



# Refugee Council of Australia

Dear Committee Secretariat,

## **RE: Endorsement of the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network's Submission to the Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training's Inquiry into School to Work Transition**

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) is the national umbrella body for refugees, asylum seekers and the organisations and individuals who work with them, representing 200 organisations and more than 900 individual members. RCOA promotes the adoption of humane, lawful and constructive policies by governments and communities in Australia and internationally towards refugees, asylum seekers and humanitarian entrants. RCOA consults regularly with its members, community leaders and people from refugee backgrounds and this submission is informed by their views.

We would like to formally endorse the submission of the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network's to the Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training's Inquiry into School to Work Transition.

Our research, and the experiences of our members, highlights that while newly arrived communities are eager to gain employment, they face a number of systemic barriers. A key way to address these barriers is by supporting the transition of young people from education into work.

The MYAN submission highlights a number of these barriers, and puts forward sound recommendations to address them. In particular, it advocates for an appropriate school to work transition strategy which is targeted to meet the unique needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Programs for refugee and migrant young people should focus on:

1. Access to targeted and appropriate English language learning, including a range of models responsive to age and proficiency, to ensure educational engagement and facilitate successful transitions to training, higher education and employment.
2. Bridging support for educational transitions.
3. Support for parent/carer engagement in young people's educational journey.
4. More targeted support for the transition from education/training to employment.
5. Developing young people's social capital and networks, with a focus on building links with industry and potential employers (consideration should be given to the benefits of mentor programs and work placements).

In addition, we have attached our report, *Finding the Right Time and Place: Exploring post-compulsory education and training pathways for young people from refugee backgrounds in NSW*, which highlights a number of recommendations to support young people to make this important transition. While the report was written in 2010, its key concerns and recommendations remain highly relevant.

Please feel free to contact us if you require any further information.

Kind regards,

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Refugee Council  
of Australia



# **FINDING THE RIGHT TIME AND PLACE**

**Exploring post-compulsory education and training pathways  
for young people from refugee backgrounds in NSW**

July 2010

Principal researcher: Louise Olliff

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Cover photo:

Students at Lurnea High School take part in creative writing activities as part of the Refugee Action Support program. The creative activities were run by Bankstown Youth Development Services. © Bilal Reda, BYDS.

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## Introduction

Between January 2004 and December 2008, 21% of the 19,839 refugee and humanitarian entrants who settled in NSW were aged between 16 and 25 at the time of their arrival, making young people of post-compulsory school age a significant demographic settling under the Refugee and Humanitarian Program. These young people bring with them a wealth of skills and experience but also face many challenges in making the transition to life in Australia, particularly with regards to their pursuit of education and training. Many refugee young people come from situations in which their schooling has been highly disrupted or, in some cases, they have not had the opportunity to attend school at all. Young people of post-compulsory school age can also face additional pressures, demands and stresses than those who migrate at a younger age. These include: more significant pressure to achieve educationally, less previous experience of education, higher level of family responsibilities, delayed or suspended personal development as a result of their refugee experience, and limited access to needed services due to the inflexibility of many youth and education systems based on chronological age (CMYI 2006a).

Despite the challenges that newly arrived young people with a background of disrupted education face in adapting to the educational expectations and environments in Australia, many are extremely motivated and driven to pursue higher education, training and career goals. Research confirms much of the anecdotal evidence that young refugee and humanitarian entrants see education as a source of hope and future (Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008; RCOA 2009).

Within this context of disadvantage and high aspirations, many educational and settlement professionals and community representatives consulted during the Refugee Council of Australia's (RCOA) [annual community consultations](#) stress that there are a significant number of young people whose learning needs remain unmet within the education and training system in Australia. The failure to meet the educational needs of students from refugee backgrounds at high school, and the lack of alternative post-compulsory education and training pathways, can have a devastating impact and lead to young people's disengagement from education, employment and other services, and ultimately to social exclusion.

## Aims

The aim of this research is to bring together evidence of good practice in the provision of education and training that meet the needs of refugee young people (16-24 years old) who settle in Australia with a history of disrupted education, as well as proposing ways forward in addressing identified gaps. In particular, research objectives included:

- To explore the issues, challenges and barriers faced by newly arrived refugee entrants who arrive in their teenage years with a background of disrupted education;
- To research 'models of excellence' for how different programs and education providers are providing pathways into education and training that meet the needs of this group of young people;
- To identify and draw together evidence of 'best practice' education and training models across NSW (and interstate) as a resource for future use; and
- To make recommendations for positive changes to policy and funding for post-compulsory education pathways that meet the needs of young people from refugee backgrounds in NSW.

## Methodology

The first phase of this research involved an extensive review of literature to engage with current thinking in NSW and across Australia about gaps, challenges and models of good practice with regards to young people from refugee backgrounds and post-compulsory education and training. This literature review informed the consultation questions and structure and provided a qualitative meta-analysis of issues. An annotated bibliography has also been developed and is available on the RCOA website ([www.refugeecouncil.org.au/current/youth.html#biblio](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/current/youth.html#biblio)).

The main source of primary data was gathered through a series of semi-structured qualitative interviews with key stakeholders with expertise in the field of education and training and working with young people from refugee backgrounds. Overall, 30 stakeholders were consulted, including teachers, academics, program coordinators, project workers, community representatives and policy-makers. Interviews were conducted mainly by telephone using an interview schedule. Three consultations were conducted by email correspondence. Consultations focused predominantly on identifying gaps and good practice case studies from the perspective of practitioners in NSW.

Case studies of models identified as good practice were followed up with representatives from the respective programs using a set template (based on case studies documented in the Victorian Settlement Planning Committee (VSPC) [Pathways and Transition](#) report). The successes and challenges documented in these case studies are from the perspective of those involved in program delivery and not through an independent evaluation.

### **Key issues in education for refugee young people of post-compulsory school age**

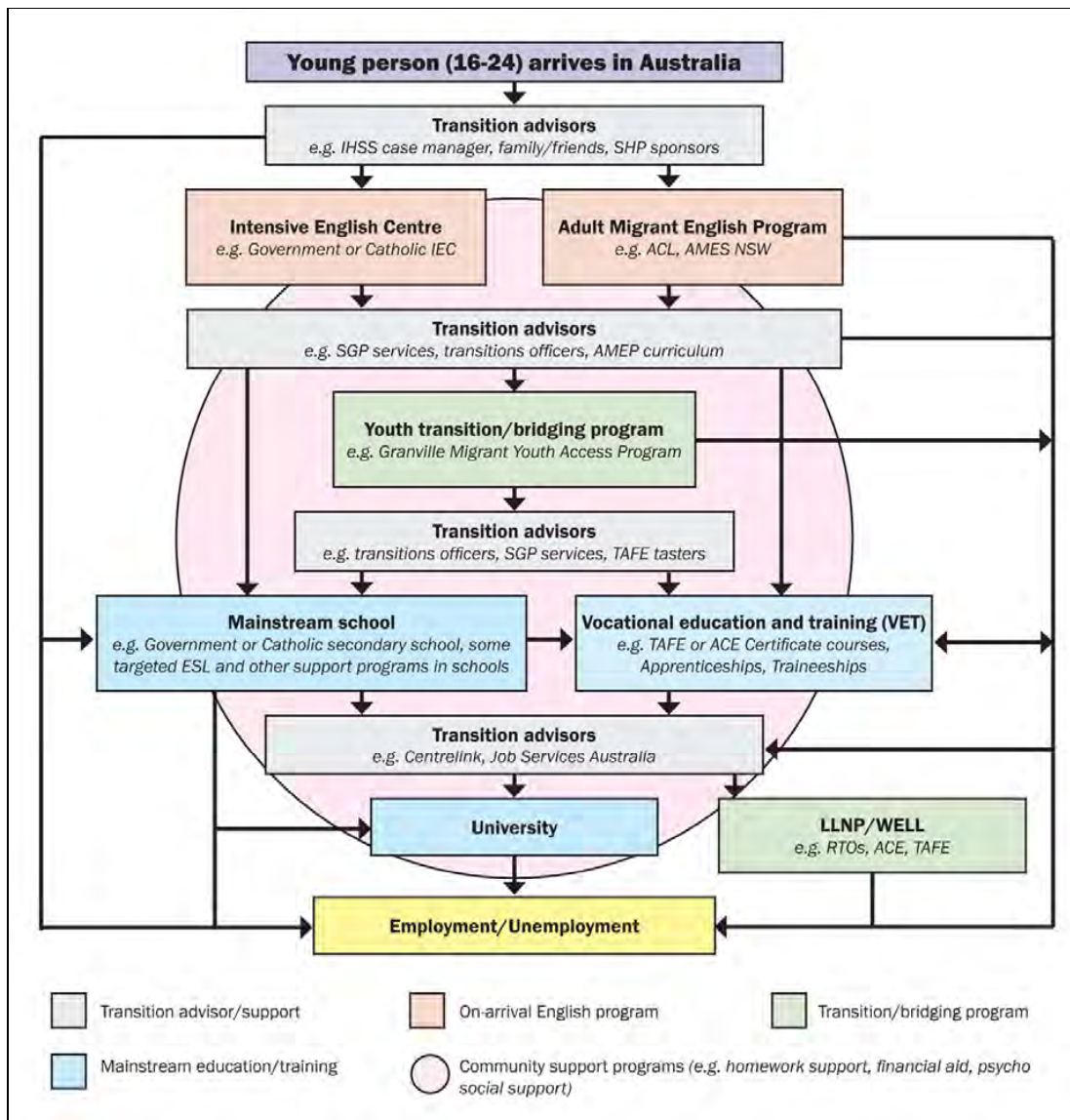
Although there has been limited research that has specifically explored the education and training experiences of refugee young people of post-compulsory school age settling in Australia, there is a growing recognition that people in this cohort have specific and complex learning needs that are not necessarily being catered for within current systems. Existing research does highlight a number of key and interrelating issues impacting on the education and training outcomes for this group of young people that require targeted responses by policy-makers and education and training providers. These issues can be broken down broadly into:

- *Disrupted education* – The majority of refugee young people arriving in Australia have experienced disrupted schooling and need time and support to catch up to their peers.
- *Difficulties navigating different education systems* – There are significant differences between Australian education systems and those overseas. Communicating expectations and ensuring young people (and their families) make informed decisions about pathways can be challenging.
- *Juggling settlement, education and family responsibilities* – Young people are often juggling the requirements of education with expectations to help out at home and other pressing settlement issues. They can be under pressure simultaneously to find employment and support family members in Australia and overseas.
- *Torture and trauma, developmental delays and classroom dynamics* – The physical, psychological and social effects of torture and trauma affect young people's ability to learn. This can play out in different ways, including slower academic progress and challenging behaviour in classrooms.
- *Literacy and students from oral-based cultures* – A significant proportion of young people arrive without having attained literacy in their first or any language, either because they come from oral-based cultures or because of their background of severely disrupted education. This has implications for pedagogy and the length of time it takes to learn English (literacy and spoken).
- *Assessing and addressing learning disabilities* – Appropriately assessing, diagnosing and responding to learning disabilities among young people from refugee backgrounds is a real challenge due to the limitations of existing assessment tools and the lack of recognition of complicating factors such as disrupted education and the impact of traumatic experiences on concentration and learning.
- *Refugee young people's aspirations, expectations and reality* – In many cases, there is a disjuncture between a young person's language and literacy abilities and his or her educational and career aspirations. This can be compounded by family pressure for career success, leaving young people making decisions without fully understanding the consequences and realities.
- *Australian systems, education level and age* – Education systems assume a link between age and previous schooling. Placing older students with minimal or no previous schooling in a skill-appropriate year level is unlikely to meet their social and developmental needs, and yet placing them in an age-equivalent year level is unlikely to meet their educational needs.
- *Regional settlement and English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) provision* – The limited resources or appreciation of particular learning and settlement needs is a major challenge in regional areas where numbers of arrivals are insufficient for the establishment of intensive English centres.

- *Pastoral and other support services within education and training systems* – There is a lack of resources to meet the complex pastoral and psychosocial support needs of students from refugee backgrounds in some education environments, including and particularly adult education environments such as TAFE.
- *Transition from Intensive English Centres (IECs) to mainstream education* – Making the transition from the supported IEC environment to mainstream education is a challenge for many young people, particularly those moving into the TAFE (adult education) system.
- *Homework support* – This can be extremely valuable for these students, but is not uniformly available or accessible in local areas, particularly where there are smaller numbers of students from refugee backgrounds settling.

### Current post-compulsory education and training pathways in NSW

The following figure provides an overview of the different types of education and training programs and transition supports in NSW that are available or targeted at newly arrived young people from refugee backgrounds aged 16 to 25. It highlights the complexity of post-compulsory pathways and services that young people must navigate from the time of their arrival:



## What works: Models of good practice

Through consultations with 30 service providers and community representatives and a review of literature, some general themes emerged regarding *what works* in the design of education and training initiatives that meet the needs of young people from refugee backgrounds. Critical factors, or principles of good practice, include:

- *Flexibility* - Young people being able to move in and out of different systems and programs; systems are 'young person-centred' and adaptable to meet individual needs. Recognition of young people's desire and need to work as well as study.
- *Understanding* - Teachers and systems having an understanding of the refugee experience, its impact on education and where young people are coming from; Program workers being skilled and resourced to engage effectively with young people at risk.
- *Pastoral care* - Support structures being in place or linked to programs that recognise young people are often negotiating complex settlement issues alongside their pursuit of education and training (e.g. providing psychosocial support, torture and trauma services, counselling).
- *Partnership* - Education and training initiatives partnering with community organisations and other services to address employment and other settlement issues; Networking and collaboration across and between sectors.
- *Strengths-based approaches* - Identifying young people's strengths and building realistic pathways; Providing extra-curricular activities such as sport and arts where young people can experience success.
- *Supported transitions* - Advisors or initiatives providing supported transitions from one education and training environment to the next (e.g. 'taster' programs, one-on-one support); Support workers having the time and capacity to build trust.
- *Literacy support* - Recognition that acquisition of literacy takes time and needs to be supported within education and training pathways. This requires expertise and resources. Age- and education level-appropriate curriculum.
- *Family-centred approaches* - Ensuring there are childcare provisions for young women with caring responsibilities; Working closely with young people's parents and families; Targeted parent engagement strategies around education, training and employment pathways in Australia.
- *Community involvement* - Bilingual/bicultural workers (e.g. bilingual education aides, community liaison workers) playing a key role; Community involvement in program design, monitoring and implementation.
- *Youth-specific* - Where possible, programs bring together people of a similar age and learning level to enhance not only educational outcomes, but also social support (i.e. peer learning and personal development).
- *Bridging strategies* - Recognising that many young people with limited literacy will struggle in mainstream education after they complete their time in IEC/AMEP, courses that create clear bridges into further education and training (e.g. combining language, literacy and vocational education and training).
- *Mentoring* - Credibility of information about realistic pathways can be enhanced when coming from mentors from similar backgrounds or from other young people.
- *Re-engagement* - Culturally-sensitive support programs to work with those who have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging.
- *Stable funding* - A secure, ongoing funding base enabling reflective and responsive practice; Enables programs to implement flexibility and invest in long-term outcomes for young people.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from consultations with a range of service providers and community representatives and through a comprehensive review of literature. They suggest ways in which the complex needs of young learners from refugee backgrounds can be met at both a local and systemic level in order to harness refugee young people's skills, aspirations and determination to succeed:

- **Recommendation 1:** RCOA recommends that State and Federal education departments work together to ensure there is increased funding for refugee and humanitarian entrant students to enable students who require more on-arrival intensive English support eligibility to remain in IECs for up to two years.
- **Recommendation 2:** RCOA recommends that the NSW Department of Education explore the possibility of establishing an additional senior IEC campus in NSW based on a similar model to that of Bankstown IEC and located in an area of high refugee settlement.
- **Recommendation 3:** RCOA recommends that a special per capita refugee youth loading be available to AMEP providers to be able to offer targeted youth-specific courses based on documented best practice, and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) refine criteria for its allocation and use to inform future tender specifications and accountability audits.
- **Recommendation 4:** RCOA recommends that State and Federal education departments invest in initiatives based on best practice that bridge on-arrival intensive English and mainstream education and training programs and target refugee and humanitarian entrants of post-compulsory school age.
- **Recommendation 5:** RCOA recommends a review of national frameworks for assessing and allocating resources to meet the learning needs of students with a background of disrupted education as outlined by the Australian Council of TESOL Associations (2009).
- **Recommendation 6:** RCOA recommends the NSW Department of Education explore the possibility of investing in enhanced professional development opportunities for teachers in NSW working with students from refugee backgrounds, using as a basis the School Support for Refugees Program model trialled in Victoria.
- **Recommendation 7:** RCOA recommends the expansion of the Refugee Action Support (RAS) Program to all NSW universities providing teacher training.
- **Recommendation 8:** RCOA recommends increased funding for pastoral care initiatives in all education and training environments catering to learners from refugee backgrounds.
- **Recommendation 9:** RCOA recommends that the NSW Department of Education allocate resources to coordinating and strengthening Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs across NSW based on the Learning Beyond the Bell model trialled in Victoria.
- **Recommendation 10:** RCOA recommends that the NSW Government invest in group and mentoring programs with therapeutic benefits targeting young people from refugee backgrounds.
- **Recommendation 11:** RCOA recommends that the NSW Government invest in culturally-appropriate services targeting young people from refugee backgrounds who have become disengaged from education and training pathways.
- **Recommendation 12:** RCOA recommends that DEEWR and DIAC work together to review eligibility criteria and flexibility of on-arrival English programs for young people of post-compulsory school age arriving under the Refugee and Humanitarian Program.
- **Recommendation 13:** RCOA recommends that the NSW Department of Education conduct a review of the capacity of schools to work collaboratively with vocational education and training providers and community services.
- **Recommendation 14:** RCOA recommends that DEEWR and DIAC explore the development of a holistic resource centre which is capable of research and innovation in language learning across the age spectrum of new arrivals.
- **Recommendation 15:** RCOA recommends that a central clearinghouse be established to increase the accessibility of learning resources targeting young people of post-compulsory school age with a background of disrupted education.
- **Recommendation 16:** RCOA recommends that DIAC initiates discussions with appropriate authorities to produce and gain comprehensive cross-sectoral data on the educational and employment pathways for the five-year period following entry to Australia of humanitarian entrants aged 16 and older who have had seven years or less of schooling.



