

Feature article –

ELECTION PROMISES ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT: WHAT WILL THEY MEAN FOR CLD YOUNG PEOPLE?

In the lead-up to the October 9 Federal election, promises to improve education, training and employment opportunities for young people have featured prominently in the campaigning of all major parties.

In examining the policies of both major parties on this issue, CMYI believes that the needs of newly arrived young people represent a missing dimension in the development and potential implementation of these policies.

For the Liberal Party, a policy launched on the 23rd September gives priority to vocational education, training and apprenticeships if the Coalition Government is re-elected. The package of initiatives under their *Step up to a new apprenticeship in the trades* policy is intended to assist 25,000 new apprentices over four years, particularly in industries where there are skills shortages. According to this proposed policy, a re-elected Coalition Government would provide \$35.5 million over four years to offer an additional 5,000 places in the New Apprenticeship Access Program each year. This program would provide young people with assistance in acquiring the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to embark on further training, employability skills such as communication and teamwork skills and is designed to give young people greater self-confidence before they get started on full-time work and training.

The Australian Labor Party's *Youth Guarantee: Learn or Earn* policy makes a promise that, under Labor, all 15 to 18 year olds will get support to either be studying at school, TAFE, or university or be in a job or apprenticeship. As part of the proposed package, initiatives that would be phased in from 2006 include: no TAFE fees for secondary school students; new support to keep 15,000 more 15-18 year olds at school each year; 1,080 Training Mentors to make sure young people stay at school or move into a full-time job or further training; 7,500 TAFE places for 15-18 year olds each year and 7,500 extra apprenticeships; and intensive help to reconnect homeless and disadvantaged youth into education, training or employment.

While initiatives proposed by both major parties may be appropriate for mainstream young people, the needs of newly arrived young people from linguistically diverse backgrounds are quite different to those of their Australian-born peers. Government initiatives need to recognise that there are barriers to CLD young people accessing many education, training and employment programs. These barriers include a history of severely disrupted schooling that make the attainment of even basic literacy and numeracy skills a challenge. Language barriers and lack of familiarity with services and support networks also make accessing training and employment programs particularly difficult for new arrivals.

To conclude, while CMYI agrees with the focus on supporting young people into education and employment, broad concepts such as *Learn or Earn* may have the

unintended consequence of disenfranchising marginalised group of young people. It is up to the government elected on October 9th to ensure that this does not occur.

For more information on the major parties' election policies and how they are likely to affect young people, the Youth Action & Policy Association NSW (YAPA) has set up an innovative election website that includes youth policy cheat sheets for all the major parties, a poll to vote off your least favourite member in "The House" (of Parliament). Go to <http://www.yapa.org.au/election/index.php>

What's new at CMYI

STATEWIDE NETWORK MEETING: *Exploring issues of body image and single parenting within a settlement context*

On 23rd September, the third CMYI Statewide Network meeting of the year was held at the CO-AS-IT Conference Room in Carlton. The meeting explored two major themes: the issue of body image in a CLD context, and the issues impacting on CLD young women who are single parents.

Pat Thurgood from the Victorian Office for Youth spoke about the current Parliamentary Inquiry into body image ordered by the Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs, Jacinta Allan MP. The aim of the inquiry is to work out ways that positive body image messages can be promoted and how support for those experiencing negative body image can be better coordinated.

Jaweria Khalid and Moona Hamoud from the Islamic Women's Welfare Council spoke about some of the body image issues that have been highlighted through their work with young Muslim women. In particular, Jaweria and Moona presented some of the issues they had experienced with young Muslim women wearing the hijab and also wanting to fit in with their peers.

Group discussions around body image issues for CLD young people also raised some important issues and highlighted possible strategies for addressing negative body image, all of which will contribute to CMYI's submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry.

On the topic of single parenting and CLD young women, Anastasia Mwangi from the Australian African Welfare Council spoke about issues common to newly arrived young single mothers, particularly those from southern Sudan. Issues canvassed included: isolation, different cultural understandings of parenting and family, financial pressures, settlement anxieties and lack of services.

The issues raised in both presentations and the group discussions will be used by CMYI to formulate strategies and recommendations to be forwarded to government and agencies.

For more information on the Statewide Network, contact Alison Coelho, CMYI Community Policy Officer, at acoelho@cmyi.net.au. The next Statewide meeting is scheduled to be held on 25th November, 2004.

NEW INFORMATION SHEETS FOR WORKERS

CMYI has released three more information sheets that can be downloaded from the CMYI website. These information sheets provide practical guidelines and background information for workers on various issues relating to CLD youth.

