

**“NOT DROWNING, WAVING”*: CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY
DIVERSE YOUNG PEOPLE
AT RISK IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**



Office of Multicultural Interests

2009

* Adapted from Stevie Smith (1956), “Not Waving but Drowning”.

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Not Drowning, Waving: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Young People at Risk in Western Australia” was developed to assist the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) to identify emerging issues that may place young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds at risk of personal, social and economic disadvantage in our community. It aims to identify:

- established and emerging issues for CaLD young people in WA;
- policies, programs and services currently addressing these issues; and
- some of the approaches to improving service delivery to this demographic that have been suggested through consultation with CaLD young people themselves.

First released as a discussion paper in late 2007, it has been subsequently updated to incorporate additional initiatives identified through feedback received from Western Australian State government agencies, universities and non-government organisations. It provides a meta-analysis of research reports, consultations and strategies to address issues relating to CaLD young people. It references relevant programs currently underway in Western Australia and other jurisdictions, and suggests strategies for the future.

While in many respects CaLD young people share the same, or similar, challenges as the general population of young people, key findings of this Discussion Paper revealed that a range of specific issues may place CaLD young people at increased risk of personal, social and economic disadvantage. These issues generally cluster around the following areas:

- **Home** – intergenerational 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 and clubs, and a lack of engagement with CaLD communities by sporting organisations, clubs and leisure centres.
- **Health** – lack of awareness of or willingness to access services related to mental, sexual and substance abuse issues.
- **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.

There is a strong need for additional specialised support for CaLD young people and their families in the areas of health and community services, education and career advice, academic learning support, and the transition from education to employment. Numerous strategies and projects to address some of these issues are currently underway. Significant gaps in service delivery remain, however, and without a coordinated strategy, the impact of current and future initiatives is likely to be limited.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Paper, the following definitions are used.

YOUTH/YOUNG PEOPLE – People between the ages of 12 and 25.¹

ETHNIC GROUP – A group that perceives itself and is perceived by others to be different in some combination of the following traits: language, religion, race and ancestral homeland with its related culture.²

CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CaLD) – in the context of this Paper, culturally and linguistically diverse refers to the wide range of cultural groups and individuals that make up the Australian population. It includes groups and individuals who differ according to religion, race, language and ethnicity. For ease, CaLD is commonly used as an abbreviation for culturally and linguistically diverse..³

RISK FACTORS – The social, environmental, psychological and physical pressures that can place young people at risk of adversity.⁴

IMMIGRANT – An individual who leaves his/her country of origin and relocates to a new country for a variety of economic, social, political and personal reasons.

PREJUDICE – Unfounded opinions or attitudes relating to an individual or group that represents them unfavourably or negatively. Prejudice may be directed at a person on the basis of race, skin colour, language, religion or culture.

RACISM – A belief or ideology that creates artificial social divisions on the basis of characteristics or abilities specific to a particular “race” which distinguishes it as being either superior or inferior to another “race” or “races”.

REFUGEE – Entrants to Australia under the Commonwealth Government’s Humanitarian Entrant Program, including the “refugee and humanitarian” and “family” streams. Refugees do not choose to leave their countries, but are defined as individuals who,

owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, [are] outside the country of [their] nationality, and [are] unable to or, owing to such fear, [are] unwilling to avail [themselves] of the protection of that country.⁵

NEW AND EMERGING COMMUNITIES – A term used to describe ethnic communities that are small in number, have recently settled in Australia and often lack established family networks, support systems, community structures and resources, relative to more established communities.

¹ Office for Children and Youth (2006).

² J.M. Yinger (1981). Cited in H. Adibi. (2003). “Identity and Cultural Change: The Case of Iranian Youth in Australia”. Paper presented to the Social Change in the 21st Century Conference, Centre for Social Change Research, Queensland University of Technology.

³ Office of Multicultural Interests (2008). A list of working definitions is available at http://www.omi.wa.gov.au/omi_terminology.asp

⁴ L. Andrews and A.M. Sibbel. (2003). *Whose community is it anyway? The Mirrabooka community action project*. Perth: Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of Crime Prevention.

⁵ United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951).

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Youth is a period of great and rapid emotional, physical and intellectual change.⁶ For some young people, the process of gaining financial independence, beginning to make autonomous decisions, achieving a level of self-awareness, and taking on a range of responsibilities can be fraught with confusion and difficult challenges. As the submission to the National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention, made by the Victorian Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (CMYI), noted, the period between 12 and 25 years of age is a significant one in any young person's development, irrespective of their cultural background, incorporating a progression towards adult life, greater independence and an increase in responsibility level.⁷

For CaLD young people, however, and particularly for those with a refugee background or who are newly arrived in Australia, the impact of these changes is even more significant. Issues of particular relevance for CaLD young people include breakdown of the family unit as a result of war and conflict; displacement from home country and culture, and inter-generational conflict arising from refugee experiences and life in a country with often markedly different values.⁸

According to the 2006 ABS Census, there are 383,772 people between the ages of 12 and 25 living in Western Australia, 93,745 of whom were born overseas and almost 71,000 of whom speak a language other than English at home.⁹ The majority of CaLD young people aged 15-24 years (41, 829) live in the metropolitan area, comprising 15 per cent of the total in this age group (276,012). Only 1,280 (0.46 per cent) live in rural and regional areas.

Since the early 1990s, arrivals from Africa and the Middle East (including Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq) have been a rapidly increasing proportion of all Humanitarian arrivals to Australia.¹⁰ Figures from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) indicate that, between June 2000 and June 2007, 9,302 Humanitarian entrants arrived in WA.¹¹ Of these, 2,843, or 31 per cent, were aged between 12 and 24.

Research and community concerns suggest that youth from certain CaLD groups are considerably disadvantaged and disenfranchised in the community. CaLD young people are not only vulnerable to the considerable risk factors that impact on youth in general, but may also be susceptible to a number of others particular to their demographic, such as marginalisation, the social effects of visible difference, racism and stereotyping. As a result, some of these young people may be perceived as being "at risk" – that is, exposed to factors that may increase the likelihood of engaging in "problem" (antisocial) behaviours.¹² These include drug and alcohol abuse, group violence, school delinquency, and other antisocial and potentially detrimental activity. Issues such as these may have both a short and long-term impact on the wellbeing of the community in general and the individual in particular.

⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2003). *Australia's youth: Their health and wellbeing* (No. PHE 50). Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

⁷ Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues. (2002). *Submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention*. Retrieved 20 July 2007, from http://www.cmyi.net.au/uploads/downloads/cmyi/pdfs/Publications/Submissions/HREOC_submission.pdf

⁸ Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues. (2002). *Submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission*.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics – 2006 Census.

¹⁰ Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007).

¹¹ Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007).

¹² Americans for the Arts. "YouthArts Toolkit – Arts Programs for Youth At Risk." Retrieved on 23 September 2008, from <http://www.americansforthearts.org/youtharts/glossary.asp>.

Increasingly, at-risk behaviour for CaLD young people is being recognised by policy makers as being a result of complex changes in economic, social and cultural factors. Research consistently points to influences such as economic inequality, poor education, child abuse, dysfunctional family life, inter and intra group violence, unemployment and community breakdown as the main contributing factors that affect outcomes for CaLD young people. Risk factors for CaLD young people interrelate to affect outcomes in a range of areas, including education, employment, physical and mental health, accommodation, violent relationships, and offending behaviours. They may result in extreme social and economic deprivation, family conflict, lack of commitment to education, and alienation.¹³

Like any other demographic, the needs of CaLD young people are diverse and, accordingly, a variety of cross-departmental approaches are necessary to address them. The needs of newly-arrived CaLD young people, for example, are different to the needs of second or third-generation CaLD young people. Refugee and Humanitarian entrants, and Family Stream entrants, experience different issues from young people who enter with their parents under the Skilled Migration stream. At-risk behaviour associated with CaLD young people, furthermore, is not limited to those born outside Australia. Second and third-generation Australians are susceptible to a complex set of issues that often overlap with those of their first-generation peers. These issues include intergenerational conflict and identity issues, as well as risk factors associated with marginalisation and exclusion.

For each of these sub groups, there will be shared issues with young people in general, with other CaLD young people and with one particular group. As the 2003 Mirrabooka Community Action Plan (MCAP) report *Whose Community is it Anyway?* noted,

their needs and strengths vary depending on a range of factors. They do however all share being adolescents who are going through this developmental phase. How they experience and express this stage is impacted on by their culture. Being of CaLD background is not necessarily a risk, in fact many aspects of their culture work to protect them and guide them through adolescence. In addition, CaLD youth do not perceive they have insurmountable obstacles because they are not from the mainstream culture. However... a number of issues... place them at risk and those areas... may require practical assistance to help them successfully take their place in mainstream society.¹⁴

Strategies for young people at risk often address negative forms of at-risk behaviour such as antisocial conduct and crime. These strategies often ignore the complex nature of the underlying factors faced by CaLD young people and consequently have limited lasting impact. The failure of such measures has pointed to the need for preventative strategies to address and seek to counteract the risk factors that prevent proactive and constructive engagement in the community.

Effective service provision for young people is an ongoing challenge for Government agencies and community organisations. In recent years, agencies have begun to realise the benefits of empowering young people to participate in the planning, development and implementation of youth programs and services. The rights of young people under 18 to participate in decisions affecting their own destiny have historically been controversial, with a central issue being whether the best interests of the child are better served by focusing exclusively on welfare, or allowing children to shape their own decision-making processes.¹⁵

¹³ Americans for the Arts. "YouthArts Toolkit – Arts Programs for Youth At Risk."

¹⁴ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose community is it anyway?*

¹⁵ Geraldine Van Bueren. (1995). *The International Law on the Rights of the Child*. Vol. 35, 308, *International Studies on Human Rights*. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers. Cited in L. Beinart. (2005). *Children as Agents of Peace: Conflict transformation, peacebuilding and track two diplomacy amongst children in Israel/Palestine*. Doctoral

Participation has traditionally been viewed as an adult activity reflecting doubts about children's capacity to engage with political processes.

However, the energies of young people can potentially be harnessed to achieve positive ends. Ignoring or marginalising this energy in contemporary communities can contribute and has contributed to aimlessness, restlessness, boredom and delinquency. Around the world, urban societies in particular have begun to respond by establishing infrastructure that redirects, focuses and aims to prevent such tendencies.¹⁶

This paper draws on research and consultation forums conducted with and by CaLD young people in Western Australia since 2004. It highlights both the issues and strategies identified by CaLD young people and initiatives undertaken to date by both government and non-government agencies.

4.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The paper has benefited greatly from contributions made by members of OMI's Ethnic Youth Advisory Group and the following organisations.

Community Vision Inc.
Curtin University of Technology
University of Western Australia
Murdoch University
Curriculum Council of WA
Department for Communities
Department of the Attorney General
Department of Corrective Services
Department of Culture and Arts
Department of Education and Training
Department of Employment and Consumer Protection
Department of Health
Department of Indigenous Affairs
Department of Local Government and Regional Development
Department of Sport and Recreation
Department of Trade and Finance
Drug and Alcohol Office
Office of Crime Prevention
Office of Equal Employment Opportunity
Western Australian Electoral Commission
Western Australia Police

dissertation, University of Western Australia. Retrieved from <http://theses.library.uwa.edu.au/adt-WU2006.0072/public/02whole.pdf>.

¹⁶ Beinart. (2005). *Children as Agents of Peace*.

5.0 ISSUES

As the period in which youth begins, adolescence involves dramatic physiological, intellectual and emotional growth and change involving a search for a compromise between self-image and the social roles and behaviour accepted in society. This is referred to as the formation of identity, a process which may be more difficult for young CaLD migrants due to the dual social world they inhabit and the competing cultural goals and expectations with which they may be faced.¹⁷ It has been suggested that young CaLD migrants and refugees may respond to this challenge in four ways, that is, by:

1. actively maintaining the culture and language of their parents and identifying primarily with the culture of their country of origin;
2. becoming part of the mainstream culture and discarding their cultural heritage;
3. becoming alienated from both their own culture and the dominant culture; and
4. reconciling their identity by selecting and adapting aspects of both cultures and developing a “bicultural” identity.

The last option is considered to be the most successful in the longer term.

Potential risk factors that increase the likelihood of young people experiencing harmful physical, psychological and social consequences include both individual, and social and environmental, factors. These may be offset by congruent protective factors, below.¹⁸

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	Individual
Low self-esteem, poor self-concept ¹⁹	Self esteem
Isolation, anomie (social instability caused by erosion of standards and values)	Academic and sporting achievement
Exposure to adverse life events	Connectedness
Limited English language proficiency	Coping skills
Acculturative stress	Religious faith
Boredom	
Social and Environmental	Social and Environmental
Unemployment, lack of access to education	Access to educational, training and employment activities
Limited networks	Social advantage
Lack of financial resources	Social networks and community participation
Racism and discrimination	Freedom from discrimination
Disrupted education	Feelings of safety and support in the community
Cultural isolation	Strong feelings of cultural identity and ethnic pride
Family breakdown, intergenerational conflict	Stable family environment

While some CaLD young people in WA are particularly vulnerable to these risks, others benefit from strong protective factors. As the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS) report *Wealth of All Nations – Identification of strategies to assist refugee young people in transition to Independence* noted, in relation to refugees in particular,

¹⁷ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹⁸ Ibid. Adapted from Refugee Review Advisory Council. *Strategy For Refugee Young People* (2002). Retrieved on 16 August 2002, from <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/pdf/rys.pdf> .

¹⁹ Self-concept refers to the awareness of one self, usually permanent self attributes such as personality, knowledge of one's own skills and abilities and of one's physical features.

[y]oung refugees, like young people generally, tend to be resilient and adaptive. They are proven survivors and in most cases demonstrate an overwhelming and unambiguous commitment to Australia and making the best of their new home... An exclusive focus on the needs of refugees, without taking into account their capacities and determination, tends to generate an overly pessimistic discourse which underestimates the potential for a well-planned service response to assist young refugees make a successful transition to independence in Australia.²⁰

A range of social, environmental, emotional and developmental factors have been identified, through various avenues of research, as having a significant influence on the degree to which CaLD young people are able to successfully participate in society. The ensuing section discusses these influences in detail.

²⁰ L. Coventry, C. Guerra, D. MacKenzie, S. Pinkney. (2002) *Wealth of All Nations – Identification of strategies to assist refugee young people in transition to independence – a report to the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme*. Hobart: Australian Clearing House for Youth Studies.

5.1 HOME

Intercultural and Intergenerational Conflict

Intergenerational conflict is an experience common to many families resettling in Australia. Parents often expect their children to maintain traditional values and roles from their home country, while young people can feel pressure directly from friends, and indirectly from the general cultural context, to adopt “Western” or “Australian” values and roles.

CaLD young people may experience conflict balancing family expectations to succeed within the dominant Australian culture, with maintaining traditional cultural values. These issues may be experienced by both first and second-generation young people. Conflict can occur within families whose members are all new arrivals in the country, as well as within families whose children were born in Australia.

Often, new arrivals must learn a new behavioural repertoire that is suitable for the new Australian cultural context, which may be accompanied by some “cultural shedding” where traditional and newly acquired cultural practices and values conflict.²¹ This process has the potential to create divisions between CaLD young people and their parents and/or community. Issues include:

- clashes between parents and children regarding modes of dress and behaviour;
- differences in child-rearing practices between cultures, in particular, a greater sense of independence amongst young people in Australia compared with some other countries; and
- disrupted power structures amongst families due to the disparate speeds at which parents and children adapt to a new language and culture.

Differences in culture can also emerge within families. A young Eritrean woman quoted in *Wealth of All Nations* commented that:

My mum and dad, although they are both Eritrean, have different languages and different cultures. There are nine languages in Eritrea. I don't understand my dad's language. I find it difficult to be with him.²²

Dress and Behaviour

Some participants at the Ethnic Youth Consultation Forum reported feeling torn between “two worlds” in trying to maintain their cultural/family heritage whilst wanting to be accepted by their mainstream peers. This experience is referred to as “front door syndrome”, and is identified as a sign of developing multiple identities:

The outside world should not be allowed to infringe in their parents' worlds.²³

²¹ M.H. Segall, P.R. Dansen, J.W. Berry, Y.H. Pootinga. “Acculturation”. In *Human Behaviour in a Global Perspective: and introduction to cross-cultural psychology*. (1999). 2nd edition. Heedaham Height, UWS: Allyn and Bacon.

²² Coventry et al, *Wealth of All Nations*.

²³ Adibi. (2003). “Identity and Cultural Change”.

For Forum participants, this state of internal conflict was associated with feelings of guilt and confusion and was often the source of arguments and disagreements with their parents. Some described their family dynamics as restrictive and different from that of mainstream Australian families. Difficulties adapting to the Australian culture sometimes manifested in conflict between parents and their children regarding dress, friendships, gender roles and marriage choices. Feedback provided by EYAG members revealed that, while it is not uncommon for young people to experience discomfort in the presence of their parents, CaLD young people could be particularly embarrassed by their parents' cultural practices that are visibly different, such as wearing a sari.²⁴

Young people consulted for a National Youth Muslim Summit convened by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (now DIAC) in December 2005, the MCAP, and the 2006 SBS report *Connecting Diversity*, reported similar experiences and concerns. For example, participants reported that parents influenced the extent to which English was spoken at home, the way young people dressed and the degree to which young people socialised with friends after school. One young person of Fijian-Indian background, interviewed for the SBS report, commented that his parents were "living too much in the past" and that, if he had a girlfriend from another cultural background, "my parents would be very critical about it".²⁵

Independence and Childrearing Practices

In August 2005, an Across-Government Working Party on Settlement Issues for African Humanitarian Entrants was established, in response to increased pressure on Government agencies and non-Government agencies to respond to the settlement needs of this demographic. In order to identify issues and priorities, the Working Party conducted a consultation process from October to December 2005. This involved submissions by State Government service providers, key non-government organisations (NGOs) involved in the settlement of Humanitarian entrants, and discussions with African community representatives.

Of particular concern to parents were issues such as challenges to discipline, a loss of respect from their children, and children leaving home as a result of conflict. Some parents were frustrated because of their children's belief that they have the freedom to do whatever they wish. There was sometimes a clash between children's sense of independence and the constraints imposed by their parents.