## 2. INTRODUCTION

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### 2.1 Background

Feedback to the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) from member organisations, refugee communities and settlement agencies has suggested that a range of challenges face newly arrived refugee and humanitarian entrants who settle in Australia in later adolescence. Many of these young people come from situations in which schooling has been highly disrupted or, in some cases, they have not had the opportunity to attend school at all. Young people of post-compulsory school age (16-24) can face additional pressures, demands and stresses than those who arrive at a younger age. These include: more significant pressure to achieve educationally, more limited previous experience of education, higher level of family responsibilities, delayed or suspended personal development as a result of their refugee experience, and limited access to needed services due to the inflexibility of many youth and education systems based on chronological age (CMYI 2006a).

Despite the challenges that newly arrived young people with a background of disrupted education face in adapting to the educational expectations and environments in Australia, many are highly motivated and driven to pursue higher education, training and career goals. Research confirms much of the anecdotal evidence that young refugee and humanitarian entrants see education as a source of hope and future (Chegwidden & Thompson 2008; RCOA 2009).

Within this context of disadvantage and high aspirations, many educational and settlement professionals and community representatives consulted during RCOA's [annual consultations](#) have stressed that there are a significant number of young people whose learning needs remain unmet within the education and training system in Australia. The failure to meet the learning needs of students from refugee backgrounds at high school, and the lack of alternative post-compulsory education and training pathways, can have a devastating impact on young people and lead to their disengagement from education, employment and other services, and ultimately to social exclusion.

Where good models do exist that effectively meet the needs of young people from refugee backgrounds with a history of disrupted education – for example, specialist programs that combine language, vocational education and training (VET) and secondary school curricula and provide pathways into further education and training – these models are not necessarily well known across different educational jurisdictions. Moreover, a one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to be effective in meeting the needs of young people at different stages of education, literacy, personal development and stages of settlement.

### 2.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of this research is to bring together evidence of good practice in the provision of education and training that meet the needs of refugee young people (16-24 years old) who settle in Australia with a history of disrupted education, as well as identifying ways forward in addressing identified gaps. Our research objectives were to:

- Explore the issues, challenges and barriers faced by newly arrived refugee entrants who arrive in their teenage years with a background of disrupted education;
- Research models of excellence for how different programs and education providers are providing pathways into education and training that meet the needs of this group of young people;
- Identify and draw together evidence of best practice education and training models across NSW (and interstate) as a resource for future use; and
- Make recommendations for positive changes to policy and funding for post-compulsory education pathways that meet the needs of young people from refugee backgrounds in NSW.

## 2.3 Methodology

The first phase of this research involved an extensive review of literature to engage with current thinking in NSW and across Australia about gaps, challenges and models of good practice with regards to young people from refugee backgrounds and post-compulsory education and training. This literature review informed the consultation questions and structure and provided a qualitative meta-analysis of issues. An annotated bibliography has also been developed and is available on the RCOA website ([www.refugeecouncil.org.au/current/youth.html#biblio](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/current/youth.html#biblio)).

The main source of primary data was gathered through a series of semi-structured qualitative interviews with key stakeholders who have expertise in the field of education and training and who work with young people from refugee backgrounds. Overall, 30 stakeholders were consulted, including teachers, academics, program coordinators, project workers, community representatives and policy-makers. Interviews were conducted mainly by telephone using an interview schedule (see Appendices for interview schedules and list of people consulted), and most interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Three consultations were by email correspondence. Consultations focused predominantly on identifying gaps and good practice case studies from the perspective of practitioners in NSW.

Case studies of models identified as good practice were followed up with representatives from the respective programs using a set template (based on case studies documented in the VSPC [Pathways and Transition](#) report). The successes and challenges documented in these case studies are from the perspective of those involved in program delivery and not through an independent evaluation.

Supplementary quantitative data from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship was also used to provide a demographic profile of refugee and humanitarian youth entrants in NSW (Section 3.1).

## 2.4 Acknowledgements

The Refugee Council of Australia would like to sincerely thank the NSW Government, particularly Graham West MP, who as Minister for Youth provided the funding that has allowed us to undertake this research. RCOA would like to thank the service providers and community representatives who participated in consultations and generously gave their time and expertise to inform the development of recommendations (see Appendices for full list of individuals and organisations consulted).

This research project was coordinated by Louise Olliff, RCOA Settlement Policy Officer. Research was undertaken with the assistance of student interns Tim Clarke and Dan Soderstrom.

## 2.5 Glossary of acronyms

ACE	Adult Community Education
ACL	Australian Centre for Languages Pty Ltd
ACTA	Australian Council of TESOL Associations
ALNF	Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation
AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
AMES	Adult Multicultural Education Services (Victoria)
AMES NSW	NSW Adult Multicultural Education Services (a division of the NSW Department of Education and Training)
CGVE	Certificate of General and Vocational Education
CIEC	Catholic Intensive English Centre
CMY/CMYI	Centre for Multicultural Youth/Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues
CSU	Charles Sturt University
CSWE	Certificate in Spoken and Written English
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship

EAL/D	English as an Additional Language/Dialect
ESL	English as a Second Language
HS	High School
HSC	Higher School Certificate
IEC	Intensive English Centre
IHSS	Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy <sup>1</sup>
LBB	Learning Beyond the Bell
LCP	Local Community Partnership
LGA	Local Government Area
LLNP	Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program
MYAP	Migrant Youth Access Program (Granville TAFE)
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NAYS	Newly Arrived Youth Specialist – services within the Reconnect program
NSW DET	NSW Department of Education and Training
OSHLSPs	Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs
RCOA	Refugee Council of Australia
RAN	Refugee Action Network
REPP	Refugee Education Partnership Project
RRAC	Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SGP	Settlement Grants Program
SHP	Special Humanitarian Program
SPP	Special Preparatory Program
STARTTS	NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TPC	Tertiary Preparation Certificate
UWS	University of Western Sydney
VET	Vocational education and training
VETAB	Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board
VSPC	Victorian Settlement Planning Committee
WELL	Workplace English Language and Literacy Program

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<sup>1</sup> To be renamed Humanitarian Settlement Services when new contracts begin in 2011

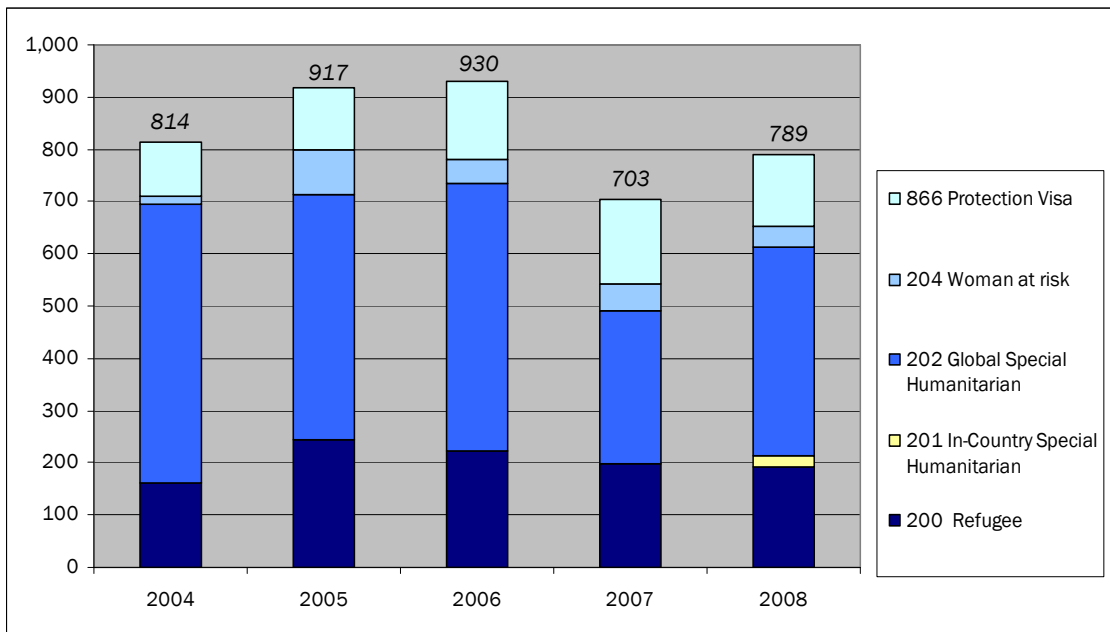
### 3. POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PATHWAYS AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM REFUGEE BACKGROUNDS IN NSW

#### 3.1 Young people from refugee backgrounds in NSW: Demographics

The following provides a statistical overview of refugee young people of **post-compulsory school age**<sup>2</sup> who have settled in NSW over the past five years. All data is derived from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship’s (DIAC) settlement database<sup>3</sup> for the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2008 (unless otherwise stated). Overall, 19,839 people settled in NSW through the Australian Refugee and Humanitarian Program over this period. Of these, 4,153 (21%) were aged between 16 and 25 at the time of arrival, making young people of post-compulsory school age an over-represented age demographic within the humanitarian program. Of these young people, a slight majority were young men (54.6%).

Figure 1 shows that 53% of post-compulsory school age young people are coming under the Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) visa category (202). This has implications relating to the financial burdens experienced by families on SHP visas who have incurred the cost of airfares and are frequently indebted to their proposers in Australia on arrival (CMYI 2007; RCOA 2008). Young people settling under the SHP also receive variable support in navigating on-arrival education and training pathways dependent on the knowledge, skills and understanding of their proposer, many of whom are newly arrived former refugees themselves. In comparison, young people coming under the Refugee (200) and Woman at Risk (204) visa categories are supported in their transition and orientation to education and training pathways through on-arrival case management funded through DIAC’s Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS)<sup>4</sup>. Those on Protection Visas (866) are young people who have been granted permanent protection after arriving in Australia under a different visa category or as asylum seekers. Whether or not these young people are already engaged in education and training or have been provided support to negotiate pathways will depend on how long they have been in Australia and under what circumstances they arrived.

**Figure 1. 16-24 year old Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants to NSW, by visa type and year of arrival**



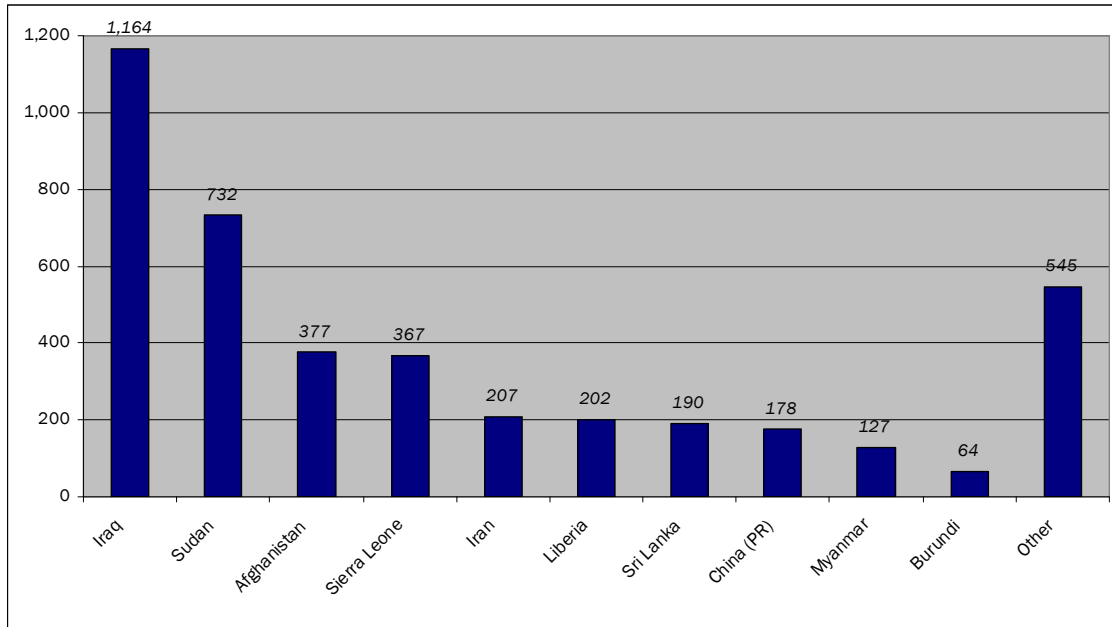
<sup>2</sup> When referring to ‘post-compulsory school age’ we refer to young people aged 16-25. In NSW (from 2010), young people cannot leave school until they complete Year 10 or reach the age of 17, whichever comes first. Most students complete Year 10 at the age of 15 or 16. For NSW policy, see <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/leavingschool/schoolleaveage/index.php>

<sup>3</sup> [www.settlement.immi.gov.au/settlement/enterSelectReport.do](http://www.settlement.immi.gov.au/settlement/enterSelectReport.do)

<sup>4</sup> [www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-programs/ihss.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-programs/ihss.htm)

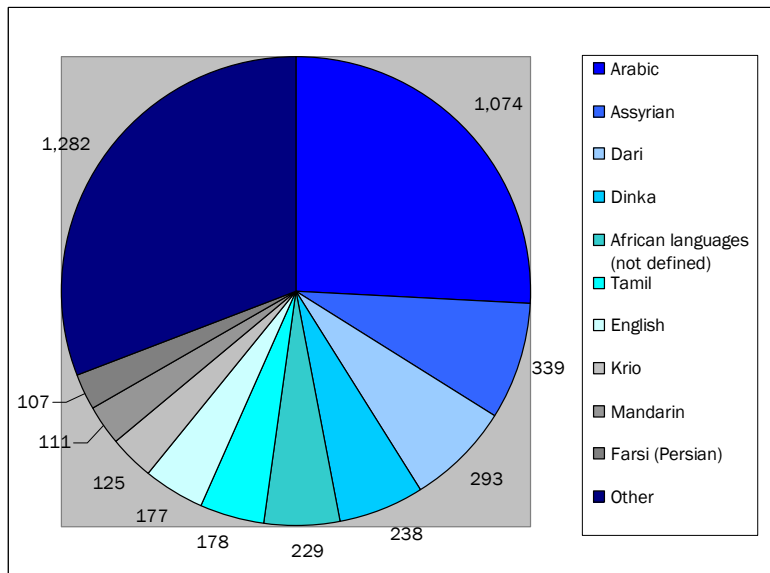
Figure 2 shows the top 10 countries of birth for post-compulsory school age young people in NSW, reflecting broader trends in the regional make-up of the Refugee and Humanitarian Program. Over the past five years, 44% of the cohort were born in countries in the Middle East and South West Asia (predominantly Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran), 38.4% were born in Africa (predominantly Sudan, Sierra Leone and Liberia) and 16% were born in South- and South East Asia (predominantly Sri Lanka, China and Myanmar/Burma).

