

Migrant & Refugee Young People Negotiating Adolescence in Australia



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CMY acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government

Introduction

Adolescence is a significant time for young people helping to inform their development and sense of identity. For many migrant and refugee young people, parents and families this occurs while also negotiating a new cultural, social and legal context. This creates additional complexities for migrant and refugee young people and their families. While this process of negotiating cultural values and norms can be positive, allowing for new perspectives to be developed, at the extreme it can also lead to conflict and family breakdown. This is particularly the case for families that experience multiple and complex settlement barriers such as changes in family dynamics, adjusting to new cultural norms and economic disadvantage. This paper explores, from a young person's perspective, how these issues impact on family relationships. It highlights the need to involve family and communities in developing a service response that acknowledges where young people and families are coming from.

Intergenerational conflict

Intergenerational conflict is conflict that occurs between people of different generations. The conflict may be between young people and their family members, extended family members, carer, or between young people and older members of their communities. Intergenerational conflict is a natural part of raising children and it occurs in families of all cultural backgrounds. It is not necessarily a bad thing: it is entirely normal, and indeed healthy, for children and young people to push boundaries and express their own independence as they develop and grow into their individual identities.¹ Learning to deal with disagreements and conflict appropriately is both a part of parenting and a part of growing up.

Many adolescents who experience conflict with parents do not have serious adjustment problems (Formoso et al. 2000). It may be because a mutual bonding can be maintained while tolerating the conflict that might occur while youth increasingly assert their autonomy (Constantine 2006). A strong and positive parent-child bond can assure youth that parents will be a continued source of stability and support, despite conflicts or disrupted family relationships (Formoso et al. 2000).²

Indeed, intergenerational conflict among migrant families has been reported as being a natural part of life beyond adolescence that is not necessarily harmful to family well-being.³

This paper

While all families experience intergenerational conflict, this paper explores the additional challenges that refugee and migrant families often face in the settlement context.

This paper was developed in response to concerns raised by young people, families, communities and service providers that CMY works with, about the impacts of family breakdown as a result of intergenerational conflict. It relies heavily upon the information generously provided by many young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and an array of service providers from different organisations within the settlement, youth and family services sectors, through interviews, focus groups and consultations.

The literature and advice about raising children is overwhelming and this paper in no way suggests that 'Western' or Australian parenting approaches are better. CMY also acknowledges the wide diversity of parenting approaches in families of diverse cultures. This paper instead aims to identify:

- The settlement complexities that contribute to intergenerational conflict in migrant and refugee families in Australia; and
- What further work needs to be done in this area to better engage and support migrant and refugee young people and families to negotiate values within a new and changing cultural context.

This paper starts from the premise that all families and all communities have strengths, which they use to their best abilities to nurture and support their children and young people. It recognises that family relationships – whatever form they may take – are particular sources of strength and support for newly-arrived people.

Ideally, family relationships provide young people with a sense of belonging, support in negotiating challenges and difficult transitions, and connection to shared values, culture and history.⁴

1. Choi, Y. et al. (2008) citing Steinberg, L. (1991) 'The logic of adolescence' in Edelman, R and Ladner, J. (eds.) Adolescence and poverty Centre for National Policy Press; Washington, DC, pp 19-36.

2. Choi, Y. et al. (2008) citing Constantine, M.G. (2006) 'Perceived family conflict, parental attachment, and depression in African American female adolescents' Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology 12(4): 697-709, and Formoso, D., Gonzales, M.A., and Aiken, L.S. (2000) 'Family conflict and children's internalizing and externalizing behaviour: Protective factors' American Journal of Community Psychology 51(2): 220-237.

3. Choi, Y. et al. (2008) citing Lee, R.M. et al. (2000) 'Construction of the Asian American Family Conflicts Scale' Journal of Counselling Psychology 47(2): 211-222.

4. Centre for Multicultural Youth (2011) Good Practice Guide: Youth Work in the Family Context.

Settlement complexities that contribute to intergenerational conflict in migrant and refugee families in Australia

The discussion begins with a brief overview of the refugee experience. For families who have had these experiences this will likely have some impact on identity formation and family relationships post- settlement in Australia.