Parents expressed disapproval of youth allowance benefits provided by Centrelink as parents believed they supported the development of too much freedom and autonomy amongst young people. Parents also expressed concerns that the way information on youth rights was presented, as part of the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Services (IHSS) orientation (see p. 16), encouraged children to leave home and did not inform young people about their responsibilities. Parents believed this information could and should be presented in a different manner; some advocated not at all. This perception was confirmed in consultations with EYAG, in which it was noted that parents in some communities were reluctant to grant independence to their daughters in particular, for fear of adversely affecting the family's reputation in the community. Some CaLD young people may also experience significant shame making use of the Centrelink allowance.²⁶

²⁴ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

²⁵ I. Ang, J. Brand, G. Noble, J. Sternberg. (2006). *Connecting Diversity: Paradoxes of Multicultural Australia*. Sydney: Special Broadcasting Services Corporation.

²⁶ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

CaLD young people, therefore, may struggle to achieve the same degree of independence as their non-CaLD peers as parents may be reluctant to promote their children's independence for fear of disrupting the family unit.²⁷ The development of adult relationships between parents and young people can be disrupted by a confusion of status, if young people are adult in outlook and social behaviour but remain economically dependent.²⁸

Acculturation

Young people in first-generation migrant or refugee families tend to acculturate more rapidly than their parents.²⁹ This is particularly the case for children of single parent families, a group that has been a priority for settlement through Australia's Humanitarian program in recent years. As a result, many CaLD young people take on support roles within the family unit, including acting as interpreters for parents, contributing to family income, caring for siblings, and performing household duties. Forum participants reported that it was not uncommon for many young people to adopt significant responsibilities including caring for siblings and interpreting for parents. This impacts both on parents, who can find the experience humiliating, and on young people, who experience not only an additional burden of care but also a responsibility that can compromise traditional power structures within families. Parents may be faced with a readjustment of family dynamics that may be exacerbated by anxiety, guilt and depression associated with their inability to protect their children from traumatic experiences in their country of origin prior to migration.³⁰

In a different context, cultural values can impact on students' capacity to undertake homework. One student, interviewed for *Whose Community is it Anyway?*, explained that the fact that the cultural "norm" of adults smoking cigarettes at home when they socialised adversely affected his studies but that he was not in a position to change the situation:

I can't tell dad to stop the smoking...It's a cultural thing... How can [dad] tell friends not to smoke in the house, they are guests.³¹

Evidence of conflict

The extent and manifestation of conflict was not identified in any of the studies considered for this report; however, should conflict result in family break-up, or the young person fleeing home, the crisis situation is usually traumatic and very difficult to resolve.³² This suggests that the matter is of concern for young people in some communities, and that further research is required to determine the nature and impact of family violence³³ in relation to CaLD young people. It also suggests that intensive support is required both for young people who are not coping with their families, and for families and communities, in order for all groups to learn how to deal with the young people in their communities.

²⁷ D. Gorman, S. Selvamanickam, M. Zgryza. (2001). *Coping in the new world: The social and emotional wellbeing of youth from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds*. Queensland: Queensland Health, Youth Affairs Network Queensland.

²⁸ Croce (1997) cited in E. Carson, P. Fitzgerald, S. Roche. (2000). *A New Social Contract: Changing Social and Legal Frameworks for Young Australia*. National Youth Affairs Research: Hobart.

²⁹ Gorman et al, *Coping in the New World*; and K. Bevan. "Youth, Culture, Migration and Mental Health: a review of literature". In M. Bashir and D. Bennett (Eds.) (2000). *Deeper Dimensions: Culture, Youth and Mental Health* (pp. 1-63). NSW: Transcultural Mental Health Centre.

³⁰ Coventry et al. (2002). *Wealth of all Nations*.

³¹ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

³² Coventry et al. (2002). *Wealth of All Nations*.

³³ Family violence occurs when a person uses violent and/or abusive behaviour to control someone with whom they have some type of 'family relationship'. See http://www.afp.gov.au/act/abuse_violence.html.

Possible Strategies

In December 2005, a National Muslim Youth Summit was held in Sydney, aimed at finding practical solutions to key issues facing young Australian Muslims. Participants in the Summit identified “addressing family violence and not hiding it” as a potential initiative in terms of community building. Some participants suggested the following initiatives to address issues relating to intercultural and intergenerational conflict:

- providing parent support groups;
- educating parents about Australian laws;
- providing activities that include both children and parents such as camps and sporting activities (that is, father/son and mother/daughter events);
- involving parents in children’s schooling through school councils and committees;
- improving literacy and English skills among older family members to enable them to communicate more effectively outside their immediate family; and
- more interaction between Islamic schools and other denominational schools through school events and projects to break down barriers and misunderstanding.

Consultation with African community representatives produced the following recommendations:

- provision of services to assist young people, parents and families to address issues of intergenerational conflict and long-term support;
- implementation of capacity-building programs and training, using bilingual and bicultural African workers, to help African communities develop the skills needed to assist their own community members; and
- a review by Centrelink of the information provided to parents and young people on arrival.³⁴

EYAG members suggested the following:

- involve parents in education about intergenerational change;
- encourage community events across generations, rather than age-specific events;
- train groups of women to become liaison officers, similar to those employed by Central TAFE’s Migrant Women’s Taskforce, and Ishar Centre for Multicultural Women’s Health “Visiting Sisters” program; and
- encourage the training and provision of interpreters and bicultural/bilingual workers.³⁵

Recent and Current Initiatives

DIAC’s Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) provides intensive settlement support to newly-arrived Humanitarian entrants. The IHSS aims to assist Humanitarian entrants achieve self sufficiency as soon as possible by providing them with specialised services on a needs basis. Through a case management approach, the needs of Humanitarian entrants are identified and addressed by providing them with settlement services that meet their particular circumstances.

³⁴ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party on Settlement Issues for African Humanitarian Entrants* (consultation process).

³⁵ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

The IHSS focuses on equipping entrants to gain access to mainstream services. IHSS services are generally provided for around six months, but may be extended for particularly vulnerable clients.

Services provided under the IHSS include:

- *Case Coordination, Information and Referrals*: includes a case coordination plan based on an initial needs assessment, information about and referral to other service providers and mainstream agencies and help for proposers to fulfill their role of assisting SHP entrants;
- *On-Arrival Reception and Assistance*: includes meeting eligible entrants on arrival, taking them to suitable accommodation, providing initial orientation and meeting any emergency needs for medical attention or clothing and footwear;
- *Accommodation Services*: helps entrants to find appropriate and affordable accommodation and provides them with basic household goods to start establishing their own household in Australia; and
- *Short Term Torture and Trauma Counseling Services*: provides an assessment of needs, a case plan, referral for torture and trauma counseling and raises awareness among other health care providers of health issues arising from torture and trauma experiences.

IHSS services are delivered by service providers contracted to the department. Volunteer groups also work with service providers to support entrants and assist them to settle into the local community.

The organisations currently contracted by DIAC to provide IHSS services are the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC) Inc in the north metropolitan area, and Centrecare Inc in the south metropolitan area.

When Humanitarian entrants exit the IHSS, they are referred to general settlement services provided through organisations funded under the Settlement Grants Program (SGP). SGP funding is directed towards those most in need, including permanent residents who have arrived in the last five years as Humanitarian entrants or as Family Stream migrants with low English proficiency; communities that require assistance to develop their capacity to organise, plan and advocate for services to meet their own needs and which are still receiving significant numbers of new arrivals; and the dependants of skilled migrants in rural and regional areas who have low English proficiency.

To be eligible for funding under the Settlement Grants Program, an organisation must be:

- a not-for-profit, incorporated, community organisation; or
- a local government organisation; or
- currently funded to deliver services under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP – see p. 48); or
- in rural and regional areas, a government service delivery organisation.

In 2008-09, SGP grants were awarded to the Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors (ASeTTS), Australian Asian Association of WA, Centrecare, Communicare, Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka, Fremantle Multicultural Centre, Mercy Community Services, Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC), Multicultural Services Centre of WA, Muslim Women's Support Centre of WA, Rainbow Coast Migrant & Multicultural Service Inc., The Gowrie (WA); and UCA Assembly Limited – Frontier Services.

The Department for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) is responsible for the Newly Arrived Youth Support Service (NAYSS) initiative, which provides a multi-function service to newly arrived CaLD young people aged 12 to 21 years, and their families, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Through the NAYSS, organisations providing services relevant to newly arrived CaLD young people at all stages along the continuum of assistance, from early intervention to transitional support, and encourage participation in economic and social life in Australia. NAYSS providers use a variety of strategies to help newly arrived young people improve their level of engagement with family, work, education, training and the community, such as counselling, group work, mediation and practical support in culturally and contextually appropriate ways.

To be eligible for support participants must:

- have arrived in Australia in the previous five years;
- have visa entry, although there is a focus on young people entering Australia on Humanitarian and family visas; and
- be aged 12 to 21 years and be homeless or at risk of homelessness.

In WA, ASeTTS is funded to provide services under the NAYSS initiative to the eligible demographic, with a focus on young people and their families in the metropolitan regions of North Perth and the City of Stirling. ASeTTS has been assisting newly arrived young people to improve their level of engagement with family, work, education, training and the community under this initiative since May 2006.

Financial Burdens

Parental feelings of inadequacy and despair in being unable to meet financial obligations and burdens in the home may be passed on to children and affect children's levels of educational achievement, vocational choices and mental health, and may potentially lead to substance abuse.³⁶

Forum participants reported that financial difficulties at home affected educational opportunities, and that this sometimes resulted in pressure to leave school and find employment to help support their families. A frequently described scenario involved parents struggling to support not only their immediate and extended family in WA but also overseas family members. Financial constraints also affected the ability for CaLD young people to participate in organised sporting and recreational activities. Pressures to finance expensive items such as Ipods could place additional burdens on parents, in particular, those with several children.³⁷

Financial pressures were reported to contribute to family conflict, domestic violence, drug and alcohol problems and the breakdown of families. Forum participants also reported concerns resulting from a perceived lack of parents' time for their children due to long working hours.

Whose Community is it Anyway? also noted that many students indicated that they had part-time employment either in the family business or other local businesses, and that this impacted on their school work by encroaching on study time and causing chronic tiredness.

³⁶ Bevan. (2002). "Youth, culture, migration and mental health".

³⁷ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

Some students worked to fulfil family obligations while others worked to support themselves at school.³⁸ The 2006 Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural New South Wales report, *Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW*, documented similar findings.³⁹

Wealth of all Nations noted that adults who remain unemployed, or are unable to find work commensurate with their level of skill and education, can become angry and depressed and, inadvertently, place excessive demands on young people in the family to make up for loss of status.⁴⁰ EYAG members noted that tension can arise in families in which men were unemployed but their partner worked, or when the female head of the household, rather than her partner, received Centrelink payments. Factors such as these can upset the balance of power in the household, resulting in feelings of humiliation amongst men which can manifest in an increase in authoritarian behaviour or domestic violence.⁴¹

Possible Strategies

EYAG members suggested that these issues can be addressed, in part, through community education strategies aimed at improving families' understanding of the social welfare system and associated processes, and the practical implications of the equal status held by women in Australian society.

³⁸ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose community is it anyway?*

³⁹ Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW. (2006) *Investigation into African humanitarian settlement in NSW* - Report of the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW. Sydney: Community Relations Commission. Available at <http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/publications/african/index.htm>.

⁴⁰ Coventry et al. (2002). *Wealth of all Nations*.

⁴¹ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

5.2 COMMUNITY

During adolescence, young people negotiate more independent relationships with their parents and develop a network of friends and acquaintances that extends beyond family. The development of friendships is crucial in the transition from childhood to adulthood.⁴² This transition also often signifies the growing independence of young people as they become less reliant on family identity. According to Mission Australia's 2004 National Youth Survey, friendships and relationships are the most important values for young Western Australians between the ages of 11 and 24.⁴³

Stereotypes and Prejudice

Young people can have "multiple belongings" that allow them to participate in the wider community in a multitude of ways, and are influenced by their cultural background, age group, religion, location and friendships.⁴⁴ For CaLD young people, however, their sense of belonging and ability to participate in the wider Australian community can be affected by the perceptions of its members. This can manifest in stereotyping and is a major contributing factor to experiences of marginalisation.

Whose Community is it Anyway? noted that development of a strong sense of ethnic identity is central to achieving successful integration, and that the attitude people have towards their ethnicity is considered central to the self-concept and psychological wellbeing of those who belong to non-dominant groups. This may be compromised if the dominant group holds low regard for the characteristics of a particular ethnic group, which can have a negative psychological impact if the individuals internalise the negative characteristics that lead them to believe they are inferior due to their ethnicity.⁴⁵ The search for identity, which characterises the process of adolescent development, is particularly profound for adolescents from ethnic groups, whose first experience of identity consolidation can involve internalising negative views of their own group while accepting the values and attitudes of the majority culture. First-time experiences of racism or prejudice can prompt a highly emotional personal ethnic identity search, which is resolved by the development of a deeper sense of belonging to a particular group.⁴⁶

As *Wealth of all Nations* notes:

Young people experiment with an emerging sense of identity through social interaction and constant feedback from others. When the host society's reaction involves racism or the undervaluing of minority groups, this feedback will be negative or at best contradictory. Significant adults in the young person's life can help counter-balance such attacks by positive reinforcement. Parents and other family members who arrived with, or joined, the young person will inevitably be important sources of feedback... however, young people from [CaLD] backgrounds often have more in common with Anglo-Australian youth than with their parents' generation with respect to views on such issues as dating, sexual freedom, leaving home, and educational and career choices. The ambivalent reception of the host society, combined with possible intergenerational conflict within the family, can result in extremely confusing cross-pressures.⁴⁷

⁴² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2003). *Australia's youth: Their health and wellbeing*.

⁴³ Mission Australia. (2004). *National Youth Survey 2004: Key Emerging Issues*. Retrieved 2 June 2006 from www.mission.com.au/cm/resource/documents/youth.survey_2004.pdf.

⁴⁴ Ang et al. (2006). *Connecting Diversity*.

⁴⁵ Andrews and Sibbel, (2003) *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

⁴⁶ Beinart. (2005). *Children as Agents of Peace*.

⁴⁷ Coventry et al, (2002) *Wealth of all Nations*.

Forum participants reported difficulties making “Australian” friends due to perceived language barriers; tensions in the Mirrabooka area between Indigenous and CaLD young people; discrimination, bullying and perceived negative reactions from community members over their clothing and/or skin colour; and perceived community stereotyping because of negative media portrayals. Some participants reported conflict within the family due to parents’ reluctance for daughters to socialise and, for Muslim participants in particular, peer pressure to experiment with drugs and alcohol. These perceptions are supported by a recent survey on attitudes towards racism in WA, in which the proportion of respondents aged 18-24 years who saw Muslims, Indigenous Australians and Africans as an ‘out group’ (that is, from whom they felt some form of social distance), was 48 per cent, 35.8 per cent, and 31.8 per cent, respectively.⁴⁸

EYAG members indicated, however, that a critical mass of people from a particular culture could enhance young people’s sense of belonging. It was noted, for example, that this was the case for many young people of Chinese background, who enjoyed the company of a relatively large Asian population in Australia complemented by a high number of international students who sought each others’ company in the absence of their family and friendship network in their home country.⁴⁹

Racism, discrimination and bullying were among the most frequently discussed issues by all Forum participants and were considered to impact on all aspects of the lives of CaLD young people. Participants perceived that the media’s use of stereotypes was a major contributing factor to the high prevalence of racism, discrimination and general misunderstanding within the wider community.

The mass media has a significant influence on attitudes towards different ethnicities. A commonly cited example of how stereotyping can affect the social lives of CaLD young people is the portrayal of CaLD peer groups as “ethnic gangs” by the media. Groups of young people from the same, or similar, ethnic background tend to be highly visible and appeal to the biases of race, age and social class.⁵⁰ The term “gang” is highly emotive, however, and can be used to describe any group or activity in which young people engage.⁵¹ The study *Ethnic Gangs in Australia, Do They Exist?* reported that young people were highly critical of media representations of “ethnic youth gangs”, and felt that media reports were biased and sensationalist.⁵² EYAG members suggested that gangs provide CaLD young people with a sense of power within a “minority” group.⁵³

Connecting Diversity also noted that survey participants expressed concern regarding the “lack of authenticity, sincerity and veracity of the perspectives they were getting, and concern about an incomplete sense of belonging where their hybrid lives were further variegated by media half truths”.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ K. Dunn, J. Forrest, H. Babacan, Y. Paradis & A. Pedersen. (2008). *Challenging Racism: The Anti-Racism Research Project*.

⁴⁹ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

⁵⁰ H. Sercombe. “Boots, gangs and addictions: youth subcultures and the media”. In R. White (ed). (1999). *Australian youth subcultures: On the margins and in the mainstream*. Hobart: Australian Clearing house for Youth Studies.

⁵¹ C. Guerra, R. Lampugnani, S. Perrone, R. White. (1999). *Ethnic youth gangs in Australia: do they exist?* Victoria: Australian Multicultural Foundation.

⁵² C. Guerra, R. White (eds). (1995). *Growing Up Different. A report for the Ethnic Minority Youth in Australia: Challenges and Myths*. Hobart: National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies.

⁵³ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

⁵⁴ Ang et al. (2006). *Connecting Diversity*.

Negative media portrayals can hinder the ability of CaLD young people to participate in many of the activities commonly undertaken by mainstream young people. For example, there has been community concern that the interpretation of WA's "move on" laws to tackle antisocial behaviour could be unfairly applied to ethnic peer groups that convene in public spaces. Young people in general are statistically more likely to come into contact with the police and the justice system, both as victims and perpetrators of crime, than the general population.⁵⁵ This issue was raised in the 2005 report, *New Kids on the Block: Making space for Sudanese young people in Queensland*, which found that Sudanese young people were targeted more frequently than young people within the wider community. The report found that, for Sudanese youth, 'hanging out' in public spaces is a social activity which is culturally-based.⁵⁶ To be stopped at random, body-searched or even assaulted, especially by police and others in authority therefore had a significant negative impact on levels of trust, confidence and respect.

Peer Relationships

Some Forum participants preferred to socialise with friends from similar backgrounds and had difficulty making "Australian" friends because of a perceived need to deny their cultural heritage in order to be accepted, and because young people from similar backgrounds better understood each other's experiences. However, Forum participants were also concerned that congregating in groups in public places, particularly if they were visibly different, would lead to them being labelled a gang and be targeted by police.

These issues were also raised by young people surveyed for *Connecting Diversity*, for example:

At school all the Asian people sit in their own group, all the Australian [sic] boys sit in another group.

