



Inclusive Local Government

engage | respond | empower

A guide to good practice strategies for
engaging young people from refugee and
migrant backgrounds in local services



304 Drummond Street Carlton VIC 3053 | T 03 9340 3700 | F 03 9349 3766 | info@cmymy.net.au | www.cmy.net.au

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Inclusive Local Government:

A guide to good practice strategies for engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in services

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

E-mail: info@cmymy.net.au

Research and writing: Diana Amato, Nadine Liddy, Louise Olliff

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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.

Community and Sector Development Team

The Inclusive Local Government Guide was developed in 2007 through the work of CMY's Sector Development Team and was funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). 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.

Young Refugees in the Picture Project

Over the last 6 years, CMY has been involved in the Young Refugees in the Picture Project (YRIP). This project was established using community sector development and capacity building initiatives to develop principles on working with young refugees to guide service development and delivery. YRIP was responsible for assisting to build the structural capacity of organisations through consultancy support and management, identifying service gaps and issues through research, identifying training needs of mainstream and ethno specific workers, providing a central coordination point for DIAC-funded workers to discuss service gaps and support issues related to their work, develop training modules and short term capacity building projects. Whilst the work of YRIP still continues, it has now been incorporated more broadly within CMY's Sector Development Team.

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

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Introduction: using this guide

The *Inclusive Local Government Guide* has been developed to support the work of local councils in ensuring young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds¹ are engaged, empowered and participate in local government programs and services (e.g. youth services, leisure services, infrastructure and planning departments).

The Guide has been specifically designed for managers and workers providing services to young people who would like to:

- Increase the access and participation of young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds and their communities in programs, activities and services;
- Target their services to be inclusive of young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds;
- Ensure access and equity and that service users reflect the diversity of young people living in local areas; and
- Provide services that are culturally responsive.

The content of this Guide has been informed by:

- CMY's work with local government youth services over the past 10 years. In particular, the Guide documents some of the learning that has come out of the *Young Refugees in the Picture* (YRIP) project. This project has worked closely with local government youth services in Casey, Whittlesea and Goulburn Valley to better respond to the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. YRIP is funded through the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).
- Individual *consultations* with local council youth services in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.
- Findings from the *Local Government Roundtable Forum* convened by CMY on 8th February 2007. Thirty workers from 12 local government areas attended the roundtable, representing a range of different services and positions—local council youth workers, police, community and settlement services. Local government areas represented at the roundtable were: Cardinia, Casey, Darebin, Hume, Maribyrnong, Maroondah, Melton, Monash, Moonee Valley, Whitehorse, Whittlesea and Yarra.

¹ Throughout this guide, we refer to culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) young people as those from refugee and migrant backgrounds. This includes young people who are born in Australia and whose parents settled as refugees or migrants. Where we refer to 'young people', this is short-hand for 'young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds'.

Structure

The Guide is structured to provide a range of contextual information and strategies for achieving culturally responsive and inclusive services.

Section 1

provides some background information around the refugee and migrant experience; issues for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in accessing services; issues for local government in engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds; and frameworks for culturally responsive service provision.

Section 2

explores the use of a Culturally Responsive Audit Tool to assess the involvement of young people in services and programs and begin the dynamic process of responding to diversity in your local government area. This section also includes a model Audit Tool.

Section 3

explores various steps and practical strategies in planning for the greater engagement of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in local government services. This includes strategies and considerations around developing policies, identifying target groups, allocating resources, staffing and communication.

Section 4

provides some examples of good practice models in local government. The case studies document the steps taken by two local councils in collaboration with CMY's Young Refugees in the Picture Project to increase accessibility.

Section 5

provides specific examples of programs that different local councils have run that have been successful in engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. The 'programs that work' section documents resource considerations, rationale, staffing and collaboration, useful strategies and challenges.

Section 6

contains additional useful resources and web links.

1 | background

Refugee and newly arrived² young people face extraordinary challenges in settling into a new country, navigating a new culture and a complex service system. Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds face particular challenges in accessing generalist services³ which can result in social exclusion and marginalisation.

The following section provides some context around young people and the refugee, migrant and settlement experiences, as well as some of the barriers young people face in accessing local services. Section 1.4 provides some rationale for why it is so important that local government services engage with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

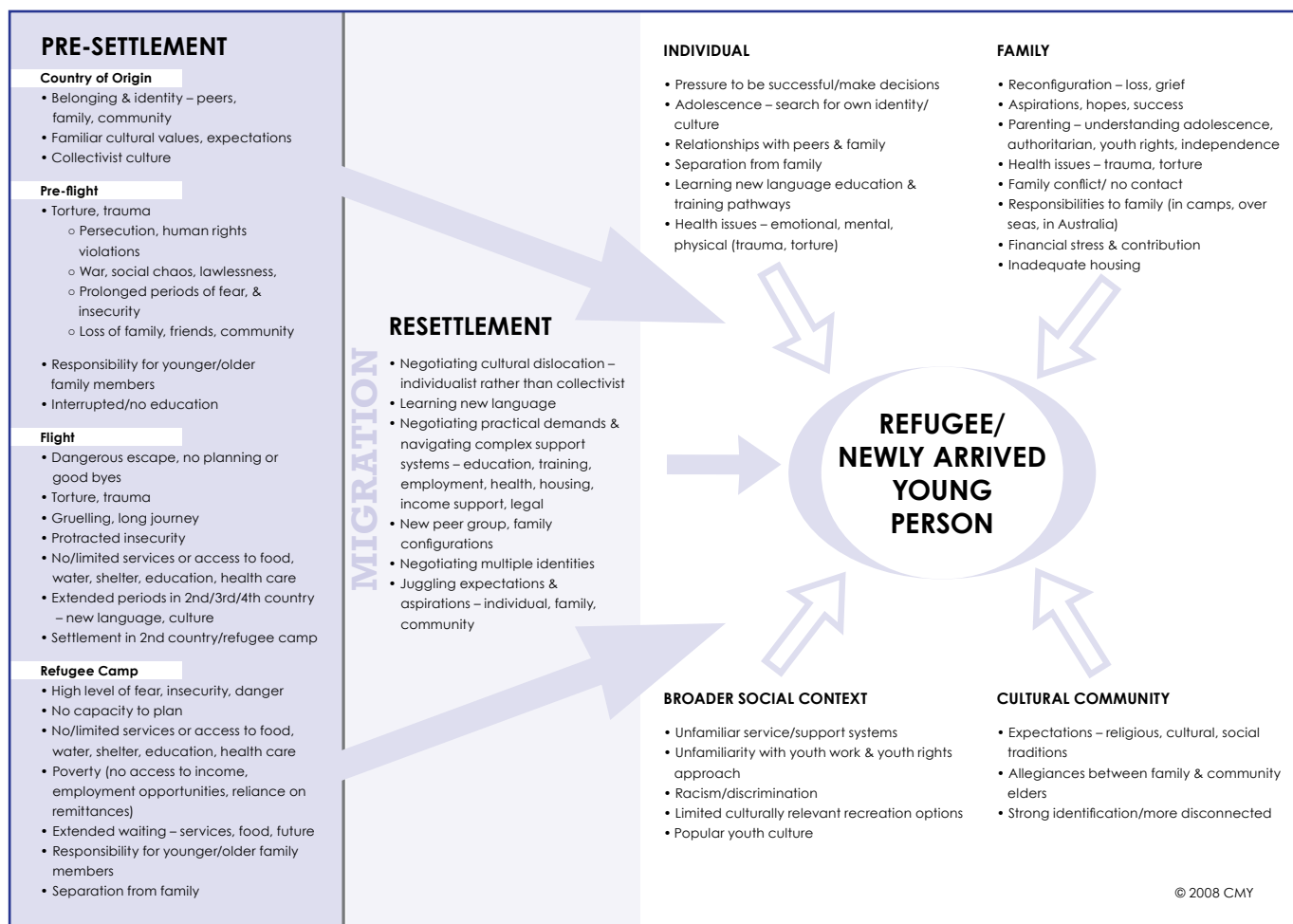
1.1 The refugee experience

While there is no standard 'refugee experience', refugees have, by definition, been forced to flee their country of origin because of war or persecution. Many refugee young people will come to Australia with their immediate or extended family, and others will come as unaccompanied minors or with non-parent carers, such as siblings.

A growing proportion of those arriving as humanitarian entrants in Australia are young people. In 2005, 64% of Australia's 13,075 Humanitarian new arrivals were under the age of 25 and 31% were between the age of 12–24.

Figure 1 provides an overview of some of the common experiences and issues faced by refugee young people that impact on their settlement and wellbeing.

Figure 1: Refugee Youth Issues



2 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).

3 Generalist (or mainstream) services are those that are available to all young people. They are therefore not designed to address the needs of particular target groups— e.g. same sex attracted, young mothers, ethno-specific, etc.

Despite the immense difficulty of resettlement and recovery, 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;
- Strong commitment to the family and the value of community; and
- A strong desire to achieve educationally.

Refugee young people often have broad international knowledge, multilingual skills and awareness of many cultures and communities. If well supported in the transition to life in Australia, refugee young people have demonstrated their strong capacity to be able to rebuild their lives, achieve their goals and contribute dynamically to the broader community.

1.2 The migrant experience

A migrant is someone who leaves their country of origin voluntarily to seek a better life for a range of personal and economic reasons. In contrast to the refugee experience, migrants have made the choice to leave, had the chance to plan and prepare for migration and generally can return at any time if they wish.

However, it should be acknowledged that for young people who have come to Australia as migrants with their families, many may have had little choice in the decision to migrate. Like the refugee experience, being a young migrant is likely to involve dislocation and some level of grief and loss. Young people from migrant backgrounds may have left behind significant relationships and a sense of belonging to their home country and/or community, and will also be negotiating the developmental challenges of adolescence.

1.3 Resettlement in Australia

For young people who are refugees or newly arrived in Australia, the developmental tasks of adolescence are compounded by the traumatic nature of the refugee experience, cultural dislocation, loss of established social networks and the practical demands of resettlement (RRAC 2002:4).

Refugee and migrant young people must negotiate education and employment pathways (for many refugees, with a history of disrupted or no formal education), often a new language and culture, make new friends, and navigate unfamiliar and complex social systems (such as Centrelink, Australian laws, public transport), while also negotiating individual, family and community expectations:

Individual

Refugee young people living in Australia are often recovering from the effects of torture and trauma, which may mean they feel depressed or angry, experience nightmares and a loss of meaning, have trouble concentrating, or find it difficult to make new relationships. Others may have been too young to consciously remember their experience but are living with relatives who express their pain in ways the young person may not understand or feel able to cope with. This is in addition to having to cope with adapting and integrating to a new life in Australia and searching for their own identity within different cultures.

Family

The pressures of resettlement on families can be enormous and have a considerable impact on how well a young person negotiates their resettlement. Attachment and family support can be some of the strongest factors in successful integration for young people.

However, some of the common challenges for refugee families with young people include:

- Inter-generational conflict within families due to changing values and expectations;
- Changes in family roles where young people are expected to adopt adult roles, such as advocating on behalf of the family due to their stronger English language skills;
- Changes in family make-up and dynamics as families are reunified after many years of separation, or young people are sponsored out to Australia by distant relatives;
- Young people feeling guilty that other family members have been 'left behind' and feel responsible for their wellbeing overseas;
- Overcrowded housing and a lack of study space;
- Large family size and financial difficulties, including repaying pre-arrival airfare debts; and
- Family members absent.

Community

A young person's resettlement experience will depend on how they negotiate the expectations and value systems of both their cultural community and the broader Australian community. Whether young people feel accepted and able to create a sense of belonging and identity will depend on factors such as:

- Racism and stereotyping in the broader community (including in schools and the media);
- Access to culturally-appropriate and inclusive sport and recreation opportunities;
- Positive dialogue between young people and community/religious leaders about expectations; and
- Opportunities for meaningful participation in community debates, structures, groups and environments.