The Refugee Experience

People who arrive in Australia as refugees, or with refugee-like experiences,⁵ are likely to have experienced all or some of the following:

- A dangerous escape from their country of origin
- Living in unsafe and insecure environments for extended periods of time (e.g. refugee camps, immigration detention or sometimes multiple transition countries) with limited or no access to essential services such as health care, education and housing
- Extreme human loss (often unexplained), including the death or disappearance of family, friends, community members and loss of home, country and security
- Traumatic experiences such as being victims of, or witnessing torture, death, sexual assault, severe deprivation, and extended periods of fear and uncertainty
- Arbitrary and authoritarian treatment in relation to rights to food, water, mobility, safety, income, education and employment
- Disrupted family roles and relationships
- Disrupted or very limited schooling⁶

People who arrive in Australia through the Humanitarian Program, and those who are granted protection onshore, may have spent their whole lives in conflict regions, refugee camps or other temporary shelters in third countries. Regardless of cultural background, parenting strategies that are necessary in a war-torn country, in which family and community members are subject to persecution, will inevitably differ from those needed in more settled contexts. The same can be said of parenting approaches necessary in a refugee camp or in a third or subsequent transition country.

Prior to, during and after resettlement, the trauma of the refugee experience can result in anxiety, sadness, a sense of having no control over one's life, fear, post-traumatic stress disorder, and lack of trust (among other responses), for young people and their families.⁷ These impacts may be evident throughout the settlement process and beyond.

5. Not all people with refugee-like experiences will have arrived in Australia on humanitarian visas (generally visa sub-classes 200-204). Many relatives of humanitarian entrants, who themselves have refugee-like experiences, are sponsored here through other avenues, due to the restrictions of Australia's annual Humanitarian Program intake. For example, large numbers of young people on last remaining relative visas (117 – check) and particularly those on orphan relative visas (115 – check) are from refugee-producing countries. See Centre for Multicultural Youth (2011) – insert name of paper.

6. Centre for Multicultural Youth (2011) Good Practice Guide: Youth work with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

7. Centre for Multicultural Youth (2011) Good Practice Guide: Youth work with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Settlement challenges

Resettlement presents challenges for all people who move to a new country. Even for families who arrive in Australia as migrants “significant life-changing events such as migration are likely to exact physical and emotional tolls on the family”⁸.

Settlement challenges for families new to Australia include:

- Learning a new language
- Adjusting to a new culture, systems and processes
- Finding stable, affordable and appropriate housing close to essential amenities
- Finding employment
- Building financial stability
- Lacking extended family and broader social support, including the social capital to access economic, social and employment resources
- Disillusionment and frustration
- Discrimination and marginalization

Settlement challenges and young people

Young people face unique challenges throughout the settlement process, because of the particular life stage of adolescence.

*Like all young people, those who arrive in Australia between the ages of 12 and 25 years have hopes and aspirations for their future; are defining their personal identity and forming relationships outside their family and; are laying the foundation for the lives they will live as adults. These developmental tasks are compounded by cultural dislocation, loss of established social networks and the practical demands of the resettlement process, and, for young people from refugee backgrounds, the traumatic nature of the refugee experience.*⁹

In addition to these, specific challenges that young people often face in the settlement process include:

- Attending a school that may not respond to their particular needs
- Unrealistic expectations from themselves, family and others
- Not having parents who can assist with their homework, due to unfamiliarity with the language or concepts
- Studying in overcrowded living conditions
- Managing cultural/social differences and peer versus family relationships
- Lack of targeted settlement support
- Significant family and community responsibilities

Issues that colour family relationships

Change in family power dynamics

Many families experience a change in the power dynamics and roles and responsibilities within their families upon settlement in Australia, partly as a result of the faster rate of acculturation and language acquisition of children and young people. The fact that young people will usually pick up English more quickly can put parents

8. Choi, Y. et al. (2008), citing Chung, R.H.G. (2001) 'Gender, ethnicity, and acculturation in intergenerational conflict of Asian American college students' *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 7(4): 376-386 and Sluzki, C.E. (1979) 'Migration and family conflict' *Family Process* 18(4): 379-390.

9. Centre for Multicultural Youth (2011) *Good Practice Guide: Youth work with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds*, citing Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council, 2002: 4).

from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) at a particular disadvantage.