Some respondents acknowledged that this could breed intolerance in the broader Australian community. Many, however, regarded integration as "a two-way street":

If they don't want to give those Asians a chance, if they don't want to go and meet them and say 'how are you guys going?' play footy, whatever, then that is being just as bad isn't it, as them sticking in their group?⁵⁷

Whose Community is it Anyway? found that, for young people living in the northern suburbs of Mirrabooka, Balga and Girrawheen, CaLD young people interacted with each other with relatively few problems other than those to be expected of any adolescent population. Teachers from Mirrabooka Senior High School considered intergroup relations to be generally good but that some times conflict became evident. A number of staff agreed that ethnospecific groups of young people had some, but minimal, influence in the school. Teachers perceived that peer pressure often motivated students to join so-called "gangs" and that membership was a source of recognition and a sense of belonging.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues. *Issues: Police and Justice*. Retrieved 3 April 2006, from <http://www.cmyi.net.au/PoliceandJustice>.

⁵⁶ Youth Affairs Network Queensland. (2005). *New Kids on the Block: Making space for Sudanese young people in Queensland*.

⁵⁷ Ang et al, *Connecting Diversity*.

⁵⁸ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

Young people expressed divergent opinions towards intergroup relations. Some young people have observed that, at school, students “stick in their ethnic groups mostly”, “people don’t talk if someone is from a different culture”, “it’s easy to mix with other people, we just prefer to stay in our own group” and “there are basically four groups, Asians, Macos [Macedonians], Aboriginals and Skips [Anglo-Saxons] in the quadrangle”. Participants also referred to conflict between Aboriginal and Asian groups. Not all CaLD young people, however, formed groups with those of similar backgrounds and not all groups were formed around ethnicity.⁵⁹

Whose Community is it Anyway? suggests a relationship between a need for personal safety and gang/group violent behaviour in that area:

You make friends with them [gangs] and if you get into a fight they back you up. So they make you feel safe.⁶⁰

Young people commented on the number of “gangs” in the area, but noted that the term was not defined and, in most cases, appeared to refer to groups of youth who hang around the street engaging in antisocial behaviour rather than organised gangs that engage in planned criminal activity.⁶¹ Participants of both the Australian Asian Association’s June 2006 workshop with young people from new and emerging communities, and those interviewed for *Whose Community is it Anyway?*, however, expressed concerns regarding personal safety and the need for an increase in security provisions in public places.

Participants suggested that the allocation of resources at school contributed to social tension, and that the approach taken by schools and the community to multiculturalism may play a role in fostering “racial” tensions. For example, there was a sense of resentment towards ethnic groups such as Macedonians and Vietnamese, as well as Aboriginal young people, because it was perceived that these groups were allocated additional resources to assist them in overcoming disadvantage. Other young people regarded themselves as living with social and economic disadvantage and regarded the allocation of additional resources as unfair. Other examples included schools’ readiness to accommodate religious practices of specific groups but not those of the dominant Christian religion, and symbols of students’ ethnic backgrounds:

There is a big Maco flag and they got their own bench.

This was perceived as unfair because “if everyone draw flag somewhere then everyone wants to fight, everyone sit next to their own flag [sic]”. *Whose Community is it Anyway?* suggests that this perception influenced young people’s understanding of multiculturalism.⁶²

Possible Strategies

Participants in the Muslim Youth Summit made the following suggestions to address the issues they perceived as paramount:

- Government-sponsored education for the public about Islam and better education about the compatibility between Australian law and Islamic values;

⁵⁹ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

⁶⁰ *ibid*

⁶¹ *ibid*

⁶² *ibid*

- media campaigns promoting anti-discrimination, including television advertisements (similar to the domestic violence campaign);
- grass-roots communication between Muslims and non-Muslims through social groups, sporting groups, activities and camps;
- school and university-based interfaith activities;
- programs for Muslims to experience and understand Australia's Indigenous heritage;
- programs and activities that increase the self-esteem of young Australian Muslims so they feel confident about their identity; and
- identification of successful and high-profile Australian Muslims who can act as ambassadors.

In the context of community building, Summit participants also suggested that community centres could be opened at mosques to encourage connections between different groups. Participants identified the perceived conflict between “Muslim” and “Australian” identity as a key issue.

In relation to Muslims and the media, suggestions included:

- increased training of Muslims to work in the media (including scholarships);
- funding documentaries on Australian Muslims;
- awards for constructive media representations of Islam;
- a monitoring body to prevent Islamophobia in the media; and
- using media campaigns to raise awareness of the impact of discrimination against Muslims and the illegality of religious discrimination in Australia.

Other suggestions made in the context of “belonging versus marginalisation” were:

- improving Muslim representation in politics, public service and community service organisations;
- increased training for service providers in cultural/religious diversity;
- building relationships with local councils and Muslim youth centres;
- funding further programs to prevent or break the isolation of Muslim young people; and
- promoting the duty of community service/volunteerism among young Australian Muslims so they continue to engage in the wider community.⁶³

The ability of young people to unite, work together and learn about themselves, their communities and WA society was a central theme of the Australian Asian Association workshop. Ideas to facilitate this interaction included:

- youth and community social events;
- workshops for young people on topics such as coping with discrimination, policing and licensing and careers and courses;
- opportunities to interact with those in positions of authority such as police, teachers and community leaders to encourage shared learning;
- mentoring other young people and learning about other cultures to promote understanding;

⁶³ National Muslim Youth Summit. (2005) “Summit Communiqué.” Australian Multicultural Foundation and Federal Government Muslim Youth Sub-Group. See <http://www.amf.net.au/documents/SummitCommunique.pdf> .

- a mentoring program for older young people to assist younger age groups in dealing with racism and other issues that affect them; and
- encouraging people from the community to participate in education programs.

Other strategies suggested by EYAG members were to:

- increase diversity of actors in advertisements; and
- encourage media to portray CaLD young people in a positive light (generally this is only found in community newspapers).⁶⁴

Recent and Current Initiatives

In WA, ASeTTS offers the NAYSS initiative which combines the Reconnect Young Refugees Program and Job Placement Employment and Training (JPET) services to newly-arrived young people aged 12 to 21 years, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The program is funded by FACSIA and aims to assist newly-arrived young people improve their level of engagement with family, work, education, training and the community through strategies such as counselling, family mediation and practical support in ways that are culturally and contextually appropriate.

State Government initiatives to assist integration of young people from CaLD backgrounds into the broader community have been funded through OMI's Inclusion and Integration Grants Program (IIGP) in 2006 and 2007 included:

- Getting Connected: a program run by Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Centre, to empower young CaLD women aged 13 to 17 to develop life skills and gain confidence;
- Connecting Communities: a six-week leadership program run by the Muslim Women's Support Centre, targeting both male and female newly-arrived migrants which aims to build practical skills and confidence and connect students with the broader community;
- Leeuwin Youth Scholarships: scholarship opportunities for young people from at-risk or marginalised communities to take part in leadership voyages on board the tall ship Leeuwin II; and
- Sports Leadership Camp: a leadership program run by the Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka, to provide CaLD young people with opportunities to learn coaching and leadership skills.

The National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS), a cooperative funding program between the Australian, State and Territory Governments, facilitates national research into issues affecting young people. NYARS operates under the auspices of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), which chooses the topics for the annual NYARS research program from a shortlist developed collaboratively by jurisdictions. In May 2007, the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales was commissioned to research how policies and service provision related to mentoring can best meet the needs of young people from Horn of Africa countries (Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan).⁶⁵ The project established the nature and range of individual, cultural and institutional factors that both facilitate and inhibit the effective implementation of mentoring to young people aged 12 to 25 from the Horn of Africa.

⁶⁴ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

⁶⁵ P. Sawrika, M. Griffiths & K. Muir. (2008) *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Young People and Mentoring: the case of Horn of African young people in Australia*. Canberra: National Youth Affairs Research Scheme.

Released in 2008, results of this project will be used to inform the development of policies and programs to effectively support the provision of mentoring services to this demographic. The report found that

“...mentoring may be a useful way of engaging young people from the Horn of Africa and providing them with the support and guidance they may need to traverse the process of acculturation;...[and] there is a greater need to offer and tailor mentoring programs and service delivery for newly arrived Horn of Africans compared to more settled Horn of Africans.

Mentoring programs may be inappropriate for newly arrived migrants and refugees who have been in Australia for less than three months. For newly arrived migrants and refugees who have been in Australia for between three and 12 months, other more frequently accessible support services that aim to facilitate their integration into Australia should be offered in conjunction with the mentoring program.”⁶⁶

Participants in the study reported that mentoring is a foreign concept in Horn of Africa cultures and that this could lead to misunderstandings and anxieties about the nature of the mentoring relationship. As a result, it was important for services to both consult with the local community about effective and culturally appropriate models for mentoring and to clearly explain the aim of the program.⁶⁷

In 2008, the University of Sydney, the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia and Inspire published research to:

- provide government, local council, service providers and the community sector with a framework for best practice youth participation models that facilitate the involvement of young people from diverse communities; and
- identify enabling attitudes, structures and conditions that ensure young people’s engagement is meaningful and sustainable.”⁶⁸

A Youth Advisory Group informed all aspects of the report which included 11 recommendations aimed at encouraging greater engagement with youth. These included use of online mechanisms, endorsement from key community figures, and applying a range of formal and informal mechanisms to have wider participation and ensuring that participation is more than just ‘having a say’.

In Victoria, the State Government allocated \$2.6 million in its 2006-2007 State Budget to expand the pilot program Youth Referral and Independent Person Scheme. The program operates from police stations in metropolitan and country Victoria and provides training and support for a network of adults to attend police interviews with a young person who may not have a guardian able to be present. Adults from non-English speaking and Indigenous backgrounds are specifically recruited and trained to provide this support.⁶⁹

As part of its Strengthening Multicultural Communities Initiatives, the Victorian government also pledged \$2 million for multi-faith initiatives in which young people would be involved.

⁶⁶ Sawrika, Griffiths & Muir. (2008). *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Young People and Mentoring*.

⁶⁷ Sawrika, Griffiths & Muir. (2008). *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Young People and Mentoring*.

⁶⁸ J. Bell, A. Vromen & P. Colin. (2008). *Rewriting the Rules for Youth Participation: Inclusion and diversity in government and community decision making*. Canberra: National Youth Affairs Research Scheme.

⁶⁹ Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. (2006). *State Budget 2006-2007 – YACVic Analysis*.

Intergroup Relationships

Since 2001, a number of incidents have occurred between South Sudanese, Indigenous and mainstream young people around Mirrabooka, Balga and Marangaroo. It should be noted, however, that the WA Police have advised that incidents involving African and Indigenous people are minimal in comparison to incidents within the rest of the community.

Nonetheless, the incidents attracted media attention, and the 2005 consultations with African community representatives revealed that it is the view of many Africans in this area that the broader issues of interracial violence and perceived victimisation experienced by South Sudanese young people are not being addressed in an appropriate manner by authorities. Representatives expressed their distress at this situation, as well as their commitment and desire to engage in community initiatives to address this issue and settle harmoniously in their communities.⁷⁰

Experiences of war, torture and trauma can also manifest in the hostility of family members towards other religious or ethnic groups in Australia.

Research undertaken for *Whose Community is it Anyway?* found that inter-group tensions were often associated with negative pre-Australian experiences of both individuals and groups.⁷¹ This was illustrated at the 2007 Australian Open Tennis tournament when violence erupted between Serb and Croat tennis fans during a day of matches featuring Serbian and Croatian players.⁷²

Forum participants made similar comments. Some participants and their families had survived and escaped traumatic events that were highly likely to influence their perceptions and impressions of others in Australia. Participants, including those from Aranmore Catholic College's Intensive English Centre (IEC), commented that antagonism between young people of different ethnic backgrounds often reflected overseas tensions and conflict. Increasing the profile of issues, differences in communities and encouraging common understanding among key stakeholders such as media, police, educators, parents and the broader WA public, was seen as crucial to solving the issues facing the young people.

This was confirmed in consultations with EYAG members, who noted that some parents harbour resentment and hostility towards members of other ethnic groups, as a result of experiences in their countries of origin, and convey such attitudes to their children. Parents may also pass on attitudes towards members of other ethnic groups that reflect the class systems of their home countries, with the result that younger generations may grow up feeling that certain CaLD groups are "lower class".⁷³

Possible Strategies

Suggestions from Australian Asian Association workshop participants to address intergroup relationship issues included:

⁷⁰ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party* (consultation process).

⁷¹ Andrews and Sibbel. (2002). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

⁷² S. Pennells. "The day Serb-Croat hatred invaded an Aussie sports icon", *The West Australian*, Tuesday 23 January 2007.

⁷³ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

- educating people from CaLD backgrounds and members of the broader community about each others' cultures; and
- providing trauma counselling to young people.

Recent and Current Initiatives

OCY's 2006-2008 Strategic Plan encompasses programs and initiatives to include all children and young people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. The Cadets WA program, currently in its 13th year of providing structured youth development opportunities for young people, encourages teenagers to learn valuable life skills whilst making friends, gaining work experience and helping their community. An important aspect of the Cadets WA program is to encourage the participation of culturally diverse young people, but of the nearly 6000 cadets involved in the program, just five per cent identify as being born overseas or speaking a language other than English at home. At Balga Senior High School's Police Ranger Cadet Unit, however, 70 per cent are young people of African and "other overseas" origins.⁷⁴

In March 2007, the City of Stirling was awarded \$410,760 under the National Community Crime Prevention Program for Reel Connections, a Mirrabooka community partnership project. Reel Connections is an information and training partnership project led by the City of Stirling that will use community development and multimedia processes to assist young migrants and Indigenous young people at risk to understand their legal rights, responsibilities and ensure their personal safety. The project aims to encourage intercultural understanding among all young residents and visitors, to improve the level of anti-social behaviour and negative perceptions of crime in the Mirrabooka Regional Centre.

Funding is used to support a program of activities with young people to pursue alternative pathways to employment and training, and to develop the skills and confidence to make informed life style decisions. The project is a community-driven solution to a number of issues identified by local area stakeholders over an 18-month consultation period and was developed in close partnership with over 20 local area stakeholders including the West Metropolitan District Police, high schools, settlement and employment agencies, Indigenous representatives, local businesses, youth service providers and government agencies.

Police and Justice

African community representatives reported feeling apprehensive about approaching police when they needed assistance due to language barriers and/or fears of discrimination. It is possible that, for some participants, negative pre-arrival experiences may be a contributing factor to their mistrust and fear of the police; however, there is also a sense amongst young African Australians that they are being targeted by police:

Young (African) people complained of being stopped on the street by police and questioned in great detail about where they were going, what they were doing... One kid was asked about the fact that he had a pizza late at night. They're also having their cars searched by police.⁷⁵

While such incidents must be seen in the context in which they occur, the 2005 report *New Kids on the Block: Making space for Sudanese young people in Queensland* also found that

⁷⁴ Information provided by the Office of Children and Youth (2007).

⁷⁵ P. Lampathakis. "Fair go a 'no-show'". *The Sunday Times*, Sunday, 28 January 2007.

police checks were common experiences for young people of Sudanese background in the study fields of Brisbane and Logan.⁷⁶

Wealth of All Nations made similar observations and noted that effort is required to establish mutual trust between refugee young people and Australian police. The report cites concerns raised by a number of agencies, including the Federal Race Discrimination Commission, regarding potential discriminatory policing practices in recent years.⁷⁷

Possible Strategies

Suggestions from Australian Asian Association workshop participants to address law and order issues included:

- recruiting and employing people from different backgrounds in police and community relations positions (for example, setting annual quotas);
- providing opportunities for positive interaction between CaLD young people and those in authority, to enable sharing of points of view and raising awareness of support available to young people; and
- engaging community leaders to partner with the police to address crime issues.

Similar suggestions were made at the National Youth Muslim Summit. Other strategies proposed in *Wealth of All Nations* included developing awareness of the law amongst refugee young people, taking into account issues relating to the need for cultural literacy, knowledge of English and access to information.⁷⁸

Recent and Current Initiatives

The Department of Justice currently provides the Australian Asian Association with 12-month funding of approximately \$66,000 for the provision of a Youth Coordinator, whose responsibilities include:

- meeting the needs of 18 to 25-year-old young people from African and Middle Eastern backgrounds;
- “creating racial harmony” and lowering the incidence of antisocial behaviour amongst this demographic;
- assisting the demographic in building communication and work-related skills, and integrating into the community;
- participating in workshops and collaborating with law enforcement agencies;
- promoting self-help strategies amongst the demographic, and
- empowering members of the demographic to become leaders.

The position was first funded in 2006/07 and was renewed for 2007/08 and 2008/2009.

Conflict between African and Indigenous young people is also experienced in other Australian States and Territories, most of which employ full-time Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs) in each district to assist Police interacting with CaLD communities. In WA, however, none of the 14 WA Police local districts have an MLO dedicated to these duties. Rather, an MLO role is undertaken by one officer who has a Strategic Project focus.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Youth Affairs Network Queensland. (2005). *New Kids on the Block*.

⁷⁷ Coventry et al. (2002). *Wealth of All Nations*.

⁷⁸ Coventry et al. (2002). *Wealth of All Nations*.

⁷⁹ Office of Multicultural Interests (2006).

Strategies implemented by the Office of Crime Prevention (OCP) also make the effort to be CaLD-sensitive. The anti-hoon and graffiti awareness raising program have been developed in consultation with groups of CaLD young people and the Australian Independent Schools Association to ensure the campaigns are culturally appropriate. The OCP also runs a grant program to fund initiatives aimed at preventing and reducing crime and fear of crime. Since 2003, 10 grants totaling \$141,000 have been given to CaLD youth and community groups, including partnerships with local government authorities.⁸⁰ Projects have ranged from arts workshops, youth festivals and recreational and leisure activities.

OCP's Local Government Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plans also indirectly address CaLD issues by requiring agencies to demonstrate that their development has been widely consultative and inclusive, taking into consideration minority and marginalised groups.

WA Police (WAPOL) has undertaken a number of strategies to engage with ethnic communities. Consultative processes have been initiated by the Indigenous and Community Diversity Unit (ICDU) through the Police Multicultural Advisory Council (PMAC). The ICDU has also been involved with conflict resolution situations and consultancy roles, which have added significantly to the communication flow between police and CaLD communities.⁸¹ The ICDU has also coordinated a series of community engagement workshops to address the issue of crime prevention and improved service delivery to new and emerging communities. A police officer is also stationed at the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC) in Mirrabooka on a fortnightly basis to provide consultation and advice to MMRC clients.

