



**Commissioner for Children and Young People**  
Western Australia

## **Culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people: A literature review**

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## Background

The Commissioner for Children and Young People WA (the Commissioner) is the independent advocate for all children and young people under 18 years of age in Western Australia. In performing the functions under the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006*, the Commissioner must give priority to, and have special regard to, the interests and needs of children and young people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged for any reason.

Evidence suggests that children and young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds (commonly referred to as 'culturally and linguistically diverse' backgrounds – CALD) experience poorer social development outcomes compared with their peers. This cohort group of children and young people experience particular marginalisation in relation to housing, health, education, employment and access to social and recreational opportunities.

This literature review draws upon a range of government and non-government data sources relevant to CALD children and young people to provide evidence of current research, policy and practice to inform the Commissioner's work.

There is no universally agreed definition in the literature for 'culturally and linguistically diverse'. For the purposes of this review CALD refers to persons who identify differently to the Anglo-Australian norm according to birthplace, ancestry, religion, race, ethnicity or language. CALD in the context of this review does not include Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. It should be noted that several other terms are used in the literature to denote the same cohort group, including terms such as 'multicultural', 'migrant' and 'from a non-English speaking background'.

## Methodology

This literature review was conducted as a desk-based review. The range of data sources reviewed include, but are not limited to, the following:

Australian academic research publications;

- Policy, advocacy and program documents from Australian not-for-profit organisations working with CALD communities;
- Australian Commonwealth Government publications (including policies; research; strategy and project documents; sectoral tools and guidelines); and
- Australian State and Territory Government publications (including policies; research; strategy and project documents; sectoral tools and guidelines).

Given the large amount of information on CALD communities identified in this review, clear research priorities were necessary. First priority was given to reviewing

relevant Western Australian sources. Second priority was given to reviewing relevant information from the national level, and from other states and territories. The reviewer has endeavoured to identify publications that address a range of different sectoral issues. This review has focused on Australian sources.

## Summary Findings

There is no universal term used in the literature to denote children and young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds. The term CALD is commonly used, but it does not have a standard definition. In some cases the term also includes Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. Other terms used in the literature to denote persons from refugee and migrant backgrounds are 'multicultural', 'migrant', and 'from a non-English speaking background'.

CALD children and young people are not homogenous despite often being treated as such in the literature. CALD children and young people are a highly diverse group, and the issues and challenges they face may differ depending on: the particular cultural group with which they identify; the number of years they have been in Australia; their pathways both to Australia and once residing in Australia; and the level of community and family support they receive once they are living in Australia. This is particularly the case for those CALD children and young people from a refugee background.

Evidence shows CALD children and young people in general terms experience poorer social development outcomes compared with their peers in the general population. While data is limited, some studies were found that suggest CALD young people have lower engagement in the workforce,<sup>1</sup> are significantly more likely to be at risk of homelessness,<sup>2</sup> have a higher risk of mental health problems,<sup>3</sup> have a lower rate of health service utilisation,<sup>4</sup> and participate less in sport and recreation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Lawson, D and Dutertre, (2010), *Finding home in Victoria*, Centre for Multicultural Youth, Victoria, at pg. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Commissioner for Children and Young People WA , (2013), *The mental health and wellbeing of children and young people: Children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities - policy brief*, Commissioner for Children and Young People WA.

<sup>4</sup> Hugo, G (Prof); McDongall, K (Dr); Tan, G (Dr); Fiest, H (Dr), (2014), *The CALD Youth Census Report 2014*, Centre for Multicultural Youth, at pg. 41.

<sup>5</sup> Olliff, L, (2009), *Amplifying the voices of young refugees*, Refugee Council of Australia, at pg 16.

CALD children and young people face a range of specific risk factors that place them at increased risk of disadvantage compared with their peers. Risk factors commonly referred to are: intergenerational family conflict; discrimination and prejudice within the community; poor English language proficiency; lack of access to or awareness of employment information and services; and lack of awareness of or willingness to access health services (particularly mental and sexual health services). Risk factors experienced by CALD children and young people tend to be described in the literature in general terms as though risk factors apply equally to all CALD children and young people irrespective of their social and economic background.

Young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds commonly face numerous and profound challenges in the process of transitioning into Australian society. The particular challenges facing this group of young people include: "adjusting to a new education system (often with disrupted or limited schooling prior to Australia); negotiating family relationships in the context of (new concepts of) independence, freedom and child and youth rights; negotiating cultural identity and expectations from family and community; and establishing new peer relationships. The settlement tasks are compounded by the developmental tasks of adolescence"<sup>6</sup>. The needs of refugee and migrant young people are often overlooked as they are a sub-group of both the broader youth and CALD sectors.

Protective factors related to cultural identity and family and community relationships that enhance CALD children and young people's wellbeing are not dominant in the literature. Available analysis tends to be generic without referencing differences across ethno-specific groups. The Office of Multicultural Interests (2009) identified religious faith, freedom from discrimination and feelings of safety and support in the community as relevant protective factors for CALD young people<sup>7</sup>.

Overwhelmingly the literature suggests mainstream and specialised services need to be improved to better address the needs of CALD children and young people. The literature acknowledges that many CALD children and young people's service and support needs are effectively being met, but some CALD children and young people are falling through the cracks. Many academics and service providers argue children and young people from CALD backgrounds, given their specific mental health, physical health, psychosocial and educational needs, require specialised support.

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<sup>6</sup> Retrieved from: [www.mmrcwa.org.au/ethnic-youth-advisory-group/](http://www.mmrcwa.org.au/ethnic-youth-advisory-group/)

<sup>7</sup> See further: Office of Multicultural Interests (2009), "Not Drowning, Waving": Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Young People at Risk in Western Australia, Government of Western Australia, pg. 8.

The critical element of effective service delivery is commonly cited as culturally competent staff, whether they be staff in mainstream or CALD specific services.

The literature refers to the CALD child and youth sector as generally under-resourced, fragmented and lacking coordination. The fragmented nature of service delivery is believed to be caused by the short-term nature of funding across the sector. The constraint of short-term funding is reported as discouraging development of institutional knowledge and capacity building in the sector. Poor coordination between service providers is reported as being partially driven by the competitive funding models used by government, thereby undermining coordination of service provision. A common theme is the need for increased government funding and more secure funding going into the CALD child and youth sector.

Culturally appropriate services are reportedly lacking in WA for CALD children and young people. This is particularly the case in the areas of crisis accommodation, mental health, drug and alcohol support and sexual health.

There are a range of programs and interventions for CALD children and young people in the Perth metropolitan area, but little in regional WA. This review only identified a few CALD specific programs outside of the metropolitan area, and these programs were in locations close to Perth.

The literature highlights the importance of using multifaceted, collaborative and holistic approaches to service delivery (whether it is mainstream or specialised). Further, the value of consulting CALD children and young people, paying attention to cultural planning, accessibility issues and utilising targeted promotion strategies, are raised as important issues for service delivery.