1.4 Why target young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds?

Targeting specific populations or dedicating resources to increase their access to opportunities is a proven strategy for engaging and increasing the participation of marginalised or socially excluded groups within local communities.

For refugee and migrant young people, increasing their access and participation in programs and services can contribute significantly to their sense of connection and belonging to a new country and culture. In particular, participating in recreation programs 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 generalist recreation programs (e.g. accessing a local leisure centre, joining a drama group, or enrolling in an art course).

Some local councils have expressed concerns about targeting specific groups because it may be perceived as an exclusive or unfair approach. CMY has found that targeting refugee and migrant young people and communities (or particular young people at risk within that population), is not about excluding others, but about recognising that a 'one size fits all' approach is not always appropriate. Refugee and migrant young people and their communities will face a range of barriers to access and participation in generalist services or programs that many Australian-born young people will not. These barriers include:

- Cultural, religious and gender differences;
- Language;
- The migration or refugee experience;
- Age—as it relates to age-specific programs and the refugee or migration experience⁴;
- Unfamiliarity with the Australian service system;
- Cost and location of programs; and
- Poor previous experiences with generalist services or programs.

⁴ Many refugee and migrant young people who arrive in Australia are unclear about their exact date of birth and must negotiate Australian systems that are often explicitly organised around age. Further, the refugee experience can have a significant impact on developmental stages and, for many young refugees, their age is less reflective of developmental life stages as it is for non-refugee young people.

Barriers inhibiting generalist services from accessing or increasing the participation of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds include:

- Lack of cross-cultural competency;
- Lack of knowledge about communities;
- Lack of networking or outreach with communities and ethno-specific agencies;
- Language barriers and lack of knowledge or experience using interpreters;
- Organisational service delivery models (e.g. hours of service, completion of forms, capacity to work across LGA boundaries, KPIs/targets) and worker values, attitudes, behaviours;
- Lack of familiarity with working in a family context;
- Geographical location and availability/affordability of transport;
- Insufficient time to develop trust with young people and communities;
- Resource constraints, including capacity to develop and support networks (particularly for interface councils);
- Refugee and migrant communities not necessarily fitting neatly into council boundaries; and
- Challenges gaining support from other areas/ departments within council, or from neighbouring local council services.

This Guide will explore a range of strategies to address some of these barriers. What should be noted is that addressing barriers to access is the responsibility of services.

“Barriers for culturally and linguistically diverse young people are (generally) based on race, language, culture and religion. What is essential to note is the barrier is located WITH the service and NOT with the client. Barriers are a service’s responsibility.”

Youth Action & Policy Association, Access & Equity Guide for services working with young people: How to develop and implement your own Access and Equity Policy, 3rd Edition, NSW, 2002, p.7

Frameworks

The *Inclusive Local Government Guide* is underpinned by a number of key frameworks relating to culturally responsive practice and service delivery. These frameworks include:

Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society (Commonwealth of Australia 1998)⁵

This Charter has been endorsed by Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments 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).

Good Practice Principles: Guide for working with refugee young people (VSPC 2005)⁶

This document was developed by the Victorian Settlement Planning Committee as a tool to assist services in working with refugee young people and supporting consistent and responsive services across Victoria. It explores three core values – Understanding, Trust and Social Justice – with principles, practical actions and case studies.

Newly Arrived Youth Support Service (NAYSS) Resource Kit (CMY 2005)⁷

This Resource Kit was developed by CMY in conjunction with the Department of Families, Communities and Indigenous Affairs (FACSIA) for NAYSS program providers. NAYSS is a nationally funded service providing culturally appropriate assistance for newly arrived young people to engage with their family and/or community. This Kit explores some key strategies for good practice in working with newly arrived young people, their families and communities, including specialist approaches required for successful outcomes with this target group.

⁵ This can be found at www.immi.gov.au/about/charters/culturally-diverse/index.htm

⁶ This can be found at www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/_pdf/GPP_July2005.pdf

⁷ This can be found at www.cmy.net.au/NAYSS/PublicationsandResources

2 | audit tool

2.1 Using an audit tool for assessment

The following checklist helps you gain an understanding of where your service is at in terms of responsiveness and what things need to be done to improve inclusive service provision. It can be used at the beginning of the process to set your direction and at the end to evaluate your progress.

The audit tool will help you answer the key question: How inclusive is your council/service of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds?

Fostering a climate of change is more than simply producing documents and programs. It is about promoting a culture of inclusiveness within your service. Staff at all levels should be actively involved in the process and management needs to provide structure and practical support to enable change to occur. It is particularly important that decision-makers within your organisation are on board as some strategies may require involvement across different departments and at various levels within local government (e.g. human resources).

	Our agency does this well	Our agency could do this better	Our agency has not yet addressed this issue	This does not apply to our agency
Policies				
Our organisation has a written policy addressing cultural diversity in our service.				
Our organisation has a mechanism to promote and monitor issues of access and equity for refugee and migrant communities.				
Our organisation has reviewed existing policies and ensured they reflect diversity and access and equity issues.				
Planning and needs assessment				
Our organisation has discussed the benefits of increasing participation of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.				
Our organisation has involved key staff, decision-makers and management in the planning stage.				
Our organisation has established terms of reference for boards and committees that state the need to consider refugee and migrant communities when developing and implementing policies.				
We regularly assess young people's needs in the local area, or have access to good information to inform our planning.				
Staff are aware of high risk groups within culturally and linguistically diverse populations.				
Our service has changed over time to meet the needs of refugee and migrant young people and their families.				
We have diverse strategies in place rather than a 'one size fits all' approach to planning (e.g. run girls groups, ethno-specific activities).				

	Our agency does this well	Our agency could do this better	Our agency has not yet addressed this issue	This does not apply to our agency
Data Collection				
We have access to up-to-date data about which communities live in our service catchment area.				
We collect data on the cultural background and languages spoken by clients.				
Promotion				
Our organisation actively promotes its programs and services to refugee and migrant communities through schools, churches, mosques, ethnic media etc.				
Our organisation uses a range of information strategies to reach target groups (e.g. using diverse examples and images in promotional material)				
Accessibility				
Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds access our service in proportion to the level of diversity in the local population.				
Our service and activities are accessible by public transport.				
Images used within the service waiting areas are reflective of diversity.				
Services provided are within the financial reach of refugee and migrant families – free or low cost.				
Some programs are outposted or outreach to clients to ensure greater accessibility.				
Staff are clear about what activities appeal to, and work well with, young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.				
Relationships with communities				
Our service has formal and informal relationships with refugee/ migrant families and community leaders.				
We use strategies to seek input from refugee and migrant young people and communities in the development and delivery of our programs.				
We seek to build the capacity of refugee and migrant communities to support young people.				
We have relationships and work in partnership with key agencies that support young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.				

	Our agency does this well	Our agency could do this better	Our agency has not yet addressed this issue	This does not apply to our agency
Work practices				
Staff are trained around cross cultural communication and support for refugee and migrant young people.				
As a team, we reflect together on work styles and approaches to ensure accessibility.				
We work with young people in the context of their family, given the importance of family to refugee and migrant communities.				
We avoid using highly formal or bureaucratic processes in working with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and use forms sensitively.				
We reflect on how appropriate the activities we run are for refugee young people who have been traumatised.				
Staff have strategies to address parent/guardian fears around their children attending activities.				
Language and communication				
Staff are trained and confident to use interpreters.				
Interpreters are offered and used with clients and their families as needed.				
Interpreting and translation are budgeted for yearly.				
Important information/signs are translated in key community languages.				
We use oral communication strategies where possible to communicate with newly arrived families in recognition of low literacy.				
Written material we produce in English uses plain language and simple terms, avoiding jargon.				
Staffing				
We have a culturally diverse staff team.				
Our organisation actively encourages people from diverse cultural backgrounds to apply for paid positions.				
Our organisation ensures engagement with diverse communities is reflected in job descriptions, workplans and key performance indicators.				
Our organisation has allocated responsibility for CLD inclusion to appropriate staff.				

3 | strategies for greater engagement of refugee and migrant young people

Planning for greater engagement of young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds in local government services and activities requires the consideration of a number of factors.

The following key strategies may help you address issues and gaps identified through undertaking an Inclusive Services Audit (Section 2):

- 3.1 Involving key staff
- 3.2 Identifying the target group
- 3.3 Developing policies
- 3.4 Setting objectives
- 3.5 Working in partnership
- 3.6 Allocating and seeking resources
- 3.7 Communicating effectively
- 3.8 Working with communities
- 3.9 Involving young people

3.1 Involving key staff

When planning a strategy, find out who has the capacity, skills and interest in engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. You may have staff with particular expertise or experience working with this target group who should be involved. Co-ordination of refugee or migrant support activities is vital and this may involve out-of-hours activities and administration, so ensure that appropriate time and resources are allocated to staff to plan and deliver effective programs and services. You might consider employing a bicultural worker (refer to Section 3.8: Working with communities) or multicultural liaison officer (bilingual if possible) to implement some of the targeted initiatives outlined in this Guide (see Section 5).

While individual workers may take the lead on addressing diversity issues, broad support from all staff is crucial for the success of the strategies you put in place. You will need to provide support to all workers involved and share the workload so that issues are not marginalised within your service. For example, professional development may be required to ensure all staff reach a shared understanding about the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Fostering a climate of change is more than 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 needs to provide structure and practical support to enable change to occur.

What you can do:

- Involve all staff in creating policies and strategies for engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.
- Support staff through professional development. There are many organisations which provide training specifically in areas of engaging and working with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. These include CMY, Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH), Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House), and Migrant Resource Centres. Many of these organisations will be able to tailor their training to suit the needs of the particular staff group.
- Appoint a worker and/or a group of workers to work with the parents of refugee and migrant young people.
- Inform all staff about the strategies the service is using.
- Delegate key staff to make contact and develop relationships with parents, community and religious leaders (perhaps a bicultural worker).

3.2 Identifying your target group

Given local government areas vary significantly in terms of demographics and resources, considerations need to be made in identifying who your target groups are and what the most appropriate strategies are for creating inclusive services. For example, identifying increased numbers of refugees settling in a particular local government area may prompt youth services to specifically target programs that meet the needs of young people from emerging refugee communities. Other local government areas may have more established migrant communities and services may want to target Australian-born young people from diverse backgrounds (e.g. second generation Vietnamese, Somali, Samoan, Lebanese).

While services should be inclusive of all young people, identifying target groups is about recognising that there are additional barriers that some groups face in accessing services. Creating a demographic profile of young people in your local area and comparing this with demographic data about who is accessing your services/programs will highlight where there are gaps in service provision and identify groups where targeted initiatives may be required.

Mapping young people in your local government area

There are many ways of obtaining information to create a demographic profile of who and where the young people are within your local government area.

- Some local councils have information on their website about the demographic characteristics of the local population. These profiles often include information on the cultural diversity, age, employment and income levels of local residents. To find refugee and migrant communities, look at the breakdown of country of origin. To identify Australian-born young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds, a useful indicator is to look at languages spoken at home.
- The Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (DIAC) online Settlement Database is a useful source of current data on settlement trends. Information on country of birth, languages spoken, age group, gender, visa type, year of arrival, English proficiency and religion can be broken down by LGA or region (e.g. Inner Eastern

Metropolitan Melbourne). Reports are automatically compiled with categories selected. Data on visa type is particularly useful in identifying refugee families in your local area.

www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/settlement-database/index.htm

- A vast amount of data is now available from the 2006 Population Census (as well as previous Censuses) and can be accessed online at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) website. For more tailored mapping exercises, the ABS can provide comprehensive statistical profiles of client groups.
www.abs.gov.au
- Regionally-based Migrant Resource Centre's (MRC) primarily provide settlement services to refugee and migrant communities and operate over several target municipalities. MRC's may be well placed to identify refugee and migrant populations, service gaps that exist, and specific issues for refugee and migrant communities in local areas.
www.eccv.org.au/7.html

Mapping who are the young people accessing your services

In identifying target groups, it is important to find out who is accessing your services and, more importantly, who isn't. For example, if you know there is a large Turkish-speaking community in your local area, but none of the young people accessing your services speak Turkish at home, you may want to explore why this is. By consulting with the community (see Section 3.8) you may find that these young people are accessing programs and services elsewhere, or that there are barriers preventing these young people from accessing your service and that a targeted response may be required.