WA Police regard community engagement as one of the best ways to counter racial tensions. The WAPOL State Security Investigations Group (SSIG) monitors racial vilification legislation and is active in developing and implementing strategies to interact and liaise with the community. In 2007, a series of community seminars informing emerging new communities about the racial vilification legislation was held in conjunction with the Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC). WA Police have also initiated outreach programs and support initiatives to respond to issues identified as impacting on newly-arrived settlement populations. Sporting events to promote interaction between the police and ethnic communities have also received positive feedback.

Training for police recruits has undergone revision to ensure that cultural diversity training programs are relevant. Programs now include components which seek to identify the issues humanitarian entrants may face in WA and examine the issue of a flexible service delivery response. For example, an African Community Awareness workshop was conducted in Mirrabooka in 2008 as in-service training for police officers. WA Police has also supported several successful community forums aimed at educating new arrivals about the police and justice system in WA to address potential misconceptions.

The WA Police PMAC-Recruitment Working Party, WA Police has also developed strategies aimed at recruiting people from CaLD backgrounds. In early 2008, WA Police representatives attended a recruitment/careers forum for CaLD youth and other stakeholders held in Mirrabooka. Members of the ICDU and SSIG have also been actively mentoring police recruit applicants.

WA Police has also actively participated in the development of multimedia material to increase awareness amongst CaLD communities about Australian governance structures

⁸⁰ Information provided by the Office of Crime Prevention (2008).

⁸¹ Information provided by Western Australia Police (2008).

and laws. For example, WA Police supported and participated in the development of an information DVD for emerging communities, "Law of the Land". Developed by the Ethnic Communities Council (ECCWA) with funding from the Australian Government Attorney General's Department and Law Society of WA's Public Purposes Trust, the DVD is available in 12 languages other than English and can be a self-education tool for new arrivals or used by service agencies for this purpose. The DVD is free and can be accessed from the ECCWA.⁸²

The Office of Crime Prevention is also collaborating with stakeholders to produce a multilingual DVD for new arrivals. A similar DVD is being produced by the Grand Lacs community with input from WA Police-Central Metropolitan Family Protection Unit.

⁸² Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc. (2008). *Equity* – Spring Edition Newsletter, p.28

5.3 SPORT AND RECREATION

Participating in structured sports or recreational activities has been identified as one of the main sources of social interaction and building networks for social wellbeing.⁸³ For young people, activities that revolve around sport and recreation provide opportunities to interact with the wider community and promote understanding and respect. Benefits include the development of self-esteem, social skills, self-discipline and leadership. Research suggests that it also deters anti-social behaviour including drug use, violence and socialising in gangs.⁸⁴ The 2004 report by the Ethnic Communities Council of WA, *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go: Implementing Strategies to address issues affecting unemployment in youth from new and emerging communities*, recommended access to suitable recreational alternatives for young people experiencing joblessness to prevent entry into anti-social/criminal behaviours.⁸⁵

Research has shown that people born in non-English speaking countries⁸⁶ have a lower participation rate in sport and physical activities (52 per cent) than those from main English speaking countries (72 per cent). The lowest participation rate is for females born in non-English speaking countries (48per cent).⁸⁷

In WA, the 2001 report of the Physical Activity Task Force Research and Evaluation Working Party noted that limited or no data was collected for some populations, including people from CaLD backgrounds, and suggested that this may indicate the need for these groups to be a priority for WA research to support the physical education strategy.⁸⁸

The *Sport and Recreation Questionnaire for Young People and Groups Recently Arrived in Western Australia*, a limited survey initiated by the WA Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) in 2005, indicated that, of the 223 respondents, most participate in sport outside of school (67 per cent) but very few play in a community sport club or centre (17 per cent), although most (61 per cent) would like to play in one.⁸⁹ Of those who indicated they played sport, basketball, soccer, cricket and netball were the most common.

According to Forum participants, CaLD young people enjoy similar recreational activities and interests as mainstream WA young people, such shopping, sport, music, fishing and socialising.

⁸³ Sport and Recreation Victoria. (2003). *Victorians Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport 2001-2002*. Cited in *Increasing Access to Sport and Recreational Clubs in Whitehorse by Young People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds*. (2005). City of Whitehorse Youth Project. Melbourne: Migrant Information Centre.

⁸⁴ Research and Evaluation Working Party. (2001). *WA Physical Activity Task Force Research and Evaluation Working Party – Background & Summary of Research*. Western Australian Department of the Premier and Cabinet (2001). Available at <http://www.patf.dpc.wa.gov.au/documents/background.pdf>.

⁸⁵ A. Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere To Go: Implementing strategies to address issues affecting unemployment in youth from and new and emerging communities – final report and findings*. North Perth: Ethnic Communities Council of WA.

⁸⁶ Note that the term “non English speaking countries” is now considered inappropriate by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It is considered more appropriate to cross-classify by Proficiency in Spoken English. See [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/6147B62CE4984142CA257179001906C8/\\$File/29010_2006.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/6147B62CE4984142CA257179001906C8/$File/29010_2006.pdf)

⁸⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). *Participation in Sport and Physical Activities 2005-2006*, Catalogue No.4177.00, Canberra: ABS.

⁸⁸ Research and Evaluation Working Party. (2001). *WA Physical Activity Task Force Research and Evaluation Working Party*.

⁸⁹ Department of Sport and Recreation. (2005). *Multicultural Youth Sport and Recreation Survey Evaluation*, Perth: DSR [unpublished].

Whose Community is it Anyway? found that the main activities participated in by CaLD young people were:

- sporting – soccer, basketball, netball, football, softball, dancing (jazz, tap and ballet), ice-skating, BMX riding and skating;
- recreational – “hanging out” at the local shopping centre, in the city or in Northbridge; going to internet cafes, movies, driving around and going to parties; and
- home-based – using the internet, playing computer games, sleeping and watching TV.⁹⁰

Both Forum and MCAP participants identified a shortage of facilities appropriate for young people in the Perth metropolitan area. Forum participants aged 12 to 17 years reported that the majority of participation in sporting and recreational activities occurred through schools. Other barriers to participation in mainstream activities included dress requirements/codes, language barriers, transport difficulties, opening hours and financial constraints (such as admission fees and the costs of registration, uniforms and equipment).

WA research findings are supported by the Victorian study *Victorians' Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport 2001-2002*, which identified a range of barriers to CaLD young people accessing club sport, including lack of parental support, cost, transport, lack of knowledge about sporting associations and clubs, lack of options for young CaLD women, and experiences of racism and discrimination.⁹¹ A recent report from the Queensland Department of Communities, *New Futures: The Queensland Government's Engagement with African Refugees* (2008) identified similar issues with the African community and details strategies already in place to address them, including the Queensland Roars Against Racism Strategy which includes special efforts to provide low cost entry to sporting events and showcasing African performers at major events. The Queensland Police Service coordinates an annual Football Cup for CaLD young people, and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation actively engages and supports young African refugees to access venues and participate in various sporting activities.⁹²

According to *Whose Community is it Anyway?* barriers to sport and recreation activities are associated with feelings of social isolation, boredom and marginalisation reported from young people.⁹³ Many of the participants in a 2003 study on how CaLD young people in Australia experience mental health described using physical activity to overcome periods of stress:

Playing vigorous sport tends to bent all negative feelings I have inside me. And if I win the game it's even better because I felt I'm good at something and I can do anything in the world... Chinese male, 16.⁹⁴

EYAG members regarded structured sport as beneficial for developing a broad range of life skills, and not only those that can be utilised in a sporting environment. They also identified a range of barriers that could prevent participation by CaLD young people in sporting activities.

⁹⁰ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

⁹¹ Sport and Recreation Victoria. (2003). *Victorians' Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport 2001-2002*.

⁹² Queensland Department of Communities. (2008). *New Futures: The Queensland Government's Engagement with African Refugees*.

⁹³ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

⁹⁴ D. Gorman, M. Brough, E. Ramirez. (2003) “How Young People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds Experience Mental Health: Some Insights for Mental Health Nurses”. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing* (12), 194-202. Available at <http://eprints.usq.edu.au/archive/00000914>.

EYAG members noted that parents often have considerable influence in relation to young people's participation in sporting activities. Issues included:

- a focus on children's academic success and amongst parents that "doing anything other than study is a waste of time" and would draw attention away from schoolwork;
- particular resistance to joining sporting clubs and becoming involved in organised sports being "too much of a commitment", especially on school days;
- a lack of understanding amongst parents of the social and mental benefits of being involved in sporting and leisure activities;
- parents' lack of involvement in sporting activities that results in limited encouragement in relation to their children's participation; and
- transport difficulties and a reluctance to allow young people, particularly girls, to travel on public transport in the evenings.

Other barriers identified by EYAG included:

- lack of confidence due to limited exposure to sports and/or limited English language proficiency;
- lack of awareness of available programs and activities; and
- conflicting commitments, such as ethnic community language schools that often run on Saturday mornings and clash with many scheduled sporting competitions.⁹⁵

Possible Strategies

EYAG members suggested the following strategies to address some of these issues:

- encourage community events involving families rather than young people only;
- introduce the concept of sport at a young age (particularly in the school setting through physical education classes), allowing young people to develop the confidence to move into mainstream sport;
- promote physical activity in terms of "fitness" rather than "sport" and hold "fun days" to reach young people who may be deterred by the competitive nature of formal sport;
- encourage attendance at sporting activities with friends to address fears associated with joining a new activity; and
- provide opportunities for girls to participate in female-only sports, in particular, swimming, such as the Muslims Women's Support Centre's successful women-only swimming program.⁹⁶

Recent and Current Initiatives

Many of these issues are currently being targeted through the CaLD Sport and Recreation Working Group, which is comprised of representatives from OMI, DSR, the WA Sports Federation (WASF), local government and the Australian Asian Association. The Working Group seeks to address the barriers currently faced by some CaLD people in accessing sport and recreation clubs and engaging in mainstream sport and recreation activities, and identifies and implements strategies to increase participation. The focus of the working group is sport and recreation activities, with an ultimate aim being to increase the membership of CaLD young people in mainstream sport and recreation.

⁹⁵ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Activities undertaken since 2006 included:

- development and implementation of a three-year CaLD project partnership between the City of Stirling, OMI and DSR through which the City of Stirling is employing a full-time Special Project Officer to increase the participation of CaLD young people in sport and recreation in the City of Stirling;
- two information sessions conducted by OMI and DSR to inform CaLD community leaders about DSR's Sport and Recreation Community Grants Scheme which, in 2006, focused on attracting applications from CaLD communities;
- appointment by DSR of a full-time officer for seven months (December 2006 – July 2007) to promote its Sport and Recreation Community Grants Scheme to CaLD community groups;
- allocation of 60 free delegate places for CaLD community group representatives to encourage their attendance at DSR's annual sporting industry conference;
- coordination of an information session for IEC staff on the Fremantle Football Club's Welcome to the AFL (Australian Football League) Program, which aims to increase CaLD participation in Australian Rules football; and
- initiating the development of resources to assist sport and recreation clubs to be more inclusive of people from CaLD backgrounds.

An interim report by Edith Cowan University identified a number of positive results of the project, including. Some of the recommendations for improvements included adoption of a brokerage system and specifically targeting CaLD women, and have already been actioned. Reports from the SPO also suggest that the programs have been highly successful.

In July 2008, a similar partnership was forged between Communicare, DSR and the DfC Office for Youth. The Southeast Corridor Project targets the areas of Belmont, Gosnells, Armadale, Canning and Victoria Park, and was a result of consultations held with relevant non-government organisations and local government authorities. Funding of \$550,000 has been made available over three years (DSR \$450,000, Office for Youth \$100,000).

Projects funded through OMI's IIGP to address these issues include the Edmund Rice Sports Leadership Camp and the Leeuwin Project (discussed on p. 24), as well as a vacation program for refugee young people, run by ASeTTS, to complement its NAYSS program.

5.4 HEALTH

A number of submissions to the *Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW* raised concerns about the health, nutrition, and wellbeing of refugee and Humanitarian entrant students and the potential impact of these on student behaviour and educational achievement. Issues included post-traumatic stress, trauma and grief associated with the loss of family and friends, poor nutrition and housing, and poverty.⁹⁷

Mental Health

Research suggests that some CaLD young people are at greater risk of having or developing low self-esteem, poor self-concept and mental illnesses (in particular, depression and post traumatic stress disorder) as a result of experiencing conflict, extended periods of separation from family members, interrupted education due to long stays in refugee camps, and racism and discrimination.⁹⁸

Experiences of war, torture and trauma significantly impact upon the wellbeing of both young children and adolescents. Adolescents, however, are especially affected as they have a clearer understanding of war, but lack the emotional maturity of adults to deal with the experience.⁹⁹ The impact of abduction and torture; sexual abuse; deprivation of food, sleep and health care; and the witnessing or performing of acts of brutal violence can take a lifetime of support to address.¹⁰⁰

Forum participants agreed that past traumas could affect the settlement experience for young people. It was noted that ex-soldiers and, specifically, ex-child soldiers faced particular difficulty re-integrating into the family unit. However, CaLD communities use mental health services substantially less than other Australian communities.¹⁰¹ Research suggests a widespread underutilisation of voluntary mental health services by CaLD young people, but this is related more to general patterns of underuse of services by them than to any suggestion of a lower rate of mental health issues amongst them.¹⁰² Low levels of access to counselling services by CaLD young people is generally attributed to a lack of information dissemination and service promotion, language and cultural barriers, stigmatisation of psychological problems, gaps in service provision and especially a lack of culturally appropriate services including torture and trauma services.¹⁰³

Forum participants, although not questioned in relation to health or mental health issues, expressed hesitancy to access health services despite the frequency and seriousness of the issues they raised in relation to coping with traumatic experiences, adjusting to life in Australia, discrimination, bullying, family breakdown and violence. Whilst some participants recognised that access to health services was important to address these issues, they perceived that barriers to access still remain. Participants reported negative experiences when accessing counselling services, including encountering cultural insensitivity.

⁹⁷ Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW. (2006). *Report of the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW*.

⁹⁸ Refugee Review Advisory Council, *Strategy For Refugee Young People*. Cited in Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

⁹⁹ United Nations International Children's Fund. (2002). See <http://www.unicef.org>.

¹⁰⁰ S. Kim. (2006). "Africa: Weary from War". *Harvard International Review* 27(4), 7-9.

¹⁰¹ M. Cassaniti and A. Sozomenau. "Culture, Youth and Mental Health". In Bashir M. and Bennett, D. (eds). (2000). *Deeper Dimensions: Culture, Youth and Mental Health*. New South Wales: Transcultural Mental Health Centre.

¹⁰² Gorman et al. (2003). "How Young People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds Experience Mental Health".

¹⁰³ Gorman et al. (2001). "Coping in the New World".

EYAG members noted that there is a significant difference in approach to the care and treatment of people living with mental illness between Australia and some other countries. Of particular note was the custom of care for people within the family structure rather than through health systems and institutions, and that this disparity could lead to confusion, especially amongst those newly arrived in Australia. Barriers to accessing services also included:

- lack of understanding amongst some CaLD communities of “Western” mental health concepts and subsequent lack of recognition of the symptoms of mental illness; and
- lack of English proficiency which may restrict the effectiveness of expressions of need for professional help.

Other issues included a perception that doctors in Australia are “afraid” to approach people from other cultures, and do not have the skills or understanding to enable them to treat people from CaLD backgrounds effectively and with confidence. It was perceived that cultural competence is not addressed in medical training.¹⁰⁴

Research also indicates that services catering for young people may be viewed with distrust by CaLD parents,¹⁰⁵ who may transfer their perceptions to their children.

Possible Strategies

Strategies through which to address the issues identified in the research and consultation processes include:

- creating environments that foster a strong sense of ethnic identity and positive self-concept where young people can make friends and form social support networks free from racism and discrimination;¹⁰⁶
- culturally sensitive counselling services for young people who are experiencing long-term unemployment to deal with potentially high risk situations, such as clinical depression and suicidal ideations;¹⁰⁷
- in partnership with schools, making torture and trauma counselling services readily accessible for children and young people;¹⁰⁸ and
- employing people from a range of CaLD backgrounds as medical professionals.¹⁰⁹

Recent and Current Initiatives

ASeTTS provides a range of specialist services, funded by the Commonwealth Government, to promote the wellbeing of torture and trauma survivors and their families and encourage clients to “heal themselves”. Current services and programs take into account the various social, personal and structural barriers that may influence the capacity of a survivor of torture and trauma to fully participate and succeed in society. Short and long-term counselling, family support during cultural transition, youth programs, and a program specifically designed for the needs of newly-arrived African women are some of the programs available to this client group.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

¹⁰⁵ Gorman et al. (2001). “Coping in the New World”.

¹⁰⁶ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹⁰⁷ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

¹⁰⁸ Office of Multicultural Interests (2005).

¹⁰⁹ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

¹¹⁰ For detailed descriptions of ASeTTS’ current programs, see <http://www.asetts.org.au>.

In 2007, the Multicultural Services Centre in North Perth received State Government funding through OMI to assist with the cost of establishing a community-based specialised mental health service to address identified gaps in service provision to people from new and emerging communities.¹¹¹

The North Metropolitan Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (NM CAMHS), part of the North Metropolitan Area Health Services (Department of Health), provides assistance to children aged 0 to 18 years who are experiencing mental health issues including depression, anxiety, self harm, suicide and trauma. Understanding that cultural belief systems around mental health can hinder the process of engagement, NM CAMHS identified the need for its services to cater to the specific needs of CaLD families and in 2007 established a transcultural youth mental health interagency group. The Cultural Advocacy for Child and Youth Mental Health group supports the early identification of young CaLD people at risk of mental disorders.

In 2006, to target the mental health needs of this demographic, the agency created a position for a Cross-Cultural Clinician. The role involves improving the accessibility to CaLD families through capacity-building strategies with relevant agencies, and providing culturally appropriate assessment and treatment of mental health problems experienced by children. Since its commencement in 2006 the service has provided services to refugee, first and second-generation CaLD families, but anecdotal reports from within the agency suggest that the actual proportion of the CaLD population accessing the service remains low. NM CAMHS suggests the following reasons for this underutilisation:

- the relatively recent focus on the CaLD population (since 2006);
- the stigma of mental health issues in sections of the CaLD community;
- lack of awareness of mental health issues within families and other agencies;
- lack of available counselling services tailored for CaLD children and adolescents; and
- CAMHS's focus on serious manifestations of mental health issues, which means it deals with only a small percentage of the child and adolescent population.¹¹²

The West Australian Transcultural Mental Health Centre, part of the nation-wide Multicultural Mental Health Australia funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing through the National Mental Health Strategy, specifically delivers mental health services for the CaLD community in WA. It conducts mental health assessments and manages the treatment of people from CALD backgrounds, as well as designing and delivering mental health promotion and prevention initiatives, and providing education and training on transcultural mental health issues.