There is a lack of policy frameworks at national or state levels to link refugee and migrant children and young people to services they need.

There is a lack of data on CALD children and young people's wellbeing across a range of indicators. For example, there is no national data set on CALD young people in the criminal justice system as this information is not consistently recorded. There is also very limited data available on CALD young people and homelessness despite homelessness being identified as an issue of major concern in the literature. A major factor contributing to lack of data is limited capacity and funding for service agencies to focus on data and evidence. In order to address any issues facing CALD children and young people, it is important to have better data collection on these population groups.

Few services and programs have been formally evaluated to demonstrate the impacts on CALD children and young people's wellbeing. The absence of evaluations appears to be due to under-resourced service providers not having the time or resourcing to dedicate to evaluations. A failure to invest in evaluating programs

significantly reduces prospects for learning more about how to effectively address CALD children and young people's wellbeing, and the merits of specialised versus mainstream programs.

A small number of publications were identified in this review that discussed successful programs. A recent report from a workshop on migrant settlement in WA noted interactive strategies such as theatre and drama are highly effective for educating young people about sensitive and taboo topics, such as sexual health<sup>8</sup>. Another publication described a number of promising programs that have the potential to support protective factors relevant to CALD young people, namely: practical assistance programs (homework clubs; driving lessons; case management for at risk or highly vulnerable persons); arts programs; sports and social activities; and leadership courses<sup>9</sup>.

There is limited evidence of consultations with CALD children and young people at either a local, state or national level to gauge their opinions and views of the challenges they face, the positive aspects of their lives, and their experiences of support services.

## Western Australian Publications

### **Office of Multicultural Interests (2013), *Cultural Diversity in Western Australia: A Demographic Profile*, Government of Western Australia.**

This demographic profile of the population of Western Australia was produced by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI).

**Aim:** It is a communication tool to positively highlight the State's cultural and linguistic diversity.

**Methodology:** The profile analyses Australian 2011 Census data to look at the countries of birth, ancestries, languages spoken, religious affiliations and proficiency in spoken English of Western Australians. Although this profile provides generally useful state level demographic data, it does not analyse census data in a manner that aids a better understanding of the needs of CALD children and young people in WA.

### **Office of Multicultural Interests (2013), *Strategic Plan: Consultation Report*, Government of Western Australia**

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<sup>8</sup> University of Western Australia (2013), *Settling in Western Australia*, at pg.9.

<sup>9</sup> Bartels, L., (June 2011) *Crime prevention programs for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia (Research in Practice no. 18)*, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, at pg.4.

This publication summaries key outcomes from consultations undertaken by OMI as part of the development of a new strategic plan for 2014 to 18.

**Aim:** To report on the views and opinions of Western Australians as they relate to multiculturalism and OMI's vision, work and priorities.

**Methodology:** OMI undertook a participatory consultation process that included: (1) release of a discussion paper and an invitation for written submissions from the public; (2) online surveys – one for the general public and the other for young people; and (3) consultation forums including two youth forums. OMI used three issues (identified in international and national literature) as the basis for consultations, namely: managing 'super diversity', social cohesion, and economic and social benefits<sup>10</sup>.

**Consultations undertaken with young people:** An estimated 190 organisations and individuals were consulted in total. The youth online survey had 61 respondents with the majority (85%) aged between 15 and 24 years. Two youth forums were held with a total of 23 young people participating (age range of participants not referenced in this report). It is unclear whether on-line survey respondents and forum participants are in some cases the same people. Either way, only a small sample size of WA young people were consulted by OMI.

**Findings:** The results of the on-line survey show the most highly rated needs of CALD young people as "having a 'feeling of belonging' (47.1%), followed by 'education' (27.5%), 'living in a non-racist community' (13.7%) and 'getting a job' (7.8%)". The results of the on-line survey show the most important issues facing young people from CALD backgrounds as "employment' and 'racism' (21.6% each)

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<sup>10</sup> "Managing 'super diversity'" is defined in the report as the "need to address settlement needs of various migrant cohorts from an increasing number of countries, as well as second and third generation and established CALD communities, and specific groups such as youth, seniors and people with disability"; "social cohesion" is defined as "the challenge of ensuring all community members feel they belong, share a commitment to Australia, participate in education, training and employment and have the opportunity to contribute to civic and political life"; and lastly the final issue "economic and social benefits" is described as "the importance of promoting the benefits of cultural diversity and encouraging the business sector and wider community of value and maximise its potential, particularly within a global economy". Source: Office of Multicultural Interests (2013), Strategic Plan: Consultation Report, Government of Western Australia at pg. i.



followed by 'education' (19.6%), 'mental health' (13.7%) and 'bullying' (11.8%)<sup>11</sup> Additional issues raised in the youth forums include language, acculturation, family/intergenerational issues, and alcohol and other drugs. A range of ideas were canvassed in the forums about ways to address these problems (refer to pages 19 – 21 of the report). The consultations highlighted that mainstream organisations need to engage more with CALD community groups and encourage their participation in decision making.

**Office of Multicultural Interests (2009), *"Not Drowning, Waving": Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Young People at Risk in Western Australia*, Government of Western Australia**

This report was first released as a discussion paper in 2007. The report was later updated with additional information about CALD programs and services gathered from government sources, NGOs and academic institutions.

**Aim:** The report was developed to assist OMI to identify emerging issues that place young people (aged 12 to 25 years) from CALD backgrounds at risk in our community (including social, personal and economic risk).

**Definition:** CALD for the purpose of this report refers to a wide range of cultural groups and individuals who differ according to religion, race, language and ethnicity.

**Methodology:** A meta-analysis of research reports, programs, consultations and policies relating to CALD young people.

**Findings:** The report identifies a range of specific issues that place CALD young people at increased risk of disadvantage, namely:

“Home – intergeneration conflict between parents and children, and the impact of financial burdens and experiences of torture and trauma on family relationships;

Community – discrimination and prejudice within the community, including intergroup tensions.

Sport and recreation – a shortage of facilities appropriate for young people; transport and financial difficulties; lack of knowledge about sporting organisations, clubs and leisure centres.

Health – lack of awareness of or willingness to access services related to mental, sexual and substance abuse issues.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid at pg.18.

Compulsory education – challenges in the education setting include: meeting personal and parental expectations; English language learning; difficulties in the transition to mainstream schooling; racism and bullying; limited parental support; and difficulties accessing resources to assist study.

Post-compulsory education – limited access to or awareness of career guidance information, and barriers to access and participation in vocational education and training.

Employment – lack of access to or awareness of employment information and services; limited job preparation; employer discrimination and prejudice due to English proficiency; lack of local work experience; and vulnerability to exploitation in the workplace”<sup>12</sup>.

**Recommendations:** This report recommends specialised support is needed for CALD young people and their families in the areas of: health and community services; academic learning support; education; career advice; and transition from education to employment. Further, the report suggests a holistic and well-coordinated approach is required to maximise the effectiveness and potential impact of policies and programs designed to address these issues.