No. 7 – Making Successful Referrals with Refugee Young People and their Families

This information sheet provides some useful tips and strategies on making successful referrals for people working with refugee young people and their families. It is important to acknowledge that for many refugee young people and their families, building trust with strangers can take time given their previous experiences of trauma

and the impact of the persons experience in Australia, language confidence and age. Families may be particularly sensitive about seeking help outside the family and feel ashamed to discuss difficulties.

This information sheet includes suggestions for preparing young people for referral and 14 practical tips for making referrals.

No. 8 – Humanitarian Youth Arrivals to Victoria (Update 1/04)

An up-to-date overview of recent humanitarian youth arrivals to Victoria. Statistics from the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) show how many refugee young people are arriving in Victoria, where they are originating from, and which local government areas they are settling in.

No. 9 – Involving Migrant and Refugee Young People in Social and Recreational Activities

This information sheet assists those running events and activities for migrant and refugee young people by providing useful strategies and tips for facilitating involvement. Many young people face issues such as social isolation, depression, lack of social connection, culture shock, language difficulties and for refugees, recovery from the effects of torture and trauma. Opportunities for newly arrived young people to participate in social and recreational activities with their peers are therefore critically important.

This information sheet includes tips for services on being culturally aware, working with families and communities, cost, transport, choice of activities and communication.

2nd CLD YOUTH WORKERS FORUM TO BE HELD IN NOVEMBER

CMYI will be hosting a follow-up forum for all funded CLD Youth Workers in Victoria on November 3rd, 2004, from 9.30-12.30 at the CO.AS.IT Conference Room in Carlton. The forum will provide an opportunity for all CLD Youth Worker's in Victoria to meet as a group, including DIMIA funded CSSS Youth Workers, Office for Youth CLD Youth Workers, FACS CLD Youth Workers and Vic Health CLD Youth Programs. CMYI will also invite other service providers and government department representatives.

The first forum provided an opportunity for workers to exchange information about their programs, discuss common service initiatives and ways to work together as CLD Youth Programs in Victoria. This second forum will allow for follow up discussion and strategies to be developed and the "Good Practice Principles for working with young refugees" document will be presented for trialing and discussion. We hope that the event will enhance agency relationships across Victoria and build on cross-sector partnerships.

For more information on this forum, contact Jen Couch, CMYI's Young Refugees in the Picture Project Coordinator: jcouch@cmyi.net.au

LAUNCH OF RESEARCH REPORT: *E.S.L Programs for Newly Arrived Young Refugees in Greater Dandenong: Investigating Transitions and Pathways to Education and Employment Success*

In late-2003, CMYI undertook a research and community consultation project in the City of Greater Dandenong to explore the transition pathways of newly arrived young refugees from English Language Schools/Centres into mainstream education, training and employment.

Due to the pivotal importance that initial intensive language learning experiences are likely to play in the settlement trajectory of newly arrived young people, the central focus of the research was an analysis of the ESL New Arrivals Program in the City of Greater Dandenong. In particular, the research explored whether or not the ESL New Arrivals Program was equipping young people with the necessary skills to make a successful transition into mainstream education and employment, and whether there were appropriate pathways open to, and utilised by, young refugees exiting the ESL New Arrivals Program.

The research involved extensive interviews with service providers who work with young refugees as well as interviews with some young refugees. The report outlines positive practices in the delivery of ESL programs for new arrivals, gaps and barriers in programs, and presents a number of recommendations.

The results of this research will be launched later in the year and copies of the report and recommendations will soon be downloadable from the CMYI website.

Postcard from Hume

Noemi Garcia, Reconnect Youth Worker, City of Hume

Each newsletter, we will be asking one of our program team to write about some of the emerging issues and new initiatives that are taking place in their region. In this first edition of the e-newsletter, Reconnect Youth Worker, Noemi Garcia, writes about some of the programs, events and issues that are currently taking place in the City of Hume.

Roxburgh College CLD Girls' Social & Recreation Program

Young women from CLD and newly arrived communities have been identified by a range of local secondary schools and health and welfare agencies as being unable to access social and recreational activities. Barriers to accessing mainstream services include: social isolation, financial constraints, lack of familiarity with services, limited recreation options and language and cultural barriers.

In June 2004, the Reconnect Young Refugees Program secured funding through Family and Community Services to run a 10-week social and recreation program for newly arrived/CLD young women in Hume, with a particular focus on Roxburgh Park.

The program has now reached the halfway mark, with the young women having already participated in indoor rock climbing, Latin dance classes, bowling, and group discussions around school, family and friendships. In November, the group will be introduced through a range of different activities to another girls' group currently running out of Broadmeadows. The aim is to introduce the girls to wider networks and supports in the Hume area.