Within the government schools system, school psychology and other related services are supplemented through DET's ESL Program which provides counselling services for traumatised CaLD students. Resources through this program were increased in 2008.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Office of Multicultural Interests (2007).

¹¹² Information provided by V. Maharaj, North Metropolitan Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (2007).

¹¹³ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008).

Substance Misuse

Legal and illicit drug use is a common coping strategy for people facing settlement issues. Substance use is globally recognised as a significant issue among refugees,¹¹⁴ and has also increased amongst young Australians in general.¹¹⁵ There is a growing body of evidence to support the relationship between substance use and post-traumatic stress disorder amongst refugees,¹¹⁶ as well as increased stress factors associated with the daily lives of new migrants.¹¹⁷

Research suggests that risk factors in relation to substance misuse relate to the refugee experience in particular. These include dealing with loss and trauma as well as risks associated with settlement in Australia including low socioeconomic status, family breakdown and intergenerational conflict, youth unemployment and lack of access to appropriate social and recreational activities.¹¹⁸ Protective factors include religiosity, cultural norms associated with drug use and strong community connections, which can help shape young people's attitudes and beliefs about drugs and prevent drug use.¹¹⁹ The need for sustained, culturally appropriate information and education on drug issues has been identified as fundamental to any prevention strategy.

Sexual Health

None of the studies considered for this report addressed the subject of sexual health amongst CaLD young people. EYAG members raised the following issues; however, it was recognised that these were not CaLD-exclusive:

- resistance from parents in relation to allowing young people to participate in school sexual education classes;
- sexual education classes provided at schools for students at too young an age which could impact on level of comprehension of issues raised;
- strong avoidance of the subject in some families (One member said that she would be "slapped in the face" by her parents if they believed she was "even thinking about sex"); and
- the lack of anonymity in the Medicare system which requires children to be listed on their parents' cards, which could deter young people who wish to seek medical assistance without their parents' knowledge.¹²⁰

Possible Strategies

Initiatives that have been highlighted for consideration in the development of education in relation to substance misuse and sexual health issues include:

¹¹⁴ N. Goren. (2006). "Prevention, newly arrived refugees and substance misuse". Australian Drug Foundation, Prevention Research Evaluation Report. Retrieved 3 April 2006 from http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/article.asp?ContentID=refugees_eval_report.

¹¹⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2003). *Australia's Youth: Their Health and Wellbeing*; and W. Loxley, J. Toumbourou, T. Stockwell. (2005). "A new integrated vision of how to prevent harmful drug use." *Medical Journal of Australia*. Retrieved 3 April 2006 from http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/182_02_170105/lox10671_fm.html.

¹¹⁶ L.M.Najavits, R.D. Weiss and S.R. Shaw. (1997). "The link between substance abuse and post traumatic stress disorder in women." *Journal on Addiction* (6) 273-83.

¹¹⁷ K.H. Sort and C. Johnston. (1997). "Stress, maternal distress and children's adjustment following immigration: the buffering role of social support." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 65(3), 83-112.

¹¹⁸ L. Oliff and K. O'Sullivan. (1996). "Refugee young people and drug prevention: Addressing the risks and tapping into strengths." *DRUGINFO*, 4 (4).

¹¹⁹ Oliff and O'Sullivan. (1996). "Refugee young people and drug prevention."

¹²⁰ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

- using bi-cultural workers and ethnic media;
- applying the model of the ABCD Program, which provided information about drugs within the context of a parenting program that focused on developing communication skills between parents and adolescents, and which was trialled with five communities in Victoria;¹²¹ and
- providing gender-specific sex education classes.¹²²

Recent and Current Initiatives

The Drug and Alcohol Office (DAO) is responding to the needs of CaLD clients by offering interpreting services to callers to the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) and Parent Drug Information Service (PDIS). These are 24 hour, confidential telephone services which provide information, counselling, referral and advice. NGOs supported by the DAO are also eligible to receive assistance to provide interpreters to CaLD people who wish to use their services.¹²³ DAO also consulted with EYAG in March 2008 to explore ways to promote target drug and alcohol services to CaLD youth. Training is also being provided to increase the knowledge and skills of Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) workers; in December 2008, a workshop on “Culture, change and conflict – Working with culturally and linguistically diverse families and young people around AOD issues” was held.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Oliff and O’Sullivan. (1996). “Refugee young people and drug prevention.”

¹²² Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

¹²³ Information provided by Drug and Alcohol Office (2007).

¹²⁴ See Drug and Alcohol Office website for updates on their training programs, at <http://www.dao.health.wa.gov.au/AboutDAO/WorkforceDevelopment/trainingDAOSemester22008/tabid/238/Default.aspx>

5.5 COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare research demonstrates that the life satisfaction of young people is closely related to what they are doing as students or workers; whether or not they have full-time employment, a course or career plan that provides direction; and whether they are part of Australia's economic "insiders" or "outsiders".¹²⁵

CaLD young people are not unlike the general population of Australian young people in terms of their educational expectations and career aspirations. Due to disruptions in schooling, unrecognised qualifications and language barriers, however, some CaLD young people may find it hard to participate in education or seek out employment opportunities. For some, these barriers can jeopardise the immediate and long-term success of settlement, placing them at risk of marginalisation, poor physical and mental health and lifelong social and economic disadvantage.¹²⁶

Whose Community is it Anyway? identified the following student and school-centred issues facing CaLD young people in the education setting:

Student Centred

- adolescence;
- life experience prior to coming to Australia;
- language difficulties;
- their own and "Australian" cultural expectations;
- peer group pressure – gangs; and
- family expectations and pressures.

School Centred

- lack of appropriate resources: time, materials, assessment tools, managing student behaviour options;
- lack of cultural knowledge and understanding; and
- difficulties in communicating with parents.¹²⁷

Similar issues were raised in *Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW*, and are discussed in more detail below.

Personal and Parental Expectations

Personal and parental expectations can place considerable pressure on students, particularly those adjusting to a new educational environment. A 2000 survey of young Australians between the ages of 15 and 21 years, and their parents, found that when asked what worried them, over 92 per cent of young people responded with "finishing school" and "getting a job"; 74 per cent of parents also identified these as major concerns for young people.¹²⁸

Forum participants expressed a strong desire to complete their education and find a "good" job. Participants reported being very aware of high parental expectations. Many also considered education a priority, the means to later finding a "good" job and ultimately the key

¹²⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2003). *Australia's Youth: Their Health and Wellbeing*.

¹²⁶ Refugee Review Advisory Council, *Strategy For Refugee Young People*. Cited in Andrews and Sibbel. (2003).

Whose Community is it Anyway?

¹²⁷ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹²⁸ Carson, Fitzgerald and Roche. (2000). *A New Social Contract*.

to their success in Australia. Participants reported high career goals, with many expressing aspirations to become doctors, lawyers and police officers, and regarding university education as the preferred option following completion of secondary school.¹²⁹

Research conducted in 2003 found that cultural background is associated with the level of educational expectations and occupational aspirations of young people. Adolescents from Asian, Middle Eastern and Southern European backgrounds tend to have higher levels of educational aspiration than adolescents from other migrant and Anglo-Australian families. The research found that CaLD young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds did not attain levels of education as high as those from middle socioeconomic backgrounds.¹³⁰

Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds, a report commissioned by DET in 2005, notes that status reproduction and status aspiration account for the over-representation of some migrant communities in university level education; that generations tend to reproduce the class position of their parents, and that this is reinforced by education systems. For example, children of parents who arrive under the Skilled Migration Stream are likely to aspire to similar educational and occupational statuses as their parents.¹³¹ For migrants from poorer backgrounds, such as those arriving under family reunion and Humanitarian programs, the migration process tends to involve increasing aspirations in which parents invest significantly in the success of their children. Young people who live at home are also more likely to remain in study than those who have moved out of home.¹³²

Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW found that, among African students and parents who have experienced disrupted schooling or limited education in refugee camps, education was highly valued, there were high expectations for children to succeed at school, and children were eager to begin their studies.¹³³

Whose Community is it Anyway? also highlighted the impact of cultural background and home life on their studies. For example, one participant commented that she had “normal Asian parents – want me to work hard, strict about doing my work”.¹³⁴

For CaLD young people with high and/or unrealistic educational and career aspirations, the inability to achieve their goals may result in confusion and anger affecting their self-confidence and self-esteem, and they are more likely to become frustrated and disruptive. Although there is consistent documentation of high achievement amongst CaLD young people,¹³⁵ delinquency and attrition rates are relatively high compared with other non-Indigenous Australian young people.

¹²⁹ Forum participants perceived that universities provide greater support than secondary schooling or TAFE. However, there was also a perception that preference is given to international students over Australian CaLD young people in the provision of academic learning and other student supports.

¹³⁰ K. Marjoribanks. (2003). “Family background, individual and environmental influences, aspirations and young adults’ educational attainment: a follow-up study.” *Educational Studies*, 29. Cited in *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds*. (2005). Perth: Australian Academy of Race Relations, Murdoch University, on behalf of the Department of Education and Training.

¹³¹ Australian Academy of Race Relations. (2005). *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships*.

¹³² Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

¹³³ Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW. (2006). *Report of the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW*.

¹³⁴ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹³⁵ Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Centre. (2001). *NESB People and Substance Abuse: a snapshot of available evidence of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug use by youth from non English speaking backgrounds in New South Wales*. NSW: Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Centre. Retrieved 3 April 2006 from <http://www.damec.org.au/Resources/NESBY.pdf>.

English Language Learning

Studies indicate that coping with the English language is one of the most common sources of concern and stress for CaLD young people in the educational setting,¹³⁶ both academically and socially, and that limited English language proficiency can impact on the extent to which CaLD young people form social networks.¹³⁷

Whose Community is it Anyway? found that English language proficiency can impact on the extent to which CaLD young people participate in class and can lead to feelings of humiliation and shame. Comments included:

I wouldn't do public speaking, I was ashamed because of English.

Other people laugh at you if you say something wrong.

When you read in class... kids laugh at you.

The study reports conflicting experiences that, while teachers and friends were willing to help CaLD students with their studies, there was a lack of understanding on the part of the general student population, and some teachers, that English is a second language for many students.¹³⁸

Consultations with African community representatives found that current Commonwealth and State Government funding for the provision of Intensive English programs does not allow for the intensive assistance needed to meet the learning, social, emotional, psychological and health needs of students. DET has indicated that school-aged refugee and Humanitarian entrants often arrive in Australia needing approximately three times the level of support provided to other migrants. This not only results in students staying longer in IECs but also reduces the turnover capacity to allow room for new arrivals.

Some Forum participants reported being held back in English as a Second Language (ESL) or IEC programs, which they perceived occurred because of Australian attitudes toward education in their country of origin. However, there was also a perception amongst some that, by remaining at the IEC, they compromised their ability to later succeed in subject areas other than English when they moved to mainstream classes.

Participants preferred not to be separated from their peers by attending IECs. There was also a perception amongst Forum participants that the IEC classes were generally inflexible and not responsive to their needs. This observation was also made in consultations with African community representatives.

Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW identified a significant trend for a higher percentage of new arrival African refugees to enrol in kindergarten when compared to other primary years. The report suggests that this may reflect parental wishes to place their children on the basis of previous schooling rather than seek age-appropriate placement. However, this trend is not replicated in WA where fewer CaLD students access pre-compulsory education programs, especially amongst younger humanitarian entrants. The numbers below indicate an overall increase over the period 2003-2008:

¹³⁶ Kids Help Line. (November 2004). *Kids Help Line Newsletter*. Retrieved 14 July 2006 from <http://www.kidshelp.com.au/upload/10572.pdf>; and Andrews and Sibbel, *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹³⁷ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹³⁸ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

DET: February ESL Program Census for the period 2003-2008¹³⁹

Humanitarian entrants identified as Kindergarten Pre-Primary Year 1 having ESL Support Needs *				
	2008	25	76	137
	2007	21	52	119
	2006	4	46	103
	2005	1	20	58
	2004	3	24	55
	2003	0	16	28

DET has advised factors influencing the uptake of Pre-Primary programs by humanitarian entrants may include lack of understanding amongst parents of enrolment procedures, a preference for utilising childcare provided through the Adult Migrant English Program, the pre-compulsory status of Kindergarten and Pre-Primary programs and the absence of dedicated English as a Second Language (ESL) programs for pre-compulsory years.¹⁴⁰

Possible Strategies

Strategies suggested by the Working Party included:

- increasing the flexibility of Intensive English Language programs to allow for students to attend for as long as they need to attain the educational levels required for the transition to mainstream schooling or employment;
- providing support programs for students in kindergarten and pre-primary schools;
- developing teacher training programs for IEC teachers and EEAs; and
- employing African EEAs to ensure appropriate cultural supports for students and teachers are utilised in the ethnicities and languages of need.¹⁴¹

Recent and Current Initiatives

The Commonwealth Government New Arrivals Program provides funding of \$5 000 per student aged six to 19 years for the provision of a minimum of six months' intensive English language tuition. Through local arrangements, students are able to access intensive instruction for up to two years at any of the seven primary and five secondary government IECs. This can involve an outreach service to provide information about enrolment of school aged children in IECs. For example, as part of a settlement program at the ESL Resource Centre in Mount Claremont, an officer regularly visits the homes of newly arrived refugee families to explain the school system to parents. Mostly, the information is related to getting school aged children enrolled in IECs.¹⁴²

The number of Government IECs in the metropolitan area has increased from eight to 12 since the beginning of 2005 to accommodate a 40 per cent increase in new arrival students, a trend that is expected to continue in the short- to mid-term. The State Government supplements Commonwealth funding for IECs through provision of infrastructure and facilities, and provides additional educational services to students to attain the English

¹³⁹ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008).

¹⁴⁰ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008).

¹⁴¹ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party* (consultation process).

¹⁴² Y. Haig and R. Oliver. (2007). *Waiting in Line: African Refugee Students in West Australian Schools*. Western Australian Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, p. 110.

language proficiency necessary for successful participation in mainstream schooling.¹⁴³ There has also been an expansion in teacher staffing allocation for students identified as having 'limited schooling' (traumatised or educationally deprived refugee/humanitarian entrants) to include learners in Years 1-4.¹⁴⁴ The teacher to student ratio has decreased from 1:15 to 1:10 for classes for 'limited schooling' students.

Current initiatives available to some IEC students include specialised social skills programs, a breakfast club, art therapy and occupational therapy. Interagency links also enable increased support for students.

Key personnel from ASeTTS, the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre, the Catholic Migrant Resource Centre, Children's Health Services and local Child Development Centres attend networking meetings convened by DET to facilitate collaborative partnerships in response to the particular needs of African IEC students. To address these varied needs (particularly in the first year of schooling), IECs have initiated and implemented a variety of programs designed to increase knowledge and understanding in areas such as health and hygiene, road awareness and safety.

Working Party consultations with African community representatives and key stakeholders revealed that there are currently no dedicated Commonwealth or State-funded programs for kindergarten or pre-primary school refugee students, a practice inconsistent with early intervention research. There is, however, a dedicated Early Childhood teacher who works with pre-primary teachers and families to make recommendations for IECs. Additionally, DET recently produced a range of postcards, in six languages, to help support families with pre-primary students during enrolment processes.¹⁴⁵ State and Commonwealth funds are primarily directed towards students of compulsory school age, but DET reported that these services are stretched to support high-needs kindergarten and pre-primary students.¹⁴⁶

WA State Government schools are allocated Ethnic Education Assistants (EEAs), whose key role is to provide language assistance, including interpreting (if accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters [NAATI], although many are not); to liaise between schools and families, and to provide cultural background information to teachers. At present, however, approximately half of the current EEAs are Chinese or Vietnamese speakers. Since most of these are permanent employees, the possibility of employing EEAs in the languages spoken by new arrivals, and for which there is likely to be an increase in demand, is restricted.¹⁴⁷ The *Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW* also found that the number and proportion of African languages spoken by school students was significant and that, apart from Arabic, the languages most represented were those for which there was less community capacity to provide interpreter and translator support.¹⁴⁸

DET is currently finalising development of an English as a Second Language/English as a Second Dialect (ESL/ESD) Progress Map. The map will assist in the planning for, and assessment of, ESL/ESD students' acquisition of Standard Australian English. The project team is working closely with the Curriculum Council to ensure linkage is articulated between the ESL/ESD Progress Map and the English as an Additional Language/Dialect Course of

¹⁴³ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party on Settlement Issues for African Humanitarian Entrants (Discussion Paper)*.

¹⁴⁴ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008).

¹⁴⁵ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2007).

¹⁴⁶ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party (consultation process)*.

¹⁴⁷ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party (Discussion Paper)*.

¹⁴⁸ Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW. (2006). *Report of the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW*.

Study. The ESL/ESD Progress Map was trialled in schools in 2007.¹⁴⁹ As at August 2008, some 800 teachers, Education Assistants and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEOs) have participated in professional learning associated with the use of the ESL/ESD Progress Map for planning, monitoring and assessing ESL students of CaLD background.¹⁵⁰

More staff have also been employed in the ESL Program for 2008, as noted in the teacher to student ratio increase, while IEC Curriculum Leaders have been employed to develop curriculum pathways for students from a limited schooling background, including those who arrive as humanitarian entrants.¹⁵¹

Additionally, the 2008 Balga Early Action Trial (BEAT Project) pilot program was initiated and measures the impact of ESL specialist teacher input in Pre-Primary and Kindergarten classes in schools with core numbers of humanitarian entrants. The ESL Program has funded a specialist ESL teacher (0.4 FTE), an African Ethnic Assistant (0.4 FTE) and has supported a program of parental involvement in the school community which targets African families who have entered Australia on humanitarian visas. Evidence to date indicates that positive outcomes and measurable improvements to the target students' pre-literacy and numeracy skills have been achieved through the BEAT pilot (Rec. 24).

The BEAT project's objectives were twofold. Firstly, to improve English language levels of Pre-Primary aged African humanitarian entrants by providing a highly experienced English as a Second Language specialist. This thereby negates the need for these students to access an Intensive English Centre (IEC) program in Year One. As a direct result of the BEAT project, nine of the ten children involved have been able to confidently access Year One, allowing smooth transition without the need to transfer into and from the IEC.