### **Western Australian Council for Social Services (WACOSS) Issues Paper-Excerpt**

**Companion to the WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission, *Investing in Outcomes: Making it Count for the People of WA, Part One – Issues and Funding Pressures in the Community Services Sector Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities (October 2010)***

Western Australia's peak body for not-for-profit social service organisations, WACOSS, has no specific CALD policy and only a few CALD related publications on its website. This 2011-2012 budget submission to the WA State Government was the only publication that was both current and relevant to this review.

**Aim:** Pre-Budget Submission to Western Australian State Government to advocate for improved services to CALD communities.

**Consultations undertaken with children:** Not indicated in the submission.

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<sup>12</sup> Office of Multicultural Interests (2009), “Not Drowning, Waving”: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Young People at Risk in Western Australia, Government of Western Australia, at pg. 3.

**Recommendations:** WACOSS pre-budget submission recommendations relevant to CALD children and young people are as follows:

- settlement services need to prioritise family reunion as isolation of women with small children is a big issue;
- a lack of childcare services means women and children are unable to fully participate and integrate into West Australian society;
- there is a real need for cross-cultural training within mainstream agencies and better coordination between existing service providers.
- stronger engagement by service providers with CALD communities is required to facilitate greater social inclusion.
- organisations providing services to CALD communities should be funded to establish a peak body in WA.

**Toure, I (2008) *Hidden Homelessness – the impact of homelessness on newly arrived youth*, Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors (ASeTTS)**

Aim of inquiry/research: The homelessness prevention program was a one year action-research project that aimed to identify strategies to help prevent homelessness among newly arrived young people of refugee background. The report *Hidden Homelessness* presents project findings and recommendations.

**Definition:** The report uses the term 'newly arrived youth' to describe young people aged 16 to 25 years who came to Australia through the Commonwealth Government's humanitarian program and have been in the country for less than 5 years.

**Methodology:** A mixed method approach was used including a desk based review of relevant literature, and interviews and focus groups with newly arrived youth and service providers.

**Consultations undertaken with youth:** A total of 113 stakeholders including newly arrived youth, service providers and community members participated. Of these participants 70 were newly arrived youth.

**Findings:**

Key finding from this research study are summarised below:

The study found the main form of homelessness was secondary homelessness (i.e., homelessness experienced by people who move from one temporary accommodation option to another, most commonly staying with a relative or friend on a rotating basis). Primary homelessness - sleeping on the streets or in inappropriate dwellings - where it had occurred had only been for a short period of time.

There has been an increase of newly arrived youth presenting at crisis accommodation services in Perth.

The main causes of homelessness were a shortage of affordable housing options (public and private), financial difficulties and family conflicts.

The main impacts of homelessness were found to be overcrowding in homes with the risk of eviction for overcrowding, disruption to schooling and triggering of past trauma.

**Recommendations:** Key recommendations from the study were grouped in the report according to their intended audience – government, service providers and community:

**Recommendations for Government (primarily for the Commonwealth Government):**

- The Commonwealth Government should increase its support for early intervention programs for newly arrived youth. WA's Newly Arrived Youth Support Service (NAYSS)<sup>13</sup> is cited as an example of a culturally appropriate program that is in high demand but with limited geographic reach due to funding restrictions.
- The Commonwealth Government should provide funding for gender specific crisis accommodation.

**Recommendations for Service Providers:**

- Service providers should adopt more flexible programming models to support newly arrived youth with complex needs (e.g., outreach services for newly arrived youth and their families).
- A state wide youth networking group for service providers is recommended with the aim of encouraging service providers to share resources, expertise and good practice.
- All crisis accommodation workers should be trained to deal specifically with newly arrived youth.
- All service providers should as a matter of standard reporting practice collect accurate data on numbers and needs of persons using their services.

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<sup>13</sup> NAYSS is described in detail in this report under the heading 'Programming Initiatives for CALD children and young people'.

### **Recommendations for community members/leaders:**

- Service providers and CALD community members/leaders should look at ways to establish collaborative partnerships aimed at dealing with homelessness issues.

### **Fozdar, F and Hartley, L (2012), *Refugees in Western Australia: Settlement and Integration*, Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC)**

This publication, *Refugees in Western Australia: Settlement and Integration*, presents the findings from a collaboration between researchers based initially at Murdoch University and then at The University of Western Australia, and the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC). This research study is not focused on CALD young people. It is a broader study on humanitarian entrants with several recommendations relevant to CALD children and young people.

**Aim of inquiry/research:** To identify settlement issues for humanitarian entrants in the first four years after arrival in Western Australia. Special focus was on differences for those who had been in Australia for one to two years compared to two to four years. The research study focused on five key areas: education, health, employment, housing and social support.

**Methodology:** A qualitative research method was used comprising of in-depth interviews and focus groups, and a methodology called photovoice where participants received cameras and were asked to take photos about their settlement experiences. A steering committee was established to guide the project. Steering committee members included: MMRC, Centrecare, Fremantle Multicultural Centre, Edmund Rice Centre, ASeTTS, OMI, and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

**Consultations with children/young people:** Of the 76 humanitarian entrants who participated in this research study five were young people aged 15 to 18 years. No children participated.

**Findings/recommendations:** Key implications and recommendations that relate specifically to young people are:

“For young people from refugee backgrounds, given their specific mental health, physical health, psychosocial and educational needs, a specific focus is required. While many do very well, some are falling through the cracks. One concern voiced by service providers was drugs and prostitution. This is a sensitive issue, and publicity around it could have a negative impact on the communities. It is therefore important to get policy and practice right. Improving the interface between the communities and the policing and justice systems was seen as one aspect in solving the problem. The need for cultural support for African young people in particular was

noted. Homework support groups and sports were seen as other ways of engaging young people”<sup>14</sup>.

This is the only publication identified in this literature review that raises prostitution as an issue of concern to young humanitarian entrants in WA.

## National Publications

**Hugo, G (Prof); McDongall, K (Dr); Tan, G (Dr); Fiest, H (Dr), (2014), *The CALD Youth Census Report 2014*, Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY).**

The CALD Youth Census Report 2014 is the most prominent publication in Australia addressing CALD young people at this point in time. A large number of organisations working with CALD young people have uploaded copies of the report onto their websites. The report was released in recent months by The Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY), and represents the first ever Australian census data analysis of young people from CALD backgrounds.

**Aim of inquiry/research:** The report aims to provide a useful overview of key variables to understanding the issues impacting on Australia’s CALD youth population and where those issues are most likely occurring across Australia.

**Definition:** CALD Youth in the context of this report refers to young people born in a CALD country and young people born in Australia who have at least one parent born in a CALD country, as defined in the report.

**Methodology:** The report analyses Australian 2011 Census data of all young people aged 12 to 24 in Australia from a CALD background. The characteristics of different sub-groups of Australian young people are compared. Subgroups include: Australian born, overseas born, CALD born, refugee born, those with refugee ancestry and those with CALD ancestry. The report examines broad data on key demographics of these different CALD sub-groups and looks at education, employment, and family and living arrangements for CALD and refugee young people comparing it with that of the Australian born population. The report focuses primarily on information at the state level.