In social, everyday situations, or in dealing with services, for example, children often become the family's representative if their parents or other family members have difficulty communicating in English. This can put both parents and children in a difficult position, as children may be exposed to and expected to understand matters that are inappropriate. Attending appointments with parents may also require children to miss school, take time off work or forgo other activities leading to stress and resentment. On the other hand, parents have to trust that their children will fully and competently interpret information. This gives children significant responsibility and also power within families, elevating their role to family spokesperson.¹⁰

You know what used to get me jealous, the fact that other parents speak English and my parents don't. I used to hate that part like I wish mum could speak English. Cos like when someone rings the phone or there's a letter I have to read it and translate it for my mum especially when some English person calls I have to answer it and then translate it for my mum – it's annoying (Young Sudanese woman, 18)

This shift in power dynamics, roles and responsibilities can place great strain on families, damaging the pride and confidence of adults. As a result communication between family members is more difficult leading to a shift in the family unit and relationships between family members. This is particularly the case when young people gain employment adopting the role of primary income earner. This can have significant impacts for the status of the head of the family, and the perceived loss of control over and responsibility for the family's wellbeing.

Children and young people interpret not only English for their parents, but often attempt to explain new cultural norms. Young people's exposure to Australian culture particularly through school means that they are in a better position to understand local systems and processes. Limited exposure to Australian culture, through lack of English and social connections, can result in misconceptions and fear of the unknown.

... a lot of adults that migrate here don't have the – there are services that teach them English and get them educated in the Australian life – but ... my mother in particular, had to you know, just work, do labour because you know the language barrier and having kids meant that she didn't have any

opportunity to study, so that, the language I guess becomes the first isolating factor for the adults and that's obviously not the same case for the children with an English Australian education. (Young man from Vietnamese background)

Diverse cultural values

We come from Africa, we have a different culture and then you come to Australia and you try to fit in with everyone else and then there's a clash (Young Sudanese woman, 21 years).

Differences in values can exist in all families and relationships and these differences may be more noticeable for families who have come to live in a new cultural context. All families have to negotiate values in supporting adolescents, to make rules and agreements and work with differences in wishes and needs. Families born overseas often have a much harder job in parenting their children in the new context given the profound re-negotiation of values that is inevitably required. This re-negotiation of values can endure for second and third generations.

I think it's hard when you don't have a middle ground – when you haven't reached that point where you've assimilated into Australian society but you still have your traditions, like, it takes a while to get to that point and it might even take a few generations to get to that point. (Young man from Vietnamese background)

Conceptualisation of adolescence and its implications

Western theorists understand this period as a time where young people explore what kind of adults they want to be. For example, what roles they wish to take in society, what work they may wish to do, what relationships they wish to form, what kind of friendships they wish to have with their peers, and how they wish to present themselves to others. In Western industrialised societies such as Australia this is often a prolonged period. This is not necessarily always the case in other cultures, which may not even see adolescence as a significant stage, nor individualist aspirations as a marker of maturity. ... As such, refugee and newly arrived young people are often juggling a range of pressures and complex relationships, negotiating family and cultural obligations and responsibilities while finding their own place in Australian society.¹¹

Families from cultures which have no - or a very different - conception of adolescence, can find it difficult to understand that there is a period between childhood

10. Lewig, K., Arney, F. and Salveron, M. (2009)

11. Centre for Multicultural Youth (2011) Good Practice Guide: Youth work with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

and adulthood in 'Western' society. Some communities may view the construct of adolescence as giving young people permission to act up or make mistakes; behaviour which is sanctioned by the State. Some families may not accept this conceptualisation of adolescence, and for young people from a refugee or migrant background who experience adolescence in Australia, these parameters may be frustrating.

Because what my mother believes is different to what I believe now because times have changed and they were taught a different way. Her mother would have taught what she's been taught and her grandmother would have been teaching her mother what's she's been taught and so on and so forth (Young Sudanese woman, 18 years).

Loss of parental confidence

Settlement is usually a time of uncertainty, and a sense of safety and stability is vital. And yet the literature and many people consulted for this paper – including young people – reported that many migrant and refugee parents “lose their authority and confidence as parents in the process of renegotiating and adjusting”¹² to life in Australia.

A lot of things I've seen with my friends, so from our area ... a lot of the refugee parents that come don't have confidence in themselves, and they're not sure of themselves, and they pass that down to their kids, and it's really sad because you see the people like going with me through high school they don't wanna apply for tertiary education because they don't believe that they can. They don't believe that they have the ability to. Yeah they just don't have that confidence and it's really sad to see that. (Young woman from Arabic background)

Heightened need for safety

Newly-arrived parents (and of course other parents too) often have great fears about what may happen to their children in Australia, particularly if they readily adopt the cultural norms of their new country. Refugee families, in particular, left their own countries to seek safety and protection for themselves and their children. These fears can understandably, lead parents and guardians to be more protective of their children. This can cause a greater need for negotiation and potentially conflict, as young people seek to assert their independence and freedom.