**Figure 2. 16-24 year old Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants in NSW by top 10 countries of birth**



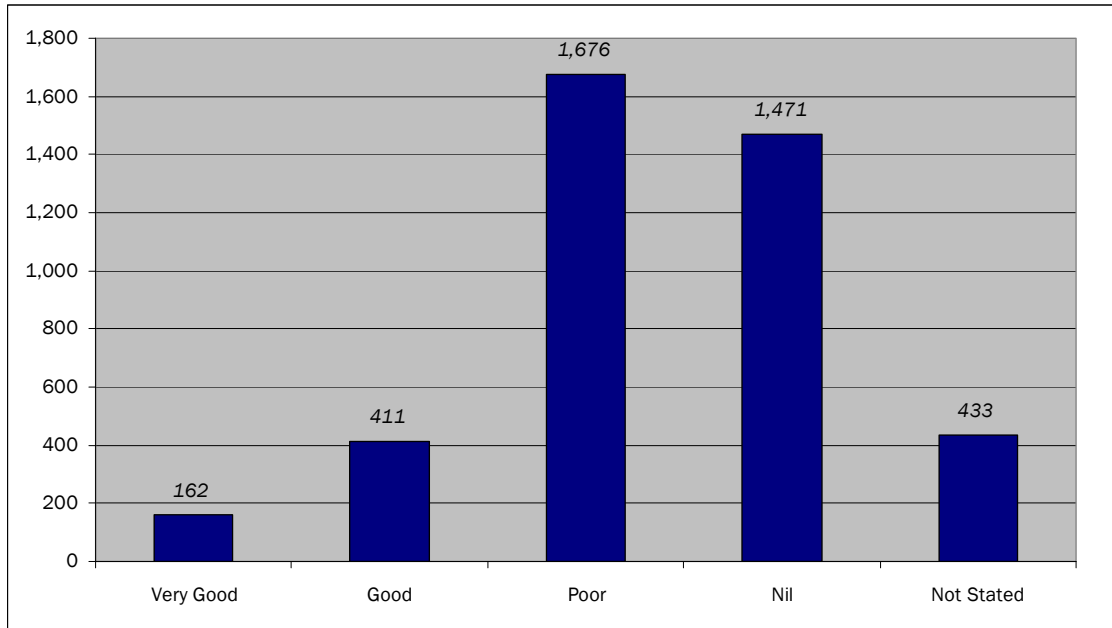
With regards to main languages spoken at home, Figure 3 shows that 25.8% of newly arrived young people nominated Arabic as their main spoken language, reflecting the large cohorts of Iraqi and Sudanese arrivals. Of the top languages nominated, all except for English either have a non-roman alphabetic script or are largely oral languages. (For example, while a written form of Dinka does exist, it is not widely taught in Sudan and most Dinka-speakers are not literate in Dinka. The same applies to many of the other smaller African languages.)

**Figure 3. 16-24 year old Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants in NSW by main language**



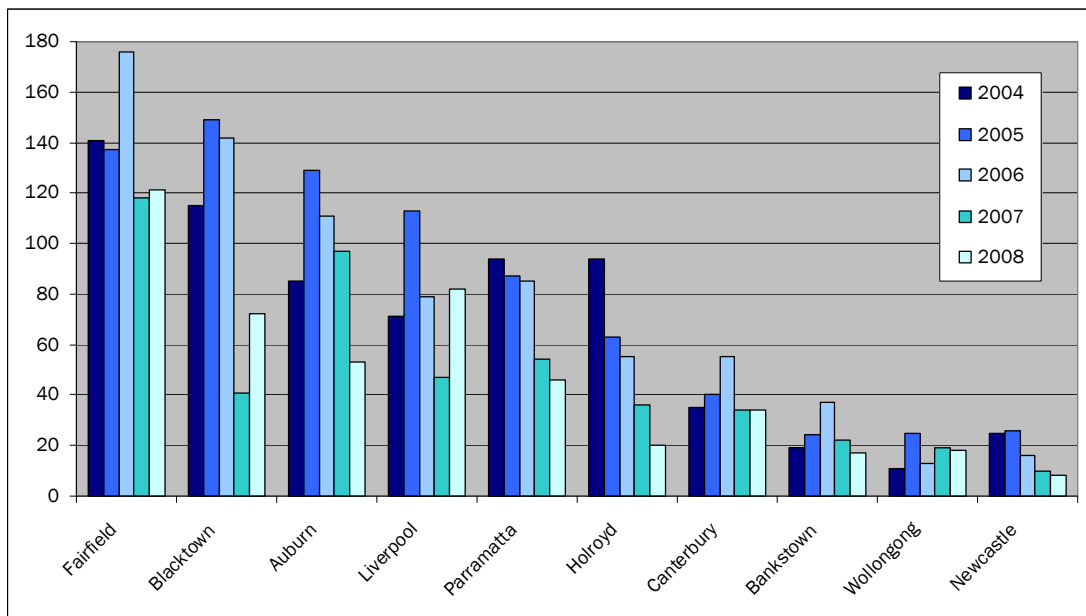
In addition to coming from a wide variety of language backgrounds, most refugee young people of post-compulsory school age arrive with poor or no English proficiency (see Figure 4). Only 13.8% of the cohort arriving over the past five years identified as having 'good' or 'very good' English proficiency. 35.4% nominated having 'nil' and 40.4% nominated having 'poor' English proficiency.

**Figure 4. 16-24 year old Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants in NSW by English proficiency on arrival**



Figures 5 and 6 provide an indication of the distribution of young people from refugee backgrounds by local government area (LGA) of residence. Figure 5 shows the changing patterns of settlement over time within the top 10 LGAs of humanitarian settlement. Figure 6 shows the distribution of humanitarian entrants across all NSW LGAs over the past five years, highlighting the many smaller pockets of young people resident in both metropolitan and regional areas. Certainly, the capacity of local education and training providers to cater to the specific needs of young people from refugee backgrounds will be influenced by the numbers of young people living in these areas or who are able to easily access them by transport.

**Figure 5. 16-24 year old Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants by top 10 NSW LGAs of residence, by year of arrival**



**Figure 6. 16-24 year old Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants who settled in NSW by LGAs of residence (2004-2008)**

Fairfield (C)	693	Griffith (C)	15	Ballina (A)	*
Blacktown (C)	519	Botany Bay (C)	14	Bellingen (A)	*
Auburn (A)	475	Burwood (A)	14	Blue Mountains (C)	*
Liverpool (C)	392	Hornsby (A)	13	Byron (A)	*
Parramatta (C)	366	Lake Macquarie (C)	13	Clarence Valley (A)	*
Holroyd (C)	268	Ashfield (A)	12	Deniliquin (A)	*
Canterbury (C)	198	Baulkham Hills (A)	12	Gwydir (A)	*
Bankstown (C)	119	Sutherland Shire (A)	9	Hawkesbury (C)	*
Wollongong (C)	86	Armidale Dumaresq (A)	7	Mosman (A)	*
Newcastle (C)	85	Leichhardt (A)	7	Narrabri (A)	*
Wagga Wagga (C)	67	Albury (C)	6	Orange (C)	*
Sydney (C)	65	Ku-ring-gai (A)	6	Queanbeyan (C)	*
Coffs Harbour (C)	52	Tamworth Regional (A)	6	Singleton (A)	*
Penrith (C)	43	Canada Bay (A)	5	Woollahra (A)	*
Marrickville (A)	38	Inverell (A)	5	Sydney (Unspecified)	13
Warringah (A)	30	Kogarah (A)	5	Invalid	274
Campbelltown (C)	29	Manly (A)	5	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,153</b>
Strathfield (A)	28	North Sydney (A)	5		
Rockdale (C)	25	Gosford (C)	4		
Randwick (C)	22	Maitland (C)	4		
Goulburn Mulwaree (A)	20	Willoughby (C)	4		
Lismore (C)	18	Cowra (A)	3		
Ryde (C)	18	Port Stephens (A)	3		
Hurstville (C)	17	Wyong (A)	*		

\* Indicates less than 3 people

Metro LGAs - Outer Sydney  
Metro LGAs - Inner Sydney  
Regional LGAs

### 3.2 Key issues

Although there has been limited research that has specifically explored the education and training experiences of refugee young people of post-compulsory school age settling in Australia, there is a growing recognition that this cohort has specific and complex learning needs that are not necessarily being catered for within current systems. Research undertaken in this area (see bibliography for list of references) highlights a number of key and interrelating issues impacting on the education and training outcomes for this group of young people that require targeted responses by policy-makers and education and training providers. These issues, which are discussed in more detail below, can be broken down broadly into:

- Disrupted education;
- Difficulties navigating different education systems;
- Juggling settlement, education and family responsibilities;
- Torture and trauma, developmental delays and classroom dynamics;
- Literacy and students from oral-based cultures;
- Assessing and addressing learning disabilities;
- Refugee young people's aspirations, expectations and reality;
- Australian systems, education level and age;
- Regional settlement and English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) provision;
- Pastoral and other support services within education and training systems;
- Transition from Intensive English Centres (IECs) to mainstream education; and
- Homework support.

#### Disrupted education

The overwhelming majority of young people from refugee backgrounds enrolling in Australian education and training institutions will have experienced some disruption to their education prior to arriving in

Australia as a direct result of their migration experience. Many young people settling in Australia have been born or spent the majority of their lives in refugee camps or moving from place to place. Although primary schooling is often offered in camps, many children do not attend because they may be needed to queue for the family at food distribution points, they may not be well enough or have adequate clothing or money for materials to allow them to attend. The quality of the schooling offered also varies enormously (State of Victoria 2008:8). Many of these young people will have had no opportunity to attend secondary school because schools either do not exist or families do not have the resources or entitlements to access them.

In terms of what these young people are actually missing when their schooling is 'severely disrupted', Brown et al (2006:153) point out that:

*In addition to the cognitive development which takes place over many years at school, the language of school classrooms features a highly specific form of English, incorporating particular ways of being and behaving, a great deal of prior knowledge, along with cultural expectations and understandings. There are many and complex challenges confronting students arriving aged 15 plus with minimal or no schooling. In addition, apparent oral fluency achieved by many refugee students quite quickly can be highly misleading for teachers, who expect transfer to and 'similarly smooth' acquisition of academic skills (Hakuta, Butler & Witt, 2000). Since Cummins' work in the early 1980s on the contrasts between basic interpersonal language and academic language (see, for example, 1984), research has demonstrated the complexity and specificity of cognitive academic language use in schools. This is particularly true of the middle years, as the nature of classroom instructions and texts begin to change as literacy practices become increasingly specialised within the subject areas (Carrasquillo, Kucer & Abrams, 2004). Students with interrupted education lack the topic-specific vocabularies of academic subjects, understandings of register and genre, cultural background to scaffold their understanding and learning strategies to process content. Social understandings of how to 'be' in the classroom may be different (Anderson, 2004) or lacking.*

Research confirms that newly arrived young people who enter Intensive English Centres (IECs) or the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) with minimal prior formal schooling, little or no literacy in their own language, refugee trauma experiences, weak or disrupted family ties or physical/sensory impairments experience a double disadvantage and are typically several years behind their English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) new arrival peers in attaining comparable literacy skill levels (see Brown et al 2006; Moore et al 2008). For example, Brown et al (2006:155) highlight research based on data from 10,000 EAL/D students in Canada and the US which found policy provision of one-year programs of sheltered English immersion were "wildly unrealistic":

*Students must acquire social communication skills, and also academic writing and speaking skills, while attempting to catch up to native speaking peers who themselves are continuing to develop academic and language competence. The complexity of language acquisition itself can not be overemphasised. [...] Hakuta, Butler and de Witt's study corroborates a body of research and evidence which estimates that in optimum circumstances, it takes three to five years to develop oral language proficiency and four to seven years to gain academic English proficiency. These times are much longer for disadvantaged children, those in poor schools, and those with interrupted schooling, with some studies suggesting it takes up to ten years for such students to acquire academic proficiency.*

The impact of this disrupted education is borne out in the slow progress of newly arrived refugee young people when compared with other newly arrived young EAL/D learners, their poor outcomes and often disengagement from mainstream education and training pathways. For example, Moore et al's (2008) study of young people from refugee backgrounds of post-compulsory school age with disrupted education in the AMEP found that "extremely slow movement across CSWE<sup>5</sup> levels by those entering at

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<sup>5</sup> Certificate in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) is the curriculum framework used within AMEP. AMEP classes are organised by level, from pre-CSWE to Level IV. Most refugee young people with disrupted education start in pre-CSWE classes, and Moore et al's research found that only a small proportion progress up to CSWE-III.



the lowest level accord with other studies on school-age and adult learners in America, Canada, Britain and New Zealand and their conclusions that minimal/no prior education and literacy are key factors in determining the time needed to gain proficiency in a second/other language” (p.96).

### Navigating different education systems

Internationally, education systems vary enormously. Where a young person from a refugee background has had some previous experience of schooling, it is likely to have been within a very different educational system. Figure 7 provides an overview of some of the common overseas variants in schooling systems. In addition to these, refugee young people of post-compulsory school age who are not eligible to access Australian secondary schools because of age restrictions, may have no comparative overseas experience to draw upon of an education or training system similar to that offered by AMEP and through Australian vocational education and training (VET) providers. Understanding and navigating these different systems can be extremely challenging for a newly arrived young person and their family, which partly explains why there is often a strong preference for young people to go to mainstream secondary schools; an education system or pathway that is notionally understood.

**Figure 7. Variations in Australian and overseas schooling systems**

Issue	Australian schooling system	Overseas variants
Gender	The majority of schools are co-educational. Girls encouraged to achieve academically in a range of fields.	Boys and girls are educated separately in many countries. In some countries girls receive little education.
Allocation of year level	Classes generally arranged within year levels according to student's age.	Students may be in class with students from a range of ages and/or abilities.
Timetabling	Timetables organised on regular cycles. The standard school day is 9am-3pm.	Sometimes standard daily timetable or no formalised timetables. School days may be afternoons only, or varied for each year level.
Discipline	Focus on individual responsibility and self-management within set rules/policies. Detention, suspension and expulsion in place of physical punishment.	More external boundaries set around discipline, and in some countries a stricter morality. Some use of physical punishment in discipline.
Learning style	The process of learning and mastery of a range of skills is emphasised. Uniqueness, creativity and individual expression are valued.	Received learning style, transmission of facts and rote learning methods common. Perfection of an accepted standard, or development of general skill may be valued.
Homework	May involve completion of class work, practice examples, research, and collaborative projects.	Sometimes homework not required. Where required, more focus on set tasks and completion of classroom work rather than developmental projects.
Assessment	Students assessed for comprehension of material and application of understanding through written work, practical demonstration, and group presentation.	There may be an expectation of word-for-word reproduction of data (memorisation of text). Oral testing or written work may be emphasised.
Interaction with teachers	Students are encouraged to have a high level of interaction with teachers. Teachers tend to be seen as facilitators.	Teachers often seen as experts, and relationships formal. In some countries asking the teacher questions is seen as disrespectful.
Teaching ratios and class sizes	Mostly between 20 and 30 students per teacher in government secondary schools.	May be large class sizes - up to 60 students in one room.
Skill development	Students are encouraged to develop on a social, emotional, physical and intellectual level appropriate to age. Extracurricular activities and excursions encouraged.	Often more focus on academic achievement and formalised learning environments. There may be some sports activities and excursions, but no school camps.
Responsibility of parents	A three-way relationship between student, home and school is seen as ideal. Parents asked to play an active role, attending the school for parent teacher interviews, meetings and extracurricular activities.	Often a more strict separation between home and school life and parents are not expected to have much of a role with the school unless a problem arises.
IT and textbooks	Access to computers and internet is taken for granted within high schools and students are expected to have functional IT skills to be able to complete homework. Students are expected to have their own copies of textbooks.	Schools with very few resources. Students work is written or orally tested, with no expectations of access to computers, internet or textbooks. There may be only one textbook per class. Some students may have never used a computer before.

Issue	Australian schooling system	Overseas variants
Post-compulsory pathways	Students legally required to be in education until minimum age (i.e. 15 or 16). Multiple education, training and employment pathways, including TAFE, university, apprenticeships and traineeships.	No legal requirement to be in education. Limited higher education pathways available, and usually only for a few (i.e. those with financial resources, power or exceptional talent). Pathways mainly high school to university

(adapted from CMYI 2006b:8-9)

### Settlement, education and family responsibilities

Newly arrived young people are usually juggling the requirements of education with expectations to help out at home with family responsibilities and other pressing settlement issues (Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008:19). For example, young people in the post-compulsory school age group may be responsible for caring for younger or older family members, have considerable home duties and be under pressure to find employment quickly in order to support their family in Australia and overseas. There may be a cultural expectation that young men who migrate as part of a female-headed household take on the responsibilities of the head of the family if they are the eldest male. Some very young women have their own children and must juggle the demands of education with parenting. This is particularly difficult in the context of childcare shortages. For example, Moore et al. (2008) were told by interviewees that “the shortage of childcare places is the main cause of women, including young women, not accessing their SPP400<sup>6</sup>/AMEP hours or discontinuing” (p.35).

As young people often attain spoken English proficiency much faster than their parents/guardians, they may be called upon to assist in negotiating complex Australian systems, such as finding accommodation, attending appointments and even representing their parents at a younger sibling’s parent-teacher interview. As one young man interviewed for an AMEP Research Centre project summed up:

*Unless we feel happy that we have our settlement issues addressed, you know, if I am thinking about my family, if I am thinking on how I am going to pay the rent, if I am thinking of looking for a house and so on, I am not in a position to concentrate on the studies. (Lloyd 2006:2 cited in Moore et al 2008:34)*

### Torture and trauma, developmental delays and classroom dynamics

The physical, psychological and social effects of torture and trauma notably affect refugee young people’s ability to learn and can play out in education environments in a number of ways. For example, Brown et al (2006) note that in classrooms “teachers find that some of these students are withdrawn, aggressive, unable to concentrate, anxious or hyperactive” (pp.151-2). Research on young people from refugee backgrounds’ experiences in NSW schools by Chegwiddden & Thompson (2008:24) found that:

*...most young people interviewed had experienced at least one suspension from school during their time in Australia. When asked why they were suspended the majority of young people reported it was for fighting, but backed up the response by specifying it wasn’t their fault. Growing up in war and surviving refugee camps results in learnt survival behaviour, for some young people survival means reacting with violence. Defending one’s honour at all costs is something that teachers identified they had witnessed in the school playgrounds. Students from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds have not learnt the conflict resolution skills that are expected of students in Australian school grounds.*

Moore et al (2008) highlight that “young men can find sitting in class physically stressful. One teacher said, ‘They need to shake the hormones down a bit, get the fidgets out of their system, get both sides of their brain working together’. Another said that some ‘revert to Grade 9 behaviour’, a few by stirring the teacher but mostly by being ‘very physically fidgety’ or, as another teacher said, ‘swinging on their chairs and wearing their hats’.” (p.36).