Secondly, through the provision of an Ethnic Assistant two days a week, the project aimed to strengthen ties with the local African community and decrease perceived barriers to the involvement of parents from this community in school events. This part of the project included sessions with parents to build an understanding of the education system and increase their capacity for involvement in it, opportunities for engagement in whole-of-school activities, as well as provide support and strategies to deal children's behaviour. Strong relationships were developed between these parents and the teachers and administration team involved. Members of the parent group have reported that they now feel they are recognised members of the school community.

Transition to Mainstream Schooling

Students who have entered Australia from Africa as Humanitarian entrants have particularly high educational support needs. Most arrive with limited or no formal schooling experiences, limited literacy in their first language and often no exposure to written language. Many students have also witnessed or experienced acts of torture, rape and murder, which can significantly inhibit their ability to engage in a meaningful learning program. Students' life experiences are narrowed since most were born and raised in refugee camps.

Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW noted that, for many African refugees, enrolment in an Australian school may be a student's first experience of schooling. It also occurs during the initial settlement process, a time of considerable stress. Recent

¹⁴⁹ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2007).

¹⁵⁰ Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEO) are education assistants of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent/background who assist Aboriginal students in a role similar to Ethnic Assistants in IECs.

¹⁵¹ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008).

research by the University of Western Sydney found that, in general, students were struggling to integrate into a schooling system with which they and their relatives were almost totally unfamiliar.¹⁵² Consultations in WA by the Working Party found that many refugee students are not achieving the academic standards of the general population in mainstream schooling. This can result in confusion, reduced self-confidence and low self-esteem, which may be expressed in acts of anger, frustration and disruptive behaviour.

While IEC students may demonstrate significant progress in English language competency, the skill level often remains lower than that required for students to succeed in a mainstream education program, and limits the capacity for students to achieve the academic standards of the general population. One of the contributing factors is the structure and length of the IEC program, which sees students graduate on completion of a period of study rather than upon reaching a certain level of English language proficiency. Further, mainstream schooling involves studying multiple subjects, to which many refugee young people have limited or no prior exposure. Teachers interviewed for *Whose Community is it Anyway?* expressed concern that students who enrol part of the way through the year are given minimal orientation to facilitate entry into the school. This could result in a lack of knowledge, resources and confidence, and hinder students' ability to engage in school.

New arrivals to Australia may also face additional pressure associated with their personal and/or parents' desire to move from IECs to "mainstream" classes. This preference may be attributed to parents' and students' desire to appear "normal", while not necessarily appreciating the complexities associated with success in "mainstream" schooling.¹⁵³

Many Forum participants who had moved to Australia commented on difficulties with their transition into the WA education system. These students reported challenges adjusting to the age-based grade allocation, differences in syllabus content and teaching styles, and the reliance on testing. The allocation of classes to students on the basis of age rather than ability was a concern of participants in all local studies considered for this Discussion Paper – the Forum, Working Party consultations, *Whose Community is it Anyway?* and the Australian Asian Association workshop. The matter was also raised as an issue of concern in *Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW*.

In its submission to the investigation, the Refugee Council of Australia discussed a number of barriers encountered in the education of African Humanitarian entrants, including:

- the way children are cared for, educated and raised in Australia, which may differ markedly from their home country and/or refugee camps;
- learning and communication in Australia, which involves mastering complex written and technological skills that are very different from cultures that are predominantly oral-aural rather than visual-verbal;
- admission of children to classes according to age rather than level of learning which can impact on students' ability to learn and interaction with teachers, peers and parents;
- parental difficulties with the level of involvement expected of them, due to their past experience, interruption of their own education and/or the energy and time taken up by their own settlement issues;
- gaps in previous learning;
- limited assistance at home in completing homework;
- costs of uniforms and school equipment; and

¹⁵² E. Cassity and G. Gow. (2006). *Making up for lost time: Young African refugees in Western Sydney high schools*. Sydney: Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney.

¹⁵³ Cassity and Gow. (2006). *Making up for lost time*.

- lack of conflict resolution skills amongst children from countries where there has been extensive conflict, or from experiences in refugee camps or countries of first asylum.

Schooling also can be impacted by students' experience, or witnessing, of traumatic events in their country of origin which may result in difficulties engaging in classroom activities.¹⁵⁴ These issues can lead to high attrition rates and negative psychological impacts on young people who remain in the school system. *Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW* noted that teachers and schools had identified various behaviours of some African students as a cause of concern. These included students taking offence easily and reacting violently to perceived injustices or instances of racism, sensitivity to the fact of their visible difference, and sometimes, violent reactions to inappropriate behaviours directed at them by others.¹⁵⁵

Forum participants perceived that their needs were not adequately understood and addressed by the DET and that racism and unfamiliarity with the education system resulted in high absenteeism and school attrition rates. Teachers consulted for *Whose Community is it Anyway?* perceived that truancy was a concern for CaLD young people at Mirrabooka Senior High School; however, they did not provide an indication of the causes.¹⁵⁶

Waiting in Line, a 2007 report into the schooling needs of African students in WA commissioned by the Western Australian Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (WATESOL) also highlighted that the needs of these students remain higher than previous cohorts of refugees to adjust to Australian schooling.¹⁵⁷ Issues included:

- a high level of literacy and numeracy needs - many come from limited schooling background, and as such are illiterate in their first language and have little or no experience with print based learning;
- lack of a relevant curriculum for African background students (that is, in terms of the content and structure of curriculum and the pedagogical approaches these imply);
- high levels of emotional needs arising from experiences of ongoing war, including loss of family, friends, social networks, homes, land and customary ways of life and escape to refugee camps, as well as post-migration trauma. Many of the teachers who participated in the research commented that learning would not happen these were addressed;
- unusually high levels of need related to nutrition, hygiene and disease/illness, for example, caregivers were not able to provide healthy diets for their families as they did not have the knowledge to do so. Students also had problems with cleanliness and body odour which impacted on their social relationships, especially with mainstream peers; and
- higher levels of racism and bullying due African students being 'visually different'.

Possible Strategies

The Working Party suggested the following strategies to address these issues, including:

- tailoring educational programs to meet the needs of individual students rather than restricted to fixed calendar periods; and

¹⁵⁴ Bevan. (2000). "Youth, Culture, Migration and Mental Health: a review of literature."

¹⁵⁵ Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW. (2006). *Report of the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW*.

¹⁵⁶ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹⁵⁷ Haig and Oliver. (2007). *Waiting in Line: African Refugee Students in West Australian Schools*.

- implementing transition programs to improve school readiness and orientation for new arrivals entering IECs and to ensure ongoing support for IEC students entering mainstream education.¹⁵⁸

Teachers interviewed for *Whose Community is it Anyway?* identified the need to ensure that students entering school at any time of the year receive a comprehensive orientation that is relevant to their particular needs.¹⁵⁹

Participants at the Australian Asian Association's workshop with young people from new and emerging communities also identified the need for:

- more involvement in assessing the needs of CaLD students; and
- honest advice from school-based staff regarding course choices, taking into account individual students' interests and ability.

Recommendations by Haig and Oliver¹⁶⁰ included:

- provision of extra support within both IECs and mainstream classrooms, including educational assistance and helping students and their families access appropriate community support.
- practical support and professional development for school staff to increase their awareness of the needs, circumstances and cultural background of these students, and assistance to develop and familiarise themselves with appropriate methodologies and assessment procedures.
- support for mainstream teachers with African students in their classes to adapt their methodologies and assessment procedures to better cater for the diverse needs of all students;
- more counselling and support for African students to prevent the type of social problems that are beginning to emerge; and
- more research about the problems encountered by African refugees, and the successes they experience.

Recent and Current Initiatives

As previously noted, DET currently provides additional educational services to students aged six to 19 years to attain the English language proficiency necessary for successful participation in mainstream schooling. IEC students are prepared for their transition into mainstream through a deliberate and relevant curriculum. IECs address their local needs using a variety of initiatives. For secondary IECs these include: Transition classes in IECs where more than 50 per cent of mainstream students are CaLD students. Students in these classes access mainstream classes while remaining supported in smaller ESL classes.

IECs follow a holistic approach to meeting their needs and, on transition, links to mainstream schools are made to ensure that schools receive comprehensive and necessary information regarding the continued educational needs of the students. Both directly and through interagency links, DET also facilitates student access to external services, contributing in part to social and emotional development.

Programs to assist the transition from IECs to mainstream schools, include services provided by Participation Coordinators who arrange transition brokerage for 15-17 year-olds

¹⁵⁸ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party* (consultation process).

¹⁵⁹ Andrews and Sibbel. (2003). *Whose Community is it Anyway?*

¹⁶⁰ Haig and Oliver. (2007). *Waiting in Line: African Refugee Students in West Australian Schools*.

who are at risk or are in the process of early disengagement from school and Project for Refugee Young People Marginalised from Education (PRYME), which was originally a program to reengage alienated refugee young people at Cyril Jackson High School. These services are in conjunction with those provided by the IEC Student Support Workers and Cultural Liaison Officers.¹⁶¹

While DET funds EEAs to provide additional support to students, the lack of staff of African background, and/or who speak African languages, limits the extent to which EEAs are in a position to provide support to these students and their families. Though it is difficult to find suitable staff with a relevant African language or desire to work as an EEA, IECs work to address the needs of their students in a variety of other ways. Many IECs access support programs and opportunities such as Drum Beat, African youth workers, community groups, and ASeTTS. Both directly and through interagency links, DET also facilitates student access to external services, contributing in part to social and emotional development.

Career Education provides students with the opportunity to develop self awareness and self management skills, while post-compulsory campuses connect their youth with Centrelink, Street Doctor and other agencies or facilities at the school site. DET also runs the Even Start program, funded by the Australian Government – which provides additional tuition support for students who are not achieving literacy and numeracy benchmarks.¹⁶²

Other tuition support programs, such as after-school programs providing assistance with homework, sometimes also offer social activities and assistance learning life skills. These have shown significant results for refugees, including improved grades, increased confidence and quicker integration into the school environment. Curtin University's "Curtin Volunteers!" conduct a Homework Help Program which works with the Somali community to deliver classes twice a week to 20 students, using 4-8 volunteers. The Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees (CARAD) provides one-on-one tutoring to refugee students. Scotch College and Balga Senior High School are part of a joint initiative that started in 2007 as part of Scotch College students' Community Service requirement. It pairs 15 Scotch College students with 15 Balga IEC students – all in Year 10 – for peer tutoring.

Past programs have included:

- The Gowrie's Refugee Homework Assistance Scheme, funded through OMI's Community Grants Program in 2008;
- a Homework and Parenting Support Project delivered by the Multicultural Services Centre of WA; and
- Northlake Senior Campus' volunteer tutor scheme run by Fremantle Volunteers.

All of these programs experienced a level of demand that is not able to be met.

Parental Support

¹⁶¹ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008). It should also be noted that an issue has arisen with respect to legislation to raise the minimum school leaving age to 17 effective January 2008 which has had an impact secondary holders (dependents) of 457 visa holders. While children of 457 visa holders have access to public education, many lack the English language skills required to complete education programs, as required under the new legislation and neither Commonwealth nor State funding adequately addresses their English language training needs. As at August 2008, there were more than 1,190 who are secondary holders of 457 visas in their first two years of schooling in Australia.

¹⁶² Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations, *Even Start – National Tuition Program*. Retrieved on 12 September 2008 at <http://www.anevenstart.deewr.gov.au>

A number of factors have been identified that affect parents' ability to assist their children's education and provide appropriate supports. These include:

- parents' levels of education and literacy;
- lack of confidence and understanding of the education and school system;
- limited English language proficiency that affects not only the level of support provided to their children in terms of school work, but also achieving an understanding of the education system and participating in activities involving parents and children; and
- issues resulting from the effects of torture and trauma.

Forum participants reported, for example, that parents were often unable to assist students with homework due to low levels of English proficiency, and that they therefore relied on siblings for assistance. Consultations with African community representatives found that some parents, particularly those from new and emerging communities, often do not understand information provided by schools in relation to their children's educational needs and progress.¹⁶³ EYAG members suggested that some parents do not become involved in their children's schooling not because of a lack of interest, but rather, a fear of being perceived as "stupid" due to language barriers.¹⁶⁴

Teachers at Mirrabooka Senior High School, interviewed for *Whose Community is it Anyway?* highlighted the difficulties in communicating with the parents of some CaLD students because of language issues and the high cost of interpreting services. Language barriers could result in parents' lack of awareness of school expectations and events, as well as any difficulties, needs or successes that their children might have at school. Teachers acknowledged that the school had some Cultural Liaison Officers who provide a useful service; however, it was noted that the continual changes to the CaLD profile of the school community resulted in a lack of staff available for parents of students from new and emerging communities.

Interviews with teachers of African refugee children conducted by Haig and Oliver for *Waiting in Line* also identified that parents faced difficulties disciplining their children in new and unfamiliar cultural environments, and that this was frequently exacerbated by the differences in approach between the school and the home. Parents reported that they were sometimes confused about what was expected of them, resorting to corporal punishment as a means of controlling bad behaviour. Teachers highlighted the desirability of working with parents to achieve a common approach to discipline.¹⁶⁵

Possible Strategies

The Working Party suggested providing programs in mainstream schools that offer support, family counselling and training in social skills, life skills and cultural transition to parents.

Recent and Current Initiatives

In WA, the Integrated Services Centre (ISC) Pilot Project was established in 2007 to address a range of issues affecting service delivery for Humanitarian entrants in WA. The project is a partnership between OMI, DET and DoH, and DIAC, the Department for Child Protection (DCP) and Centrelink are also key stakeholders. The ISCs, currently located at Parkwood Primary School in the south metropolitan area and Koondoola Primary School in the north

¹⁶³ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party* (consultation process). See also the report by Haig and Olive. (2007). *Waiting in Line*.

¹⁶⁴ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 14 February 2007.

¹⁶⁵ Haig and Oliver. (2007). *Waiting in line*.

metropolitan area, provide culturally appropriate and holistic services to support individuals and families in their health, psychological, social and community needs through the provision of a nurse, a counsellor specialising in mental health, a Multicultural Community Liaison Worker and, in 2007, a Career Development Worker.

The ISC services are currently available to the students attending the IECs at these schools, and their family members, and are designed to complement the support currently being provided by the IECs and the settlement services provided under DIAC's SGP. It is intended that the ISC services will contribute to improving the educational outcomes of the students and the overall settlement of families.¹⁶⁶

The DET's ESL Program staff, together with Edith Cowan University's School of Education, provides English classes for CaLD members/parents of school communities throughout the metropolitan area. As at July 2008, 22 schools registered to take part in the 2008 program which offers a six week course. However, the growth of this program is restricted by the availability of volunteer teachers.¹⁶⁷

Racism and Bullying

Relationships in the school community are influenced by underlying factors that maintain behaviours such as bullying, harassment and discrimination in society.¹⁶⁸ In the school environment, as in society, young people who are most likely to experience discrimination, racism and bullying are those who are most identifiable,¹⁶⁹ and CaLD young people are 40 per cent more likely to report being bullied than their Anglo-Australian counterparts.¹⁷⁰ School dropout rates and delinquency amongst CaLD young people, consequently, is high in comparison to other non-Indigenous Australian young people.¹⁷¹ In a recent survey on attitudes towards racism, it was noted that amongst the youth (18-24 years old) who responded, more than 92% acknowledged that racial prejudice exists in Australia, while 88% of the total Perth respondents thought the same.¹⁷² A similar number believe that it is a good thing for society to be culturally diverse.

Racism is present in all Australian schools and can manifest both directly and indirectly, through incidents of racial abuse, harassment and discrimination, or in the form of prejudiced attitudes, lack of recognition of cultural diversity and culturally biased practices. This can have a damaging effect upon the individual with victims experiencing reduced levels of self-confidence and feelings of failure and insecurity. These feelings have been associated with students rejecting their own culture, language and values and a subsequent loss of identity, which can result in students becoming fearful of attending school and withdrawing from other students and activities.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ Office of Multicultural Interests (2007).

¹⁶⁷ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008).

¹⁶⁸ Bullying No Way! "Deeper Issues" (2004). Retrieved April 3, 2006, from <http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/issues/deeper-issues.shtml>.

¹⁶⁹ K. Rigby. (1999). "What harm does bullying do?" Conference paper presented at Children and Crime: Victims and Offenders. Brisbane: Australian Institute of Criminology. Retrieved April 3, 2006, from <http://www.aic.gov.au/conferences/children/rigby.html>.

¹⁷⁰ Kids' Help Line. (2000) *Issues and concerns facing youth of non-English speaking backgrounds: An analysis of Kids' Help Line calls*. Brisbane: Kids' Help Line.

¹⁷¹ Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Centre. (2001). *NESB People and Substance Abuse*.

¹⁷² Dunn, et al. (2008). *Challenging Racism*.

¹⁷³ Racism No Way. (2005). "Anti Racism Education for Australian Schools." Retrieved 20 June 20 2006, from <http://www.racismnoway.com.au/>.

Many Forum participants reported experiences of racism, discrimination and bullying which they perceived had occurred because of cultural, religious or ethnic differences and levels of English proficiency. *Connecting Diversity* also reported similar themes. One young woman, a second-generation Australian with a Malaysian background living in Bunbury, commented that she was “picked on” when she was growing up “because I’m from a different culture.” Another young woman, interviewed in Sydney, reported that “my dad is Malaysian and in grade six I got called some awful names...I don’t think I even look that Asian...”¹⁷⁴

Possible Strategies

Suggestions made to address issues of this nature, made by Australian Asian Association workshop participants, were:

- providing students with opportunities to share their culture;
- compulsory work experience or interaction with different cultures during schooling; and
- employing African and overseas teachers.

Participants at the National Youth Muslim Summit also identified the need to address bullying and discrimination against Muslims in public schools.

Recent and Current Initiatives

In WA, a key initiative to address the issue of racism in schools is *Countering Racism in Education: A Planning and Evaluation Tool for Western Australian Primary and Secondary Schools*. This tool was developed by OMI and consultation with DET and is designed to assist schools to make their own assessments about their progress towards countering systemic racism, in consultation with students, parents, staff and the community. 19 schools nominated to participate in the pilot program. Seven were selected to trial the tool kit in 2008 and another seven in 2009.