Some Africans are really strict. Why don't I get to go out like all the other kids? (Young Ethiopian man, 20 years)

Perceived loss of culture

There is deep concern within newly-arrived and more established communities, that parents and communities are losing control of their young people, and that young people are losing their cultural values and way of life. These fears can manifest in disagreements over issues such as education, relationships, gender roles and religion.

Being of Vietnamese background, I've noticed that adults, the older generation have kind of resigned to the fact that a lot of us second generation Vietnamese have just become too Australianised for them and it's kind of past a threshold of turning back. So the link and the cultural language has suddenly been irreversibly lost. ... I think there's a generation gap and a cultural gap between different generations. (Vietnamese young man)

Diverse and disrupted family structures

Families who have refugee experiences often have high levels of resilience and coping skills, and can be a great source of strength to each other in recovering from the effects of torture and trauma. However migration, and particularly the refugee experience, can separate and change the make up of families. What 'family' means for newly-arrived young people can therefore be very different. The family may look and function in a profoundly different way from the way it did overseas or in the past. For some, their immediate family, including their parents, may be dead or missing. Others may arrive in Australia to find that one or both parents have remarried or formed new relationships. Many will live in multi-family households with non-parent guardians, extended family, friends or community members.

The lack of broader family support networks further contributes to settlement challenges for families new to Australia. Family supports are critical in negotiating a range of settlement pressures and in the absence of such support, participating in employment or other community activities is difficult. Concern about family members left behind in conflict regions or refugee camps place additional stress, and sometimes feelings of guilt, for families. This can be compounded by financial pressures particularly if families are sending money overseas to support those left behind.

12. Choi, Y. et al. (2008), citing Foner, N. and Kasinitz, P. (2007) 'The second generation' in Waters, M.C., Ueba, R. and Marrow, H.B. (eds.) *The new Americans: A guide to immigration since 1965* Harvard University Press; Cambridge MA, pp. 270-282.

Sudden single parent households and female headed households face new and additional challenges including changes in power dynamics. In other contexts, mothers may have headed their families for years, and are reunified with the father of their children after settlement in Australia. This may cause confusion around who the head of the household is, authority and decision-making power.

Unmet expectations

Many service providers and young people consulted felt that the information and expectations families have before coming to Australia are unrealistic. Feedback from the sector indicates that the pre-arrival information people receive about Australia is often very different to the reality of the experience when they arrive. Newly-arrived families may be unprepared for the challenges involved in settling and parenting in a new cultural context.

For so many parents and carers, resettlement in a new country is seen as chance to provide greater opportunities for their children. The expectation that their children will thrive and have a better life than themselves can result in significant pressure being placed on young people particularly in relation to education and vocational success.

But they – the way they're saying that is they wanna live their life through you because they didn't get the education and the job, so they wanna live their life, they want you to succeed. But you want your freedom also. You want them to be relaxed a little. And also you wanna be yourself, not someone else's dream. (Young woman from Arabic background)

Financial Pressures

Financial pressures can contribute to conflict in all relationships and for newly arrived families there is greater probability that financial stress will be a factor in the initial settlement period. Many newly-arrived refugee families will be dependent on Centrelink payments upon arrival, as unlike migrants who arrive through the Skilled or Family Migration Streams, they have not had time to prepare for the move to Australia and secure employment. Supporting, often large, families on Centrelink payments is difficult and stressful. Long periods of unemployment can also be demoralising particularly when skills go unrecognised. For parents who do find employment, many work long hours in low-skilled, low-paid jobs in order to support their families. This has impacts in terms of the amount of time families can spend together, and the domestic expectations on other family members (e.g. childcare, cooking and housework).

The question of contributions to the household income can arise in other contexts too, as some service providers cited young people's financial independence as a source for family disagreement. For example parents and children may disagree over whether Youth Allowance or other payments young people receive should be subsumed into the household income. Pressure can be placed on children of a working age to contribute financially to the family unit, or to send money to relatives overseas.

...my brother, he's telling me now that it's my role now, I have to step up to send money. So the pressure is on there. He wants to have at least one year off. Then it'll be my role, which I'll try to manage in a way. ... they can't tell people enough it's because full-stop, when you're here you don't have any more problems. "We're still back here, we're still struggling so you have to send money"...Especially when they hear that you get Centrelink money – that's like "you get paid for study?" ... and then you know just like give them all your money and just live off nothing... (Young Sudanese woman)

Gender

While the impacts of changes in family structures and differing rates of acculturation can affect all young people, it is clear that there are some differences in experiences for girls and boys. Young women consulted for this paper emphasized the lack of freedom they experience as well as the higher expectations to help out at home. Some expressed deep resentment at the perceived injustice of having more restrictions imposed on them than their brothers.