<sup>6</sup> SPP400 refers to the Special Preparatory Program (SPP) funding of 400 hours for young people in the AMEP who have had seven years or less education. See Figure 8 for more information

CMYI (2006a:7) identify “delayed adolescence” as a factor for some young people from refugee backgrounds in their early 20s:

*While their actual age may indicate the onset of adulthood, the issues they are addressing may have been faced by their Australian born counterparts in their early teenage years. They will often require youth support services for a longer time. Their development may have been disrupted by the impact of the traumatic nature of the refugee experience and existence ‘on the run’, long periods in camps or second countries in situations of severe deprivation, cultural dislocation, or loss of established social networks.*

Dealing with difficult behaviours in the classroom that are linked to young people’s experiences of torture and trauma and the refugee experience can be challenging for teachers and require sensitivity, creativity and collaborative approaches (see Moore et al 2008; STARTTS *Hints for Healing* URL). Where there is a lack of understanding or capacity to address challenging behaviours, young people can quickly find themselves disengaged and excluded from mainstream education and training pathways.

### **Literacy and students from oral-based cultures**

A significant proportion of young people coming through the Refugee and Humanitarian Program arrive without having attained literacy in their first or any language, either because they come from oral-based cultures or because of their background of severely disrupted education. For example, in 2002-03, 27% of refugee and humanitarian entrants settling in NSW in the previous five years stated they could read their first language well compared to just 7% in 2005-06 (NSW DET Presentation, June 2008 cited in Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008:20). Research has shown that individuals that are literate in their first language find it easier to learn a second language and become literate in that second language at a quicker rate (ACTA 2009; Burgoyne & Hull 2007; Moore et al 2008). For example, the Australian Council of TESOL Associations (ACTA 2009:9) reports that:

*Collier’s (1987) comprehensive and landmark study of school age learners concluded that: “Where all instruction is given through the second language (English), non-native speakers of English with no schooling in their first language take 7–10 years or more to reach age and grade-level norms of their native English-speaking peers” (p. 618). Reviewing more than two decades of research, Thomas and Collier (2002) stated that, for those with prior literacy, “the minimum length of time it takes to reach grade level performance in second language (L2) is four years” (p. 9). Hakuta, Butler and Witt (2000) found that, even in schools regarded as highly successful in teaching EAL learners, “oral proficiency takes 3 to 5 years to develop, and academic English proficiency can take 4 to 7 years”.*

With regards to how first language literacy impacts on learning trajectories within Australian education and training systems, Moore et al (2008:31-2) refer to Huntley’s (1992) four types of “ESL literacy learner”: *pre-literate* (i.e. the learner comes from a non-literate society); *non-literate* or *illiterate* (i.e. the learner comes from a literate society but has not acquired literacy); *semi-literate* (i.e. the learner has gained elementary literacy in a literate society); and *non-roman alphabetic* (i.e. the learner has literacy in another script). Moore et al identify a further set of learning needs – ‘learning how to learn’ – that spans the first three learner categories. Moore et al’s research found that a large proportion of the young people of post-compulsory school age engaged in the AMEP/SPP can be classified under this first pre-literate category, a situation that has a significant impact on learning outcomes.

Research by Moore et al (2008) and Burgoyne & Hull (2007) highlight the challenges of teaching young people who are pre-literate and the lack of expertise and resources within Australian education and training systems to recognise and cater for the particular learning needs of young people from oral-based cultures. For example, Burgoyne & Hull’s (2007:9-10) research into young Sudanese students found that:

*There was general agreement among participants in this study that learning to read and write presented the greatest learning challenge for Sudanese learners. However, there was no general agreement about the ease with which Sudanese learners were able to learn to speak English. There was little evidence that teachers were aware of the literature on learners from highly oral cultures or of the need to develop oral language teaching strategies that do not rely on written prompts.*

## Assessing and addressing learning disabilities

There is anecdotal evidence and some research that suggests Australian education and training systems are facing challenges in appropriately assessing, diagnosing and responding to learning disabilities among young people from refugee backgrounds (see Fraine & McDade 2009; Kaplan 2009; Stolk 2009). For example, Chegwiddden & Thompson (2008:19) found that school counsellors reported teachers were sending students from refugee backgrounds to them for IQ and cognitive testing to provide an explanation for poor results at school. Yet there are a number of possible reasons why these students are achieving relatively slow progress in school, including: traumatic experiences disrupting concentration and learning, loss of attachment figures and family dysfunction, learning disabilities and disrupted education. As Kaplan (2009:6) argues, there is

*...growing awareness among mental health service providers that some refugee children and adolescents who were performing very poorly at school were receiving diagnoses of intellectual disability and low intelligence quotients that were not consistent with their level of everyday functioning. Such assessments could mean access to special assistance but could potentially preclude them from receiving the necessary and appropriate interventions if the diagnosis was not correct. There are two main likely causes of poor performance in addition to the possibility of an intellectual disability. The first is a constellation of cognitive, emotional and behavioural effects that are the result of trauma. The second is the inherent cultural bias of standardised tests of ability, including a refugee student's sheer lack of experience with the range of cognitive tasks that underpin test performance.*

On the other hand, Moore et al (2008) argue that “although learning disabilities exist in any population, their incidence can be expected to be higher among those who have been exposed to the kinds of trauma many refugees have experienced” (p.33). Whether or not there is a higher incidence of learning disabilities among this group of young people, the challenge remains in ensuring there are culturally-appropriate tools for assessing cognitive functioning as well as appropriate interventions where a learning disability is identified.

## Refugee young people's aspirations, expectations and reality

There is often disjuncture between young people's language and literacy abilities and their educational and career aspirations and this has implications for the education and training pathways that young people (and their families) choose. Young people from refugee backgrounds are often extremely motivated to achieve academically and can feel enormous pressure to catch up with their Australian-born peers as quickly as possible. As Chegwiddden & Thompson (2008) report: “A majority of young people interviewed identified education as the most important aspect of their life as it is a source of hope and future” (p.22). At the same time, newly arrived young people and their families will have a limited understanding of the range of employment options in Australia or the possible education pathways that can lead to rewarding careers. For example, Moore et al (2008) reports that refugee young people and their parents can view AMEP centres within a TAFE institute as second-best to secondary schools, even where targeted youth programs are well suited to the learning needs of older young people.

The mismatch in aspirations, understanding and the high expectations of Australian education and training systems can lead to young people prematurely exiting on-arrival intensive English courses (IECs or AMEP) as they “run to catch up” (service provider consultation). Where young people make the transition into secondary school, Brown et al (2006) report that “many students felt alienated by the transition from on-arrival language centre where ‘there everyone is like me’ to mainstream school where the other students ‘are always ahead of you’ (p.159)”. Likewise, Moore et al's (2008) study of young learners within the AMEP found that young men are often “impatient with learning English and eager to move quickly through the SPP400/AMEP” (p.36). Or as one AMEP service provider put it:

*We have a constant problem with someone coming in with, say, two years education and wanting to be [a] brain surgeon. It's not just them, it's their families. They've got one family member out: 'Now, you go to the new country, go to university, become a doctor, earn lots of money and get us all out.' It's a huge issue, yeah. So we have to work with that a lot. And in the lower levels, it's harder. (cited in Moore et al 2008:36)*

Once a young person has transitioned from an on-arrival English program into mainstream education and training, current funding and program restrictions make it extremely difficult if not impossible for them to return to the English program. Once within a mainstream school or TAFE, being unable to meet the expectations of these post-compulsory learning environments can have a negative impact on a young person's sense of self-worth and their ongoing engagement. Moore et al (2008) warn that if young people's "ambition to succeed is met with failure and unemployment, they are vulnerable to being caught up in the more undesirable aspects of the wider youth culture and involved with 'oppositional sub-cultures of marginalised peers' (Gibson 2001:21)." (p.37). As one young person so poignantly puts it:

*"It's really hard. Sometimes you feel like you don't want to come to class because everyone is ahead of you and you don't know anything. Sometimes it feels like you hate yourself, like why am I not like them? Or why did I come here? They already know everything. Why did I come to this country? They know everything and I don't know nothing. You are thinking a lot of things and so you feel bad."* (cited in Brown et al. 2006:160)

### **Australian systems, education level and age**

Australian education systems assume a link between age and previous schooling. That is, class levels in schools are mostly determined and regulated by the chronological age of students and not on the relative skill level of students. Refugee young people who arrive in the post-compulsory school age are therefore mostly placed in middle or senior secondary school, even where their education level may be equivalent to someone in a primary or junior high school. As a recent report on the settlement experiences of Horn of Africa communities in NSW describes:

*"They come here at say 15 years, you have never gone to school... then you come here you are taken to school according to your years. How do you think that child is going to manage? That is why you see all these boys on the streets idle...they are leaving school because they do not understand."* (Refugee from Sudan cited in Pittaway & Muli 2009:12)

Placing older students with minimal or no previous schooling in an appropriate education environment is extremely challenging, as placing them in a skill-appropriate year level is unlikely to meet their social and developmental needs, and yet placing them in an age-equivalent year level is unlikely to meet their educational needs. As a Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council report describes:

*Some schools refuse entry to students 18 years and older, whereas schools which enrol these students have difficulty placing them in an appropriate class as they do not have the necessary skills to cope with a senior year level. However, placing them with significantly younger children impacts negatively on their socialisation and self-esteem. Too often the result in both cases is that these young people drop out of school, frustrated by their lack of progress or desire to be wage earners.* (RRAC 2006:7 cited in Moore et al 2008:47)

For those newly arrived young people aged 18-24 who are not eligible to access IECs or secondary school, age is also a complicating factor in their experiences at AMEP, although for different reasons. As there are only a limited number of youth-specific AMEP courses available in NSW, most young people are placed in mixed-age classes based on their assessed learning level. Moore et al (2008) describe problems relating to cultural norms in mixed-age classes. Teachers had been told by both young people and community elders that young people were "embarrassed in classes with those regarded as older and wiser than them and where it was disrespectful to know more or do better" (p.67). A teacher interpreted how these cultural issues relate to class groupings:

*There's a certain pride [among older people in a community]. And I think that in their communities possibly their positions are threatened. And I think that their positions need to be preserved. They have to be an authority figure for young people. So my feeling is that young people should be in their own classes. It's much, much better for them. And the concerns they have are quite different. I think the whole thing of trying to keep communities intact is really important. It's not good to put the elders in a position where they feel humiliated. And there's no doubt that young people learn faster. They do. And even if the reading and writing is still bad, the oral language increases faster. They understand more.*

*And suddenly the balance in the classroom is changed. And they [the younger ones] become very impatient... (Moore et al 2008:67)*

### **Regional settlement and EAL/D provision**

There are increasing numbers of refugee and humanitarian entrants settling in regional areas in NSW due to planned regional settlement initiatives developed under the Refugee and Humanitarian Program and due to the secondary migration of families from metropolitan areas to rural areas, attracted by housing and employment opportunities. For example, Figure 6 shows significant numbers of young people from refugee backgrounds settling in Wollongong, Newcastle, Wagga Wagga and Coffs Harbour over the past five years and smaller numbers in 22 other regional LGAs.

Young people from refugee backgrounds settling in regional areas face particular challenges where there are limited resources or appreciation of their particular learning and settlement needs. This is a major challenge in regional areas where the critical mass has not allowed for the establishment of intensive English centres. For example, Moore et al (2008:38) found that:

*post-compulsory school-age refugees with minimal/no schooling were reported as being placed in rural schools without ESL programs, which was also noted as a 'key issue' in the ACTA report (2005:7). These interviewees believed that rural school authorities did not always appreciate refugee youth's particular learning and settlement needs. Moreover, these students are often dispersed in different schools, thereby diminishing the feasibility of targeted ESL provision, including through the SPP400/AMEP.*

### **Pastoral and other support within education and training systems**

Within Intensive English Centres (IECs), significant resources are allocated to pastoral and other non-educational supports in recognition of the complex settlement issues that young people and their families face in conjunction with their educational pursuits. Cassity & Gow (2005, 2006) identify the importance of relationships in assisting young people from refugee backgrounds to achieve their potential at school, and that most students reported the support and assistance provided through the IEC system to be helpful (see also Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008). However, once a young person has transitioned from on-arrival English courses into mainstream education and training environments, much of this pastoral support, as well as the trusted relationship young people have developed with workers, is lost.

While some schools are better resourced to provide pastoral and other support to students (of note are schools within the Catholic education system and government schools with significant numbers of refugee background students that are well linked with community organisations), many others are ill-equipped to deal with the complexity of issues encountered by students from refugee backgrounds, particularly those who are more recently settled. Refugee transition officers and other ancillary workers are often working with significant numbers of students with extremely complex needs and do not have the time needed to provide the intensive one-on-one support that is instrumental in a young person's ongoing engagement in school.

The situation for young people who transition from on-arrival intensive English programs to TAFE is particularly fraught (see Black 2008). The TAFE system is based on an adult higher education model, which relies on students being independent and self-directed. For young people with considerable support needs, pastoral and other ancillary services are severely lacking. Young people from refugee backgrounds who are struggling to juggle the considerable demands of their education with other settlement and life issues can quickly become lost or disengaged.

### **Transition from IECs into mainstream education and training**

A number of research reports have documented the considerable difficulties experienced by young people transitioning from IECs into mainstream educational environments (see Cassity & Gow 2005, 2006; Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008; CMYI/SELLEN 2004). As captured by the Victorian Settlement Planning Committee:

Transition points represent critical opportunities and key stressors in most young people's lives. As the [Good Practice Principles: Guide for Working with Refugee Young People](#) (VSPC 2005) sets out, the unique intersection of challenges faced by young people from refugee backgrounds – coping with adolescence, settlement and their traumatic past – mean that they can find it particularly difficult to make successful transitions. (VSPC 2007:2)

Cassity and Gow (2005), for example, found that students from refugee backgrounds reported the transition from IEC to mainstream education as the most difficult transition they had made since arriving in Australia. Although there are a (growing) number of targeted initiatives to support these transitions, this is still an area where significant gaps exist. This is particularly the case where young people are not transitioning from IECs into schools, but are going to TAFE or another adult education or training environment.

### Homework support

For newly arrived young people, the demands of post-compulsory education do not end when classes do. Almost all Australian TAFE and secondary schools require students to complete homework out of class hours. As Brown et al (2006:159) points out,

*A simple homework revision task that presents few difficulties for a local student may require many hours of work for these students. There are numerous studies that recognise the increased processing time for reading and writing tasks required by students who are working in a second language.*

Compounding these difficulties, finding a quiet space and time to complete homework can be challenging for young people who are living in crowded housing conditions, are looking after younger or older family members, have considerable household duties or are under pressure to juggle part-time employment on top of studying. Parents/guardians of young people are often ill-equipped to help their children with difficult homework tasks due to their own limited language and education experience and differential expectations of what is required (REPP 2007).

Homework support groups – such as homework clubs run by community organisations or by schools – can be extremely valuable for these students, but are not uniformly available or accessible in local areas, particularly where there are smaller numbers of students from refugee backgrounds settling.

### 3.3 Current post-compulsory education and training pathways in NSW

Figures 8 and 9 provide an overview of the different education and training programs and transition supports that are available or targeted at refugee young people who settle aged between 16 and 25 in NSW. Both show the complexity of post-compulsory pathways and services that young people must navigate from the time of their arrival.