In order to identify service gaps and target groups, it is necessary to collect and collate data on the cultural background and languages spoken by clients.

3.3 Developing policies

The policies of an organisation create the framework that guides its strategies, programs and service delivery. Having dynamic policies around inclusion and access and equity will guide the direction of your strategic plan and provide a framework around strategies and practice that is inclusive of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Clear and specific policies are essential for effective organisational collaboration (See resources in Section 6 for examples of policy templates and inclusion policies). For policies to be meaningful and useful they need to be understood and accepted by the people who have to work with them. Often policies are drafted by management and are then sent to staff for feedback afterwards. This process can make open discussion difficult as staff may feel they cannot provide honest and open feedback to management. It can also reduce creativity when people have to respond to something that has already been laid out, rather than being part of the policy formulation process from the beginning.

Involvement by all stakeholders in the formulation of policy will ensure that the collective knowledge and experience of everyone in the organisation is taken into account.

Policy development process

Policy formulation is often an organic process which takes place when staff and key stakeholders identify, discuss and research issues collaboratively. The following provides some steps to developing strong inclusion policy within your local government service:



3.4 Working in partnership

CMYs experience has shown that collaborative partnerships between local government services, community organisations and ethnic communities are critical in engaging young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds.

There are many benefits of working in partnership, including:

- Increased project resources, including access to rooms/facilities, buses, extra staff, in-kind support and equipment;
- Increased and easier access to target groups. A partner organisation can often 'vouch' for the credibility of an organisation that is new or unfamiliar to prospective participants. Working with partner organisations who know the target group well mean that activities that are of interest to this target group are easier to identify;
- Partner organisations are often able to directly promote programs to prospective participants as they already have established relationships. This is particularly useful for promoting new programs or initiatives; and
- Organisations find that once they work together they begin to share information on other services and activities and this can lead to increased opportunities for participants as well as for organisations.

Choosing a partner organisation

Aim to work with an organisation with common objectives and interests. Ask a prospective partner:

- What is the focus of your work? (e.g. family support, youth work)
- Who do you support? (e.g. a specific language, cultural or religious group)
- Do you have a history of working with local government?
- Would you be interested in working with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds?

For more information about working collaboratively, VicHealth has developed a number of excellent resources on developing effective partnerships (www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

What you can do:

- Understand the differences between organisations that work with refugee and migrant communities. Migrant Resource Centres and other organisations can help you negotiate the multicultural service sector more effectively. (See Resources in Section 6)
- Find out which ethno-specific community organisations in your area have a sensitive understanding of both youth issues and family perspectives, and have the capacity and willingness to be involved in local government services/activities. Be aware that there are numerous political and social differences between groups. Each one will have special interests and resources.
- Build up relationships with key cultural or religious leaders as useful links in engaging young people and their families.
- Approach a community language school that operates in your area to set up a partnership. Many state schools offer their facilities for community language classes and this can provide links to students and parents.
- Approach youth and family services whose role is to engage young people and who are interested in focusing on migrant and refugee young people. (See Resources Section 6)

3.5 Consulting and setting objectives

Whatever strategies you decide to use to engage young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, you will be more successful if you carefully consider their needs and motives. Determine whose needs you are trying to meet. The most effective engagement strategies will be those that address issues at the top of young people's hierarchy of needs rather than the peripheral issues.

Preliminary questions that may help you set objectives are:

- Who do we want to reach?
- What is our main objective in engaging these young people?
- What do we know about these young people, their daily lives and environment?
- What are their fears and the barriers they see?
- What are their interests and how do we communicate most effectively with these young people?

Consultation

Consulting with young people and communities is vital and will help you answer these questions and choose appropriate strategies (see Section 3.8 and 3.9). For example, you could:

- Conduct focus groups with young people around specific needs or gaps in services;
- Run a sport and recreational fun day and invite youth workers and workers from partner organisations to start the process of engagement;
- Consult with bilingual workers and community leaders to discuss significant underlying issues that young people are most concerned about;
- Bring together young people with a common interest, such as a cross cultural group of Muslim young people. Recognise the differences and similarities between communities in their culture, religion, language and migration history.

3.6 Allocating and seeking resources

Once you have set objectives and decided on an appropriate strategy, you may need to allocate or seek additional resources. Keep in mind that cost is often one of the main barriers preventing refugee and newly arrived young people from participating in activities. Keeping costs for participants low is vital to ensuring your programs and services are inclusive and accessible.

It should be noted that many strategies are not particularly costly. For example, interpreting and translating services are available free to local government services within guidelines provided, and forming partnerships with community organisations can provide opportunities for council services to run youth programs and share the costs. More intensive longer-term strategies may require special grants, for example through the Office for Youth (Department for Victorian Communities) or VicHealth (e.g. Building Bridges, Active Participation Grants).

Estimate the financial costs for the activities or services you are planning. Make sure you budget adequately for things such as transport, which is often a significant barrier for refugee and migrant young people's participation, and staff time (for example, workers may need to work outside regular hours in order to engage effectively with

communities, and more time may be required to develop relationships and outreach to where young people are).

Consider:

- What financial assistance can the council provide?
- Can a partner organisation provide other resources such as a worker's time, venue or equipment?
- Do we need to apply for a grant?

Targeting young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds using existing funding

Running targeted programs using existing generalist funding streams is one strategy you can use to ensure programs and services are inclusive. For example, most council youth services receive funding from the Office for Youth (DVC) to run FReeZA music and culture programmes. FReeZA provides young people with an opportunity to run local drug and alcohol free live band and dance parties and cultural events for other young people. FReeZA aims to provide opportunities for youth and community development, and allocating this money to new or emerging communities is an excellent way of increasing their participation in local government services.

To run an effective program, partnerships could be formed with local ethno-specific organisations, such as Migrant Resource Centres, to engage or target specific young people. This partnership may elicit a more productive response from young people because workers with whom the young people are already familiar and trust are introducing them to council services. In addition, having a cultural festival or celebration may ease young people into these services as they can impart their knowledge about their culture to others whilst also developing leadership skills. For a good example of using FreeZA money to target young people from diverse backgrounds, see the Moonee Valley Hip Hop Program case study featured in Section 5.

3.7 Communicating effectively

Communicating effectively to ensure your local government services are accessible and inclusive involves consistent policies and practice on using interpreters and translating, as well as more general competency around cross-cultural communication.

Translating

A growing number of organisations are now thinking about providing translated material to young people and their families. However, in order to be effective with newly arrived communities, agencies need more creative means to provide this information. Many newly arrived refugee young people and their families have had little or no previous education and have not had the opportunity to learn to read in their first language. Some spoken languages are not recognised in written form. Many communities will be much more comfortable and familiar with oral communication methods such as face-to-face meetings, discussions and listening to the radio.

If you do translate you may want to consider:

- What existing translated materials exist that we could use? (Search www.mylanguage.gov.au. CMY also provides a range of translated material for young people and families, including parent consent forms www.cmy.net.au/TranslatedandCommunityInfo)
- Are we targeting young people or parents/family members for the material?
- Which communities most need translations (the targets of your service, or high risk groups in your local area?)
- What languages are spoken by those communities?
- What languages will be actually read by community members?
- Check with your preferred translator about which languages they can provide translations in.

Make sure you also think carefully about the English version. Use plain English and explain any important concepts and terms. This will assist not only to make it clear for the translator (some terms are hard to translate), but also for those who will have to rely on the English version if you have a limited number of translations you can fund.

What are the alternatives to translation?

- Engage with existing ethnic radio programs on SBS, 3CR, 3ZZZ etc for a talkback session, an interview or by providing appropriate pre-recorded information in your target language.
- Develop visual material, signs, DVDs, displays to show in your service, or to be used in community settings.
- Employ and train bi-cultural workers to work with existing community groups to both deliver information around key issues and the services you offer and seek input from community members about the programs you deliver.
- Facilitate direct oral communication through the use of interpreters by attending community meetings or events.
- Develop partnerships with education providers to develop appropriate curriculum material for use in the classroom with English language learners, such as the Tenant's Union has done successfully with AMES.

Using interpreters

The role of a language interpreter is to restate spoken communication from one language to another. A professional interpreter should be used when you or your client identify that language is a barrier to communicating effectively. It is important not to make assumptions about a young person's capacity to understand and communicate in English. Services should have clear policies and guidelines for staff around using interpreters (see Section 3.3).

When to use interpreters

- Where a young person speaks limited or no English;
- Where a young person speaks basic English but is under stress;
- When conveying important or sensitive information about health issues, entitlements, rights and responsibilities or seeking informed consent; and
- When a young person requests an interpreter.

Professional interpreters should always be used in preference to friends, relatives and unqualified bilingual staff as interpreters. Interpreters are trained, possess linguistic competence and proficiency, are skilled in cross-cultural communication, are impartial and operate within confidentiality guidelines. Children should never be used as interpreters due to the inappropriate responsibility they carry as an interpreter and the shift in power dynamic away from the adult.

Types of Interpreters

Telephone interpreters

- Can be called immediately;
- Offer more language possibilities because interstate interpreters can be used;
- Offer anonymity of the client;
- Offer the possibility of communicating with a client who isn't with you; and
- Require access to a speaker phone if you are with the client.

On Site Interpreters

- Offer more assistance with longer, more detailed or complex conversations;
- Are often used with group meetings (e.g. meeting with a young person and their family); and
- Are best used where there is time to book ahead (allow at least a week).

Planning

Key factors to consider when planning to engage an interpreter include:

- Allow extra time for the interpreting process (double the usual interview time);
- Consider a client's request for strict confidentiality when using an interpreter;
- Avoid assumptions about the language your client speaks. Always ask your client what language interpreter they prefer; and
- Some clients will be embarrassed about not understanding something or about being misunderstood, but may nevertheless be reluctant to use an interpreter. If your client is reluctant to use a professional interpreter, try to explore with them their reasons and concerns. It may be because they:
 - Do not understand the concept of professional confidentiality and impartiality;
 - Have had a previous negative experience with a particular interpreter; or
 - Feel embarrassed or disappointed that you think they need a professional interpreter and perceive this as a judgment about their English language proficiency.

Strategies for negotiating with young people around the use of interpreters

- Explain that you are aware that many young people and families, particularly those from smaller, emerging communities, are concerned about trust and confidentiality;
- Reassure the young person that interpreters are bound by confidentiality and impartiality rules;
- Explain the benefits of using a neutral, trained interpreter who is not a family member;
- Explain why you need an interpreter in your role even if they don't feel the need;
- If another young person is suggested, explain your organisation doesn't allow you to use family and friends as interpreters;
- Let the young person know they can use an interpreter that they do not know and is not well known to their community;

- Suggest using a telephone interpreter from another state or using a name other than the client's real name (this can be decided with the client) for greater anonymity; and
- Ask the client for any other suggestion to address their concerns.

Cross cultural communication

Working effectively requires competency in communicating cross culturally. This is about recognising that there are different communication styles and being aware that culture mediates such things as body language, eye contact, the appropriateness of talking about particular issues (e.g. drugs and alcohol), conflict resolution styles, and so on. For example, Anglo-Australians may interpret a situation negatively if a young person does not make direct eye contact, as them being elusive or untrustworthy. However, in many other cultures, a young person will not make eye contact as a sign of respect, particularly when talking to someone who is older or in a position of authority.

For resources and training around cross cultural communication and competency, check out the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health website (www.ceh.org.au).