**Consultations undertaken with children:** No consultations with children are recorded in the report.

**Findings:** The research found Australia’s migration patterns have altered in recent years with increasing numbers of refugees now living in cities other than Sydney and

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<sup>14</sup> Fozdar, F and Hartley, L (2012), *Refugees in Western Australia: Settlement and Integration*, Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre, at pg.146.

Melbourne (traditional entry points), and an increasing number of refugees living in rural areas. Evidence of these trends is seen in data from 2006 to 2011 that shows Western Australia (along with Queensland and South Australia) reporting average growth rates of young people born in refugee countries nearly double the national average.

The research found that CALD young people have a lower rate of health service utilisation. This was found to be particularly pertinent in regional communities that may have very few if any services catering to those from a CALD background. In terms of education, the report concludes young people born in CALD and refugee countries and with CALD and refugee ancestry had higher participation rates in educational institutions than young people born in Australia. In the case of employment it was found that young people with CALD and refugee ancestry had lower engagement in the workforce than the Australian born population but higher than young people born in CALD and refugee countries. The report concludes that “this indicates that over generations different population groups begin to converge towards the Australian born average”<sup>15</sup>. In terms of living arrangements the research found household sizes ranged for a number of cultural and economic reasons. Of note was the rate of migrant young people ‘living in a two or more family household’: ‘both youth born in CALD countries and refugee countries in the 12-17 and 18-24 age groups had higher proportions living in multiple family households compared to the Australian born population’<sup>16</sup>.

**Recommendations:** The report recommends more research is needed to better understand CALD and refugee groups across different ethnicities at more localised levels. These population groups also need to be assessed against a far wider range of social and economic indicators. The report argues more detailed research will provide a more accurate understanding of experiences of CALD young people and their challenges, and will provide the necessary baseline information for policy makers at different levels in government to make informed decisions for service delivery to these groups.

***Supporting Young People and Children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CLDB): Youth and Children Policy Statement (2007), Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)***

The Australian national peak body representing and advocating for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, FECCA, produced this *Youth and Child Policy*

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<sup>15</sup> Hugo, G (Prof); McDongall, K (Dr); Tan, G (Dr); Fiest, H (Dr), (2014), *The CALD Youth Census Report 2014*, Centre for Multicultural Youth, at pg. 41.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid at pg. 42.

*Statement* in 2007. Although the policy includes some outdated references to Federal Government programs it remains the only policy statement from FECCA on young people and children identified in this review.

**Aim:** FECCA policy objectives are as follows:

“Provision of services that encourage and support the development and cultural identity of young people and children of CLDB.

Ensuring that all youth and children’s services such as maternal and child health centres, youth centres, and legal and accommodation services be accessible, supportive, understanding and responsive to young people and children of CLDB.

Increased awareness in the community about issues that impact on the ability of young people and children from CLDB to participate fully in society.

Positive promotion of young people and children from CLDB in the media.

Recognition that young people and children from CLDB have valuable and positive contributions to make to society”<sup>17</sup>.

**Consultations undertaken with children:** CALD community representatives were consulted, but the statement does not specifically reference whether this included children and youth representatives.

**Recommendations:** A wide range of recommendations are included in this policy that FECCA states would positively address issues confronting CALD young people and children. FECCA’s key recommendations<sup>18</sup> are broadly as follows.

Services need to be delivered that effectively incorporate linguistic, cultural and faith diversity. Flexible service delivery models should be used and tailored to the specific community.

Increased funding and resources are needed to ensure adequate English language support is provided in all educational environments.

Apprenticeships and employment programs for CALD young people should be actively promoted with a particular focus on persons who have experienced limited or disrupted education.

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<sup>17</sup> *Supporting Young People and Children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CLDB): Youth and Children Policy Statement (2007)*, FECCA at pg. 5.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid* at pg. 9-12



Programs should be developed that improve access to the legal system and the cultural competence of the justice system.

A greater focus on housing and homelessness is necessary.

***Refugee Youth in Focus – National Forum on Young People from Refugee Backgrounds: Exploring Policy and Practice in the Australian Context (July 2013), Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network and University of Sydney Law School.***

The Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (Australia) held a national forum on refugee young people in partnership with the University of Sydney Law School, the Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS), Refugee Health NSW, Department of Education NSW, the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) and the Forum of Australian Services for Torture and Trauma (FASSTT).

**Aim:** The forum brought together over 300 representatives working across a range of sectors (including employment, health, education, settlement and law) with refugee young people, with the aim of exploring good or encouraging practice in service provision.

**Definition:** Focus of consultations was refugee young people, including asylum seekers, and humanitarian entrants (these cohort groups are defined under Australia's migrant law).

**Consultations undertaken with children:** Refugee young people attended the forum but the number of young people is not reported.

**Consultation Process:** Plenary sessions were structured around four themes: health, education and employment transitions, youth specific settlement services and migration law.

**Recommendations:** Key policy and advocacy priorities were identified for each thematic area and they are discussed in detail in the report. High level recommendations to Government that emerged from the consultations are as follows.

“Develop a national status report on how young people from refugee backgrounds are faring;

Provide a national framework for the care and support of children and young people who come to Australia as asylum seekers or refugees;

Establish a nationally consistent approach to ESL support in secondary schools;

Improve access and equity in relation to youth mental health services, including the development of targeted programs to better meet the needs of refugee young people; and

Provide improved transition support for unaccompanied humanitarian minors turning 18 and leaving out-of-home care"<sup>19</sup>.

These recommendations highlight key gaps in current service delivery, and represent the need for those in the sector and government (at all levels) to shift towards a more coordinated and consistent approach supporting children and young people settling and/or seeking asylum in Australia<sup>20</sup>.

**Olliff, L, (2009), *Amplifying the voices of young refugees*, Refugee Council of Australia**

This paper reports on the outcomes of a project undertaken by the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) in 2008-9.

**Aim of inquiry/research:** The project aimed to encourage refugee young people to identify the key issues that they want addressed at the national level.

**Methodology:** This research is based on a literature review, and a series of youth consultations undertaken in three Australian states and the Australian Capital Territory.

**Consultations undertaken with children:** A total of 43 young people aged between 12 to 25 years were consulted.

**Findings:** Findings from the literature review and youth consultations are reported separately.

**Feedback from consultations with young people**

Priority concerns identified by young people were: education and training; housing and homelessness; employment and financial problems; family issues; and the accessibility of services. Little additional information on these priorities is provided in the report.

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<sup>19</sup> *Refugee Youth in Focus – National Forum on Young People from Refugee Backgrounds: Exploring Policy and Practice in the Australian Context (July 2013)*, Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network and University of Sydney Law School at pg 23.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid at pg. 23.

## **Key findings from the literature review (thematically grouped).**

### **Theme: Education and training**

#### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Intensive English language programs on arrival (access, variations, length of time, resource limitations).

Supporting transitions into mainstream education.