**Figure 8. Post-compulsory education and training programs and supports in NSW**

Program	Providers	Funding agency	Description and eligibility
<b>On-arrival English</b> (English language acquisition programs provided free to eligible new arrivals)			
Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ACL</li> <li>▪ AMES NSW</li> </ul>	Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AMEP is provided for migrants and humanitarian entrants 18 years old and over (or between 16 &amp; 18 years old and not attending an IEC) who do not have functional English.</li> <li>▪ Entrants are eligible for up to 510 hours of tuition.</li> <li>▪ Curriculum based on Certificate in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) pre-CSWE, CSWE I-IV</li> </ul>
AMEP Special Preparatory Program (SPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ACL</li> <li>▪ AMES NSW</li> </ul>	DIAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Refugee and humanitarian entrants between 16 and 24 years of age AND with less than seven years of education are eligible for up to an additional 400 hours of English language tuition</li> <li>▪ Those over 18 but with more than seven years of education are eligible for up to an additional 100 hours of tuition.</li> </ul>

Program	Providers	Funding agency	Description and eligibility
ESL New Arrivals Program – Intensive English Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 14 State Government IECs</li> <li>▪ 1 Intensive English High School</li> <li>▪ 2 Catholic IECs</li> </ul>	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) administered by the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Catholic Education Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intensive English Centres (IECs) are run by the NSW Department of Education to provide newly arrived students whose first language is not English with intensive English tuition.</li> <li>▪ To be eligible, young people must be permanent residents or an approved temporary resident, enrol within six months of arrival, not have completed high school in their country of origin, and intend to continue their education in a government school.</li> <li>▪ The Catholic Dioceses of Parramatta and Sydney run similar centres (CIECs) within their education departments.</li> <li>▪ Students are eligible to access IECs for approximately 12 months. Students at CIECs can remain for 1-3 years.</li> </ul>
<b>Tailored courses</b> (either wholly or partially designed to accommodate the needs of ESL learners, including those with disrupted education)			
ESL Targeted Support Programs – in schools	Selected Government, Catholic and Independent secondary schools	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESL Targeted Support Program provides ESL support in high schools using a variety of models (e.g. separate ESL classes, additional teaching support for ESL students)</li> <li>▪ Teaching allocation includes weighting for students who arrived on refugee and humanitarian visas.</li> </ul>
Certificates in Spoken and Written English – in schools	Selected secondary schools and IECs	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recently arrived, senior ESL high school and Intensive English Centre students at risk of disengaging from education can be awarded statements of attainment in the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) accredited, outcomes-based Certificates in Spoken and Written English (CSWE), Levels I-III.</li> </ul>
Work Ready HSC Pathways Program	Holroyd High School	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Holroyd HS offers a Work Ready HSC Pathways Program for students who do not wish to undertake academic studies.</li> <li>▪ Students choose from either Standard or ESL English, Fundamentals of English, General Mathematics, Senior Science, and a range of vocational education and training (VET) Framework courses to Certificate II (including in Business Services, Construction, Hospitality Operations, Information Technology and Retail Operations).</li> <li>▪ Students are not required to complete more than one English written exam as part of their HSC assessment.</li> </ul>
State funded (recurrent) ESL Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TAFE Institutes</li> <li>▪ ACE Providers</li> </ul>	TAFE funded jointly by the NSW and Federal Govt. ACE funded by NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specialist ESL courses from Certificate I to Certificate IV with a focus on Access, Employment, Professional or Further Study.</li> <li>▪ A range of contextualised ESL and vocational training programs that vary between providers aimed at bridging young people into further vocational training in TAFE and general education or employment pathways.</li> </ul>
Migrant Youth Access Program	Granville TAFE	Granville TAFE, TAFE NSW (NSW DET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides literacy and numeracy to students who have been referred to TAFE by IECs and who do not have adequate skills to participate in other TAFE programs.</li> <li>▪ Available to students aged 15 to 21 year, and takes up to 80 students each year. The program uses innovative teaching strategies such as song writing and performance art to engage the students, with the aim of students entering Year 10 or other TAFE courses.</li> <li>▪ On completion of this program, teachers support students to identify other appropriate vocational courses within TAFE, including courses such as English for Special Purposes, which is run in conjunction with vocational courses.</li> </ul>
Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP)	Various providers, State-wide	DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides basic language, literacy and numeracy assistance to job seekers, particularly young job seekers.</li> <li>▪ Centrelink and Job Services Australia refer clients to an LLNP provider.</li> <li>▪ Clients attend training on a part-time (minimum of 10 hours and maximum of 19 hours a week) or a full-time basis (minimum 20 hours per week).</li> <li>▪ Training is delivered in blocks of 160 hours (or up to 450 hours for advanced vocationally-oriented courses) up to 800 hours maximum with a combination of levels.</li> </ul>

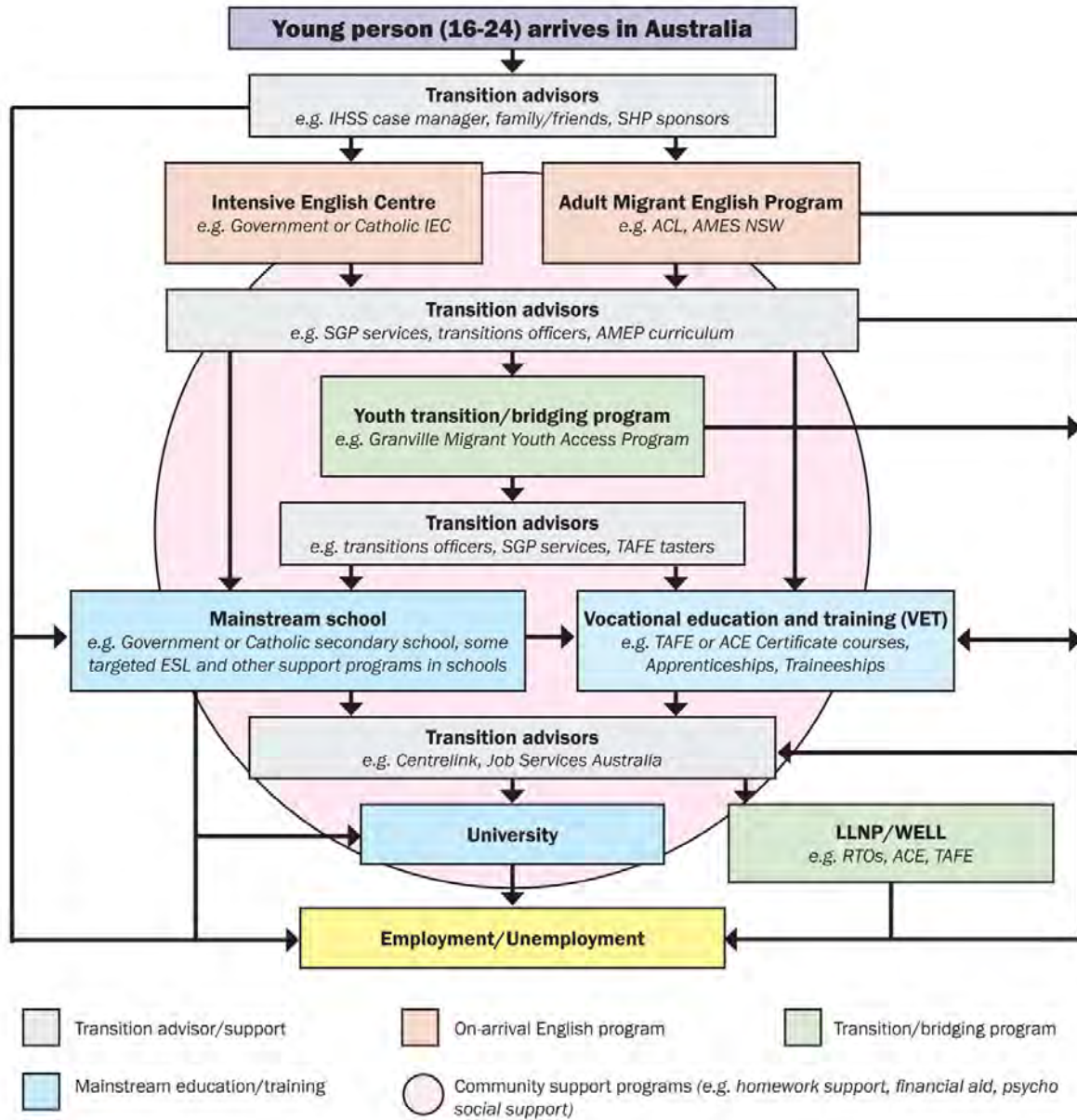


Program	Providers	Funding agency	Description and eligibility
Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Program	Various (e.g. enterprises, representative bodies, local governments and RTOs.)	DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The aim of the WELL Program is to provide funding to organisations to train workers in English language, literacy and numeracy skills.</li> <li>This funding is available to organisations for language and literacy training linked to job-related workplace training and is designed to help workers meet their current and future employment and training needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Education support programs</b> (organisations and programs that support refugee students to stay engaged in education and training)			
Refugee Action Support (RAS) Program	9 schools in Sydney 1 school in the Riverina	ALNF, NSW DET, UWS and CSU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University student tutors, as a component of their Master of Teaching (Secondary) practicum, provide tuition and in-school assistance to refugee students to develop their literacy skills and improve their participation and engagement in schooling.</li> </ul>
After School Program for Refugee Students	11 schools in Sydney	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This program provides after school tuition, with bilingual support, for refugee students who have been in Australia for less than three years.</li> <li>The program supports students in their transition to high school and increases their understanding of the high school curriculum and its expectations.</li> </ul>
Community-based homework support programs	Various (e.g. Granville Youth and Community Rec. Centre, Auburn Youth Centre)	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many community-run homework support centres such as Granville Youth and Community Recreation Centre, Auburn Youth Centre, Young Christian Workers, and library-run homework centres, which provide outside school hours support, and are at times staffed by volunteers.</li> </ul>
Refugee Students Assistance Scheme	State-wide	NSW DET and the NSW Teachers Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides limited financial support to refugee students in schools, IECs and TAFE.</li> <li>The funds support refugee students through the provision of textbooks, excursions, subject fees, stationery and uniforms.</li> </ul>
Refugee Transition Program	10 participating schools in 2009	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a supplementary staffing allocation to a number of targeted schools with high refugee student enrolments to support refugee students in transition from IECs into mainstream high school and to help them plan their transition from school to further education, training or employment.</li> <li>Assists refugee students to develop English language and literacy skills, study and learning skills, curriculum concepts, understanding of available educational and vocational pathways and school and workplace cultures and expectations in the Australian context.</li> <li>In-school support and professional learning for teachers is provided by regional Refugee Student Support Officers.</li> </ul>
Classroom Connect	Growing number of secondary schools. Run by Mercy Works	Comic Relief Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses trained volunteers to provide additional in-school support and mentoring to refugee students at a critical time of their settlement in Australia.</li> </ul>
<b>Mainstream</b> (courses available to the general population in post-compulsory education)			
High School Certificate (HSC) for school aged students	Schools in NSW	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To qualify for the Higher School Certificate students must satisfactorily complete a Preliminary pattern of study comprising at least 12 units and an HSC pattern of study comprising at least 10 units.</li> <li>Students can accumulate courses towards the Higher School Certificate over a period of up to five years. The five-year period will commence in the first year a student attempts an HSC course examination.</li> </ul>
Vocational Education and Training (VET) – in schools	Offered in most NSW schools	NSW DET, DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certificate-level VET courses offered in schools</li> <li>Available to students in Year 11 and 12</li> <li>Taught by teachers at school</li> <li>VET provides vocational training and workplace experience.</li> </ul>
Vocational Education and Training (VET) – in TAFE	Certificate-level courses provided through TAFE NSW and ACE providers.	NSW DET, DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VET provides vocational training and experience in the workplace.</li> <li>Certificate-level VET courses offered across a range of difference industries</li> </ul>
HSC for Adults/TAFE NSW Higher School Certificate Programs	Offered at a range of TAFE NSW Campuses	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enrol in the HSC students must have completed the NSW School Certificate (Year 10 Equivalent) or the TAFE NSW Certificate II in General and Vocational Education or equivalent, or be 20 years of age or over</li> <li>Pattern of study: 10 Units of Preliminary courses, 10 Units of HSC courses</li> </ul>

Program	Providers	Funding agency	Description and eligibility
TAFE NSW Tertiary Preparation Certificate (TPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University of Technology Sydney</li> <li>Over 50 TAFE NSW Campuses</li> </ul>	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enrol in the TPC students must have completed the NSW School Certificate or the TAFE NSW Certificate II in General and Vocational Education or equivalent.</li> <li>The TPC is recognised by TAFE and all universities in NSW and the ACT as a Year 12 equivalent credential for the purposes of assessing eligibility for entry to TAFE NSW Diploma courses and university undergraduate courses. It is also recognised as a Year 12 equivalent course by the Australian Defence Forces, NSW Police Service and other state and federal government agencies.</li> </ul>
Pre-apprenticeship Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAFE NSW</li> <li>Various Private Registered Training Orgs (RTOs) and ACE providers</li> </ul>	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-apprenticeship programs provide a pathway to full time apprenticeships in selected industries and are available to senior secondary school students.</li> <li>They also offer a reduction in nominal duration of the apprenticeship training contract.</li> <li>To be eligible students must have completed school and be a permanent resident of Australia.</li> </ul>
Apprenticeships & Traineeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAFE NSW</li> <li>Various RTOs, ACE providers</li> <li>Some secondary schools</li> </ul>	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprenticeships and traineeships combine work and structured training.</li> <li>Apprentices/trainees must enter agreement with an employer before starting.</li> </ul>
University courses	Universities in NSW	NSW DET, DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrance based on completion of HSC or Tertiary Preparation Certificate.</li> <li>Undergraduate and graduate courses.</li> </ul>
<b>Transition support</b> (organisations and programs which provide advice on education pathways and career options)			
Community Information Officers, Bilingual/bicultural School Learning Support Officers, and Refugee Support Officers	Schools across 10 NSW DET regions	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2008 NSW DET provided 17.2 community information officer positions located in all ten NSW DET regions. Officers assist in strengthening links and facilitating communication and interaction between schools and communities from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds</li> <li>Bilingual/bicultural school learning support officers provided to schools including non-metropolitan high schools to assist in the successful settlement of refugee students.</li> <li>3 Refugee Support Officer positions provide advice and support to schools with significant numbers of refugee students.</li> </ul>
Links to Learning	9 Links to Learning projects targeting young people from CALD backgrounds	NSW DET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links to Learning provides grants to community organisations to assist them in working with young people, who have left or are at risk of leaving school, so that they can reach their full potential.</li> <li>Funded organisations operate creative and innovative projects that assist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Leavers: young people who have left school before completing Year 12 or its equivalent</li> <li>Students at Risk: students in Years 7 to 12, identified as at risk of disengaging from their education.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Links to Learning supports young people aged 12 to 24 years who experience barriers to participating in mainstream education or training. Participants are provided with development and support services to assist them remain in or re-engage with education, training or employment.</li> </ul>
Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian Centre for Languages Pty Ltd (ACL)</li> <li>IHSS Consortium</li> <li>Anglicare Sydney</li> </ul>	DIAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide on-arrival settlement services to Humanitarian entrants for the first six months.</li> <li>Includes providing advice and support enrolling young people in education/training</li> </ul>
Settlement Grants Program (SGP) services	Various SGP funded Migrant Resource Centres and Settlement Service providers throughout NSW	DIAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition advice and other settlement services to migrants and humanitarian entrants that have exited from IHSS.</li> <li>These services include functional English language training and assistance in the communication and settlement process with focus on work-based English language skills and social skills for a range of learners.</li> <li>Generally, those who have already completed their 510 (or 910) hours with the AMEP, or are not eligible for the AMEP classes are eligible for SGP support.</li> </ul>

<b>Program</b>	<b>Providers</b>	<b>Funding agency</b>	<b>Description and eligibility</b>
Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ACL</li> <li>▪ AMES NSW</li> </ul>	DIAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides counselling and pathways information through educational counselling as part of the AMEP.</li> </ul>
Reconnect - Newly Arrived Youth Specialist (NAYS) services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Southern Youth &amp; Family Services, Wollongong</li> </ul>	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides culturally appropriate services ranging from early intervention to transition, for newly arrived young people aged 12 to 21 at risk of homelessness.</li> </ul>
Youth Pathways	Career Advice Australia	DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Youth Pathways aims to assist the most at-risk young people to make a successful transition through school to completion of year 12 (or its equivalent) and ultimately, to further education, training or employment and active participation in the community.</li> </ul>
Local Community Partnerships (LCPs)	Career Advice Australia	DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LCPs partner with industry and employer groups, schools, professional career advisers, community organisations, parents, young people, youth service providers and other government and community organisations to assist all young people aged 13-19 years to gain the skills, experience and professional guidance to help them achieve a successful transition through school, and from school to further education, training and employment.</li> </ul>
Centrelink	National network of Centrelink offices	Centrelink comes under the Federal Department of Human Services (DHS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Centrelink is an Australian government statutory agency, delivering more than 140 different products and services on behalf of 25 government agencies to the Australian community.</li> <li>▪ Centrelink have two refugee youth-specific place-based service initiatives focused on transition support (Fairfield in NSW, Broadmeadows in Victoria)</li> </ul>
Job Services Australia (formerly Job Network)	National network of service providers	DEEWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Job Services Australia (formerly the Job Network) is a national network of private and community organisations dedicated to finding jobs for unemployed people, particularly the long term unemployed.</li> </ul>

Figure 9. Post-compulsory education and training pathways and transition points



## 4. WHAT WORKS: MODELS OF GOOD PRACTICE

### 4.1 Key principles

Through consultations with 30 service providers and community representatives (see Appendices for a list of those consulted) and a review of literature<sup>7</sup>, some general themes emerged regarding *what works* in the design of education and training initiatives that meet the needs of this group of young people. Critical factors, or principles of good practice, are outlined in Figure 10 below.