3.8 Working with communities

CMY has found that young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds identify with other people from similar backgrounds or experiences and that this is an important factor in achieving participation. There are a number of strategies that can be used in engaging refugee and migrant communities more broadly, and subsequently in increasing participation of young people in services. For example, consulting with communities around barriers and needs is essential (see Section 3.5). Another key strategy is around the employment of bi-cultural or bi-lingual workers who are able to provide links and essential skills to local programs and services.

Bi-cultural and bi-lingual workers

Many local councils have employed staff from diverse cultural backgrounds and who are fluent in more than one language to support the delivery of services to that same cultural group or cross culturally. These bi-cultural

or bi-lingual workers are generally employed on the basis that they are better placed to engage with their own cultural community, not only with young people but also with parents and community leaders who may be initially distrusting or unfamiliar with services and who may have low English language proficiency. Bi-cultural workers may also be employed to work cross culturally outside of their own cultural group but with young people who share similar refugee or migrant experiences.

Some of the benefits of employing bi-cultural workers are that they can provide young people and their families with a vehicle to gain confidence to participate in generalist activities within the local community. Employing and recognising the skills of bi-cultural workers can also empower and build the capacity of local communities. For an example of how a local youth service employed bi-cultural workers as a strategy, see the Darebin-Banyule Cross Regional Active African Youth Project case study detailed in Section 5.

Benefits

Through a series of forums involving bi-cultural workers and managers over 2006-2007, CMY has documented a number of benefits for employing bi-cultural workers:

- The ability to identify young people's issues more easily;
- Using cultural insight to help reach a shared understanding;
- The ability to be a role model to inspire young people from your community;
- Communicating in the same language can offer greater comfort and can be both informal and formal (less restricted communication);
- More control over the meaning you are communicating in first language;
- The ability to use people's own frame of reference to help them understand new information;
- More subtle interpretation of meaning such as de-coding and drawing out unspoken issues;
- Understanding the norms and expectations and using this to explain systems or to advocate on certain issues;
- Greater trust as they may be more likely to approach you for help;

- Being more motivated to advocate and support people from your own community;
- The ability to juggle both cultures (own culture and Australian cultural norms) and ease the way for young people struggling with identity.

Challenges

Whilst there is general acknowledgement that using the bi-cultural model has many benefits, currently there are no existing standards, training or policies that define these roles. It is worth noting that bi-cultural workers often face many challenges that mainstream workers do not. These include:

- People can become dependent on you because they trust you. It can be hard to maintain boundaries without risking offence;
- Young people may not want to talk to you or may feel ashamed (depending on the issue) or fear confidentiality being broken;
- Can be expected to deal with everything and everyone from your culture regardless of your role;
- Organisational management support may not cater to the needs of bi-cultural workers;
- Workplace may not recognise the extra complexity of the work;
- Other workers may not share the responsibility for working with refugee or migrant young people;
- Expected to understand every aspect of their culture and other workers may be insensitive to the complexity of community/cultural politics;
- Need to be very aware of the Australian system and this may be new or unfamiliar as well;
- Worker burn out – exhaustion.

3.9 Involving young people

The principle of youth participation is central to any service or organisation that aims to enhance the lives of young people. Providing opportunities for young people to gain skills and experience in identifying needs and gaps, and influencing services and structures, is an important step for local services wishing to engage refugee and migrant young people more broadly.

Processes which include young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in decision making – both through local communities and political processes at local, state and national levels – must be developed in partnership with young people themselves. Ensuring that the process is structured and linked to an existing group or organisation which can provide support to the young person on an ongoing basis is one of the most effective ways of engaging refugee and migrant young people in decision-making processes.

Effective youth participation initiatives also require adequate lead-up time to allow for preparation and debriefing, and information needs to be provided to young people about processes and services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. Time also needs to be spent in educating young people about political systems and processes, management structures and consultation methods.

Why youth participation?

There are many reasons for developing partnerships with young people in your local service:

- You can model young people's broader right to full citizenship and participation in Australian life and make this possible;
- You can support the individual young person's right to participate in decisions affecting them;
- You can tap into young people's expertise on their own social and cultural conditions;
- You can assist young people to develop skills, confidence and awareness so that they can take initiatives and tackle issues on their own;
- Active and productive youth involvement can challenge negative stereotypes of young people otherwise perpetuated in the community;
- Young people can bring new perspectives, influencing outcomes in new and unexpected ways;
- Participatory mechanisms can make your service more responsive, understanding and considerate of the young people with whom you are working;
- Policies and programs incorporating young people in their design and delivery are likely to be more efficient and effective;
- The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Australia is a signatory, endorses the right of young people to participate as fully as possible in their society.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states:

"[Countries] shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." (Article 12)

"The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice." (Article 13)

Strategies for youth participation should be incorporated at all stages of a project: planning, development, programming, operation, monitoring and evaluation. For a case study of a local government youth participation initiative, see the City of Moonee Valley GURU Project (Section 5).

4 | local government case studies

Section 4 documents how two local government areas – the City of Casey in Melbourne’s outer southeast and the regional area of Goulburn Valley – have utilised strategies to increase the engagement of young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds in local programs and services.

These case studies should not be seen as prescriptive, but illustrate the uniqueness of refugee and migrant young people’s experiences, local resource and infrastructure considerations, and how a range of strategies can be used to facilitate young people’s access to services. Both case studies illustrate how good practice strategies in working with refugee and migrant young people involve consistent and responsive approaches, and are strengthened by specific policies and practice guidelines.

4.1 City of Casey: Experiences of an interface council

With a high proportion of refugees settling in Melbourne’s outer southeast, many newly arrived communities were beginning to shift from original settlement areas such as Dandenong to neighbouring areas such as Casey.

These shifts in settlement are due to factors such as:

- Available housing (a high proportion of Sudanese have settled in Casey because there are more 4-5 bedroom homes available to cater for larger families);
- Affordable living (cheaper rent);
- Newly arrived families who move to an area pave the way for others from their community to also move; and
- Employment opportunities.

The following is a description of the partnerships and strategies employed by City of Casey in increasing the engagement of young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds.

The CMY and City of Casey CLD youth project

Between 2004-05, CMY undertook a capacity building project in partnership with the City of Casey. The aim of the project was to assist the youth services team and the city council more broadly to plan and deliver youth services in a culturally appropriate manner in recognition of the increasing number of newly arrived families settling in the area.

Six key phases to the project were employed, from initial engagement through to the withdrawal of CMY, although these phases did not always play out in a linear fashion. A range of strategies were developed within each of these phases to implement a planned strategy in engaging young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds in this growth corridor.

Strategies included:

- Staff secondment, training, professional support and secondary consultation;
- Internal data collection and analysis;
- Roundtable discussions with staff service providers, community leaders and young people;
- A forum held with a range of workers from local government youth services to explore models of inclusive service delivery;
- Development of a 3-phase action plan – including training and awareness-raising, planning and program implementation, and evaluation.
- The implementation of a range of local initiatives in line with recommendations to increase the participation of young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds in council programs;
- Evaluation and review.

Project phases in planning and responding to the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds

Phase	Tasks	Activities
1. Initial contact and entry	<p>Auditing, mapping and scoping of community and issues.</p> <p>Gaining acceptance as agency and partner.</p> <p>Contact and network building.</p> <p>Initiating core group.</p> <p>Secondment arrangements.</p>	<p>Meetings with staff and forming networks</p>
2. Analysis, Strategising and Planning	<p>Issue/problem defined</p> <p>Goal setting</p> <p>Change analysis</p> <p>Identifying action issues</p> <p>Strategy development</p> <p>Securing resources</p> <p>Submission writing</p>	<p>Roundtables held</p> <p>Casey Action Plan developed</p>
3. Action	<p>Organisation and network development</p> <p>Policy advocacy</p> <p>Integrated planning</p> <p>Community capacity building</p> <p>Program development</p>	<p>Local government forum</p> <p>Young people's roundtables</p> <p>School holiday program</p> <p>e-Merge friendship group</p>
4. Maintenance	<p>Developing competency and leadership skills</p> <p>Ongoing planning</p> <p>Maintaining structures and processes</p>	<p>Training</p> <p>Mentoring/secondary consultation</p>
5. Evaluation	<p>Evaluation of outcomes and process</p> <p>Setting future goals</p>	<p>Evaluation</p>
6. Withdrawal	<p>Celebration of achievements</p> <p>Leaving sustainable structures</p>	

PHASE 1. INITIAL CONTACT AND ENTRY

Initial contact was first made by CMY with the City of Casey in March 2004. Time was invested in methodically identifying geographic structures and boundaries, demographic composition, sites of power and leadership. At the time of initial contact, there were a growing number of newly arrived families moving to the area but low participation of young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds in council services.

In this initial stage, staff expressed some fears about working with these young people and the work was felt to be challenging and unknown. They lacked information about emerging communities in the area, strategies others had tried to successfully engage newly arrived young people, and the role of other agencies in the region. Skilful listening was important for building trust and collective interest in the partnership and addressing the needs of refugee young people.

As part of this initial stage, an agreement was made for staff secondment. An existing member of Casey Youth Services was employed by CMY to deliver the project, allowing change from within the service with strong links and support from CMY staff to resource the position.

The seconded role provided leadership within the youth services team and council around issues for migrant and refugee young people. The worker developed expertise in the area which she was able to use to empower other staff. Another focus of the position was to increase networks with refugee and migrant communities, young people and specialist services in the region.

PHASE 2. ANALYSIS, STRATEGISING AND PLANNING

This phase involved identifying the key issues of concern and building shared understanding of how to achieve effective change. In 2004 CMY initiated and undertook three roundtable discussions with community workers, peak bodies and community leaders within Casey about the needs of migrant and refugee young people. Community leaders were eager to have more contact with Council and to involve young people in council activities.

Through diverse community consultation and dialogue with agencies and government departments, a clearer understanding of local need was developed which fed into the culturally diverse action plan and program delivery.

Forum for culturally and linguistically diverse young people

Strategy

Secondary schools, community groups and agencies were invited to nominate six to ten young people from various cultural backgrounds, ages and experiences to attend a forum. The forum provided an opportunity for young people to:

- Hear about and map their journeys to Australia;
- Celebrate personal achievements and success stories;
- Identify what works for culturally diverse young people in the City of Casey;
- Explore issues and barriers to accessing services;
- Identify program ideas and initiatives to increase cultural sensitivity; and
- Provide young people with information on Council's youth, civic and community programs and encourage leadership roles.

Challenges

- Ensuring schools and agencies provided information and invited young people to participate in the forum;
- That the young people felt comfortable attending and participating, especially in small work groups;
- That the target group (newly arrived/refugee) were those who had been selected to attend the forum.

Benefits and outcomes

Feedback from the 62 young people who attended the forum indicated that they found the event useful in terms of making new contacts, being informed about Casey Youth Services and realising they were not alone with the challenges of settling into a new community. They were eager to hear each others stories and have input into small group discussions. They also articulated an eagerness to be involved in future events.

Staff who assisted on the day learned more about diversity in the Casey community and the difficulties that new arrivals face. It was advantageous that young people could meet and speak to workers directly and obtain resources and information on the day.

Local government youth workers roundtable

Another key task of this phase of the project involved hosting a local government youth worker roundtable which provided an opportunity for City of Casey staff to hear from councils that had previous success in implementing strategies to engage young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

In a smaller discussion forum, staff were able to discuss the details of program implementation, strategies and approaches to the work, including funding levels. Casey staff came away with a sense of empowerment; that they were on track and the work was achievable, even on a limited budget.

General approaches to strategic planning

When the problem and the most acceptable solutions were agreed upon, CMY and Casey regularly held strategy meetings. Strategies were ordered in priority according to the likely outcomes, resources and what participants will commit to. Collaborative strategies involved working together through negotiation, partnership building, problem solving and resource sharing. Having agreed on the process, detailed planning was required. Time, money, alliances and management structures were identified and agreed upon.

PHASE 3. ACTION

A key strategy of the project was to develop the Casey Refugee and Culturally Diverse Action Plan. The plan aimed to ensure that:

- Young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds have equitable access to services and programs in the City of Casey; and
- Services are provided in a culturally sensitive and appropriate manner.