Experiences of young people with disrupted education.

Impact of trauma on education and learning pathways.

Lack of targeted education and training pathways for post-compulsory school age young people and young people with severely disrupted education.

Young people being placed in school based on chronological age not ability.

Family and individual expectations vis-à-vis expectations of education and training system.

Families' limited understanding of Australian education and training system.

Homework support.

Financial issues for post-compulsory school aged young people in accessing higher education"<sup>21</sup>.

### **Theme: Police and legal issues**

#### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Poor relationship and lack of trust between police and refugee young people based on pre-settlement experiences.

Lack of information/ understanding about police, laws and justice system in Australia.

(Perceived) stereotyping and discrimination by police.

Culturally-appropriate practice at the local police level and within juvenile justice.

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<sup>21</sup> Olliff, L, (2009), *Amplifying the voices of young refugees*, Refugee Council of Australia, at pg 15.

Culturally-appropriate responses to violence.

(Perceptions of) gangs and responses.

Fines and other legal issues"<sup>22</sup>.

**Theme: Racism and discrimination**

**Main issues/concerns:**

"Explicit and implicit discrimination and racism.

Inadequate responses to discrimination and racism in school environment.

Discrimination in employment and housing.

Media representation of refugee young people.

Impact of racism on young person's self-esteem, health and settlement experiences"<sup>23</sup>.

**Theme: Housing and homelessness**

**Main issues/concerns:**

"Lack of (culturally appropriate) public housing options (e.g. for large families, young pregnant women, proximity to transport).

Difficulties accessing private rental market (referees, rental history, discrimination, financial barriers).

Overcrowding and sub-standard housing stock leading to youth homelessness.

Intergenerational conflict, settlement stresses and homelessness.

Access to crisis accommodation and accessible/inclusive housing support services for refugee young people.

Understanding tenants' rights and responsibilities"<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid at pg. 15

<sup>23</sup> Ibid at pg. 15

<sup>24</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

## **Theme: Employment and financial problems**

### **Main issue/concerns:**

"Lack of recognition of prior learning and/or training when accessing employment opportunities.

Lack of job seeking skills and understanding of employment pathways.

Experiences of racism and discrimination.

Pressure on some young people to leave school and work to support family.

Debt associated with sponsored humanitarian settlement (e.g. SHP visas).

Financial literacy and debts related to mobile phone and car loans, taking out personal loans, repaying fines etc"<sup>25</sup>.

## **Theme: Family issues**

### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Disruption to family relationships due to refugee experience and settlement (e.g. separated families, reunited families, changing roles).

Conflict arising from young people arriving with people other than parents (e.g. aunts, siblings, cousins).

Pressure to support family members overseas.

Role-reversal as young people interpret and translate for parents.

Intergenerational conflict (e.g. parents wishing young people to maintain 'traditions'; young people adopting practices of new culture/peers).

Lack of family-inclusive service system (particularly youth services).

Culturally-relevant parenting programs"<sup>26</sup>.

## **Theme: Transport**

### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Lack of knowledge about Australian laws (e.g. driving, public transport laws).

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

<sup>26</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

Cost and accessibility of public transport (particularly in outer metropolitan and regional areas).

Transport-related fines (due to restrictive costs, lack of understanding of system, driving unlicensed).

Barriers to obtaining driver's licence (cost of lessons, attaining required driving experience with limited access to fully-licensed drivers in community)<sup>27</sup>.

### **Theme: Health and wellbeing**

#### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Knowledge and information about available services.

Language and cultural barriers to accessing services.

Unresolved health issues due to pre-settlement experiences (e.g. illness or injury not treated adequately leading to complications, malnutrition).

Mental health and wellbeing issues impacted upon by family conflict, pressures at school, financial hardship, resettlement etc.

Torture and trauma recovery.

Sexual health issues: lack of information, early pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases."<sup>28</sup>

### **Theme: Alcohol and drugs**

#### **Main issues/concerns:**

Alcohol misuse (related to disengagement, family conflict, accessibility of alcohol and culture of drinking in Australia, homelessness, mental health issues)."<sup>29</sup>

### **Theme: Accessibility of services**

#### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Lack of policy frameworks at national (and state) level regarding linkages of refugee young people to services.

Accessibility of services includes:

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

<sup>28</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

<sup>29</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

visible accessibility (awareness of service);  
 physical accessibility (transport, location);  
 procedural accessibility (referral and registration processes);  
 economic accessibility (affordability);  
 psychological accessibility (beliefs and expectations of service users);  
 cultural accessibility (language, values and behavioural norms)."<sup>30</sup>

### **Theme: Sport and Recreation**

#### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Under-representation of refugee young people in structured sport programs and competitions.

Knowledge of sporting services and structures.

Family support of young people's participation in sport and recreation vis-à-vis education/employment.

Financial and transport barriers to participation.

Racism in sporting environment"<sup>31</sup>.

### **Theme: Understanding my own culture and identity**

#### **Main issues/concerns:**

"Acculturation.

Negotiating individual, peer, family and community expectations.

Access to community language education."<sup>32</sup>

Cornfoot, S and Francis, S (2007a). *Multicultural Youth in Australia: Settlement and Transition*, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Canberra.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

<sup>31</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

<sup>32</sup> Ibid at pg. 16

*Multicultural Youth in Australia: Settlement and Transition*, is the first in a series of two papers commissioned by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY).

**Aim of the inquiry/research:** This paper examines the needs of multicultural youth sub-groups (migrant, refugee and second generation young people) from CALD backgrounds in the areas of employment and training, health, family and community, settlement needs, education, youth participation, sport and recreation, and justice and law.

**Definition:** In this paper 'youth' refers to persons aged 12 to 25. 'Multi-cultural or CALD' is used to refer to "*culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD/CLD/CLDB), including those born overseas (refugees or migrants) and second (or later) generations*"<sup>33</sup>.

**Methodology:** This paper is based on a literature review; programming experience gained by the Centre for Multi-cultural Youth (CMYI); and feedback from consultations conducted in each state or territory with representatives from a range of non-government and government service providers.

**Findings:** The report highlights a number of areas where additional support is necessary to ensure settlement and transition for newly arrived young people is effective. Firstly, settlement is found to require a number of critical elements to be effective (ie, stable housing and income; access to health services; access to education and training; living free from discrimination; solid support networks; having a positive sense of self and identity; feeling a capacity to influence their future; and having the confidence to access services). The report highlights that refugee and migrant young people are likely to need additional support to help them participate in social and political life, to access appropriate housing and transport, and access education and training. Further, this study found culturally appropriate services are particularly lacking in the areas of mental health, drug and alcohol support and sexual health.

**Cornfoot, S and Francis, S (2007a). *Working with Multicultural Youth: Programs, Strategies and Future Directions*, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Canberra.**

*Working with Multicultural Youth: Programs, Strategies and Future Directions* is the second paper in the series commissioned by ARACY.

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<sup>33</sup> Cornfoot, S and Francis, S (2007a), *Multicultural Youth in Australia: Settlement and Transition*, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Canberra at pg.