Access to Resources

Forum participants expressed other concerns in relation to their school experiences. These included the affordability of textbooks, access to computers, and a lack of computer knowledge that affected students’ ability to complete homework assignments. With the growing expectations from teachers that assignments be word processed, some participants felt disadvantaged as they did not own a personal computer and relied on public facilities that are often in high demand. The suggestion of “free education” as a means of addressing some of the barriers for CaLD students, made by participants at the Australian Asian Association workshop, suggests that financial constraints are of significant concern to young people from new and emerging communities.

These issues were also identified in *Investigation into African Humanitarian Settlement in NSW*.

¹⁷⁴ Ang et al. (2006). *Connecting Diversity*.

5.6 POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Career Information

Research suggests that there is insufficient dissemination of information targeting CaLD students about the Australian education system and options for future study. This is partly attributed to the lower involvement of CaLD parents in Australian school communities, and their limited knowledge and lack of confidence in accessing information on future career options for their children of school leaving age.¹⁷⁵

Many Forum participants perceived that there is a lack of information about career options and tertiary education pathways available to students in WA. Participants in the consultations carried out at Aranmore Catholic College identified a lack of information regarding vocational pathways as alternatives to mainstream schooling once the students leave IECs. Many Forum participants reported that they were unaware of apprenticeship and traineeship options and other career pathways.

Consultations also suggest that African Humanitarian entrants are not accessing career counselling services to guide decisions regarding education, training and employment.¹⁷⁶ Some career counselling is provided through the AMEP to assist students choose their next path of study. New arrivals who choose not to access the AMEP are not eligible for the vocational counselling offered through the program.¹⁷⁷

Options include accessing the Career Development Centre in Perth or advice provided by Job Network agencies. However, neither of these options offer specialist services and the current model for career counselling, which is based on a self-help model, is problematic for new arrivals who may not be familiar with computers or service systems in Australia.

Possible Strategies

Strategies to address these issues that were suggested by the African Working Party on African Humanitarian Entrants included:

- establishing a “one-stop-shop” service targeting African Humanitarian entrants vocational and career counselling needs by providing improved information dissemination and access to services, educational support and advocacy services, and cultural orientation information and programs; and
- incorporating a Case Management Model of service delivery for Vocational Education and Training (VET) initiatives targeting African communities, to speed up access to information and support services from existing agencies, and enhance entrant’s understanding of Australian culture through a more personalised service delivery model.

Recent and Current Initiatives

In 2007, the ISCs at Parkwood and Koondoola Primary Schools provided access to career development information through provision of a Career Development Worker for students’ families.

¹⁷⁵ J. Collins, C. Sim, N. Zabbal, B. Dhungel and G. Noel. (1997). *Training for Ethnic Small Business*. Canberra: Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

¹⁷⁶ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party* (consultation process).

¹⁷⁷ Collins et al, (1997). *Training for Ethnic Small Business*.

In 2008, a Career Link program was initiated through a Memorandum of Understanding between OMI and DET with provided community-based agencies that provided services to CaLD clients with access, on a rotational basis, to a "hot-desk" at DET's Career Development Centre (CDC). The CDC is The CDC is staffed by qualified Career Guidance Professionals and has strong links with schools, TAFE colleges and industry bodies. It is a central point for information and advice about career opportunities and training across Western Australia. It is co-located with TAFEWA Admissions, the Overseas Qualifications Unit and Commonwealth Career Development Centre.

Up-take of the program was low, however, and the hot desk was used primarily by Skills Refresh Organisation of Australia, an organisation aimed at assisting migrant graduates who have obtained qualifications either in Australia or overseas, to obtain work in their qualification field, and the Muslim Women's Support Centre.

State-wide, services are provided by DET's Career Development Services Branch to assist students and parents to understand both educational options and realistic career paths. Of the 25 non-for-profit community based agencies which receive \$7.8 million of DET funding for the statewide Employment Directions Network (EDN), three of these centres (Centrecare, Fremantle Multicultural Centre and Multicultural Service Centre) target refugees and people from a CaLD background.¹⁷⁸

Participation in Further Education

Research considered for this paper did not identify specific issues of concern regarding the experience of university education. As noted earlier, many Forum participants regarded university education as the preferred option following completion of secondary school. Participants perceived that universities provide greater support than secondary schooling or TAFE, a perception also reported in the DET study, which noted that respondents perceived universities were more accepting of diversity.

Forum participants also perceived that universities give preference to international students over Australian CaLD young people in the provision of academic learning and other student supports, although no examples of this bias were recorded. EYAG members also perceived that universities demonstrate leniency towards full fee-paying international students in assessment processes and reported that domestic students experience frustration when they feel they undertake a larger proportion of the workload in group assignments, particularly those with an oral component. EYAG members reported feeling guilty when they avoided being placed in groups with students who had poor English skills, and that these students often had trouble mixing in as others made fun of their accents.¹⁷⁹

Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships suggests that a motivating factor to seek tertiary education rather than the VET option is that entry to university is considered to be merit-based with a greater sense of achievement attached.¹⁸⁰

Compared to cultural groups that began arriving in the early 1980s, those from more recently arrived groups appear to have less access to higher education¹⁸¹ but are more likely to participate in post secondary education, including vocational training, than those born in

¹⁷⁸ Information provided by the Department of Education and Training (2008).

¹⁷⁹ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

¹⁸⁰ Australian Academy of Race Relations. (2005). *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships*.

¹⁸¹ S.E. Khoo and B. Birrell. (2002). "The progress of young people of migrant origin in Australia," *People and Place*, 10 (2): 30-44. Cited in Australian Academy of Race Relations. (2005). *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships*.

Australia or have lived in Australia for more than five years.¹⁸² Within the VET system in Australia as a whole, people from CaLD backgrounds are over-represented in the preparatory and access classes, but under-represented at higher levels such as apprenticeships and traineeships.¹⁸³

For African humanitarian entrants, barriers to VET participation include limited language and educational backgrounds, low levels of English language competency, and limited study skills and/or life skills.¹⁸⁴ Consultations suggested that tutoring, additional English language support and mentoring are required to help those already in training. This is particularly the case for teenagers and those in their early 20s who had limited education opportunities on arrival.

Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships noted that issues specifically affecting CaLD trainees were:

- awareness of the VET system and the potential outcomes associated with various training options;
- the cost of training and the impact of financial and family commitments;
- level of proficiency in the English language, including understanding the jargon involved in some trades and vocations;
- inappropriate expectations of training (including the type of learning involved);
- stress associated with the migration experience;
- limited support within the home to help with study or transport;
- confidence in accessing support services; and
- different learning styles and cultural differences.

These factors potentially affect the likelihood of uptake and success of any form of further education.

Cultural differences were relevant in a number of ways, including the culture of the classroom in terms of the various roles of the students, teacher, and gender roles, and cultural values reflected in courses and professional jargon. The report noted that

some practices amount to structural racism, and at least, a devaluing of the culture and experiences of CaLD participants.

The report refers to the 2004 study *A Fair Go: Factors impacting on vocational education and training participation and completion in selected ethnic communities*, which found that cultural factors are not a necessary cause of failure to complete, but can be a factor when coupled with other difficulties such as transport or English language difficulties. This was particular an issue for students who experience more cultural distance from mainstream Australia, such as Arabic, Turkish and Vietnamese speakers. Teachers were found to play a vital role in the success of CaLD trainees and apprentices, and lack of intercultural competence, which could result in lack of empathy for CaLD students and understanding of the challenges they face, contributes to attrition rates.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² P. Morgan, S. Chiem & Ambaye, H. (2004) "The Equity Edge: An Empirical Approach to Determining Priority Groups," in K. Bowman (ed). *Equity in Vocational Education and Training: Research Readings*. Adelaide: NCVER (2004). Cited in Australian Academy of Race Relations. (2005). *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships*.

¹⁸³ J. Miralles. (2004). *A Fair Go: Factors impacting on vocational education and training participation and completion in selected ethnic communities*. Canberra: National Centre for Vocational Educational Research. Retrieved April 3, 2006 from <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1501.html>.

¹⁸⁴ Office of Multicultural Interests. (2006). *Across-Government Working Party* (consultation process).

¹⁸⁵ Miralles. (2004). *A Fair Go*.

Low participation rates may also be attributed to negative attitudes towards VET amongst some CaLD communities. According to Murdoch University's 2007 report *Refugees and Employment: the Effects of Visible Difference on Discrimination*, aspirations to improve status are attached to professional rather than trade or vocational careers for many people.¹⁸⁶ However, there are differences between cultural groups in terms of how acceptable it is to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship. The south-east Asian groups particularly mentioned that only university was acceptable for their families but those from European and Middle Eastern backgrounds mentioned family members who were undertaking VET or employed in trades. This was attributed to differences in the extent to which trades occupations were valued in their country of origin and, possibly also to differences in socioeconomic status. One of the respondents commented:

It comes also to your culture because it depends a lot on what happens back home, what's seen as good or not good back in your home country, and I think also that has an impact on getting information or the lack of information.¹⁸⁷

The study also reported that some second-generation CaLD people may not want to pursue these careers because they have been historically associated with the domain of new migrants. Having children who "moved up" in society was regarded as part of adapting to the new culture and breaking the ties with the stereotype of new migrants doing jobs that others do not want to do. Others feared that their children would be more likely to experience discrimination if they were to enter trades.

Conversely, however, it was also noted that people who had lived in Australia for a long time, or were more integrated into the mainstream Australian community, would be more likely to allow their children to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship.

Possible Strategies

Strategies to address these issues that were suggested by the Working Party included:

- implementing training programs to assist preparation for and access to VET including pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships and traineeships;
- establishing programs that incorporate job preparation, work placement, and specific vocational skills such as computing;
- establishing customised training programs that cater for the learning levels of entrants, such as teenagers and those in their early 20s, who have limited language and educational backgrounds; and
- implementing bridging courses in specific vocational sectors, incorporating ESL support, and tailored to skills shortage areas.

Recommendations made to increase access to, and retention of, students from CaLD backgrounds in VET identified by Australian Asian Association workshop participants, and *Refugees and Employment: the Effects of Visible Difference on Discrimination*, included:

- using culturally appropriate dissemination methods to inform communities about VET options; in particular, using community networks to circulate information by word of mouth;

¹⁸⁶ V. Colic-Peisker and F. Tilbury. (2007). *Refugees and Employment: The effect of visible difference on discrimination*. Available at http://www.cscr.murdoch.edu.au/refugees_and_employment.pdf. Draft version cited in Australian Academy of Race Relations. (2005). *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships*.

¹⁸⁷ Colic-Peisker and Tilbury. (2007). *Refugees and Employment*.

- providing integrated English language support within training environments, such as through DET's Certificate in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVSS) which offers in-class literacy and numeracy support through a team teaching approach;
- professional development in cultural competency for teachers and trainers;
- using "plain English" in course material and removing unnecessary jargon;
- implementing culturally relevant assessment strategies and instruments within courses; and
- challenging the assumption that "one size fits all", as significant differences exist between, and within, groups.

Recent and Current Initiatives

DIAC funds organisations in each State and Territory to provide services under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), which delivers basic English language tuition to migrants over 18 years of age who have been assessed as not having functional English skills. Eligible clients have a legal entitlement to up to 510 hours of English tuition. Humanitarian entrants with special needs are eligible for up to 400 additional hours of tuition under the Special Preparatory Program (SPP).

In WA, the two contracted AMEP service providers are West Coast TAFE Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) (Perth CBD, metropolitan, regional and rural WA); and Central TAFE (Perth CBD only).

The SPP within the AMEP was established in recognition of the need for additional assistance for some AMEP clients, specifically Humanitarian entrants who may have difficulty adapting to a more formal learning environment and who were assessed as having special needs arising from their pre-migration experiences (generally torture and trauma), or have had limited schooling prior to migration.

Eligible clients of the SPP can receive:

- up to 100 hours of English language tuition to Humanitarian entrants over 18 years of age, who have had difficult pre-migration experiences, eg torture and trauma;
- up to 400 hours of English language tuition may be provided to Humanitarian entrants aged between 16 and 24 who have low levels (between 0 and 7 years) of formal schooling; and
- access to the 400 hours of English language tuition for eligible clients between 16 and 18 years, which is subject to confirmation that they are unable to be placed in an appropriate school program.

DET is the primary agency responsible for funding VET programs through both TAFEWA Delivery Agreements with TAFEWA colleges and its other funding programs including the Competitive Allocation of Training (CAT) funding program (which is accessible to all Registered Training Organisations [RTOs] in Western Australia by competitive application). CaLD people are included as one of the equity groups targeted in the CAT funding program. Programs to assist African humanitarian entrants prepare for and access VET programs, including Pre-Apprenticeship, Apprenticeship and Traineeships may be developed through this funding. Funded programs often include job preparation, work placement and specific vocational skills, such as computing.

Examples of courses funded under this program for delivery in 2008 to CaLD participants included Certificate II in Business, Certificate II and III in Health Services Assistance, Certificate I in Hospitality (Kitchen Operations) and Certificate III in Children's Services.

DET also funds training under the Equity Development and Innovation (EDI) program, which targets several equity groups including CaLD, with a specific reference to new and emerging CaLD communities, particularly humanitarian entrants including women and young people (teenagers and early 20s). This training may be accredited or non-accredited. One of the selection criteria for funding is how the project will benefit the participants and improve their prospects of continuing into further education/vocational training.

Other courses which bridge into further training or employment are run by Central TAFE using profile funding (state), with the addition of ESL support via the Certificate of Applied Vocational Study Skills. Employability skills are also included in all of the vocational courses.

AMEP providers also offer a range of courses aimed at combining tuition in English language skills, with practical and vocational training. Both include significant work experience and Employment Pathways units. Pathways into a variety of vocational based courses have also been established with students provided opportunities to progress from the AMEP into various certificates in fields such as child care, aged care, information technology, health and business. In conjunction with this, employment training and exposure are increased through additional opportunities, for example, the AMEP Migrant Pathways into Employment Expo held at Central TAFE in May of 2008, with invitations extended to current and previous students.

OMI's Training Subsidies Program aims to address the relatively low participation of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships in WA. It involves a partnership between OMI and DET. Extra Edge Community Services has been contracted to develop a best practice model through which to increase employment of people from CaLD backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships for adoption and ongoing implementation by Group Training Organisations (GTOs) and other relevant organisations.

The project will place and support a minimum of 20 people from CaLD backgrounds in an apprenticeship or traineeship. The project is also raising awareness of opportunities in apprenticeship and traineeships amongst CaLD communities, and promoting employment of people from CaLD backgrounds amongst employers. Extra Edge has partnered with Group Training Organisations Skill Hire (Geraldton) and Directions (WA) in Midland, and community organisations Joblink Midwest (Geraldton) and Rainbow Coast Community Services (Albany) to deliver the project.

The project aims to assist people from both new and emerging, and established CaLD communities. To date, participants from new and emerging communities such as Sudan, Liberia, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan and Eritrea have received assistance through the project. The project commenced in March 2008 and is due to be completed in March 2009.

5.7 EMPLOYMENT

The youth unemployment rate in Australia is generally much higher than the total unemployment rate. In July 2008, the national unemployment rate was 4.2 per cent, while the youth unemployment rate was 17.3 per cent.¹⁸⁸ Despite the current mining boom in Western Australia that has seen overall unemployment rates fall to 3.3 per cent in 2008,¹⁸⁹ youth unemployment rate remained relatively high at 11.5 per cent over the 12 months to June 2008.¹⁹⁰ Additionally, some young people are underemployed in part time rather than preferred full time employment, a trend which is particularly prevalent amongst CaLD young people.

New migrants generally experience significantly higher unemployment rates than the rest of the population, which reduce substantially with increased duration of residence.¹⁹¹ *Refugees and Employment: the Effect of Visible Difference on Discrimination* showed that Africans experienced unemployment levels above the current national average (by approximately 5 per cent).¹⁹²

Similarly, *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships* notes that, in general, employment outcomes are not as positive for VET students from CaLD backgrounds. Of all graduates, 73 per cent report finding employment after graduation, compared with 58 per cent of graduates from CaLD backgrounds. It is suggested that this may be the result of individual and/or structural discrimination. Further, the report suggests that awareness of poor outcomes may be factor in the decision not to choose this avenue of employment.

Apart from the obvious economic costs to the community, unemployment contributes to family breakdown, low socioeconomic status, crime and violence. In the current environment, unemployment can result in accompanying feelings of marginalisation and exclusion by limiting participation in social, economic and political life. *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go* reported a range of emotions expressed by young people from new and emerging communities as a consequence of both short-term and long-term unemployment, including disappointment, sadness, depression, feelings of uselessness and suicidal thoughts.¹⁹³

Participants in the study identified the following factors as significant barriers to employment:

- lack of relevant work experience (55.2 per cent);
- lack of confidence in interview skills (35.1 per cent);
- lack of information on the job search process (33.6 per cent);
- lack of language and/or literacy skills (29.1 per cent); and
- pressures to look for work by Job Network agency/Centrelink (22.4 per cent).

A significant number of qualitative responses also were made in relation to the experience and/or anticipated experience of discrimination. These included:

- wearing hijab (Islamic head covering);
- speaking with an identifiably “foreign” accent;

¹⁸⁸ Department of Treasury and Finance, Government of Western Australia. (July 2008). “Economic Note.” Available at http://www.dtf.wa.gov.au/cms/uploadedFiles/labour_force_july_2008.pdf

¹⁸⁹ Department of Treasury and Finance. (July 2008). “Economic Note.”

¹⁹⁰ Department of Treasury and Finance. (July 2008). “Economic Note.”

¹⁹¹ Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (now DIAC). (2005).

¹⁹² Colic-Peisker and Tilbury. (2007). *Refugees and Employment*.

¹⁹³ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

- being “black”;
- being an immigrant; and
- lack of employer understanding of religious practices, such as prayer time.

The study also found that young people who had attended and completed English classes were more likely to be employed than those who had not.

These findings were supported by *Refugees and employment: the Effects of Visible Difference on Discrimination* which revealed that CaLD young people are often disadvantaged in the employment market because of their age, lack of local work experience, knowledge of recruitment and selection practices, knowledge of their rights and entitlements as workers, and a lack of English proficiency.¹⁹⁴

An examination of participants’ education background for *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go* suggested that significant numbers of young people from new and emerging communities would not have had substantive periods of time in formal education prior to their arrival in Australia, and that this influenced their employment prospects. The study found that young people who were in paid employment were more likely to be educated at higher levels than those not in paid employment.¹⁹⁵ A significant number were employed in both full and part-time work as labourers, factory workers and cleaners, and in the fast food industry.