The intention was to locate the action plan within the broader City of Casey Youth Strategy (2001 to 2011) that was developed to guide youth service delivery and development by all providers in the municipality. Elements of the existing youth strategy regarding the need for effective community linkages, collaboration and partnerships, the diversity of the Casey population and the need to improve access to services, were built upon in developing the plan.

Implementing the action plan required organisation, leadership, knowledge and skills. The project success largely rested on the ability of City of Casey and CMY to elicit broad participation and implement clear decision-making processes.

Program implementation

The action phase involved trialling new programs and adapting existing approaches to service delivery to ensure greater accessibility of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Casey has developed a number of programs since the project was initiated. These include:

e-Merge

One of the most successful programs implemented to date was the eMerge Multicultural Friendship Group, a recreation-based personal development program for young people aged 12-18 who are newly arrived to Australia or from refugee/migrant backgrounds. The program, based in secondary schools, was developed following concern from schools about how to respond to difficult behaviour from students in class and with their peers. (See Section 5 for full case study.)

Multicultural Youth Activity Service

In 2006 the City of Casey was involved in running the Multicultural Youth Activity Service in a school setting. The Council felt it was best to run the program in a place where young people and parents are already familiar and trust. Parents can see the value of the program, and think it must be okay if it is at the school, breaking down fears which might have prevented their young people from being involved. As a result of their involvement in MYAS, two young people have now joined a general youth group (non CLD specific), and one young person has joined the Casey Youth Ambassadors program. The YAS program is run by a generalist worker, rather than the CLD-focused position, which indicates there is an increased sensitivity and awareness of working with refugee and migrant young people across the board, and cross-cultural work has been mainstreamed with local youth services.

Holiday programs

Casey have trialled a CLD-focused school holiday program, adapting existing programs and ensuring there are more free and accessible activities in the holiday program. For example, many more of the activities are now held at the youth centre. In 2006 youth services have trialled allocating a few funded places for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds within their generalist program, so that they can increase participation rates.

Mix it Up

Involving young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in the organising committee for the 'Mix It Up' National Youth Week 2005 event resulted in culturally diverse performances attracting approximately 120 people. Benefits included breaking down some cultural barriers between various community groups about young people from multicultural backgrounds, and breaking down some of the cultural stereotypes about young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

PHASE 4. MAINTENANCE

For the project to survive over time, the City of Casey and CMY ensured that they agreed on roles, priorities and policy. Casey Youth Services ensured they had the resources needed to maintain the momentum and operationalise actions. A key element for success was the involvement of staff from a range of departments/ services in cross cultural training. A training program was developed by CMY in consultation with the City of Casey and was attended by approximately 30 staff from youth services and a range of other departments.

The objectives of the training were to:

- Define the concept of culture and how it impacts on participants' interactions with others;
- Assist participants to define aspects of their own cultural frameworks and biases;
- Explore migrant and refugee young people's experiences and identify key issues;
- Explore the barriers that inhibit migrant and refugee young people from accessing generalist services; and
- Explore the barriers that inhibit services from effectively engaging with migrant and refugee young people.

While the youth service team were hoping for higher participation rates from staff in other departments, there was good interest in the training and feedback was positive. There has been a positive attitudinal change in council staff across the board following this and other successful initiatives implemented as part of the action plan.

Benefits and outcomes for participants:

- Increased knowledge of the refugee experience as it relates to young people – trauma and phases of refugee adjustment;
- Discussion of a range of strategies to better engage refugee young people;
- Exploration through realistic scenarios that staff could identify with and understand;
- Improved understanding of the importance of culturally sensitive service provision; and
- Increased confidence in dealing with common or difficult situations.

Some of the challenges in this training phase included:

- Ensuring the details of the training were provided to all staff members by managers/team leaders;
- Encouraging staff, or allowing them the time, to attend the training;
- Seeing the training as an important professional development opportunity and necessary for improved customer service;
- Encouraging staff members to attend who thought they did not need the training; and
- Designing the training to meet the needs of a diverse group of staff with a broad range of experience and roles.

Other key elements of success that lead to a maintenance of outcomes included clarity from Casey about responsibilities for day-to-day operations and the overall direction of future projects. Casey invested in the future of the initiative by allocating funds for a new CLD youth focused position.

PHASE 5. EVALUATION

Evaluation was undertaken throughout the project to allow for the regular review of goals in terms of outcomes and processes. This reflection enabled the project to adapt its direction where necessary. There have been a range of short and long term outcomes achieved through the partnership, at both an intangible, attitudinal level, and at a concrete, measurable level.

Outcomes include:

- Increased whole-of-staff awareness of the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds;
- Creation and funding of a dedicated CLD youth worker position by council;
- A number of programs successfully implemented for CLD youth including inclusive school holiday initiatives and multicultural youth groups;
- Increased level of engagement of CLD young people including those who are newly arrived within specialist and generalist programs at the council;
- A number of young people linked into youth participation initiatives;
- Stronger partnerships with schools around CLD youth issues;
- Increased referral and partnerships between generalist agencies and schools and specialist CLD youth services;
- Successful funding submission for a school-based program;
- More co-ordinated strategic planning to meet future needs; and
- Plans for a number of new initiatives around homework support, parent engagement and recreation.

The City of Casey were granted an AMES Award in 2005 for the work undertaken in the project.

Learnings and reflections from Casey's perspective

- Seconding an existing worker on staff at council was very effective;
- The project has increased awareness across the youth team, and helped to shift attitudes and understanding about cross cultural work which in turn built confidence;
- The range of strategies put in place, including training, was very useful;

- It's been important to have organisational understanding and backing; this gives you confidence to try new things, make mistakes, learn, reflect;
- A learning culture is also important—having time to reflect and debrief together;
- Thinking about gaps is also important—could we provide a more appropriate service? It is useful to reflect with young people on these issues;
- It's not about overnight change—you need to expect that it will take some time to make bigger shifts;
- Go with where the interest lies—for example, move to a school where there is more interest or support;
- You might have to have an advocacy role if you work in a bigger institution, and provide sensitive assistance to redirect thinking; and,
- Council as a whole are much more embracing of cross cultural issues and thinking about access and equity. This is partly due to strong leadership and interest from a range of staff members across the council.

PHASE 6. WITHDRAWAL

At the completion of the project, goals were rethought and achievements celebrated. Substantial structures were left in the region allowing for ongoing work to be undertaken with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. CMY is available for secondary consultation to support existing staff in the future.

Challenges ahead

Some existing challenges for staff in the City of Casey include:

- How best to service and run programs in such a large geographical region with poor transport infrastructure.
- Casey is concerned about one-stop-shop models of service delivery in relation to interface councils, particularly as they impact on access for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.
- How to promote acceptance and understanding amongst local residents in what has traditionally been a very Anglo-dominated area. The council have been successful in promoting programs and positive news stories in the local paper to try to shift perspectives.

4.2 Shepparton and Cobram: A regional model⁸

In 2005, approximately 3,000 young people living in Shepparton and Cobram in Victoria's Goulburn Valley region were born overseas or came from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) households. About 500 of these young people had settled in Australia in the past seven years from countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Albania and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Young Refugees in the Picture Project

In response to rapid growth and increasing numbers of young people from Arabic-speaking backgrounds settling in the Goulburn Valley, CMY and UnitingCare – Cutting Edge collaborated to facilitate the Young Refugees in the Picture project in Shepparton and Cobram in 2005-06. The project was funded by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (since renamed the Department of Immigration and Citizenship) to assist in the development of a co-ordinated service response for newly arrived young people through:

- Increased understanding of the needs of CLD young people;
- Development of local strategies as a response to the needs of CLD young people; and
- Enhancement of local service provider partnerships.

Working in partnership

A particular feature of the project was the combination of specialist skills and knowledge from a metropolitan-based specialist refugee service agency (CMY) and a rural specialist mainstream provider (UnitingCare – Cutting Edge). This was an effective way of using a cross-agency partnership to address the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Consultations

Given that the development of effective local services relied on having a solid base understanding of the needs of refugee and migrant young people as well as the local service providers supporting them, community consultation formed a critical component of the project. To ensure that the project collected thorough information across the community spectrum, a total of 59 community members across Cobram and Shepparton were consulted.

These consultations involved CLD young people and their parents (primarily from Arabic-speaking backgrounds), and service providers from the education, health, youth, family and community service sectors.

What did the consultations tell us?

- CLD young people and their families generally felt welcomed and well supported by the local community;
- Local service providers were committed to providing a high level of support to newly arrived communities;
- There are, however, many areas in which service provision and settlement support could be improved.

Identifying key issues and strategies

Through the consultations, a number of key issues and strategies were identified by local service providers, young people and families. These included:

English language support and education

Refugee and migrant young people consulted expressed a keen desire to fit in at school, to work hard and to succeed in their studies. Not surprisingly, a strong command of English was identified as playing a key role in achieving these outcomes and enabling links with many other important aspects of life, such as employment pathways and enabling engagement with the broader community. Parents, young people and service providers had many suggestions for improving English language and education support services, including:

- Newly arrived young people to have access to English language support in an Intensive Language Centre prior to being placed into mainstream primary and secondary schooling;
- ESL funding in primary and secondary schools to be increased to facilitate a greater number of classes per week;
- A cross-cultural education program to be delivered in all primary and secondary schools to explore, discuss and celebrate the diverse cultures represented in the local community, thereby reducing the incidence of racism in schools;
- Newly arrived young people to have access to homework support for mainstream subjects;

8 The following case study was adapted from an article published in *Migration Action*, Vol XXX, Issue 1, 2007 – “Young Refugees in the Picture Project: Culturally and linguistically diverse young people in Regional Victoria” by Sam Prideaux

- Mainstream teachers to have access to professional development to assist them in effectively supporting ESL students;
- A school-based induction program to be available for both newly arrived parents and young people to explain the school system and culture and to encourage parents to engage in the school community, their children's education and determination of future pathways.

Alternative education pathways

Consultations revealed a strong desire amongst newly arrived young people to participate in tertiary and/or other alternative education pathways (e.g. TAFE). This desire does raise significant challenges in the Goulburn Valley region because limited locally-based tertiary options can result in families moving to other locations which offer further education. While some tertiary education options are available in Shepparton, limited English language proficiency affects the participation of some newly arrived young people in mainstream subjects. This has particular relevance for those who arrived in Australia nearing adulthood with little secondary education in Australia. Opportunities to build skills that are employment-related are limited.

Employment

Refugees and migrants settling in Shepparton and Cobram are under-represented in the local job market, despite young people speaking about their strong desire to secure meaningful and satisfying employment. Barriers preventing young people from securing employment included:

- Inadequate English language proficiency which limits work to unskilled manual labour;
- Limited permanent employment options in more desirable industries (e.g. trades, office, retail, manufacturing). Seasonal, unskilled, farm-related work is often the only accessible option (e.g. fruit picking);
- A belief that employers discriminate against refugee and migrant communities because of negative stereotypes;
- Refugee and migrant young people not having existing networks in the local community which excludes them from accessing the "hidden" job market.

Belonging to and participating in the community

- While refugee and migrant young people and their parents generally feel safe and supported in the local community, they acknowledge that cultural misconceptions, stereotyping and intolerance within the broader community can result in an unreasonable fear of, and offensive behaviour towards, community members. In particular, Arabic-speaking young people feel there is a need for them to "apologise" for being a Muslim, given the perception of Islam by some elements of the community following terrorist attacks overseas;
- Many young people noted that they had Australian-born friends and were keen to socialise with them outside school. However, a lack of culturally appropriate social and recreational opportunities limits such engagement. For example, Muslim young women who are keen to play sport and participate in exercise (swimming, aerobics, working out at the gym) are prevented by the lack of gender-segregated facilities. This in turn limits their opportunities to engage with women from the wider community;
- Newly arrived community members also indicate a lack of understanding of Australian culture and social norms. This has impact on their confidence and ability to engage socially with the broader community.