**Aim of the inquiry/research:** To provide an overview of successful strategies and programs operating across Australia for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

**Definition:** This paper adopts the same definition as the first paper in the series.

**Methodology:** This paper is based on the first report, a desk based review of project documentation, experience of the CMYI, and consultations/interviews with government and non-government service providers.

**Findings:** The report concludes that the multicultural youth sector is generally under-resourced, fragmented and lacking coordination. The cause of this situation is believed to be the ad hoc and short-term nature of project funding, and the lack of social policy frameworks at federal and state level that address multicultural youth. In terms of programming, this research study found there is very little base line data available to inform the design of programs/services, and few evaluations of programs have been undertaken.

**Recommendations:** To address substantial gaps in service provision the report argues there is a need for broad strategies to strengthen the development and implementation of services for multicultural young people. The report recommends a range of broad strategies be implemented that cover: the development of a national refugee youth settlement strategy; development of an on-arrival case co-ordination model; strengthening youth orientation services and increasing information access; increasing opportunities for youth participation; strengthening research and data collection; and establishing a formal policy driven voice on multicultural youth issues at the national level.

**Sims, M; Guilfoyle, A; Kulisa, J; Targowska, A and Teather, S (2008).**  
*Achieving Outcomes for Children and Families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds*, Centre for Social Research, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia for the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Canberra

**Aim of inquiry/research:** To identify strategies for supporting successful inclusion into Australian society of children and their families from CALD backgrounds.

**Methodology:** This paper is based on a review of international literature, and telephone interviews conducted with agencies working with CALD children and families around Australia.

**Findings:** A range of successful programs supporting CALD families across Australia were identified. Some of these programs operate culturally specific services – these types of services were found to be best delivered by staff of the same cultural group and are most effective where participants have experienced high levels of trauma. Successful programs with a multicultural focus were identified and found to be most

effective where staff are members of some of the cultural groups participating, but not all staff need to be. Services with this type of focus need to be flexible to adjust to the different needs of participating cultural groups. Some mainstream services were also found to offer effective programs. These types of programmes were found to be most effective when they are implemented in partnership with other organisations that are culturally specific or multicultural (i.e. agencies with the requisite cultural competence). All programs considered effective by this study use strengths-based approaches that aim to empower project beneficiaries.

**Recommendations:** The report makes six key recommendations in regard to mainstream, culturally specific and multicultural service agencies, namely:

“Receive adequate funding for cultural competency and community work training and the physical resources to both develop close links with communities and employ well qualified and experienced staff.

Work to acquire an understanding of the way of working required through staff training and development at ALL levels from management to community-based workers.

Focus on ensuring that all staff are culturally competent through staff training and development at ALL levels from management to community-based workers.

Work in partnership with community members, including recognising and strengthening the relational style of informal community leaders, especially women.

Work in true partnership - culturally specific, multicultural and mainstream services working with government agencies to develop social networks within local communities as well as links/bridges between the communities and the outside resources.

Develop models of clustering services which both suit the needs of individual communities and allow for community members to easily access the necessary services”<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Sims, M; Guilfoyle, A; Kulisa, J; Targowska, A and Teather, S (2008). *Achieving Outcomes for Children and Families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds*, Centre for Social Research, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia for the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Canberra at pg. 25.

**Bartels, L., (June 2011) *Crime prevention programs for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia (Research in Practice no.18)*, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra.**

**Aim of the inquiry/research:** This publication examines key criminal justice issues and protective factors relevant to CALD communities, and documents good practice programs from around Australia that counter CALD social disadvantage.

**Findings:** The research found a lack of secure and long-term funding is one of the biggest challenges facing service delivery in this area. Most of the programs referenced in this report are only funded on a short-term basis. The report argues that it takes time to establish effective programs as relationships need to be established between CALD communities and law enforcement agencies. Funders need to recognise the time required to take a program from an establishment phase to an effective and sustainable program.

This publication includes examples of Australian good practice programs in dealing with CALD communities in relation to criminal justice issues<sup>35</sup>. A quick summary of noteworthy WA programs referenced in this publication are included below:

**Footy with the Fuzz - Police Multicultural Friendship Games:** As the name suggests this initiative comprises of football games that aim to build positive relationships between CALD young people and the police. Matches have been run since November 2009. The author of this literature review has not been able to confirm whether games are ongoing. This initiative won the 2009 'Community Event of the Year' Western Australian Sport and Recreation Industry Award, and its organisers were acknowledged by OMI in their Multicultural Community Service Awards in 2009.

**Law of the Land:** This project involved the production of a DVD that introduces new entrants to Australian law. Over 7,500 copies have been distributed since the DVD was launched in September 2008. The DVD is available in English and 12 community languages (Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Burmese, Cantonese, Dari, Dinka, French, Mandarin, Kirundi, Somali and Swahili). It is intended to be used either as a self-education tool or by service agencies for new arrivals.

**Reel Connections:** Reel connections was a community arts program for Indigenous and CALD young people to learn about the law. Short films were produced as part of

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<sup>35</sup> Examples are drawn primarily from the 2006–10 Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards (ACVPA), and case studies from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (2011) *Taking The Initiative: Police Working With Australia's Diverse Communities* website.

the project, including "a film on the consequences of driving without a driver's licence, and a film which explores the role of the police in Australia"<sup>36</sup>. The project was independently evaluated and found to be highly effective by project stakeholders. The initiative received a range of awards, including from OMI. Yet despite the awards the initiative was not funded post 2010.

## Other Australian State Publications

**Lawson, D and Dutertre, (2010), *Finding home in Victoria*, Centre for Multicultural Youth, Victoria.**

*Finding home in Victoria* was produced by the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) with funding provided by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the Victorian Office for Youth.

**Aim of inquiry/research:** This paper examines the factors that place and maintain refugee and migrant young people at greater risk of homelessness, and the capacity of the current housing and homelessness service systems to meet their needs.

**Methodology:** This paper is based on current policy and literature on homelessness, consultations with housing and homelessness services, multicultural and youth sector workers, and young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. This paper also drew upon the wealth of experience CMY has gained delivering a project called Reconnect Newly-Arrived and Refugee Specialist Services. Through this project CMY provides support to newly-arrived and refugee young people at risk of homelessness.

**Consultations with children and young people:** Young people from refugee backgrounds linked to CMY's Reconnect program were consulted.

**Findings:** One of the biggest problems facing young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in Victoria is accessing safe and affordable housing. This cohort group of young people is estimated to be six to ten times more likely than other groups of young people to be at risk of homelessness. One of the leading causes of homelessness for refugee young people is family breakdown. There are a range of factors unique to the refugee experience that increase the risk of family tension and conflict, namely "the impact of trauma and loss, disrupted and re-configured family relationships, overcrowded housing, increased responsibilities and high expectations for young people, and differing rates of acculturation."

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<sup>36</sup> Bartels, L., (June 2011) *Crime prevention programs for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia (Research in Practice no. 18)*, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra at pg. 9.