Horn Of Africa Girls' Camp

In partnership with VICSEG, Crossroads Reconnect, African Australian Welfare Council and the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, a camp was held earlier this year at Phillip Island for young women from Horn of Africa backgrounds living or studying in Hume.

Twenty-five young women attended the three-day camp, three of which were 21-year-old leaders from Somali backgrounds.

The aim of the camp was to bring together newly arrived young women who have settled in Hume to participate in a culturally appropriate recreation program with strong leadership from peers from within their communities. The camp created an opportunity for the young women to develop friendships and helped break down the barriers of isolation towards more active participation.

The girls reported having a great time on camp. For some of the girls it was their first time away from their families. The girls enjoyed activities such as swimming and body boarding.

Following the camp, a reunion was held to bring back all participants and to discuss the future of the group. 31 young women attended this reunion, 6 of who had not attended the camp but wanted to become involved in future activities.

This group now meets on an ongoing basis and a number of activities are underway. An all girls Horn of Africa basketball team has been formed in preparation for the statewide African girls basketball tournament to be held on October 1. This tournament will see a number of teams from around Melbourne playing off for the championship and will be the first time a team from Hume has entered the competition.

Hume/Moreland Cultural Connections Network

The HMYCC has reconvened after nearly 12 months. The aim of the network is for services to come together and address gaps in services for refugee/CLD young people in Hume and Moreland. The network has met twice this year and the focus of discussion has been on 'family'. Planning and discussions are underway to address the many issues that have been raised, particularly around family conflict. A forum is being planned to explore and address this complex issue.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

- *YACVic Conference: 'FRINGE BENEFITS? Young people on the edge of policy and place'* will be on the **6th and 7th October** at the Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre, Ferres Boulevard, South Morang, Melbourne. For more details on the conference, how to register and the program of events, go to <http://www.yacvic.org.au/conference/>.
- *The Health and Wellbeing of Refugees and Asylum Seekers Conference*, University of Melbourne, **15th November, 2004**. Program includes keynotes by Arnold Zable, Dr Sev Ozdowski, Tahir Cambis. For more information on how to register for this conference and on the program, go to: www.psychology.org.au/units/interest_groups/cultures/8.7.34_11.asp or contact Jackie Bornstein on (03) 8344-7035, jbarn@unimelb.edu.au
- *Refugee and Human Rights Photographic Exhibition*. 'What Human Rights Means to Young People' is a photographic exhibition by refugee young people from the Western Young People's Independent Network (WYPIN). The photographic exhibition raises awareness of the importance of the UN Human Rights Declaration and its relevance to refugee young people. Young people worked with community artist Marion Lee Singer and learned how to take photos. The black and white images have been colourfully written over by young people.
- Where: The Immigration Museum, Old Customs House, 400 Flinders Street, Melbourne. For more information contact: wypin@mcm.org.au

SHORT COURSE OF LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

- *'Challenging the Crisis'* presented by the Islamic Council of Victoria. Includes lectures on: 'Terrorism and the 'war on terror',' 'Clash or dialogue of civilisations?', 'Democratic Governance' and 'The Way Ahead'.
 - When: 6:30-9:30 pm, Mondays, 13 September to 11 October, 2004
 - Registration & enquiries ph. 9328-2067 or email admin@icv.org.au

NEW RESOURCES

- *'Refugees and asylum seekers: A guide to key resources and recent developments'*. Information and Research Services at the Parliamentary Library in Canberra have published a new resource that provides links to statistics and information about the world's refugees, asylum seekers and others 'of concern'. It focuses on key agencies and materials that track recent developments and explore current issues. It aims to enable comparisons to be made between Australian and international refugee and asylum seeker responses and policies.
- See: <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/INTGUIDE/SP/Refugees.htm>
- *'Beginning a life in Australia'* booklets - *Dinka* language
- The "Welcome to Victoria" Kit is now available in another language: DINKA. If you or your agency provides services to the South Sudanese community, a copy of the Kit can now be downloaded from the DIMIA Website. See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/settle/booklets/booklets.htm>

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

- *Human Rights Medal and Awards 2004* – The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is looking for nominations for the 2004 Human Rights Medal and Awards. The Medal recognises the achievements of an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights in Australia. The Human Rights Awards are presented to an individual or organisation that has made significant contributions in the areas of: Media, Arts non-fiction, Community, and Law. Entry forms are available from www.humanrights.gov.au/hr_awards/ or contact hrawards@humanrights.gov.au. Entries close 8 October.