Accessing support services

- Newly arrived young people revealed that living "in between" two cultures is quite stressful. They endeavour to meet the varied and often conflicting expectations of family, their ethnic community, new Australian friends and the broader Australian community;
- Feedback from the young people and their families indicated a general lack of awareness of available services and a belief that services provided are often not youth or CLD-focused;
- Additionally, cultural barriers can prevent young people and families from accessing services. Service agencies do not always understand CLD issues and have not developed programs to specifically address these barriers.

Providing support services

Service providers were asked to identify the key issues and challenges they faced in supporting newly arrived refugee and migrant young people. Key issues included:

- Lack of knowledge by service providers on how to effectively engage with refugee and migrant young people and their families;
- Lack of awareness regarding cultural, social and religious customs and societal norms;
- Limited understanding of the trauma associated with the refugee experience and the corresponding impact this has on young people;
- Insufficient time and resources to build relationships and trust with refugee and migrant communities;
- While most service providers would like more time to invest in relationships, they felt that their roles and their funding agreements did not allow for this;
- Service providers who pursue active engagement with refugee and migrant communities generally do this in their own time.

Developing a Community Action Plan

Following the community consultations, information was collated and distributed to local service providers along with an invitation to participate in a service planning day. The CLD Youth Service Provider Planning Forum was held in February 2006 and was attended by representatives from 23 local and state agencies. This was a significant and powerful demonstration of the commitment of the local community to support young people and their families settling in Shepparton and Cobram.

From this planning forum, it was acknowledged that the local community lacked a cohesive focus on CLD young people. It was also agreed that local service providers needed to develop a community action plan in response to the identified needs of CLD young people. Forum participants agreed to create a new local service provider network called the CLD Youth Strategic Alliance. This alliance would focus specifically on CLD young people with the aims of:

- Developing a community strategic plan in response to the identified needs of CLD young people;
- In consultation with CLD communities, facilitate service provider collaboration; and

- Advocate for a funded CLD Youth Coordinator position whose role would include:
- Working with young people, families, communities, schools and job network agencies to support CLD young people and connect them to appropriate services;
- Implementing the community action plan;
- Facilitating inter-agency collaboration and training.

Twelve local and state-based agencies across the education, health, youth, family, and community service sectors are members of the CLD Youth Strategic Alliance. Together they have engaged other service providers and are working collaboratively on the development of local strategies through various working groups. Four working groups have been set up to focus on:

- Education, English language support, and alternative training pathways;
- Accessing health services, including mental health services;
- Community wellbeing, including social and recreational opportunities; and
- Advocating for local CLD Youth Coordinator funding.

Sustaining actions

The work of the CLD Youth Strategic Alliance and the working groups in developing and implementing the community action plan is ongoing and is based on open dialogue and a collaborative approach. The Young Refugees in the Picture Project has enabled UnitingCare – Cutting Edge and other local service providers to better articulate the issues facing refugee and migrant young people. This has resulted in the successful procurement of a number of new programs. These include employment, support and counselling, and community engagement programs targeting young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

There is still much to be done to improve services for young people who have settled in Shepparton and Cobram, but with the commitment of state and federal government, and the collaboration of the local community, the future looks bright.

5 | programs that work

The following are case studies of specific projects or programs that have been successful in engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in local government services.

5.1 Cross regional project (Darebin-Banyule)

Project	Active Young Africans Project
LGA	City of Banyule and City of Darebin
Program description	<p>Purpose: To engage young people from Somali backgrounds living in the West Heidelberg and East Preston areas in sports, physical activity, social networking and leadership activities.</p> <p>Design: Banyule and Darebin Councils identified that young Somalis were living in one municipal area but seemed to be accessing services from their neighbouring councils. This reinforced the notion of community identity rather than geographic municipal communities/boundaries.</p> <p>The 12-month project, run in 2002–03 and funded by VicHealth, incorporated a wide variety of approaches. Single sex programs covering a variety of ages and activities included: school holiday activities/excursions, weekly after school activities during terms including homework support, female only swimming program (family) at Olympic Leisure Centre, female only (family) gym program at Reservoir Leisure Centre (both extremely well attended - up to 50 per session!!).</p> <p>A number of major events were also held, including: Three basketball tournaments (involving both genders, playing separately on same days), Eid Celebration dinner/dance (women only), and a leadership program for both genders. A three-day summer camp was also run involving leadership training skills for young participants (e.g. first aid, dealing with cultural conflict, etc.)</p>
Participants	Young Somalis 12 to 25 years
Location	West Heidelberg (Banyule City Council) and East Preston (Darebin City Council)
Resource requirements	<p>Staffing: Casual part-time staff including from Somali backgrounds and program workers with full-time staff/service coordinators as project managers.</p> <p>Some young people as peer leaders.</p> <p>Steering Committee of stakeholder agencies (Council youth services, both Council leisure/cultural services, VICSEG, Olympic Leisure Centre, Banyule Community Health Service, male/female project workers)</p>

Project	Active Young Africans Project
Resource requirements (cont.)	<p>Partnership/collaboration: Banyule and Darebin Local Councils - youth services and leisure services units, VICSEG as staffing partner, VicHealth as funding partner, Steering Committee of stakeholder agencies.</p>
Strategies used	<p>Multifaceted—a range of programs aimed at after school, holiday programs, sports carnivals and accredited leadership activities. Programs were run with local agency partners e.g. leisure centres/community health centres and included Somali speaking staff and leaders. The program funded by VicHealth identified that young Somalis were living in one municipal area but accessing services from their neighbouring councils. This reinforced the notion of community identity rather than geographic municipal communities. The project approach served to respond to the communities’ current practices and cultural needs.</p>
Challenges/barriers	<p>Cultural issues separate and segregated activities for both sexes; This meant that there was an increase in resourcing levels required compared to integrated and mainstream activities. Varying levels of community/family support for young people (particularly young women) to participate as many come from large families and are required to assist their mothers with home duties. Young people’s expectations that the service provided would be even more frequent and longer running than the 12 months. This generated a number of requests that could not be met, such as basketball tournaments every weekend. The great results achieved from the project have not been able to be sustained as the funding was only for one year and not recurrent. Staff from the communities identified that the task was larger than expected as it raised community expectations as to the amount of time they could spend on the projects, the collecting and dropping off of the young people and the subsidised costs of the activities made ongoing self funding difficult to achieve. Another challenge was the different service models and styles of each of the two local governments which were brought into question; while both Councils at times saw their roles differently, the outcomes for the young people were well regarded and this served as the most effective tool for staying on track.</p>
Additional information	<p>Some of the most tangible benefits of the work included: A young Somali man provided training in Certificate 3 in Health & Fitness which resulted in Banyule City Council subsequently employing him as a casual gym instructor. A young women’s only swimming program which commenced during the project continued at Olympic Leisure Centre, West Heidelberg and now continues to be in place. Increased usage of the local leisure centre by Somali residents. Stronger working relationships between the two councils that have been maintained over the past 5 years; this has resulted in strong partnerships, and led to initiating key regional projects such as the Northern Skate Series (2005, 2006), and shared professional development of workers forum (2003)</p>

Project	Active Young Africans Project
Additional information (cont.)	<p>While not long term, the project funding partner VicHealth was instrumental in developing some effective projects for local Somali young people that did meet their social and physical need.</p> <p>The project raised awareness and provided a challenge within Banyule City Council which resulted in more of a focus on West Heidelberg and emerging communities. The Youth Service model was changed this year to reflect these needs i.e. local area development workers established.</p>
Contact details:	<p>Frances Gianinotti (03) 9457 9962</p> <p>Fowzia Issa (03) 8470 8003</p>

5.2 Driver education (Hume)

Project	Driver Education Program — CALD 120
LGA	City of Hume
Program description	<p>Purpose:</p> <p>The CALD 120 program was designed to engage newly arrived young people in a driver education program that was tailored to their needs and would assist them in understanding the process of obtaining a driver's licence.</p> <p>The program also provided an opportunity for newly arrived young people to have positive interactions with local police, who were involved in facilitating sessions.</p> <p>Design:</p> <p>A major concern identified by service providers in the City of Hume was the increased incidence of young people driving without a licence. This has significant implications for the young people themselves, their interactions with the police, their own safety and the safety of the broader community.</p> <p>Workers identified a number of key factors that impact on refugee and migrant young people driving without a licence. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Language barriers and a lack of support in the complex licensing process; 2) The cost of obtaining a licence, including driving lessons; 3) The lack of access to a safe, roadworthy vehicle and learner driver support (esp. in absence of a mentor or role model); 4) Pre-settlement experiences also impact on young people driving without a licence, as many come from countries where driving without a licence is the norm.

Project	Driver Education Program — CALD 120
Program description (cont.)	<p>The CALD 120 program was designed in two parts. The first phase focused on road safety issues using interactive sessions as a way of engagement. The second phase (funding not yet secured) will focus on practical experience through linkage with a driving school and mentors to obtain the required 120 hours of practice.</p> <p>Phase 1 was run in Term 4 of 2006. 8 x 2-hour sessions were held from 12.30-2.30 on Tuesdays. Topics included a tour of VicRoads, a session by the road safety and awareness unit, go-carting excursions and presentations by local government and police.</p> <p>The program was facilitated by a youth worker from the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) and lunch was provided each week.</p>
Participants	14 young people (aged 17-21) from refugee/migrant backgrounds participated in the program. The participants were all newly arrived (0-2 years) and were studying English at NMIT (Broadmeadows).
Location	Sessions were held at the MRC in Broadmeadows, which is next door to where the students were attending classes at NMIT. Excursions were held at various venues (VicRoads, go carting etc) and transport was provided from the MRC for these outings.
Resource requirements	<p>Budget/funding:</p> <p>Hume Whittlesea LLEN provided funding for the 8-week phase 1 program of around \$1400. This covered food (lunches were provided), go carting, fees for presenters, translation of program information, bus hire and petrol.</p> <p>In kind support was provided by VicRoads, CMY, Hume City Council, and Northern AMEP Consortium at NMIT Broadmeadows in terms of staff time, and the venue was supplied by MRC North West</p> <p>Staffing:</p> <p>1 CMY youth worker coordinated and facilitated the program, and officers from Victoria Police were involved in most sessions. Presentations were by representatives from various organisations.</p> <p>Partnership/collaboration:</p> <p>Hume Whittlesea LLEN, CMY, Hume Moreland Youth Cultural Connections Network, Victoria Police, Northern AMEP Consortium @ NMIT Broadmeadows, VicRoads</p>
Strategies used	<p>Working in partnership was key to the success of this program – the initial need was identified by teachers at NMIT, NMIT was flexible in allowing the program to be run around course time, and the ongoing involvement of the police provided an opportunity for young people to interact and ask questions.</p> <p>The program was promoted through the NMIT English course where the need was identified in the first place. Information about the purpose of the course (i.e. to prepare participants to get their licence) was translated and given to participants at the start. This meant that the participants were clear about the purpose of the program from the outset.</p> <p>Sessions were run in English, but presenters used basic English. The VicRoads Learning Books were given to participants in either Arabic or English. Using visual medium was also useful (video, photos, etc.)</p> <p>Running the sessions at a time that fitted in with the NMIT English course meant that young people could easily attend and did not have to go home and then come back again (transport was not an issue).</p>

Project	Driver Education Program — CALD 120
Challenges/barriers	<p>Difficulty securing funding for phase 2 of the project meant that the timing was not ideal. It would have been better to run phase 2 soon after phase 1, to keep the same group of young people (many have now left the NMIT course) and support them with the practical side of getting a driver's licence.</p> <p>Ensuring the commitment of partner organisations – the young people were there every week, but ensuring presenters and co-facilitators maintained commitment was more of a challenge.</p> <p>Evaluation from phase 1 participants suggested that more focus on the Learners Handbook and assisting young people to go through and understand this would have been helpful.</p> <p>Need to ensure the course is not too heavy on theory; sessions that were too 'heavy' lost the interest of participants. Need to think creatively about how to cover sessions (e.g. using games, visual tools, videos etc)</p>
Additional information	Local agencies are currently in discussion with local council and other stakeholders about securing funding for the continuation of this program and expanding to include both phase 1 and 2.
Contact details	<p>Noemi Garcia Multicultural Youth Worker and Team Leader Centre for Multicultural Youth ngarcia@cmy.net.au 03 9340 3700</p>