The research found the true extent of the problem remains partially hidden as many refugee and migrant young people are not accessing housing or homelessness services and therefore do not appear in formal data. They are instead moving around couch-surfing.

Youth housing options were found to be limited, and often not culturally appropriate for young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds. The situation is even worse for newly arrived young people with no Australian rental history.

Despite the significant numbers of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds affected or at risk of homelessness, this group is not specifically referred to in Commonwealth and Victorian Government policies addressing youth homelessness.

**Recommendations:** Acknowledging the limitations of housing and homelessness services, this report recommends a range of ways the system could potentially be improved to ensure equal access to housing is available. Recommendations for improving the system involve a combination of early intervention, expansion of services to regional areas, workforce development, increased collaboration between agencies, and advocacy with Commonwealth and State Governments. Further, the paper recommends longitudinal research is funded to better understand the scope and nature of refugee and migrant youth homelessness.

## **Programming Initiatives for CALD children and young people**

This literature review identified a range of Australian programming initiatives targeting CALD young people. Far fewer programs were identified targeting CALD children. The vast majority of programs identified target newly arrived refugee young people (i.e., refugee young people who have been in Australia for less than 5 years). These specialised programs are implemented by a range of NGO service providers funded by the Commonwealth Government.

In this section of the literature review programming initiatives are grouped according to topic for clarity. Program selection has been made on the basis of: (1) priority given to identifying and reviewing Western Australian programs; and (2) reviewing programs referred to in the literature as good practice and/or programs in high demand. While intended to be accurate, this is not a comprehensive list of programs/services available.

### **Western Australian Programs**

#### **Programming initiatives with a broad scope:**

Integrated Services Centres (Koondoola ISC and Thornlie ISC), Edmund Rice Centre  
Mirrabooka

The Edmund Rice Centre runs two 'Integrated Services Centres' at the Intensive English Centres (IEC) at Thornlie Primary School and Koondoola Primary School. These 'Integrated Services Centres' are described as providing holistic and culturally appropriate services. They aim to support humanitarian entrants and refugee students and their families with regard to health and social wellbeing. Each centre has a Multicultural Community Liaison Worker and Administration Officer. Their role is to provide support and advocacy, assist with referrals to other service providers and run information sessions on topics relevant to their clients.

### **Newly Arrived Youth Services (NAYSS), ASeTTS**

NAYSS has been referred to in several WA research studies as a high demand program. The program is funded by the Commonwealth Government. Under NAYSS, ASeTTS works with young people (12 to 21 years) who have arrived in Australia in the previous five years and who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Through the initiative ASeTTS provides counselling, information, community development activities and referral services in the northern suburbs of Perth.

### **Families in Cultural Transition Program (WA), ASeTTS**

This program was first developed in New South Wales by the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), and then replicated in other states including WA and the Northern Territory. It comprises of a series of workshops designed to provide refugees with useful information to aid settlement. Participants are given an overview of the Australian political system, employment and family law information, and information about financial management. Bicultural facilitators are trained to conduct the program in small groups within their own communities.

### **Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (WA), Convened by Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia**

The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia is due to take over from the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre in November 2014 as the convener of the Western Australian chapter of the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN), which is a national network. The MYAN is the only nationally recognised policy and advocacy group specifically dedicated to multicultural youth issues. The MYAN believes that "a targeted or specialist approach to policy and service delivery is essential to support the social, cultural and economic participation of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in Australia"<sup>37</sup>. MYAN provides advice to the

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<sup>37</sup> See further [www.myan.org.au](http://www.myan.org.au)

Federal government through policy submissions and representation on advisory bodies, and promotes the needs and issues impacting upon CALD young people through policy and advocacy programs. MYANWA feeds into the national level work of the network. MYANWA hosts regular meetings for CALD young people and service providers.

### **Mirrabooka *Communities for Children (CfC)* initiative, The Smith Family**

The Smith Family is a Facilitating Partner of the Australian Government's Mirrabooka *Communities for Children (CfC)* initiative. This initiative targets children aged 0 to 12 years and their families in Mirrabooka. The Smith Family contracts a range of NGO community partners to implement prevention and early intervention services. It is not CALD community specific, but given its geographic target area covers the Northern Perth suburbs of Balga, Westminster, Girrawheen, Koondoola and Mirrabooka, many of the services are designed with CALD families in mind. For example, the initiative funds the Supporting Jobless Families Project, which is implemented by Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Centre and MercyCare.

## **Education and training programs**

### **Driver Education, Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka**

The Edmund Rice Centre in Mirrabooka runs a Driver Education Program for humanitarian entrants who have been in Australia between six months and five years.

### **After school homework/tutor programs**

There are a number of NGOs providing after school homework programs, including, but not limited to:

**Fremantle Multicultural Centre (FMC):** The Fremantle Multicultural Centre in February 2014 established an after school homework/tutor program. The program is supported by a small group of skilled volunteers.

**The Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC)** runs a program called the Homework Hut which is a free after school homework program. The program relies on volunteers, and it is run in a range of community and school locations. According to MMRC's website current program locations include Greenwood Senior High School, Aranmore College, Mirrabooka Senior High School, Clarkson Library and Mirrabooka Library.

### **Children in Cultural Transition (CICT) Program, ASeTTS**

The Children in Cultural Transition (CICT) program is funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) under the Settlement Grants Program (SGP). The CICT is an educational program designed to support primary school aged

children from a refugee background to transition successfully into mainstream schooling. The program provides students will an opportunity to participate in a small group with students from the same school either after school for 3 hours per week for eight weeks, or during school holidays for three hours a day for one week. In these small groups students can learn more about school life in Western Australia, and talk through any particular concerns they may be experiencing with school. Programs are designed to be tailored to individual schools and the community they are located in. Groups are run by trained facilitators from similar cultures. The ASeTTS website states broadly the content of the program is:

- Understanding Australian culture
- Coping with discrimination and bullying
- Understanding the school environment and developing organisational skills
- Appreciating the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise
- Strengthening families and friendships
- Identifying and accessing community links.

## **Family and Community Engagement Programs**

### **Strength to Strength (WA), ASeTTS**

Strength to Strength is a joint program between ASeTTS and Relationships Australia WA. Its goal is to help refugee families build stronger relationships and enhance the lives of individuals, families and communities. Strength to Strength provides counselling, information, community development activities, referral and advocacy for families.

### **Community Parks Project, Anglicare WA and The Smith Family**

The Community Parks Project is one of a small number of programs identified that target very young children (ages 0 to 8 years). The project provides activities in local parks across the suburbs of Girrawheen, Koondoola, Balga, Westminster and Mirrabooka aimed at supporting participants' cognitive, physical, emotional and social skills. The activities are supported by qualified staff who provide a supportive environment for children and their parents to play together. One of the key aims of this project is to reduce social isolation. The project has been reportedly successful as it provides a range of activities that are culturally appropriate (puppets, story books, dolls, puzzles etc.) and people come to activities as they wish. Activities are free of charge. Language reportedly is not a significant issue as there is no need for parents or children to have to read any written material or engage in conversation if they do not want to.



