 5436.
- The City of Melbourne is inviting applications for its **2006 Community Services Grants Program** under the following categories: Children's Services Ethnic Meals Subsidy; Youth; City Safety; and, Community Information and Support. To apply for a grant, organisations must be not for profit and offer a project that primarily benefits the community in the City of Melbourne. The guidelines and application forms can be downloaded by visiting www.melbourne.vic.gov.au. The closing date for applications is Friday 1 July 2005.
- The **Consumer Credit Fund Advisory Committee** is now inviting applications for grants from the Fund. The closing date is 4pm Friday 24 June 2005. The Consumer Credit Fund was established by statute to provide grants to non-profit organisations for: public education, advice and research in matters relating to the use of consumer credit. For more information go to <http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/CA256EB500644CE/page/Credit+%26+Debt-Grants+Research+%26+Seminars-Grants?OpenDocument&l=80-Credit+%26+Debt~&2=60-Grants+Research+%26+Seminars~&3=10-Grants~>

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

Why we need a new policy on refugees – The Age, 26/05/05

Petro Georgiou, federal Liberal MP for Kooyong, recently proposed two private member's bills relating to the treatment and processing of asylum seekers in Australia. As Georgiou writes, "It is clear that additional measures are necessary to ensure that the system is compassionate, fair, accountable and subject to independent scrutiny."

The first bill proposed by Georgiou proposes compassionate measures to alleviate the plight of individuals who are suffering under the current system. This includes releasing asylum seekers who have been detained for more than one year, immediately releasing all children under 18 and their immediate families, and allowing TPVs who have been recognised as refugees to stay in Australia permanently.

The second bill proposes a model of reform so that the problems that have arisen under the current system do not recur. This includes: Asylum seekers who don't have a visa will be able to be detained only if it is necessary to detain them on specified grounds, limiting the detention of asylum seekers to 90 days, and granting permanent residency to anyone found to be a refugee.

To read the full article, go to <http://theage.com.au/news/Opinion/Why-we-need-a-new-policy-on-refugees/2005/05/25/1116950753630.html>

CMYI welcomes and supports these Private Member's Bills, and encourages the Government to act with compassion in relation to refugees and asylum seekers.

A *Just Australia* calls on all supporters to call, write or fax your MPs (both Liberal and Labor) to ask them to support the Bills or at least the need to debate the Bills in Parliament. (Click [here](#) to find MP contact details). <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/members/mi-alpha.asp>