... there's not a lot of freedom in African families, and there's different treatment between boys and girls in families, boys are always treated better, they're treated a bit superiors, yeah, that's the difference ... they're being treated less than boys, boys are always being treated better (Young Sudanese woman, 21 years).

Service providers and young women also reported that family conflict can result from boys asserting their authority within families. In some cases, this can be in response to the lack of a father figure in the home. Some service providers and young people suggested that many cultures give boys more chances to make mistakes, and that this pattern persists when families settle in Australia.

Mental health

As described earlier, people with refugee experiences may have experienced torture or trauma, and/or witnessed the torture or trauma of loved ones or others. People with a history of torture and trauma are at increased risk for mental health issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder or depression. Newly-arrived families, particularly those from LBOTE, may experience additional barriers accessing mental health support, including language difficulties, social isolation, lack of knowledge of services, and culturally inappropriate services. They may also have different cultural conceptions of mental health, which inhibit help-seeking. Poor mental health has the potential to exacerbate difficulties in negotiating family relationships in the settlement context.

Where to from here?

What we already know:

Prevention and early intervention

Families need to have information about how to address parenting challenges, including information about expectations and misconceptions for both young people and parents/ guardians, the types of issues that may naturally be a source of conflict during settlement and acculturation, and that it is okay to seek help. This will normalise the challenges of parenting adolescents, particularly in a new culture, so that families know that they are not failing, and they are not the only people facing these types of challenges. Empowering families with this knowledge, in a supportive environment, should alleviate rather than exacerbate some of the insecurities and anxieties experienced in settlement. It will also help reinstate the power and status of parents within families, who may otherwise struggle in an unfamiliar culture.

We think there should be some sort of funding like for classes like to teach like older people how to communicate more with their kids and be a bit more open-minded cos some parents for example, like my mum she's all about study, go to university, she doesn't consider what the other possibilities are like sports, or I could be good at arts or. And not everything needs me to go to university, things like that yeah, I think they need to have some sort of classes to just make them aware and help them more (Young woman from Arabic background).

It is also vital that parents and families are given more information about Australian family laws and parenting in the new cultural context. It is fundamental that families and community leaders understand and accept that family violence for example – whether against children, women or anyone else - is illegal in Australia, and that child protective services and/or the police have the lawful authority to intervene in families if violence is occurring. Families, including young people, need to know the implications of contacting child protective services, or the police, in situations of family violence. People need to know that child protective services can be called upon as a support mechanism for families, rather than a punitive measure, and that children will not be removed except in very serious cases. While families and parents should not be overwhelmed with

information in the early settlement period it is important that basic information about the concept of adolescence, norms, challenges, services and laws are provided.

I think the education of adults when they come here is lacking. If the parents were introduced to Australian culture, through education, through language, I think they'd be in a much better position to engage with the child in their own education, in the child's social interactions, in the child's development of their ideas of identity and culture. I think a holistic education – you can't force an adult to do that – their first priority is how am I going to earn enough money to put food on the table plus I have to send money back home, that's usually the case with migrants here too (Young man from Vietnamese background)

The shift in family power dynamics, that gives rise to a range of issues, can be lessened from the start if parents are empowered more effectively in the early days of settlement. Empowering parents more effectively includes basic steps such as explaining service systems and available supports, normalising the challenges of raising adolescents, promoting help-seeking and encouraging and supporting English language acquisition and better use of interpreters.

Meaningful community engagement

Building on the community development approach, strengths-focused work is vital in working with young people and their families. Many families who have come through the refugee experience have high levels of resilience and have managed to deal effectively with many challenges already. Effective measures to reduce the likelihood and impacts of intergenerational conflict are often found within communities themselves, and service providers need to engage community members and leaders in this context.

Empowering communities to identify issues and solutions and - where necessary or desired - supporting them to respond, whether through resources, expertise, networking, information, or training, has far better outcomes than solutions imposed externally. Useful practises include drawing on the strengths of young people and their families by talking about how they resolved issues in their home countries, and which elements of those approaches could be helpful or tailored to the new cultural context. Many parents and carers have strong parenting skills, which is important to recognise, encourage, develop and share.