5.3 Homework support (Whitehorse)

Project	Multicultural Homework Support Program
LGA	City of Whitehorse
Program description	<p>Purpose: Provide newly arrived and refugee young people with homework support.</p> <p>Design: The need for homework support programs targeting refugee and newly arrived young people is well documented. Newly arrived and refugee young people often place very high value on educational attainment, and the pressure to succeed can be exacerbated for those with a history of disrupted schooling and who are coping with the difficult demands of Australia's education system in the context of learning a new language. The need for such a program is also demonstrated by its ongoing popularity.</p> <p>Initially, the Multicultural Homework Support Program in Whitehorse was staffed by volunteers. The program, which is now in its fourth year, has made a shift to employing four paid VCE-level tutors, and has found that this has improved the quality and reliability of support for young people attending the program.</p> <p>The program runs once a week from 4.00-6.00pm on Thursdays. Refugee and newly arrived young people turn up on a casual basis and are allocated to different groups depending on their homework support needs. Tutors assist with a range of subjects, with a particular emphasis on chemistry, physics, maths and English.</p>

Project	Multicultural Homework Support Program
Program description (cont.)	<p>The Multicultural youth worker co-ordinates the program and ensures young people register when they come in, are given name badges, and are assigned to the appropriate tutor tables. Fruit and juice are provided to participants as part of the program and to encourage healthy eating.</p> <p>Tutors are provided ongoing support regarding working cross-culturally by the youth worker who co-ordinates the program.</p>
Participants	<p>Open to 12- to 20-year-old young people (Years 10–12) from Whitehorse and broader eastern region.</p> <p>Majority of participants are newly arrived from a range of different backgrounds — Sudanese, Afghan etc.</p>
Location	Box Hill Library
Resource requirements	<p>Budget/funding: The program has received 12-month project funding through School Focused Youth Services. In kind support from Whitehorse & Manningham Library Services.</p> <p>Staffing: 1 youth workers, 1 librarian, 4 paid tutors</p> <p>Partnership/collaboration: Deakin University Commerce Department (two post-grad students recruited through their volunteer program to tutor in biology, legal studies, commerce. Students are given credit for studies); Whitehorse & Manningham Library Services; Whitehorse Youth Services; Whitehorse School Focused Youth Services</p>
Strategies used	<p>The Homework Support Program has been running for a number of years, so it is well known and links have been established with local schools and Blackburn English Language School.</p> <p>Maintaining a clear structured program assists in ensuring that homework is the main focus and the program does not simply become a social gathering point – giving nametags, getting young people to register, recording which school and postcode participants come from (also useful for stats), colour-coding tables by subject (e.g. maths, English), introducing young people to tutors.</p> <p>Providing some food—fruit and Primas—encourages healthy eating and helps participants focus on homework.</p> <p>Building strong partnerships with SFYS brokerage and local council has helped the program in getting a range of different stakeholders involved.</p>
Challenges/barriers	<p>When the program was running with volunteer tutors there were challenges in terms of ensuring the commitment and quality of tutors. Volunteers can be high maintenance, often don't have the necessary skills, and hard to maintain commitment. Getting qualified paid tutors has overcome these difficulties.</p> <p>Sustainable funding has been a challenge. Funding bodies rarely commit to programs for longer than 12 months, which means resources must be put in to re-applying for more funding to maintain ongoing program.</p>

Project	Multicultural Homework Support Program
Additional information	In negotiating with tutoring companies, see if they will agree to cheaper rates because it is an ongoing, regular arrangement for tutors.
Contact details	<p>Natalia Pereira Youth Worker and Homework Support Program Co-ordinator Whitehorse Youth Services natalia.pereira@whitehorse.vic.gov.au</p>

5.4 Youth participation (Moonee Valley)

Project	The GURU Project
LGA	City of Moonee Valley
Program description	<p>Purpose: The GURU Project was initiated as a response to young people’s concerns about public safety and police harassment around the Flemington public housing estate.</p> <p>Design: The GURU youth committee drew on the Creating Better Cities for Children and Young People model in order to develop a survey to gather information about the experiences of young people living in the southern region of the municipality. The Creating Better Cities model provides municipalities, governments and professionals working with young people the opportunity to evaluate whether their cities are healthy places for children and young people to grow up in. The model suggests numerous ways for young people to be involved in the collection of data about the needs of their peers and their community, including questionnaires, guided tours of communities by young people, photography, art and drama, focus groups and interviews and behaviour mapping of specific spaces within communities.</p> <p>The GURU project involved supporting young people and the broader community to identify their concerns and issues regarding their experience of police harassment and public safety in the local area. This involved developing, circulating and collating a survey and final report to the broader community. Young people held public forums to report on the survey findings and those attending these forums included local councillors, senior and local officers from Victoria Police, community members, youth and welfare workers. Life skills and capacity building activities were also a central part of this project.</p> <p>Activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and facilitating information sessions on legal issues in collaboration with local workers, young people and police; Planning and delivering camps and other recreation programs (e.g. arts-based, basketball & soccer) in collaboration with local schools, agencies and Victoria Police; and Skills development in submission writing, public speaking, event organization, etc. <p>The next stage of the project will involve developing initiatives in response to the findings of the research.</p>

Project	The GURU Project
Participants	The GURU youth committee comprised of ten young people from Flemington and North Melbourne. Research was carried out by seven young people and consultation involved 93 young people from the local area.
Location	This research focuses on issues facing young people residing in Flemington, Ascot Vale and parts of Kensington and North Melbourne.
Resource requirements	<p>Budget/funding: The 3-year project was partly funded through the Office for Youth, Youth Participation and Access (YPA) Program, and the City of Moonee Valley.</p> <p>Staffing: A project worker was employed to deliver individual case management and group work activities.</p> <p>Partnership/collaboration: Local councillors, senior and local officers from Victoria Police, community members, young people, Moonee Valley Youth Services. Subsequent initiatives following on from the publication of the research have involved: Victoria Police, Flemington-Kensington Community Legal Centre, CMY, Debney Park Secondary College.</p>
Strategies used	<p>Working in partnership with young people, broader local community members/family, schools, police, other workers/services;</p> <p>Flexible and responsive service delivery – i.e. identifying and responding to the needs/ issues of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in their local area;</p> <p>Applying an outreach model to service delivery;</p> <p>Consulting with young people and supporting young people to identify their needs and issues and develop appropriate and realistic responses;</p> <p>Providing opportunities for young people to have a voice around issues that affect them and empowering them to take steps in addressing these issues;</p> <p>Taking the time to build trust with young people and their community through flexible and responsive service delivery approaches (including outreach);</p> <p>Encouraging and fostering young people to be youth leaders within their community and local area.</p>
Additional information	The Guru Project has directly led to improved relationships between young people and the police, and improved perception of public safety, and resulted in a reduction in police harassment. Young people reported that they no longer felt afraid of police in their local areas as they had developed more trusting relationships with them.
Contact details	<p>Moonee Valley Youth Services 03 9243 8708</p>

5.5 Sport and Recreation (Yarra)

Project	Yarra Leisure Chill Out Project
LGA	City of Yarra
Program description	<p>Purpose: To engage young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in local leisure services, and to increase long-term access of leisure centres by young people from all backgrounds.</p> <p>Design: Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) and City of Yarra received a VicHealth grant in 2005 to investigate CLD young people's access to leisure centres in the City of Yarra. The resulting report identified the under-utilisation of centres for a number of reasons. (A summary of the report – Creating a level playing field in more than just sport – can be found at: http://www.CMY.net.au/SportandRecResources)</p> <p>As a result of this initial investigation, a partnership was formed between City of Yarra Leisure and Youth Services and CMY. A 7-week program for young people (12-17 year olds) was initiated at the Collingwood Leisure Centre to engage young people from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>The Chill Out Program ran on Friday nights from 7pm-9pm, and included pool activities, a giant pool inflatable, and supervision by both leisure centre staff and youth workers. Entry fee was \$3.</p>
Participants	12–17 year olds from all backgrounds
Location	Collingwood Leisure Centre
Resource requirements	<p>Budget/funding: The program was run after the regular closing time of the Collingwood Leisure Centre, from 7-9pm on Friday nights. Young people were charged \$3 to participate. Costs included: \$1500 for promotion (including 2 for 1 passes, design and printing of posters, CDs) \$260 per night for staffing</p> <p>Staffing: Leisure Centre staff (casual), and youth workers from council and CMY. Number of staff per night ranged from 5–8</p> <p>Partnership/collaboration: City of Yarra Youth Services and Leisure Services, YMCA, Centre for Multicultural Youth</p>
Strategies used	<p>Distributed flyers and free passes at locations where young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds hang out (Collingwood English Language School, local schools with high CLD population, Collingwood flats) as well as targeting agencies working with CLD communities (Jesuit Social Services, CLD networks, council staff working at the Collingwood flats);</p> <p>Cost was kept low so as not to be prohibitive for newly arrived and refugee young people;</p> <p>Youth workers were able to engage young people in activities while at the pool, as well as let them know about other activities and services offered in the City of Yarra;</p> <p>Partnership formed between local government and community organisation (CMY) enabled better use of resources.</p>

Project	Yarra Leisure Chill Out Project
Challenges/barriers	<p>Staffing issues—finding youth workers willing to work on Friday nights.</p> <p>Resources—need to commit to a reasonable number of weeks so to build up support and participation. Also unlikely to be a profitable activity for centre, so need to have leadership regarding long-term goal of such a program (to increase participation).</p> <p>Accessing schools—hard to promote event in schools due to gate-keeping.</p> <p>Identifying and working with a leisure centre willing to take on such a project (buy-in by staff and management).</p> <p>The images on the promotional material were not ideally suited for the target audience. (The images were too young.)</p> <p>The promotion was ad-hoc. A planned approach would need to be completed prior to the next program.</p> <p>The night needed to be more attractive to youth e.g. themes, giveaways, food, entertainment.</p>
Additional information	<p>An evaluation of the project has been planned using focus groups and getting participants to fill in forms that will then be followed up by a phone call. The evaluation will assess the impact of the project and inform future directions in leisure services for the City of Yarra.</p>
Contact details	<p>Chrissy Billings Access All Abilities Officer City of Yarra Tel: 9205 5756</p> <p>Alex Prado Multicultural Sport and Recreation Office CMY Tel: 9340 3700</p>

5.6 Multicultural Friendship Group (Casey)

Project	eMerge
LGA	City of Yarra
Program description	<p>Purpose: To help students from newly arrived and refugee backgrounds make connections with local community and form friendships with other young people.</p> <p>The aims of the group are to:</p> <p>Increase protective factors among newly arrived and CLD young people, including greater connection and sense of belonging to the community and school, improved self-esteem, improved social skills and increased recreation options;</p> <p>Improve young people’s social and community support network; and</p> <p>Foster cultural understanding and respect for difference, whilst celebrating cultural identity.</p>