**Figure 10. Principles of good practice in the design of post-compulsory education and training initiatives that meet the needs of refugee young people with a background of disrupted education**

What works	What this means	Examples <sup>8</sup>
<b>Flexibility</b>	Young people can move in and out of different systems/ programs; systems are 'young person-centred' and adaptable to meet individual needs. Recognition of young people's desire/need to work as well as study.	River Nile Learning Centre; YAMEC; Ucan2; Bankstown IEC
<b>Understanding</b>	Teachers/systems have an understanding of the refugee experience, its impact on education and where young people are coming from; Program workers are skilled and resourced to engage effectively with young people at risk.	Granville TAFE MYAP; Refugee Action Support Program; DET Refugee Transitions Program
<b>Pastoral care</b>	Support structures within or linked to programs that recognise young people are often negotiating complex settlement issues alongside their pursuit of education/training (e.g. providing psychosocial support, torture and trauma services, counselling)	Holroyd High School/IEC; River Nile Learning Centre; Milpera SHS
<b>Partnership</b>	Education/training initiatives partnering with community organisations and other government services to address employment and other settlement issues; Networking and collaboration across and between sectors.	Ucan2; Centrelink PBS for Youth Refugees; Milpera SHS
<b>Strengths-based approaches</b>	Identifying young people's strengths and building realistic pathways; Providing extra-curricular activities such as sport and arts where young people can experience success.	Granville TAFE MYAP; AMES Youth Program; Reconnect-NAYS
<b>Supported transitions</b>	Advisors or initiatives provide supported transitions from one education/training environment to the next (e.g. 'taster' programs, one-on-one support); Workers have time and capacity to build trust.	Gateways; Auburn Youth Centre NAP Project; Centrelink PBS for Young Refugees
<b>Literacy support</b>	Recognition that acquisition of literacy takes time and needs to be supported within education and training pathways. This requires expertise and resources. Age- and education level-appropriate curriculum.	Classroom Connect; YAMEC; River Nile Learning Centre
<b>Family-centred approaches</b>	Ensuring there are childcare provisions for young women with caring responsibilities; Working closely with parents/families; Targeted parent engagement strategies around education/training/employment pathways in Australia.	Gateways; Auburn Youth Centre NAP Project; River Nile Learning Centre; Reconnect-NAYS
<b>Community involvement</b>	Bilingual/bicultural workers (e.g. bilingual education aides, community liaison workers) playing a key role; Community involvement in program design, monitoring and implementation.	Gateways; River Nile Learning Centre

<sup>7</sup> In particular, through documenting a series of good practice case studies, the Victorian Settlement Planning Committee (2008:3) identify five overarching principles of good practice:

1. providing 'clients' with (supported) choice resulting in the support of flexibility (i.e. supporting clients when they say 'I need to go back to what I was doing before')
2. recognising and building on existing skills
3. looking for diverse and inclusive ways of doing things (including community involvement)
4. communication across and between jurisdictions, institutions, programs and pathways
5. (a) identifying the inter-related barriers to participation and transition  
(b) scoping and creating linkages that align existing resources to integrate/connect education and other service systems  
(c) where gaps are identified, providing programs and funding in ways that address the interconnectedness of the barriers

<sup>8</sup> These examples correspond to case studies in Section 4.2

What works	What this means	Examples <sup>9</sup>
<b>Youth-specific</b>	Where possible, programs bring together people of a similar age and learning level to enhance not only educational outcomes, but also social support (i.e. peer learning and personal development).	Granville TAFE MYAP; AMES Youth Program; YAMEC; Bankstown IEC
<b>Bridging</b>	Recognising that many young people with limited literacy will struggle in mainstream education after they complete their time in IEC/AMEP, courses that create clear bridges into further education and training (e.g. combining language, literacy and vocational education and training)	Granville TAFE MYAP; YAMEC
<b>Mentoring</b>	Credibility of information about realistic pathways can be enhanced when coming from mentors from similar backgrounds or from other young people.	Holroyd High School/IEC; Ucan2; Bankstown IEC
<b>Re-engagement</b>	Culturally-sensitive support programs to work with those who have already disengaged or are at risk of disengaging.	Reconnect-NAYS; Centrelink PBS for Young Refugees
<b>Stable funding</b>	A secure, ongoing funding base is critical for enabling reflective and responsive practice; Enables programs to implement flexibility and invest in long-term outcomes for young people.	

## 4.2 Case studies

The following case studies have been grouped by the different points at which they fit into the education and training pathways of young refugees of post-compulsory school age (see Figure 9). These good practice case studies have been identified in NSW and in other states on the basis of their adherence to the principles outlined above and through recommendations by service providers consulted. Workers and teachers involved in the different programs or initiatives provided the content for these case studies, particularly around what they saw as the main challenges and successful strategies.

### On-arrival English programs

CASE STUDY 1	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Bankstown Intensive English Centre</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our statement of purpose: A partnership for learning English as a foundation for success.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students enrolling in the IEC are between 16 and 26 years of age and newly arrived in Australia.</li> <li>In 2009, the IEC currently has 95 students enrolled, 83% of whom came through the refugee and humanitarian program. All of these students started at the IEC without age-appropriate education.</li> </ul>
<b>Program Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bankstown IEC is located within the grounds of Bankstown Senior College, a comprehensive co-educational senior high school, encompassing Years 10-12. Bankstown is the only adult Intensive English Centre for newly arrived students aged 16-26 in NSW.</li> <li>Classes run from 8.30am-3.30pm, Monday to Thursdays, providing some flexibility for students to juggle part-time work and other commitments.</li> <li>Students are eligible to stay at the IEC for four terms, with some provision for extension.</li> <li>Pastoral care support includes a school counsellor/psychologist (0.6 EFT) and bilingual support/school learning support officers to assist teachers and students.</li> <li>Pathways from the IEC include: Bankstown Senior College (which offers English for Study, Certificate of General and Vocational Education (CGVE) and Higher School Certificate including appropriate academic and vocational range of subjects), local high schools, TAFE and employment. An exiting booklet, which maps different educational options and pathways, is provided to each student.</li> <li>Curriculum and content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IEC uses the Intensive English Program (IEP) Curriculum Framework which offers classes from Foundation through to Level III. Class sizes are kept small (~15 students)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> These examples correspond to case studies in Section 4.2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>per class) and are based on skill level not age.</li> <li>- English is taught through secondary school subjects, including English, Maths, Science, Australian History and Geography, Music and IT.</li> <li>- Bankstown IEC has developed student resource books for language and numeracy learning that are needs appropriate.</li> <li>▪ The IEC focuses on skill building for school-to-work transition, as this age group is focused on pursuing education/training that will lead to employment. Initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- School to Work log book for each student, with teachers working with students to identify and build skills around Australian workplace expectations (e.g. making eye contact, hygiene, punctuality).</li> <li>- Simulated job interviews, drawing on skills identified and worked on in log books.</li> <li>- TAFE Tasters – in the past the IEC has worked with Bankstown TAFE to provide 6-week taster courses for students.</li> <li>- TAFE Outreach – providing support to students to do online job applications for part-time work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Programs and partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The IEC works with community organisations such as STARTTS, Transcultural Mental Health and MRCs to run group and individual programs as needs arise.</li> <li>- The IEC offers a peer reading and numeracy program, 0.5 hrs a day, 4 days a week. This program matches students who are more advanced with those at foundation level, building language and numeracy skills, developing leadership skills and supporting the integration of students across the IEC.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DIAC ESL New Arrivals Program funding</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of education and low literacy levels.</li> <li>▪ Keeping students focused and engaged: Many of these young people are focused either on the past or the future and find concentrating on the present learning difficult.</li> <li>▪ Family pressures, responsibilities and expectations.</li> <li>▪ Acculturation: navigating different systems (e.g. online applications, bureaucratic service providers).</li> <li>▪ Apprenticeships: Young people transitioning from the IEC and subsequent education pathways struggle to attain apprenticeships due to lack of contacts/networks, difficulties with application processes, low English/literacy and numeracy levels and racism. This is in spite of the skills, aptitude and experience young people bring with them to Australia.</li> <li>▪ Distance to travel to Bankstown IEC is a challenge for some students. Most students travel between 3 and 4 hours per day.</li> <li>▪ Issues with Centrelink requirements for IEC students who are 21-25 years old. All students in the 21-25 age group, on their arrival in Australia, are put on New Start Allowance. As the IEC is not an automatically recognised activity for New Start, such as AMEP, IEC staff must regularly advocate for students on an individual basis with Centrelink and Job Network providers so that financial needs can be met while students follow their most appropriate course of study.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A flexible approach: the development of programs and initiatives that meet identified needs as they emerge.</li> <li>▪ Programs which inform and support both academic and vocational pathways in future education.</li> <li>▪ Content and curriculum being age-appropriate and education level appropriate focusing on Senior High School preparation.</li> <li>▪ Close monitoring and follow up to ensure high attendance levels: The IEC makes this a priority, as it provides structure and emphasises the importance of attendance and reliability for Australian social expectations.</li> <li>▪ Therapeutic programs, such as drumming and positive psychology and mindfulness.</li> <li>▪ Co-located with the Bankstown Senior College which offers academic and vocational programs that are well suited to the needs of these students.</li> <li>▪ An intensive four days per week which allows students to juggle multiple responsibilities (e.g. study, part-time work, attending appointments, assisting families as well as maintaining a regular high attendance pattern at school).</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (02) 9796 8138</li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.bankstown-h.schools.nsw.edu.au">www.bankstown-h.schools.nsw.edu.au</a></li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 2</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>AMEP Youth Program, AMES (Victoria)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To provide an English language program tailored to the needs and interests of young people based on Applied Learning principles</li> <li>▪ To provide supported pathways to secondary school, TAFE or employment for young migrants and refugees.</li> <li>▪ To offer social and community connections.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Newly arrived refugee and migrant young people, aged 18-25, who are eligible for the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP).</li> </ul>
<b>Program Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are currently ten youth-specific AMEP classes being delivered by AMES at four sites in the southern and western regions of Melbourne. AMEP classes run for 4 hours, 5 days a week. (A further 2 classes are held in partnership with secondary schools)</li> <li>▪ The program also includes a number of extra-curricula excursions and leadership activities. These are seen as critical to assisting young people in establishing themselves and their sense of identity. These classes also prepare for young people's transition to learning environments (including expectations of TAFE) or to employment.</li> <li>▪ The AMES Youth Program offers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English through youth-specific content (Pre-CSWE to CSWE 3);</li> <li>- Employability skills;</li> <li>- Preparation for work;</li> <li>- Work experience (in some courses);</li> <li>- ICT and e-learning;</li> <li>- Excursions and Sports (YPAP); and</li> <li>- Social connection and life skills (YPAP).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Youth Participation and Access Program (YPAP) activities and projects are designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- link young people with the broader community;</li> <li>- assist young people to develop leadership skills;</li> <li>- provide orientation to local communities and services;</li> <li>- provide opportunities for young people to safely explore their new environment; and</li> <li>- assist students to establish a healthy lifestyle.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Work preparation and experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UCan2: with Foundation House and CMY. Supports young people from refugee backgrounds in their pathways to further education and employment through a program of intensive work-preparation, mentoring and part-time work.</li> <li>- Employment Preparation Programs integrating work preparation, CSWE delivery and work experience.</li> <li>- Employability skills underpin all AMEP delivery.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Pastoral support and career and vocational counselling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AMES Vocational and Educational Counsellors: support learning, help plan future study, provide information about jobs in Australia and provide information on where to get help for settlement.</li> <li>- Bilingual aides with knowledge of students' first culture and language assist in educational support</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ AMES youth staff accompany and encourage students engaged in extra-curricula events, including sports programs.</li> <li>▪ Professional development and training workshops offered for teachers in the Youth Program.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) 510 hours and Special Preparatory Program (SPP) 400 hours, both funded through Department of Immigration and Citizenship.</li> <li>▪ Extra-curricular activities run in partnership with other agencies and funded through various sources.</li> <li>▪ Youth Participation and Access Program funded through the Victorian Office for Youth.</li> <li>▪ State profile hours available to extend students after completion of SPP and AMEP hours.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keeping students on realistic pathways that they are happy with.</li> <li>▪ Presenting pathway realities in a positive light.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High level of commitment required from staff to support extra-curricula activities and provide the pastoral care necessary to ensure success for this cohort.</li> <li>▪ Where there is a smaller cohort there are more challenges in providing the range of programs, classes, support to meet individual needs.</li> <li>▪ Wide geographical spread of the program can present logistical challenges.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<p>Strategies to successfully maintain engagement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A designated Youth Coordinator.</li> <li>▪ Effective relationships and partnerships across a range of agencies.</li> <li>▪ Local provision and local solutions.</li> <li>▪ Program based on identified student needs.</li> <li>▪ Strategies to manage transitions along students' pathways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Briefings to young people, parents and communities; and</li> <li>- Ongoing management of parents and community expectations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Appropriate staffing of programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stable staffing establishment;</li> <li>- Experience with and commitment to target group essential;</li> <li>- First language support; and</li> <li>- Links to communities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Pastoral support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vocational counselling;</li> <li>- Personal support; and</li> <li>- Bi-lingual multicultural officers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Margot Hennessy, Youth Program Coordinator, AMES Education</li> <li>▪ <a href="mailto:Hennessy@ames.net.au">Hennessy@ames.net.au</a></li> <li>▪ (03) 8558 8800</li> </ul>

(Adapted from VSPC 2008:14-16)

<b>CASE STUDY 3</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Milpera State High School (Queensland)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Milpera School is committed to maximising the full human potential of every student within a socially just and culturally inclusive environment. We achieve this by delivering a quality educational and settlement service that is needs based in order to gain the best learning and settlement outcomes for our learners and their families.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In 2006, refugee students comprised 76% of the school population with only 5% of these students having an age appropriate education.</li> <li>▪ All of the students who come to Milpera are speakers of languages other than English when they arrive in Australia.</li> <li>▪ Students' ages range mostly from 12 to 18.</li> </ul>
<b>Program Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Milpera State High School offers integrated programs to its students in: English/Studies of Society and the Environment; Mathematics; Science; Information Skills; Computer Technology; Special Programs; Electives; Pastoral CARE; and HPE (Health &amp; Physical Education).</li> <li>▪ The programs at Milpera are directed at equipping students with the English language that they need to operate in the community and the language and concepts that they need in order to be successful in the mainstream high schools.</li> <li>▪ Additional programs and classes offered at Milpera include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Art Therapy – Qualified Art Therapist work with individuals and small groups for 2 days per week, to express feelings, to heal in safety and to build resilience through a visual medium.</li> <li>- Bilingual Support Program - program is designed to assist the school with cultural information, behaviour management, interpreting, parent community contact and classroom support.</li> <li>- CARE Program - English and bilingual learning about topics that are essential for successful settlement and acculturation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Classroom Reading Groups - Classroom teachers supervise and manage 3 volunteers who work with small groups to model, support and respond to reading in small groups</li> <li>- Foundation Program - This program has been established to provide preparation for learning in a school setting. This includes pre-literacy, pre-numeracy, socialisation and some P-3 essential learnings adapted for secondary aged students.</li> <li>- Help Our Writing (HOW) - A structured, genre based one-to-one tutorial support to assist students to develop skills and confidence to approach and accomplish writing tasks. The program involves four half hours per student per week for 10 to 20 weeks.</li> <li>- Outdoor Education Programs - The school has 2 camps per year for younger students at Numinbah Valley Outdoor Education Centre and 1 camp for older students at Maroon Dam Outdoor Education Centre. English language, social skills and knowledge of the Australian environment and its plant and animals are acquired while engaging in outdoor activities such as bushwalking, rock climbing and abseiling.</li> <li>- School Based Youth Nurse - A preventative health and referral service. Liaison with QIRCH clinic and mental health service providers.</li> <li>- Support a Reader (SAR) - This program provides one-to-one, 15 minutes of daily reading support for 5 to 10 weeks.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Milpera works closely with external services to provide settlement support. This includes: Edmund Rice Camps, African mentoring program, Multicultural Development Association (IHSS) and Queensland program of assistance to survivors of torture and trauma (QPASTT) trauma counselling and support.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding through: Department of Education and Training (Qld) ESL New Arrivals Program, Commonwealth DEEWR and Department of Immigration and Citizenship Outreach Workers.</li> <li>▪ Settlement related services funded through a range of government and non-government sources.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Literacy levels – young people who arrive aged 16+ often have very limited literacy/education levels, and there are a lack of pathways and time in appropriate programs for these young people to catch up.</li> <li>▪ Family/individual expectations – Young people (and their parents) are in a hurry to move into mainstream school and can have unrealistic expectations that can lead to disappointment/behaviour issues/disengagement further down the track.</li> <li>▪ Complex settlement issues – Students not only dealing with language/literacy issues, but also many complex settlement issues. They may not be ‘ready to learn’ until halfway through their time at intensive English centre.</li> <li>▪ Funding restrictions – Young people cannot go into AMEP once they have accessed their hours at an intensive English school, even if they are only at pre-Foundation level and unlikely to be able to keep up in a mainstream senior secondary environment.</li> <li>▪ Teaching materials that are age- and life stage-appropriate and which target young people with lower literacy/education level.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identifying English language learning needs and placing young people in appropriate class level, regardless of visa status or cultural background.</li> <li>▪ Music/art therapy programs that recognise cultural and gender differences and engage young people positively around settlement and other issues.</li> <li>▪ Foundation level English program for teenagers, i.e. learning how to learn for unschooled refugee background students</li> <li>▪ Resources that use oral communication to teach young people about rights and responsibilities, e.g. Beat the RAP DVD developed by Refugee and Immigrant Legal Service (RAILS) about Australian laws and responsibilities.</li> <li>▪ Small classes.</li> <li>▪ Transition pathways for older young people from on-arrival intensive English program to migrant youth course at TAFE.</li> <li>▪ Providing appropriate welfare support that addresses complex settlement issues</li> <li>▪ Enabling school to play a socialising function where young people can develop self esteem and confidence.</li> <li>▪ Milpera treats the whole student and not only provides for their education and English language needs, but also their broader settlement needs. (Moore et al. 2008: 48-9)</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (07) 3379 5588</li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.milperashs.eq.edu.au">www.milperashs.eq.edu.au</a></li> </ul>