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

- *Additional settlement services for Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) entrants from 1 September 2004.*
Additional settlement services are now available to SHP entrants (visa subclass 202) who arrive in Victoria on or after 1 September 2004. The new range of services still relies on the valuable role Proposers and community associations play in linking SHP entrants to essential mainstream services, but provides additional support in the following ways:
 - 1. Pre-Arrival Proposer Assessment**
Face-to-face assessments with proposers will be conducted to identify initial orientation, airport pick up, short-term and long-term accommodation support needs prior to the SHP entrants arriving.
 - 2. Initial and Follow-Up Assessment with SHP Entrants**
Service Providers will conduct face-to-face assessments with SHP entrants within 2 weeks of arrival and again within 6 weeks to check they have been linked to essential mainstream services and to address any outstanding settlement needs.
 - 3. Group Information Sessions**
Vital information sessions will be provided to SHP entrants within 8 weeks of arrival: Financial literacy and numeracy; Orientation to the law; Centrelink/ Employment/ Education
 - 4. Accommodation Support**
Assisting in finding private rental, first month's rent and access to the Bond Loan Scheme may be available to SHP entrants. A needs assessment for the Accommodation Support Service will be conducted by the Service Provider.
 - 5. Food/ Clothing/ Petrol Vouchers**
Food and/or Clothing vouchers will be available to SHP entrants when they attend their initial face-to-face assessment with Service Providers within 2 weeks of arrival. (\$50 for single SHP entrants, \$100 per household with 2-4 SHP entrants, \$150 for 5-7 entrants, \$200 for 8+ entrants). Petrol vouchers (valued at \$20 per household unit) are also available to Proposers or community members who pick up SHP entrants from Melbourne Airport.
- *BriTA builds resilience*
The pilot phase of the BriTA Project, completed by the Queensland Mental Health Centre (QTMHC), was declared a success. The program, conducted with 47 young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, is a set of 10 learning modules specifically designed to build resilience in young people from CALD backgrounds. Evaluation showed that resilience protective factors

had improved after the course, especially in relation to personal goal-setting and help-seeking behaviours. For more information contact Kate Lemerle, QTMHC, ph (07) 3240 2833. (Source: 'Synergy', no.2, 2004.)

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

- *'Racial slurs 'justified as free speech''* – The Age, 02/09/04
Older male teenagers and young men are more likely to hold and voice prejudiced views than other young people, according to an Australian Multicultural Foundation report. The report calls for innovative educational programs to challenge this group after finding nearly half the adolescent and young adult males commonly cited their right to freedom of speech in defence of expressing their intolerance.
- *'Refugee kids miss health care'* – Channel 7 News, 22/08/04
Fewer than one-third of refugee children at Australian high schools have been immunised against infectious diseases including measles, hepatitis B and mumps, a study by the Western Sydney Refugee and Migrant Services has found.
- *'Prolonging the agony'* – The Age, 28/07/04
An alternative viewpoint: Far from being compassionate, Vanstone's new visa arrangements for asylum seekers are cruel, writes author and activist Arnold Zable. A critical review of the government's announcement that 9500 TPV holders would have the opportunity to apply for a range of mainstream migration visas. Zable appeals for the abolishment of TPV visas.

2. CMYI's electronic newsletter: Tell us what you think

We hope you enjoyed reading CMYI's first 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:

1. What do you think about the design and readability of this newsletter?

- Very easy to read
- Moderately easy to read
- Difficult to read

- Comments _____

2. In terms of relevance and interest, how would you rate the following sections of the CMYI newsletter?

Feature article

- Very relevant and/or interesting

- Moderately relevant and/or interesting
- Somewhat relevant and/or interesting
- Not at all relevant or interesting

What's new at CMYI

- Very relevant and/or interesting
- Moderately relevant and/or interesting
- Somewhat relevant and/or interesting
- Not at all relevant or interesting

Postcard from...

- Very relevant and/or interesting
- Moderately relevant and/or interesting
- Somewhat relevant and/or interesting
- Not at all relevant or interesting

New resources, events and conferences

- Very relevant and/or interesting
- Moderately relevant and/or interesting
- Somewhat relevant and/or interesting
- Not at all relevant or interesting

Projects, programs and services

- Very relevant and/or interesting
- Moderately relevant and/or interesting
- Somewhat relevant and/or interesting
- Not at all relevant or interesting

In the news

- Very relevant and/or interesting
- Moderately relevant and/or interesting
- Somewhat relevant and/or interesting
- Not at all relevant or interesting

3. What other information do you think would be valuable to include in this newsletter?

4. How often would you like to receive information via the CMYI e-newsletter?

- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Every two months
- Quarterly
- Whenever an important issue comes up

5. Any other comments