### **Multicultural Supported Playgroups (WA), The Gowrie WA**

The Gowrie's Multicultural Supported Playgroups provide family support for migrant and refugee families with young children living in the south east corridor of Perth. The project aims to assist families acquire knowledge, skills and strategies that are supportive of early years development, to reduce social isolation, support social relationships and improve participants' access to mainstream and CALD specific community services. The project includes three family play and learning sessions per week in Gosnells and Carlisle. The model used for each of the sessions is one hour play with mothers and children together and one hour of activities for the mothers to attend while their children are cared for in the playgroup. The children are provided with developmentally appropriate play experiences and both positive interactions and guidance strategies are modelled. The women participate in an exercise programme and a conversational English class, as well as parent information sessions and visits to local community facilities. In addition, the program collaborates with the Gosnells Women's Health Service project that has the resources to work with individual CALD families and to link them to services in the area.

### **Multicultural Playgroups, Communicare**

Communicare runs multicultural playgroups in Bentley and Cannington for children aged birth to 5 years and their families during school terms. The program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. The aim of the program is to strengthen attachment between parents and children through play.

### **Multicultural Parent and Child Group, ASeTTS, WA**

ASeTTS runs a multicultural playgroup that meets every Friday morning at their offices in Northbridge. The group encourages parents to play with their children and build social relationships with peers.

## **Homelessness programs**

### **CALD Children's Therapeutic Support Service, Fremantle Multicultural Centre (FMC)**

The Fremantle Multicultural Centre (FMC) runs a program specific to CALD children aged 4 to 14 years of age called the CALD Children's Therapeutic Support Services program. The program provides intensive case management support to children who, with their family, are living in supported accommodation as a result of having experienced homelessness. Program participants are primarily supported on an outreach basis to overcome the trauma and disruption resulting from their homeless experiences. Services range from family counselling, mentoring, protective behaviours sessions and assistance to access extracurricular activities and support in

connecting with local community services. Children have also been assisted with educational needs, health and disability support, advocacy and transport. Assistance is also provided in varying degrees to the parents and other family members of the referred children.

## **Sport and arts programs**

### **Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre**

The Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC) through its youth Settlement Grant Program run a range of sports, arts and youth development activities that aim to help young people integrate into the Australian community. The target group for these activities are young people from 8 to 25 years from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds that have lived in Australia for less than 5 years. A brief overview of the different activities rolled out by the MMRC are included below.

**Sports activities:** MMRC run regular sporting activities after school and on school holidays in different geographic areas around Perth, including, but not limited to, basketball, soccer, tennis and dance.

**School Art Program:** MMRC run a 5 week art/life skills program where CALD children and young people through art address issues of emotional wellbeing. The School Art Program aims to engage different primary and high schools with Intensive English Centres (IECs), English as Second Language (ESL) and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). The MMRC website states the following schools have participated in the program: Eddystone Primary School; Koondoola Primary School; Mirrabooka Primary School; Nollamara Primary School; Hudson Park Primary School; Balga Senior High School; and Greenwood College.

**'Star Search' Program:** Star Search is a performing arts program rolled out annually to showcase the talents of young people aged 8 to 25 years from a migrant background. Auditions are held at various schools and community centres to identify singers, dancers and musicians. Performers selected through the auditions process are mentored, coached and counselled by professional musicians, choreographers and dancers over a period of two months leading up to a Grand Finale .

**CALD Newsletter Project:** MMRC support a bi-annual newsletter project run by CALD young people (aged 12 to 25 years). The program provides an opportunity for young people to write about social, economic and other issues that concern them, and raise awareness in the broader community about issues affecting new and emerging communities in Perth.

## Youth leadership

### **Youth Leadership Program, The Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka**

The Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka runs a leadership program for CALD young people that aims to encourage young people to become good community role models. Participants in the program are given training in a range of areas including art, sports coaching, media, life-skills and leadership. Only limited detail on program content was available on the Centre's website.

## Racism and bullying

### **WA Department of Education, *Countering Racism: A Planning and Evaluation Tool for Western Australian Schools***

The WA Department of Education with input from the OMI developed a planning and evaluation tool kit in 2010 aimed at helping schools counter racial discrimination. The toolkit is designed to assist all elements of the public school system to reflect on current practices, plan changes and develop inclusive environments, implement changes to address racism and evaluate how effectively they are being implemented. The Countering Racism Tool is structured around six areas of action consistent with *Racism. No way* (for information about this initiative see [www.racismnoway.com.au](http://www.racismnoway.com.au)), namely: policies and guidelines; curriculum; student support; training and development; parent and community involvement; and reporting.

## Victorian Programs

The Victorian Programs (as per below) are included in this review on the basis that they have been referred to in numerous publications as good practice examples of CALD young people programs.

## Law and justice

### **Youth Referral and Independent Person Program, Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)**

The Youth Referral and Independent Person Program (YRIPP) was established in 2004 and is a Victorian State Government funded initiative of the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) and the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, delivered in partnership with Community Legal Centres, UnitingCare and Victoria Police. YRIPP operates in 129 police stations across Victoria. YRIPP provides volunteer "Independent Persons" (IPs) to support young people in police custody prior to and during police interviews. Based on early intervention at the point of police contact,

YRIPP also aims to divert young people, including refugee and newly arrived young people, from progression to higher levels of the criminal justice system.

## **Education and training**

### **Opening the School Gate: Engaging culturally and linguistically diverse parents in schools, CMY**

Opening the School Gate is a resource kit designed to provide teachers with strategies to engage parents and families of students from refugee and migrant backgrounds to fully participate in their children's education at school. The kit is also intended to strengthen the capacity of schools and community agencies to work with and support culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families in a culturally appropriate way. Opening the School Gate: Engaging CLD Parents in Schools can be retrieved free at [www.cmyi.net.au/ResourcesfortheSector#TrainingAndResource](http://www.cmyi.net.au/ResourcesfortheSector#TrainingAndResource).

### **School's In for Refugees, Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (VIC)**

School's In for Refugees is a resource tool kit to aid schools in responding to the needs of their refugee students. It highlights the importance of creating a school setting which is welcoming and inclusive of parents of refugee students and the students themselves. It suggests policies and practices which a school might adopt in creating such a setting, and a curriculum which supports the learning of refugee and other students.

## Information Sources

### Websites:

The following government, non-government and academic institutions' websites were reviewed.

- Office of Multicultural Interests (WA)
- Department of Social Services (Cth)
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Cth)
- Department of Families and Community Services (Cth)
- Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (WA and national)
- ASETTS WA
- Anglicare WA
- Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka
- Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre WA
- Fremantle Migrant Resource Centre WA
- Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)
- Centre for Multicultural Youth
- The Smith Family
- Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
- Australian Human Rights Commission
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Kids Helpline
- Murdoch University
- University of Western Australia
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