## Youth transition/bridging programs

CASE STUDY 4	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Migrant Youth Access Program, Granville TAFE</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To enable at-risk, disadvantaged, migrant and refugee young people to make a smooth transition from school to work or further study.</li> <li>▪ To support migrant and refugee young people to develop the confidence, knowledge and skills necessary to operate in their new society.</li> <li>▪ To develop innovative curricula to engage and support youth at risk; increasing the proportion of 15-21 year olds proficient in literacy, numeracy and technology to enable further study and workforce participation.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At risk, disadvantaged, migrant and refugee young people aged 15-21 who have limited access to school or further education.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Migrant Youth Access Program (MYAP) incorporates two eighteen week courses (run twice a year), delivered through a partnership between the Granville College Multicultural Education Unit and two teaching sections – the Adult Basic Education and Vocational Access faculties.</li> <li>▪ Students enter one of two courses (Level 1 or Level 2) based on their assessed language capabilities. The MYA Program articulates to a range of TAFE pathways. MYAP Group 1 articulates to MYAP Group 2. Places are guaranteed at same level for further semester where needed and appropriate.</li> <li>▪ Courses are run from 9.30am to 2.30pm Monday to Friday.</li> <li>▪ A detailed recruitment and selection process is undertaken by MYAP Multicultural Education Co-ordinator, teachers and disability staff and involves gathering information, assessment and interview sessions. This is done to find suitable students and a suitable group for the program. Applicants who settled under refugee and humanitarian program (i.e. most 'at risk') are prioritised, as are continuing MYAP students. Most applicants have exhausted their time at IECs.</li> <li>▪ Orientation is extensive, including walks around TAFE to introduce students to support services, facilities and staff.</li> <li>▪ The MYAP features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language, literacy and learning skills development as part of every subject.</li> <li>- A tailored, innovative curriculum and methodology.</li> <li>- Program staff with skills, qualifications and experience in working with refugee young people, working cross-culturally and community development, technology proficiency and numeracy skills development. Most teachers have university qualifications in Adult Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or Adult Basic Education (ABE).</li> <li>- Settlement support, including skills development in accessing and understanding Australians systems and cultures, with emphasis on accessing relevant support services and leisure activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ MYAP offers Out of Class Learning Experiences (OCLE) to students. Activities focus on developing young people's confidence, self esteem and skills, such as using public transport and participating in leisure activities in bush settings. OCLE activities are free to students experiencing financial hardship and at a minimal cost (only low cost transport fares) to others.</li> <li>▪ MYAP encourages student retention by offering incentives (e.g. showcasing achievements), physical and visual activity and learning, regular social interaction and the use of technology.</li> <li>▪ Barriers to attendance and learning addressed through education and modelling e.g. health, nutrition and conflict resolution strategies.</li> <li>▪ Supported pathways from MYAP into further education, training and employment through TAFE tasters, a buddy system, mentoring, skills development in pathway planning and individual pathway access support.</li> <li>▪ Expertise from and network building with supportive staff through TAFE, government and community organisations partnerships.</li> <li>▪ Joint class activities (Levels 1 and 2) to enable development of social and support networks.</li> <li>▪ Frequent communication between course co-ordinators and all program staff regarding pastoral care, pathways and other student matters.</li> </ul>

<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded through SWSI TAFE budget (Social Inclusion Unit, Employment Preparation and Vocational Access Faculties).</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel for young women from some cultural backgrounds is an issue when running OCLE activities.</li> <li>Funding insecurity; having to negotiate regularly for funding to continue (i.e. not part of core work of TAFE).</li> <li>Working with young people who are dealing with complex issues – depression, trauma etc. Some students behave inappropriately or aggressively on occasions and this can trigger fear and trauma in already traumatised individuals.</li> <li>Limited resources for teachers to have the time to work holistically; many do so outside of required role due to passion and commitment.</li> <li>Overlapping of State/Federal services and poor communication between different services/departments.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating hope for young people by providing different experiences (e.g. art, music), particularly where they can achieve/experience success.</li> <li>Employing teachers who are trained/skilled at working with young people at risk.</li> <li>Offering a multicultural education program where migrant and refugee young people can mix – this has to be managed, but also pushes young people to succeed.</li> <li>Providing outdoor learning experiences for which many refugees have never had the opportunity to do so.</li> <li>Early intervention – allowing refugee young people to gain meaningful skills so that they remain engaged.</li> <li>The building of harmonious relationships amongst participants through anticipation of systems and procedures that may affect students, monitoring of each students behaviour during lead up sessions to classes, reporting to staff of serious incidents, warning systems for student behaviour, various harmony sessions run by program staff and counsellors, and ongoing pair and group work to foster co-operation.</li> <li>The mentoring of students principally through the Out of Class Learning Experiences (OCLE).</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(02) 9682 0308 Multicultural Education Unit – Granville College</li> <li><a href="http://www.swsi.tafensw.edu.au/aboutswsi/colleges/granville.aspx">www.swsi.tafensw.edu.au/aboutswsi/colleges/granville.aspx</a></li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 5</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Young Adult Migrant Education Course (YAMEC), Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (Victoria)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide ESL and general education classes for newly arrived young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds</li> <li>Provide further ESL classes for young people who have completed their on-arrival English hours</li> <li>Offer the opportunity for migrant and refugee young people to attain a Victorian school completion certificate (VCAL<sup>10</sup>).</li> <li>Address student settlement and health issues, while improving their social connectedness and access to recreational opportunities.</li> <li>Prepare students for further study, apprenticeship and training courses and employment through integrating employability skills at all levels of the program.</li> <li>Provide support, counselling and advocacy to assist students to address barriers to education and to plan career pathways.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Young Adult Migrant Education Course (YAMEC) provides accredited English as a Second Language certificates and general education courses to young adult migrants aged 15-26 years who have disrupted or no prior schooling.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program originated over 25 years ago to accommodate the needs of migrant and refugee young people who could not access secondary school in Australia due to age, English language level, lack of prior education or those who prefer a non-school setting to study.</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning - <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vcal/index.html>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ YAMEC provides a flexible program at 3 class levels from low level ESL literacy to ESL Certificate 3 / VCAL Intermediate. It incorporates studies in Numeracy and Maths, Science, Computers, Current Affairs, Health and Civics and Citizenship. In addition to an ESL Certificate 2 or 3 incorporating the subjects above, VCAL students also study VCAL core modules of Personal Development Skills and Work Related Skills and modules from VET Certificate courses (e.g. First Aid, Food Handling and Hygiene, Retail Communication Skills).</li> <li>▪ VCAL students participate in community-based projects and volunteer work as part of their course requirements. Along with other YAMEC students, they also complete a 2 week work experience placement with local businesses, agencies and services.</li> <li>▪ Collaboration and partnerships with local agencies and services enrich the program by providing extra-curricular activities (guest speakers, health education, leadership program, life skills workshops, gym and sports program, mentoring, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Pastoral support, pathway and career planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each class has a Home Teacher who has designated time to attend to students' support and advocacy needs.</li> <li>- A Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) Officer provides pathway and career planning advice for students at each campus. The MIPs Officer also assists students to address any barriers to education that affect their attendance or wellbeing.</li> <li>- Exiting YAMEC students follow a variety of pathways including: Academic English at TAFE, Year 10 or VCE, Pre-apprenticeships, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, TAFE Certificate courses e.g. Maths &amp; Science Bridging Course or Cert 3, Gateway to Nursing, Cert 3 Patient Support Services, Aged Care Services, I.T. Certificate 2 or 3. Some students gain full time employment in industries such as Hospitality, Retail or Manufacturing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AMEP</li> <li>▪ LLNP</li> <li>▪ TAFE global budget</li> <li>▪ MIPS funding. This allows further services to be provided (e.g. Housing assistance, welfare counselling etc).</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student punctuality and regular attendance is an issue for some classes, but understandable for these students who are dealing with settlement, health, legal and family issues. Support and advocacy with these issues is vital in reducing the students' barriers to attending regularly.</li> <li>▪ To assist students with the complexity of their needs, teaching and welfare staff need to be dedicated and committed to the program and the students.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flexible program delivery and curriculum that respond to changing demographics</li> <li>▪ Health and settlement issues addressed through integrated curriculum</li> <li>▪ Appropriate level of education and training</li> <li>▪ Peer support and interaction in a supportive environment</li> <li>▪ Vocational counselling, range and accessibility of pathways</li> <li>▪ Collaboration and participation with community agencies and health services</li> <li>▪ A stable learning environment includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ongoing and flexible funding</li> <li>- full time YAMEC coordinator and assistance of VCAL coordinator</li> <li>- TAFE setting – range of courses, pathways and facilities</li> <li>- highly qualified and experienced ESL teachers and specialist welfare staff coordinate assistance to meet individual student support needs</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Whole of organisation support</li> <li>▪ Core teaching staff that coordinate class management and activities</li> <li>▪ Large classrooms, excellent computer rooms and library facilities</li> <li>▪ Class sizes of fewer than 20 students</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ YAMEC Program Coordinator, Youth Unit, NMIT</li> <li>▪ (03) 9269 1775</li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.nmit.vic.edu.au/courses/young_adult_migrant_education_course_yamec">www.nmit.vic.edu.au/courses/young_adult_migrant_education_course_yamec</a></li> </ul>

(Adapted from VSPC 2008:25-28)

<b>CASE STUDY 6</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>River Nile Learning Centre (Victoria)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The River Nile Learning Centre aims to assist and support disengaged young people from refugee backgrounds to develop pathways towards re-engaging in further education or employment. RNLC aims to develop consistent learning with the students that will have the outcome of enrolment with Victoria University, other general adult learning programs or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Young women from refugee backgrounds aged 15-21 who have become disengaged from school.</li> <li>▪ Many of the young women have small children or are pregnant.</li> <li>▪ All have interrupted learning and are negotiating complex settlement and family issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Classes run from 9am – 3pm, Monday to Friday (although there is flexibility to allow young mothers to juggle other commitments such as attending appointments).</li> <li>▪ Group size varies from six to 15 students at any time.</li> <li>▪ The Centre is based on the same site as the Footscray Anglican Sudanese Welfare Ministry and has strong links with both the Sudanese community and the Footscray Anglican Parish.</li> <li>▪ Lunch is supplied daily for students through the Welfare Ministry.</li> <li>▪ Some limited on-site childcare is available through the assistance of an Education Support Officer, who is of Sudanese background. Funding for this position is through private donation. Mothers are able to participate while their small children are present.</li> <li>▪ Learning content caters to individual needs from basic preliterate learning to middle school literacy. Students work in one small group with highly-skilled ESL teachers. Learning content is developed to be meaningful and related to the students' life needs (e.g. childcare and parenting, preliminary and intermediate literacy and numeracy, Australian legal systems).</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Centre has operated with funding for between 1.4 and 1.6 EFT ESL teachers.</li> <li>▪ Volunteer committee of management (including members of Sudanese community).</li> <li>▪ Primary funding through Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).</li> <li>▪ Other funding and in kind support from: Debney Park Secondary College, Western English Language School, Footscray Anglican Parish, and some private donors.</li> <li>▪ Other support from volunteers and Youth Work students on placement.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No resources to support enrolment of young people over 21 years (despite demand), as these are not currently funded through DEECD.</li> <li>- Not enough resources to be able to offer similar program for young men.</li> <li>- No funding available to employ a Director to be able to support the direction and growth of the program.</li> <li>- No funding for support workers (i.e. administration, social worker).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The complexity of social and cultural issues that students are negotiating in conjunction with their education – i.e. parenting, family and community disconnection, acculturation, housing etc. – means attendance is inconsistent and a lot of resources need to be put into supporting students to address these life issues.</li> <li>▪ Lack of referral pathways to catch students as they are disengaging from education/training.</li> <li>▪ The diversity of learning needs on any one day from preliterate to intermediate learning needs presenting within the one group and staffing ratio to meet these needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being open and flexible to meet individual learning needs and recognising the complex issues that students are facing.</li> <li>▪ Ensuring content is age-appropriate and suited to the life stages and learning level of these young women.</li> <li>▪ Building trusted relationships between students and teachers, which requires time, resources and sensitivity.</li> <li>▪ Having strong links with Sudanese community and being able to build bridges between young women and their community.</li> <li>▪ Providing accessible childcare to enable young mothers to participate.</li> <li>▪ Rewarding attendance with public transport tickets and driving lessons.</li> </ul>

<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (03) 9687 6244 or (03) 9687 9577</li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.rnlc.org.au">www.rnlc.org.au</a></li> </ul>
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## Targeted support in mainstream schools

<b>CASE STUDY 7</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Holroyd High School and Intensive English Centre (IEC)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Holroyd High School, through its IEC, provides English language courses for newly arrived ESL (English as a Second Language) students in preparation for further study in a mainstream high school. Students learn English through the wide variety of subjects they will encounter when they transition to high school.</li> <li>▪ Holroyd High School aims to engage refugee students at an early stage of their Australian school experience, helping them to become confident and independent in the process.</li> <li>▪ The school aims for all students to become “good citizens” who are able to pursue a variety of education, training and employment pathways upon exiting the school.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Secondary school-aged young people living in local and adjoining LGAs.</li> <li>▪ A majority of students from refugee and migrant backgrounds.</li> <li>▪ IEC students are newly arrived migrant and refugees, many of whom enter the IEC with very limited or no English speaking and writing skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Of the 611 students at Holroyd High School, 228 are enrolled in the IEC program, which runs five days a week along a regular school timetable.</li> <li>▪ An integrated IEC and High School model is offered to students. IEC students are able to participate in co-curricular activities that are offered to all students at Holroyd High School. These include school excursions and sports carnivals. All students attend approximately three excursions per term.</li> <li>▪ The school offers a <i>Work Ready HSC Pathways Program</i> for students who do not wish to undertake academic studies. Students taking the Work Ready HSC may choose from either Standard or ESL English, Fundamentals of English, General Mathematics, Senior Science, and a range of vocational education and training (VET) Framework courses to Certificate 2 (including in Business Services, Construction, Hospitality Operations, Information Technology, Metal &amp; Engineering, and Retail Operations). As part of this program students are not required to complete more than one English written exam as part of their HSC assessment. Learning programs are personalised for each student.</li> <li>▪ The school also offers a modified VET Program where there is a wide range of vocational HSC subjects available. Holroyd High offers six of the eight VET Framework courses. These courses are both Board of Studies and Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) accredited to Certificate II level: Business Services, Construction, Hospitality Operations, Information Technology, Metal &amp; Engineering, and Retail. Students may take these courses as part of an academic or vocational HSC, or through the school's Work Ready HSC. Students may also undertake a range of courses at TAFE.</li> <li>▪ Newly arrived NESB students are eligible for up to 4-5 terms at the IEC and in their 2nd Semester may work towards their ‘work studies’ certificate.</li> <li>▪ A number of students in Years 9 and 10 follow a vocationally oriented program with substantial work experience and the possibility of pre-apprenticeship participation. Students may also enrol in the <i>Saturday School of Community Languages</i> to study their own languages, and the Open High School for subjects not available at school.</li> <li>▪ The school offers Life Skills courses for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities.</li> <li>▪ The school also offers a school-developed Board of Studies endorsed course, <i>Australian Cultural Studies</i>, for recently arrived non-English speaking background students to build cultural understandings and literacy and English language levels.</li> <li>▪ All students in Years 9-12 participate in mentoring programs with Business people or University students and staff.</li> <li>▪ The school employs a wide spectrum of support staff including: qualified ESL teachers (many of whom speak languages other than English), teachers’ aides and counsellors. There is one full-time refugee transition program teacher to support refugee students moving from the IEC and from school to work or further training, and a 0.4 EFT vocational transition teacher.</li> </ul>