The majority of young people were employed on a part-time or casual basis and for less than 35 hours a week; however, they were both willing and able to work more hours. Employed young people were likely to have been educated at a higher level than was required for the position. Many expressed the view that their job/s did not make full use of their skills. Most indicated that their jobs did not require any specific skills and predicted that they would remain in their current jobs only until they found a better one.

This finding also mirrors the occupational status loss experienced by Humanitarian and refugee entrants who tend to cluster in unskilled or semi-skilled professions.¹⁹⁶

Forum participants identified English language proficiency as a potential barrier to employment. However, participants perceived that English programs are not adequately preparing people for further studies or employment. Working Party consultations also found that current AMEP delivery does not enable most Humanitarian entrants to acquire English language competence to a level required for VET and employment.

Access to Employment Assistance

Lack of knowledge and use of employment information services has a major impact on employment. This is particularly the case for people from new and emerging communities. Of the 137 young people surveyed for *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*, more than half had never heard of and/or used vocational counselling services, migrant service agencies, or career information centres.¹⁹⁷

Young people interviewed for *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go* perceived the following avenues to be most effective in help them find employment:

¹⁹⁴ Colic-Peisker and Tilbury. (2007). *Refugees and Employment*.

¹⁹⁵ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

¹⁹⁶ Colic-Peisker and Tilbury. (2007). *Refugees and Employment*.

¹⁹⁷ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

- friends and/or relatives (60.2 per cent);
- registration with a job network agency (55.6 per cent);
- registration with Centrelink (45.9 per cent);
- access to job search assistance (35.3 per cent); and
- help with interview skills (31.6 per cent).¹⁹⁸

All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go found that young people from new and emerging communities consider English language programs are most useful in enhancing social interaction and least useful in increasing job prospects. However, young people who had both attended and completed English classes were more likely to be employed than those who had not attended and/or not completed English classes.¹⁹⁹ Further, young people who had attended English classes were more likely to have heard of and/or accessed a range of mainstream and specialist services, such as migrant service agencies and Centrelink, when looking for work.

Forum participants, however, expressed the view that Centrelink and job search agencies were ineffective and that agencies suggest employment options that do not match their career aspirations. Forum participants often felt obligated to accept positions that did not align with their career aspirations due to their families' financial pressures. These perceptions were also expressed in consultations by the Working Party and attributed to providers' lack of cultural awareness and the lack of specialist services. The need for specialist services and/or outreach services targeting this cohort was also a key recommendation of *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

Research suggests that personal networks, such as friends and family, are the most effective avenues in finding employment in Australia.²⁰⁰ Young people from new and emerging communities, therefore, are likely to be further disadvantaged by the lack of established community networks to assist them in finding employment.

Job preparation

The Working Party report also noted that there are currently no programs addressing the transition to work requirements of 15 to 18 year olds. The Working Party considered this of particular concern given the current high unemployment rate within the African refugee group. It was suggested that bridging courses would provide a foundation for further skills development and enhance employment prospects.

Forum participants regarded interview processes as intimidating and attributed their apprehension to fears that language barriers would have a substantial impact on their performance and likely success. Difficulties addressing the requirements of selection processes were also reported. *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go* also identified the need for:

- job-search workshops incorporating a range of preparatory job search techniques, such as preparation of a resume, in the context of learning about the job market; and
- language classes to specifically address job interview skills.

EYAG members also noted the need for assistance in the job application process, noting that this is an issue for many young people and not solely those from an CaLD background. EYAG members suggested that many young people have unrealistic expectations of the

¹⁹⁸ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

¹⁹⁹ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

²⁰⁰ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.; Australian Academy of Race Relations. (2005). *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships*.

nature of work and level of salary in their first few years in employment, and that is can result in unsuccessful applications for jobs for which they are unqualified. It was suggested that some young people are reluctant to begin at a lower level of an occupational or salary scale, or to undertake perceived low-status jobs, such as those in hospitality or food preparation.²⁰¹

Forum participants also noted that lack of access to a vehicle could be a barrier to employment. Barriers to gaining a driver's license was also raised at the Australian Asian Association workshop, with participants identifying the following needs in relation to obtaining a driver's license:

- use of simple language;
- having interpreters available;
- conducting training sessions on rules and regulations;
- providing more support for new drivers in terms of assessing and training;
- employing assessors from different backgrounds; and
- raising awareness of the process of getting a license.

A similar issue was raised in the 2006 report *Service provision in the Upper Northern Suburbs for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities: a Scoping Study*:

There remains no comprehensive driver training option for CaLD individuals and there is an overall lack of support as they attempt to negotiate securing a driving licence. In addition, many migrants and refugees do not have access to information regarding purchasing a roadworthy vehicle and can sometimes get duped into purchasing second hand vehicles that required costly repairs to maintain their roadworthiness.²⁰²

Possible Strategies

Refugees and Employment: the Effects of Visible Difference on Discrimination recommended establishing short-term courses specifically designed for new migrants in preparation for joining the Australian workforce.²⁰³

Strategies to address these issues suggested by participants at the Australian Asian Association workshop included:

- more intensive English courses, literacy classes and employment orientation;
- provision of career advice in schools;
- more short-term courses that lead to employment.
- communication and events to socialise on a regular basis to support each other and encourage networking;
- training sessions on selection skills, interviews, resume writing, getting to work on time, transport issues, dealing with discrimination issues; and
- work experience for students, training opportunities and workshops.

Strategies to address some of these issues that were suggested by the Working Party included:

²⁰¹ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

²⁰² D. Gallegos, M. Jackson, N. Leggett, L. Rogerson, M. Tolson and B. Urquhart. (2006). *Service provision in the Upper Northern Suburbs for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities: a Scoping Study*, Perth: Centre for Social and Community Research, Murdoch University.

²⁰³ Colic-Peisker and Tilbury. (2007). *Refugees and Employment*.

- providing VET programs which include job preparation, including job application and interviews and job seeking skills;
- developing programs that provide opportunities to gain local work experience and offer support during work practice training; and
- employing Multicultural Liaison Officers in Job Network agencies or, alternatively, improve cross-cultural training for Job Network staff.

The preliminary findings of the follow-up research to *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*, entitled *All Dressed Up and Somewhere to Go*, made the following recommendations for providing career assistance to young people from new and emerging communities:

- English programs be made more relevant to future employability;
- add an “employability skills” component (including guidance on how to construct a resume, and advice on interview skills and presentations) as an adjunct to the linguistic and literacy skill component of existing English programs and courses;
- foster closer links between English programs, qualification assessment organisations and avenues and services that facilitate entry into employment;
- strengthen communications between these systems to help increase general awareness of the role played by all in enhancing the employability prospects of youth;
- increase access to information about vocational programs leading to specific skill enhancement to increase employability;
- increase access to culturally appropriate counselling and adjunct support services for youth not in paid employment, possibly through a Youth Drop In Centre;
- increase access to practical help in developing and refining job search skills and information on support avenues and services available in the job search process;
- establish a specialist youth information or job search skills service;
- fund existing services to provide outreach services and information to NEC young people; and
- continue funding for projects, with resources for higher intensity of assistance and for an extended period of time.²⁰⁴

Recent and Current Initiatives

Initiatives to address the above issues, which are currently being developed, include:

- a CaLD Driver’s Licence Reference Group chaired by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to address some of the issues affecting the capacity of CaLD people in the, particularly African humanitarian entrants, to obtain and keep their drivers’ licenses. Information sheets on how to obtain a licence have been translated into eleven languages.
- a driver’s licence program for humanitarian entrants delivered by the Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka, received SGP funding to deliver. The program began in September 2008 with the inaugural group of 15 participants beginning Drive Safe classes and practical driving lessons. The program also includes a Driver Instructor Course for humanitarian entrants which began in October 2008. The first language of the successful applicants (three women and four men) were Dinka, Arabic, Madi, Farsi, and Dari.

²⁰⁴ Ethnic Communities Council of WA. (2007). *All Dressed Up and Somewhere to Go*, Department of Education and Training (unpublished report).

- a joint initiative between OMI and DET to increase access by CaLD people to apprenticeships and traineeships in WA through a targeted program involving group training organisations.

The Career Development Services Branch of DET currently funds the delivery of community-based career development services through the Employment Directions Network (EDN). Services are open to everyone in the community and include access to career guidance, work experience, internet access for job search support and a range of career development tools and information. Within the network, Centrecare, the Multicultural Services Centre of WA, and the Fremantle Migrant Centre provide specific career guidance assistance for migrants, people from CaLD backgrounds and refugees. One of the services offered by the EDN is the provision of insurance cover and liaising with an identified employer to assist migrants undertaking work experience.

Registered training organisations wanting to target this group can apply for funding through programs including DET's Competitive Allocation of Training (CAT) funding. Although "CaLD youth" are not identified as a specific demographic for this funding, target groups include both Youth at Risk and people from CaLD backgrounds. Funding is generally for 12 months, but three-year programs are often also supported. In 2008, the number of Perth-based projects funded targeting people from CaLD backgrounds was 12 (compared with eight in 2007); the number of projects targeting youth-at-risk remained static (18).

Youth at Risk Projects funded through CAT funding (2008) for delivery in 2009

Agency	Course
Communicare	Certificate I in General Education for Adults
	Certificate I in General Education for Adults (Introductory)
	Certificate II in General Education for Adults
Community and Youth Training Services Inc.	Certificate I in Work Preparation
Kenshusei International Pty. Ltd.	Certificate II in Sport (Coaching)
Mission Australia	Certificate I in Work Preparation
South Metropolitan Youth Link Inc.	Certificate in Gaining Access to Training and Employment
	Certificate I in Horticulture
	Certificate I in Retail Services
	Certificate II in General Construction
	Course in Gaining Access to Training and Employment (Introductory)
Silver Trowel Trade Training Pty. Ltd.	Certificate I in General Construction
Stirling Skills Training Inc.	Certificate I in Transport and Logistics (Warehousing and Storage)
	Certificate II in Business
	Certificate II in Transport and Logistics (Warehousing and Storage)
The Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres Inc.	Certificate I in Automotive
	Certificate I in Community Recreation
	Certificate I in Retail Services

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse funded through CAT funding (2008) for delivery in 2009

Agency	Course
Fremantle Education Centre Inc.	Certificate II in Customer Contact
	Certificate III in Teacher Assistant
National Corporate Training Pty. Ltd.	Certificate I in Information Technology
	Certificate II in Hospitality (Kitchen Operations)
Nationwide Training Pty Ltd.	Certificate II in Health Support Services
	Certificate III in Health Services Assistance
Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth (Centacare Employment and Training)	Certificate I in Hospitality (Kitchen Operations)
	Certificate II in Health Support Services
The Gowrie	Certificate III in Children's Services
TR7 Pty. Ltd.	Certificate III in Aged Care Work
	Certificate IV in Aged Care Work

Employer Attitudes

The findings of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's *Ismae* project reinforce that attitudes and perceptions of potential employers are major barriers to employment, particularly for many young Muslims.²⁰⁵

Humanitarian and refugee entrants, in particular, those from African and Middle Eastern backgrounds, have been found to exhibit higher unemployment rates than those from Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia, even though the participants from African and Middle Eastern backgrounds on average were better educated with better English skills.²⁰⁶ Respondents described experiences of being exposed to prejudices or explicit discrimination based on their ethnicity. This is consistent with earlier research that found that potential employers' evaluation of applicants is significantly related to the similarity of employers to applicants with regards to demographics, attitudes and the applicant's appearance.²⁰⁷

Forum participants also reported discrimination in the workplace, which they perceived as being due to cultural, language and ethnic differences, and a lack of respect from co-workers and employers regarding their cultural beliefs. In particular, African young people felt that they were being denied jobs because of their skin colour and their accent. EYAG members also perceived that accents and non-Anglo names could influence employment prospects; for example, they suggested that anecdotal evidence from university peers indicates that law graduates with "Anglo" names are more likely to secure an articulated clerkship than graduates with "non-Anglo" names.²⁰⁸

Participants surveyed in *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go* also perceived employers were prejudiced against overseas-trained students. Participants reported difficulties obtaining recognition for trade skills and education gained overseas, and reported that bachelor degrees and other academic awards from other countries were often not recognised in

²⁰⁵ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. (2004). *Ismae - Listen: National consultations on eliminating prejudice against Arab and Muslim Australians*. Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

²⁰⁶ Colic-Peisker and Tilbury. (2007). *Refugees and Employment*.

²⁰⁷ R.D. Gatewood and H.S. Field. (2001). *Human Resource Selection* (5th ed.), USA: Thompson Learning; and P.C. Morrow. (1990). "Physical attractiveness and selection decision-making." *Journal of Management*, 16(1), 45-60.

²⁰⁸ Consultation with the Ethnic Youth Advisory Group, 11 April 2007.

Australia. Many felt that they were forced to “start from scratch” once they arrived in Australia when their pre-arrival experience was not given adequate recognition.

Lack of local work experience has also been identified as a major barrier to employment. More than half of the 138 participants in *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go* nominated this as a key barrier to securing a job.²⁰⁹ Participants of the Ethnic Youth Consultation Forum, *Whose Community is it Anyway?* and *Pathways to Apprenticeships and Traineeships* also highlighted the issue.

Workplace practices

The vulnerability of young people to exploitation by employers has been highlighted by a number of media reports describing situations in which employers have exploited young people and migrant workers, placing them in dangerous situations and denying them adequate benefits and remuneration.²¹⁰ However, the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection reports that it can be difficult to collect information and allegations of breaches of employment legislation.²¹¹

Some Forum participants reported that they were unaware of worker rights and entitlements. Participants perceived that CaLD young people may be at greater risk of exploitation due to language barriers, their need for financial security, and lack of knowledge regarding employment entitlements and requirements. Many participants were not aware of the existence of government agencies and legislation, such as the Department of Employer Consumer and Protection (DOCEP) and the Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC), to safeguard the rights of workers in the workplace. It was noted that, although DOCEP publishes fact sheets and education packages, and operates a call centre offering assistance, it does not publish the material in any medium that specifically targets young people.

Possible Strategies

Suggestions made by participants at the Australian Asian Association workshop to address these issues included:

- conducting employer seminars to improve understanding about migrants;
- ensuring migrants are aware of their rights and discrimination issues;
- imposing penalties against employers who are racist;
- ensuring regulators monitor and impose standard wages; and
- developing role models and local mentors.

Recent and Current Initiatives

In 2007, DOCEP initiated the CaLD Migrant Workers' Project. Designed to provide information to CaLD workers on their employment rights through the use of seminars, the Labour Relations website and printed media, the project aims to build networks with community migrant and ethnic associations in order to facilitate ongoing relationships with

²⁰⁹ Tan-Quigley. (2004). *All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go*.

²¹⁰ D. Macken. “For young workers it’s gloves off in the IR battle.” *Financial Review*, 13 April 2006, p. 41; K. MacDonald. “Perth firm probed over migrant workers’ racket.” *The West Australian*, 16 March 2006, p. 12; K. McDonald. “Slug for uniforms may be against law.” *The West Australian*, 23 May 2006, p. 11; S. Mora; and M. Quinian, “Double whammy under new industrial relations laws for young workers.” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 April 2006, p. 11.

²¹¹ Information provided by Department of Consumer and Employment Protection: Labour Relations Division (2007)

CaLD workers and promote fairer, safer and more productive workplaces. The project is also aimed at encouraging CaLD workers to report unsafe or unfair work practices that they might be experiencing, so that these issues can be addressed in a constructive manner.²¹²

DOCEP has also developed the “Your First Job” program to assist high school, TAFE students, including migrant youths, entering the workforce. This is a series of web-based learning modules covering the wide range of situations that young people may experience in the workforce. The WA Paychecker is another internet tool to assist workers to assess the fairness of their pay and work conditions through a comparison with the State award benchmark. The awards covering hospitality and retail are of particular significance to young CaLD workers as they have high levels of employment in these industries.²¹³

²¹² Labour Relations Division, Department of Consumer and Employment Protection (2007).

²¹³ Paychecker can be accessed at <http://www.docep.wa.gov.au/WAPayChecker>.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This paper has revealed that, while CaLD young people share many of the same, or similar, challenges as the general youth population, a specific range of issues may place some CaLD young people at potential risk of personal, social and economic disadvantage. Issues may be broadly categorised in relation to the home, community, sport and recreation, health, education and employment. Particular areas of need include provision of specialised support for CaLD young people and their families in the areas of health and community services, academic learning support, education and career advice, and the transition from education to employment.

Many of the identified issues were found to interrelate, suggesting the need for a holistic and coordinated response by Government to maximise the effect of policies and programs implemented to address these issues.

Although the resources required to meet the diverse needs of CaLD young people in the short term may need to be increased, research indicates that the social and economic benefits to the community in the long-term will be significant. It has been noted, for example, that people from refugee backgrounds are more likely than other migrants to strongly identify with Australia, to take up Australian citizenship, and to become “high achievers”.²¹⁴

Investment in strategies that address the risks faced by CaLD young people, and which develop and enhance the protective factors that mitigate against these risks, therefore, provides a valuable opportunity to maximise the potential for WA’s CaLD young people to contribute to the strength of the State, both in the current climate and in the future.

²¹⁴ Coventry et al. (2002). *Wealth of All Nations*.

7.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
AMES	Adult Migrant Education Service
ASeTTS	Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors
CaLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CAT	Competitive Allocation of Training
CAVSS	Certificate in Applied Vocational Study Skills
CMYI	Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues
CRIO	Community Relations Integration Officer
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DET	Department of Education and Training
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DOH	Department of Health
DOCEP	Department of Consumer and Employment Protection
DSR	Department of Sport and Recreation
EEA	Ethnic Education Assistant
ECCWA	Ethnic Communities Council of WA
EDN	Employment Directions Network
EOC	Equal Opportunity Commission
EYAG	Ethnic Youth Advisory Group
FaCSIA	Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Forum	Ethnic Youth Consultation Forum
GTWA	Group Training WA
IEC	Intensive English Centre
IHSS	Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Services
IIGP	Inclusion and Integration Grants Program
ISC	Integrated Services Centre
JPET	Job Placement Employment and Training
LLNP	Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program
MCAP	Mirraboopa Community Action Project
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
MCIMA	Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
NAYSS	Newly Arrived Youth Settlement Services
NYARS	National Youth Affairs Research Scheme
OCY	Office of Children and Youth
OMI	Office of Multicultural Interests
SGP	Settlement Grants Program
SPP	Special Preparatory Program
Summit	National Muslim Youth Summit
TAFE	Tertiary and Further Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
Working Party	Working Party on Settlement Issues for African Humanitarian Entrants

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