I think developing incentives within the community ... where the incentive may not be a great thing or tangible but it was something enough for people to go oh yeah you should do this – word of mouth is probably the strongest form of advertising anyway – if people could change their perception – if their perceptions could be changed about the purpose of programs and the community could share that message rather than the government pushing the messages or NGOs or other orgs pushing the message then I think people would just generally be more receptive to it (Young man from Vietnamese background).

Services should only be there as a safety net (Young African men, both in 20s)

For families from some cultural backgrounds, the involvement and endorsement of community leaders will be necessary to secure their engagement with particular programs or services. At the same time it is vital that young people's voices are heard. Connecting with young people around their challenges and aspirations can help to support the maintenance of their culture. It is also important for agencies and communities to learn from other communities that have arrived in past years. Examples of successful outcomes from community attention to and work on an issue can have powerful effects on emerging communities.

Culturally responsive service provision

Inadequate or inflexible services and programs make it difficult to assist young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and their families exacerbated by fragmented service provision. Close relationships between settlement or culturally-specific organisations and mainstream services are important to offer coordinated support to families and the individuals within them. Reluctance to engage with family support services can be compounded for families from refugee backgrounds, who may have experienced negative interventions from government authorities in the past. Information and myth-busting in early settlement will help families understand which support services exist for them and their children and encourage help seeking.

Identifying what parents want for themselves and their children improves relevance of service delivery and access. Many mentioned the value of having bicultural and bilingual workers and gender specific programs. Service providers and young people also identified the value of employing more creative ways to explore and resolve issues in the context of renegotiating values and culture. Understanding different perspectives and experiences through role play, story-telling, youth-led community discussions, audio-visual resources, language specific material and theatre were recommended. Story-telling, in particular, is a method some communities may feel more comfortable using to discuss ideas and convey messages.

And I think also maybe making a video or just hearing some successful stories about migrants who'd been through some conflict but they were able to overcome it and what ways they overcame it so people can see ... (Young woman from Arabic background).

Service providers reported that many newly-arrived families don't have opportunities to spend recreational time together. Bringing elders or parents and young people together can therefore help both speak honestly and understand each other better, in a neutral setting. Further, children and young people of different ages require different responses – for example, what works for a young person under the age of 18 years might not work for those who over 18 years.

We need to acknowledge and validate a variety of parenting styles using a strengths-based approach to explore how existing practices may be adapted to the new parenting

context. There needs to be some time allocated to explore values that impact on parenting decisions, and how these values can be preserved even if parents need to adapt their approaches and responses in the new cultural context. A one-size-fits-all approach therefore is inadequate to respond to the varying intensity of needs during the settlement period.

What else we need to know

Creating opportunities for enhanced dialogue between parents, families, young people and service providers will allow for greater appreciation of the range and depth of parenting practices pre-migration. This will also develop our understanding of how the settlement context, and the challenges that this presents, impacts on parent and guardian capacity and how the 'system' acts to assist or inhibit this capacity. Newly-arrived and other culturally diverse families face similar issues to those in any family with adolescents, but the acculturating and unpacking of values needs to happen and needs to happen in a facilitated and supported way.

It is clear from our initial consultations that both parents and young people need to be involved in more open conversations individually and with each other. The young people consulted for this paper emphasized for example the need for parents to gain greater understanding of the challenges they face in settling in to Australia, particularly the challenges of developing bicultural or multicultural identities.

Service providers also need to participate in this discussion informing the development of culturally relevant services and programs for young people, parents and communities. Engaging in these conversations will allow for further exploration of how family and community structures help support young people pre-migration and in the settlement context and help services identify how they can rebuild, replicate and strengthen these internal support structures. This rebuilding process will lead to greater independence and resilience of young people, families and communities.

At the same time service mapping of parenting and family strengthening programs needs to be undertaken with an evaluation of cross-cultural effectiveness. Recognised parenting programs exist however there is a gap in the synthesis and documentation of strong evidence-based programs that support young people and families cross-culturally. The need for further research in the following areas has been identified:

- How did internal community networks support young people and families pre-migration to Australia? How have these structures been affected by the migration and settlement experience and how can the service system help strengthen these supports?
- How are migrant and refugee young people and parents re-negotiating values and culture in Australia and how can these experiences be shared in order to learn from one another?
- Who is currently doing what in relation to parenting and family strengthening in the new settlement context? What programs and considerations within programs are effective in supporting young people and families?