Project	eMerge
Program description (cont.)	<p>Design:</p> <p>In 2004/5, Hampton Park Secondary College found there were an increasing number of refugee/newly arrived young people moving from Dandenong to Casey and enrolling in the school. The school and local council youth services decided to set up the eMerge friendship group as a pre-emptive way of fostering a sense of belonging and the inclusion of refugee/newly arrived young people in the school and local community. The eMerge group meet after school on Wednesdays for 1¼ hours during the school term. The group play games, participate in activities (such as art, cooking, sport), have guest speakers (such as the Koori Educator or Environmental Educator from council), and go on excursions (such as to the local youth centre or library). Afternoon tea is usually provided each week. eMerge participants are also linked into things like the City of Casey school holiday program.</p> <p>eMerge was originally started and run by City of Casey Youth Services, but now it is run by the school itself.</p>
Participants	<p>Students at Hampton Park Secondary College from newly arrived backgrounds. Students can participate from any year level, although most are in years 7–10. Participation numbers vary from week to week (and year to year). In previous years there have been about 12-15 young people.</p>
Location	Hampton Park Secondary College, student wellbeing area.
Resource requirements	<p>Budget/funding:</p> <p>Currently, the group is funded through the school welfare budget, although they have previously received funding from council for things like art materials and food. ~\$800 grant has supported eMerge for a year with things like art material, food, fruit</p> <p>Staffing:</p> <p>The Student Wellbeing Coordinator runs the group with the support of two teachers from the school. Guest speakers from council and local services are regularly involved.</p> <p>Partnership/collaboration:</p> <p>A partnership between Hampton Park Secondary College, City of Casey Youth Services and CMY originally set up the program. Hampton Park SC now run eMerge, but with some involvement and support from Council Youth Services.</p>
Strategies used	<p>eMerge has been promoted to students through the Welfare Coordinator going to the ESL classes and talking to students about the program.</p> <p>A letter in first language is sent to parents to obtain support/consent. As the program is run in and by the school, parents tend to be open to allowing their young people to participate (e.g. the school is a familiar/ trusted environment, relationship already established).</p> <p>In recognising the importance of working with young people in the context of their family, eMerge ran a Family Fun Day to get parents involved. At this day, the students presented a Powerpoint slide show of the activities they had been involved in. There was also a graduation presentation to acknowledge the students' involvement.</p> <p>Food as an enticement is always good!</p>

Project	eMerge
Strategies used (cont.)	<p>Running the group in the school and straight after school finishes means transport is not an issue, and students are more likely to be familiar and comfortable in joining.</p> <p>Running a group like eMerge doesn't have to be a big financial drain. Young people are happy to play games, share food (e.g. fruit, sandwiches) etc. Focus is on friendship and fun.</p>
Challenges/barriers	<p>It's been important to engage of young people and their families at the beginning of the school year. When the group hasn't started at the beginning, it has been harder to recruit students and get families on board.</p> <p>Staff sustainability/risk of burnout is an issue. Need to ensure that responsibility for the group isn't left to just one person. The challenge has been in getting other staff involved and to take ownership.</p> <p>Seeking to maximise the number of participants who can benefit from the program over time within funding limitations, therefore having to offer a time-limited experience for young people;</p> <p>Discussing program limitations, seeking effective ways to assist young people to sustain social connections after their time in the program ends.</p>
Contact details	<p>Sue Wannan Student Wellbeing Coordinator Hampton Park Secondary College (03) 8795 9400 wannan.susan.s@edumail.vic.gov.au</p>

5.7 Hip Hop Program (Moonee Valley)

Project	The Ghet-Go & Connect Hip Hop Program
LGA	City of Moonee Valley
Program description	<p>Purpose: The Hip Hop Development Program seeks to connect young people aged 12–25 in the Southern region of Moonee Valley through hip hop programs/activities that nurture artistic development and social connectedness with peers and the community.</p> <p>Design: Problems/issues that were identified were feelings of isolation, boredom, disengagement from home/school/community and a lack of opportunities to participate in music programs. MVYS decided to use hip hop as a tool for engagement and to assist in re-engaging young people as active and valued citizens within the community and as a pathway to artistic, social and individual development.</p>

Project	The Ghet-Go & Connect Hip Hop Program
Program description (cont.)	<p>Some of the issues that were recognised were::</p> <p>Cultural issues: culturally many females need to participate separately from the males in social activities.</p> <p>Community Issues: at times there are feelings of racism, negative stereotypes and harassment in all parts of the community. Some young people are disengaged from school, work, family etc.</p> <p>Personal Issues: many refugee young people have experienced severe trauma.</p> <p>Economic Issues: the young people have little or no money to spend on leisure activities.</p> <p>Hip hop is the most popular music type within the region, and has strong appeal to young people from refugee/migrant backgrounds. Hip Hop program activities included hip hop dance, breakin, emceeing, song-writing and recording.</p> <p>The program was split into two parts. The first part was to provide 5 weeks of educational hip hop workshops with no pressure to perform but to participate by learning and being involved. The second part (which has not occurred yet) will invite participants who have shown exceptional commitment and interest in the first series of workshops, to participate in intensive workshops in either emcee or dance to provide further opportunities of learning at a higher skill level.</p> <p>It was recognised that there would need to be two locations for the workshops. Debney Park Secondary College was chosen as a site as culturally it would be easier for the females to participate with the support of the school. Another factor was that not all students lived within the Flemington Housing estate. The second location was Flemington Community Centre to provide an educational activity for the young people living within the estate outside of the school setting.</p> <p>The first series of workshops were run in Term 2 of 2007, 5 weeks x 1-hour workshops at Debney Park Secondary College on Mondays after school. Also at Flemington Community Centre 5 weeks x 1 ½ hour workshops on Mondays from 6pm onwards.</p>
Participants	44 young people (aged 13-19) from refugee and migrant backgrounds participated in the program. The participants are students of Debney Park Secondary College and/or those living in the southern region of Moonee Valley.
Location	Workshops were held at Debney Park Secondary and Flemington Community Centre.
Resource requirements	<p>Budget/funding:</p> <p>Freeza and Multicultural Arts provided funding for the 5-week phase 1 program of around \$3500. This covered venue fees, mentor artists costs and food.</p> <p>In kind support was provided by Flemington Community Centre, and Debney Park Secondary College of free or lowered venue costs.</p> <p>Staffing:</p> <p>A MVCC Liaison Officer (funded by Arts Victoria) and Youth Coordinator from Multicultural Arts coordinated and facilitated the program, organising an emcee, hip hop dance and krump dance mentors. A peer mentor was also recruited and recognised for his leadership within the community.</p> <p>Partnership/collaboration:</p> <p>Moonee Valley City Council and Multicultural Arts</p>

Project	The Ghet-Go & Connect Hip Hop Program
Strategies used	<p>Organising two separate workshops: one at DPSC and one at FCC to ensure more participants could be involved and also to involve y.p who did not necessarily live in the Flemington area. Also there would be a higher number of female participants involved at DPSC due to parents feeling more comfortable with mixed participation at the school than outside.</p> <p>A peer mentor was appointed to play an active role in communication and the facilitation of meetings, connecting with young people around the Flemington estate. This particular person is well respected by young people and the older community.</p> <p>Meetings and heavy promotion at DPSC and FCC ensured a cross-selection of young people.</p> <p>Running sessions at a time that suited the young people and ensured no clash of commitments during the afternoon/evening workshops.</p>
Challenges/barriers	<p>Getting young people to arrive on time and understanding the importance of time to the FCC so the workshops can start promptly.</p> <p>Ensuring that young people have received actual permission from a parent/guardian to participate means re-checking indemnity forms and seeking an additional one to be signed.</p> <p>The peer mentor to play an active role of responsibility and participate in assisting with communication and with and involvement of participants. At times this person acted more as a participant rather than a leader and only stepped up when reminded of their role.</p> <p>Keeping the males separated from the females at the Flemington Community Centre to ensure productivity and also as the age groups are quite distinct. Males predominantly aged 16–19 whereas the girls interested in participating aged 13-16.</p>
Additional information	<p>MVCC and Multicultural Arts are currently in discussion to organise and seek appropriate youth to participate in the second phase of intensive workshops</p>
Contact details	<p>Arna Singleton Hip Hop Community Liaison Officer Moonee Valley Youth Services asingleton@mvcc.vic.gov.au Tel: 03 9243 8708</p>

5.8 Women's Sports Development Project (Whittlesea)

Project	Islamic Women's Sports Development Project
LGA	Whittlesea City Council
Program description	<p>Purpose: The Islamic Women's program aimed to provide recreational opportunities to Islamic women and a social outlet. The program was put together using a youth participation model hence the young women decided to plan a gym program. The program focus was a social outlet with fitness being a priority for the women.</p> <p>Design: The program ran for 15 weeks. The first three sessions were planning, activity, venue, times, and negotiating and comparing pricing. Follow up to the program was to involve some of the women in preparing a presentation to Council's Leisure Services and Planning about their needs.</p>
Participants	In total there were 15 participants involved, all female. Ages ranged from 16 to 25 years.
Location	Beach House Gym
Resource requirements	<p>Budget/funding: The program ran with a budget of \$3000 from the Council program budget</p> <p>Staffing: The staffing requirement was two staff, a full time staff member and a casual staff member who has links with Whittlesea's Islamic community.</p> <p>Partnership/collaboration: City of Whittlesea Youth Services, Beach House Gym</p>
Strategies used	<p>A part-time bi-cultural (Turkish) staff member of the youth service had links with many women from the Islamic community and was able to encourage and engage their participation in the programme.</p> <p>Flyers were developed and promoted to young people in the community and in local schools.</p>
Challenges/barriers	Limitations on venues due to cultural requirements; i.e. an 'all female gym' with no male access and adequate changing room facilities. It was very difficult to find a gym that catered for the needs of Islamic women.
Contact details	<p>Tanya Nacarov City of Whittlesea Youth Services Shop 111 Epping Plaza, High Street, Epping Vic 3076 9401 6622 or 0418 592 761</p>

6 | additional resources

The following section includes additional resources and links to organisations and services that may be able to provide further support and referral.

- Useful resources, websites and training providers
- *What is a Youth Service? A guide for families wanting to find out more about youth services in Australia* (CMY 2006)
- *Culturally Inclusive Planning for Sports (CIPS) Toolkit* – Policy templates
- *Community organisations to contact for support and referral* – CMY Info Sheet No. 12
- *Refugee Young People and Resettlement* – CMY Info Sheet No. 14
- *Humanitarian Youth Arrivals to Victoria (Update 7/06)* – CMY Info Sheet No. 13
- *Involving Migrant and Refugee Young People in Social and Recreational Activities* – CMY Info Sheet No. 9

Resources

Good Practice Principles: Guide for working with refugee young people (VSPC 2005)

www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/_pdf/GPP_July2005.pdf

Newly Arrived Youth Support Service (NAYSS) Resource Kit (CMY 2005)

www.cmy.net.au/NAYSS/PublicationsandResources

Settling In: Exploring Good Settlement for Refugee Young People in Australia (CMY 2006)

www.cmy.net.au/AllCMYPublications#S

The Partnerships Analysis Tool (VicHealth)

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/ (go to Resources section)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship Settlement Database

www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/settlement-database/index.htm

DIAC Community Profiles (including Bhutanese, Burmese, Congolese, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Liberian, Sierra Leonean, Sudanese, Togolese and Uzbek)

<http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-planning/community-profiles.htm>

Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society (Commonwealth of Australia 1998)

www.immi.gov.au/about/charters/culturally-diverse/index.htm

Wealth of All Nations: Identification of strategies to assist refugee young people in transition to independence (Coventry et al, 2003)

www.acys.utas.edu.au/ncys/nyars/n23.htm

Working with young refugees (YAPA, NSW)

www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/refugee.php

Coping in a new world: The social and emotional wellbeing of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (YANQ, 2001)

www.yanq.org.au/content/view/61/24/

Websites

Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network (VLGMIN)

www.vlgmin.org.au

Centre for Multicultural Youth

www.cmy.net.au

Newly Arrived Youth Support Service (NAYSS)

www.cmy.net.au/nayss

Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture (Foundation House)

www.survivorsvic.org.au

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria

www.eccv.org.au

Refugee Council of Australia

www.refugeecouncil.org.au

Training Providers

Centre for Multicultural Youth

www.cmy.net.au/training

Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health

www.ceh.org.au

Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture (Foundation House)

www.survivorsvic.org.au

Migrant Resource Centres

www.eccv.org.au/7.html