<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Holroyd High School and IEC operate with funding primarily from the NSW Department of Education and Training.</li> <li>▪ The Federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship provide additional funding through the ESL New Arrivals Program for the IEC.</li> <li>▪ Other funding sources and in kind support for support programs, including: Australian Business Community Network (ABCN), University of NSW, University of Western Sydney.</li> <li>▪ The school operates a donor trust fund within the school accounts to support refugee students, and a donor trust through the National Foundation for Australian Women (NFAW) to support refugee girls in their education.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students' aspirations are usually based on a limited view of vocations and can be unrealistic.</li> <li>▪ Lack of differential funding for students that recognises the high needs of refugee students; a 'one-size-fits-all' funding model means that additional support needs are not easily met.</li> <li>▪ Working with other bodies (such as TAFEs and Centrelink) can be challenging where there are rigid frameworks.</li> <li>▪ Lack of appropriate adolescent mental health services – the system not set up to meet immediate needs. Many students need serious counselling. The system has very little understanding of the issues these students are dealing with (e.g. torture and trauma).</li> <li>▪ Financial resources are limited and small schools like Holroyd are in a tenuous funding position.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Using an approach that involves a mixture of flexibility and sensitivity when developing modified programs that meet the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and needs.</li> <li>▪ A willingness to 'test' or trial new initiatives.</li> <li>▪ Using the flexibility of the HSC to set up work-ready programs with limited exams that suit students with lower literacy.</li> <li>▪ Employing a full-time transition teacher to work intensively with students transitioning from IEC has seen a vast improvement in literacy levels and understanding of work issues.</li> <li>▪ In 1996 the pre-existing school rules were abolished and a system of "Respect and Responsibility" was established by staff and students; this makes school a trusted student-centred environment.</li> <li>▪ Being pre-emptive rather than dealing with problems after they occur.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (02) 9631 9410 (Holroyd High School)</li> <li>▪ (02) 9896 1172 (Holroyd IEC)</li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.holroydhs.nsw.edu.au">www.holroydhs.nsw.edu.au</a></li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 8</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Classroom Connect, Mercy Works Inc</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Classroom Connect uses the extensive educational experience of trained volunteers to provide additional in school support and mentoring to refugee students at a critical time in their settlement in Australia.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students granted humanitarian entry status or whose circumstances would qualify for humanitarian entrance despite grant of other visa type (e.g. Family Stream).</li> <li>▪ Priority is given to: a) students who have moved from an Intensive English Centre (IEC) to the mainstream school within the last 12 months, b) students who exited an IEC more than 12 months ago and who still require intensive educational support.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Classroom Connect uses the extensive educational experience of trained volunteers to provide additional in school support and mentoring to refugee students.</li> <li>▪ Volunteers work one-on-one or in small groups with refugee students for approximately three hours per week for one school year, focusing on assisting the educational transitions of students.</li> <li>▪ The key responsibilities of the volunteer are to assist newly arrived refugee students in their learning by providing support that nurtures student wellbeing and self esteem. Volunteers provide literacy support and assist students in understanding classroom instructions, assessment tasks and in organising their school work.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers are mainly retired teachers and professionals.</li> <li>Classroom Connect currently works in seven schools (De La Salle College Ashfield, Bethlehem College Ashfield, Patrician Brothers College Fairfield, Mary MacKillop College Wakeley, Trinity College Regents Park, Holy Spirit College Lakemba, and the Catholic Intensive English Centre, Lewisham). In 2010 the project is being expanded into additional Sydney schools, both government and non-government.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2008-09, the Classroom Connect pilot project was funded by a grant from Comic Relief Australia. In 2009-10 the project is funded by Mercy Works and by donor contributions. In-kind support is also provided by the Catholic Education Office.</li> <li>Mercy Works employ 0.8 EFT project workers to coordinate the program, liaise with schools and run training for volunteers.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project needs to be effectively integrated into and complement the existing support structures of schools.</li> <li>The project requires a dedicated In-School Coordinator to prepare staff and establish and monitor its progress in each school.</li> <li>There are a variety of learning support models that can be utilised for refugee students and project stakeholders need to be flexible in the type of support provided to students.</li> <li>Students need to understand the potential value of the project and particular effort is required to overcome student resistance to receiving targeted support.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive training of volunteers includes information on refugee settlement, youth education challenges, literacy strategies and how best to support students.</li> <li>Quarterly information sessions for volunteers provide an opportunity to share issues, challenges and learnings and build the collective knowledge of the group.</li> <li>Effective school orientation includes school executive support, teacher briefing, student preparation and volunteer introduction and integration.</li> <li>A dedicated In-School Coordinator with responsibility for ESL and/or learning support is the dedicated liaison between volunteers, teachers, students and project coordinator.</li> <li>Effective relationships have formed through regular contact between volunteers and students and the provision of consistent, targeted learning support.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(02) 9564 1911</li> <li><a href="http://www.mercyworks.org.au">www.mercyworks.org.au</a></li> <li><a href="mailto:classroomconnect@mercyworks.org.au">classroomconnect@mercyworks.org.au</a></li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 9</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Refugee Transition Program, NSW Department of Education and Training</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Refugee Transition Program aims to support refugee students in transition from intensive English programs into mainstream high school and to help them plan their transition from school to further education, training or employment.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The target group for the transition program is refugee or humanitarian entrant students in years 7 – 11 who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have had no or minimal schooling in their first language;</li> <li>have low levels of literacy in English;</li> <li>have low levels of numeracy;</li> <li>have been assessed as being at risk of not completing their education in mainstream schooling;</li> <li>have been in an Australian school for less than three years, including time in an intensive English program.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2009 there were 10 participating schools. Each participating school employs a teacher in a specialist ESL role to implement the program. In some schools this teacher works closely with a Transition Advisor.</li> <li>In addition, some funds are allocated to assist with costs of the program such as excursions.</li> <li>Each participating school develops a program to meet the identified needs of its students. While the program varies between schools, the content must include a component in each of</li> </ul>

	<p>the areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English language, and literacy skills;</li> <li>- Numeracy skills;</li> <li>- Curriculum concepts and skills related to key learning areas, including ICT skills;</li> <li>- Study and organisational skills;</li> <li>- Educational and vocational pathways; and</li> <li>- School and workplace cultures and expectations.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schools use different implementation models. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Targeted classes created. These classes timetabled for half of each day; Students are integrated into the mainstream for the rest of the day</li> <li>- Small group withdrawal: Students are timetable to receive additional support appropriate to their needs at a time which fits in with other subjects being studied.</li> <li>- Individual support component: Many students need an individual support component in their program. An individual language, literacy, learning and transition plan is developed for these students, in consultation with the school learning support team, students and parents or family. The team should include an executive member of staff, the school counsellor, ESL teacher, career or transition advisor as well as members of community organisations where appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NSW Department of Education and Training coordination; staffing supplementation and resource grants for participating schools, direct consultancy support to schools from regional refugee student support officers. Professional learning programs are provided to teachers and schools to support implementation and evaluation of the program.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mapping and working collaboratively with other services: Knowing about organisations supporting refugee students and families and the services they offer; providing advice about how to work with schools.</li> <li>▪ Meeting the literacy, numeracy support needs of adolescents with disrupted schooling: Many refugee young people need high levels of language and literacy support. It is difficult for schools to meet these needs adequately with existing resources. Professional learning for secondary teachers on developing early literacy skills for second language learners with disrupted schooling is necessary.</li> <li>▪ Students need to be supported to plan realistic pathways, recognising the time it takes to acquire the English language and literacy skills required for academic success.</li> <li>▪ Young people and parents' attitudes to TAFE: some teachers experience strong resistance from students and families to pathways through TAFE and have worked to build understanding about post-compulsory pathways.</li> <li>▪ For newly arrived refugee students in the post-compulsory school age group, finding work experience is a real challenge, e.g. lack of social networks to draw on, limited previous employment experiences for those coming from refugee camps, limited literacy and numeracy skills.</li> <li>▪ Integration of Refugee Transition Program with other programs in school. This requires strong leadership by school and a whole-school approach to understanding and addressing learning/language literacy needs of refugee students.</li> <li>▪ Settlement issues are significant for this group of young people and their families.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building links between refugee students and the support services that are available in communities. e.g. The Refugee Transition Program has enabled Fairfield HS to participate in the Centrelink Place-Based Service initiative in Fairfield, providing opportunities for agencies/services/schools to come together and work collaboratively. The Social Inclusion Program Refugee Youth (SIPRY) at Fairfield High School emerged out of this collaboration – high school and TAFE teachers designing curriculum that provides a targeted bridging course to TAFE.</li> <li>▪ Teachers having the time, resources and flexibility to develop targeted programs that meet the needs of students and deliver them flexibly, inside and outside the classroom and school.</li> <li>▪ Having the flexibility to take up what is being offered by different agencies in the community – e.g. teachers being able to build relationships with community agencies and draw upon these relationships to link students with work experience opportunities, e.g. Miller Technology High School worked closely with Liverpool LCP to organise work experiences for refugee students</li> <li>▪ Teachers developing curriculum to meet learning needs of students at an appropriate</li> </ul>

	<p>literacy level. e.g. The Refugee Transition Program teacher at Auburn Girls High differentiated curriculum to make Year 9 Commerce culturally relevant to the experiences of newly arrived refugees and provide literacy support for students with high language and literacy support needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supporting students to develop social relationships, e.g. Holroyd High School: refugee students involved in cultural exchange with Camden High School – received peer support for career and transition research and planning,</li> <li>▪ Engagement strategies with parents – e.g. The Refugee Transition Program teacher at Merrylands HS has worked with bilingual teachers aides to run meetings with refugee parents about educational/training pathways.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jane Wallace, Refugee Student Support Officer, Multicultural Programs Unit, NSW Department of Education and Training</li> <li>▪ (02) 9244 5314</li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 10</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>School Support for Refugees Program, Foundation House (Victoria)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Foundation House Schools Support Program recognises the impact of the refugee experience and trauma on children, young people, individuals and families and aims to improve the wellbeing and educational outcomes of refugee students in schools.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Foundation House Schools Support program aims to build schools' capacity to support the education and well-being needs of families of refugee backgrounds.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foundation House has established a Refugee Action Networks (RANs) strategy in four metropolitan areas of Melbourne, and in one rural area of Victoria. Each RAN consists of 7 – 10 schools in that local area and works with a Foundation House School Support worker on developing a whole-school approach to supporting students and families of refugee background. Each school nominates a core group of teachers (Refugee Action Team) to work on the project over an 18 month period. RAN meetings are held twice a term in each local area so that schools can share strategies and information as well as build partnerships with local community agencies.</li> <li>▪ In 2007 Foundation House began working with 4 groups of schools using the RAN strategy, and is working with 5 new groups of schools in 2009-10.</li> <li>▪ Foundation House has developed a range of resources drawing on the experience of working in partnership with schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>School's In for Refugees</i> - Whole-school guide to refugee readiness' (2004)</li> <li>▪ <i>HealthWize</i> - health literacy teaching resource for refugee and other ESL students (2004)</li> <li>▪ <i>Klassroom Kaleidoscope</i> - A program to facilitate connectedness and well-being in the culturally diverse classroom (2007)</li> <li>▪ <i>Taking Action</i> - Human Rights and Refugee Issues Teaching Resource (2005)</li> <li>▪ <i>The Rainbow Program for Children in Refugee Families</i> (2002)</li> <li>▪ <i>A guide to working with young people who are refugees</i> (1996 &amp; 2000)</li> <li>▪ <i>Talk's In</i> - Families of refugee background and schools in dialogue (VFST 2009).</li> <li>▪ <i>The Education Needs of Young Refugees in Victoria</i> - Refugee Education Partnership Project (2007)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Professional Development &amp; Training for those who work in and with schools is offered through the Foundation House training calendar. PD and training is offered to schools through the RANs and in response to individual requests for training and support from schools outside the RANs.</li> <li>▪ Beaut Buddies is a Foundation House project funded through the VicHealth Building Bridges scheme. Beaut Buddies is a school-based peer-support program aimed at supporting the transition for young people of refugee background from English Language School/Centre to mainstream secondary school environment, through the use of a peer-buddy system. Both the transitioning students and their 'buddies' are assisted in developing pro-social skills through collaboratively working on a variety of shared activities and projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (previously funded through philanthropic trusts) and VicHealth</li> </ul>

<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program is currently working on strengthening its relationship with leadership teams within schools to successfully develop and implement whole-school plans to support students of refugee backgrounds. The program is working on including the Principal in the Refugee Action Teams within schools and has organised a Principals' breakfast to increase understanding of the program's work with schools and the opportunity for Principals to support this work in their school.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refugee Action Networks (RAN's) – Foundation House prioritises supporting schools through the development of regional networks. Refugee Action Networks aim to support each school in the RAN as they develop and implement a whole school approach to supporting students of a refugee background.</li> <li>This whole school approach includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School policies and practices;</li> <li>School organisation, ethos and environment;</li> <li>Partnerships with families;</li> <li>Partnerships with agencies; and</li> <li>Schools curriculum and programs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Working with schools in a RAN provides an opportunity at a local level to share information, link with other projects and services, and facilitates an environment of collegiate support, shared strategies and a platform to advocate for the needs of refugee students. Each RAN is supported by a Regional Reference Group made up of key departments and agencies for that area.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samantha McGuffie, Schools Support Coordinator</li> <li>(03) 9389 8926</li> <li><a href="mailto:mcguffies@foundationhouse.org.au">mcguffies@foundationhouse.org.au</a></li> <li><a href="http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/service_innovation_program/working_with_schools/school_program">www.foundationhouse.org.au/service_innovation_program/working_with_schools/school_program</a></li> </ul>

### Community support programs to help students stay engaged

<b>CASE STUDY 11</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Learning Beyond the Bell, Centre for Multicultural Youth (Victoria)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Beyond the Bell (LBB) provides resourcing, support and coordination to Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs (OSHLSPs) across Victoria to increase the consistency and accessibility of OSHLSPs and, in particular, increase the connectedness of refugee and migrant young people to school and the community and to improve attitudes to learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinators and volunteer tutors involved in Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs (OSHLSPs) across Victoria</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LBB network provides opportunities for OSHLSP coordinators to access free professional development specifically tailored to the needs of homework clubs.</li> <li>Volunteer recruitment and referral process – LBB volunteer coordinator recruits volunteers for programs matching the skills of the tutor with the specific needs of the OSHLSP e.g. VCE Maths/Science tutor.</li> <li>Tutor training – free training for volunteer tutors in Homework or Tutoring Programs for school-aged students. Topics covered in training includes: understanding the impact of the refugee experience, strategies for assisting with literacy and numeracy creating a scaffold for homework support.</li> <li>Small grants – Two funding grants are available through CMY for existing and new OSHLSPs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>LBB Best Practice OSHLSP Grants 2010-12</i> of up to \$15,000 per school year are to help OSHLSPs to implement best practice principles, for example through salaries, professional development and operating expenses. Programs receiving grants will receive intensive support from CMY in meeting best practice standards, program auditing and assistance with creation and implementation of improvement plans</li> <li>The <i>LBB Resourcing the Future OSHLSP Grants 2009</i> are one-off cash transfers of up to</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>\$5000, and are intended to assist existing and new OSHLSPs in purchasing resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Network Meetings – The Learning Beyond the Bell Regional Officers facilitate bi-monthly meeting of coordinators and agencies involved with OSHLSPs. The meetings involve presentations from a range of learning support models, a focus on specific topics, information and resource sharing and professional development, and an opportunity to glean ideas and knowledge from other Homework Club Coordinators.</li> <li>Resources – <i>I wish it was every day... Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs: A Guide for Co-ordinators</i> covers a range of issues involved in setting up and running an OSHLSP; Case studies; Tutor training resources (participant notes, presenter notes and handbook).</li> <li>Consultation – consultation for organisations wanting to or who have already established OSHLSPs. Consultations can cover a range of issues including: developing programs; sustainability; training and professional development; evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development have provided 4-year funding to Centre for Multicultural Youth to set up, coordinate and administer LBB (including managing small grants).</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the main challenges for OSHLSPs is a lack of funding support. Programs that are completely staffed by volunteers are often difficult to sustain in the long term and are more likely to operate in an ad hoc manner. The key to successful OSHLSP is a paid coordinator.</li> <li>Volunteer tutors are not always able to provide the long-term commitment needed to support young people and establish ongoing relationships.</li> <li>Creating meaningful relationships between teachers, community partners and parents is vital in supporting the educational needs of refugee young people. However these relationships take considerable time to establish and maintain.</li> <li>Access to suitable venues and resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer tutor training has been conducted throughout the state on a regular basis and has been extremely well attended. Additional training has been requested by Universities, school groups and other service providers.</li> <li>The LBB volunteer tutor recruitment strategy has proven so successful that we currently have more volunteers than we can place in programs.</li> <li>Provision of coordinators manuals for OSHLSPs</li> <li>Regional Officers have established steering groups within local government areas to broker partnerships between schools and community service providers, improving the quality of the service to students attending individual OSHLSPs.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator – Learning Beyond the Bell, Centre for Multicultural Youth</li> <li>(03) 9340 3700</li> <li><a href="http://www.cmy.net.au/LearningBeyondtheBell">www.cmy.net.au/LearningBeyondtheBell</a></li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 12</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>The Refugee Action Support (RAS) Partnership - Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF), NSW Department of Education and Training, University of Western Sydney (UWS) and Charles Sturt University (CSU)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support high school refugee students to: improve their English language and literacy skills; develop their understanding and achievement of requirements in subject areas; and develop the confidence to participate in the classroom.</li> <li>To assist pre-service secondary education students to: develop the skills and understandings to support the learning of refugee students in schools.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students from refugee backgrounds in Years 7-11 who have transitioned from an IEC to mainstream education within the previous two years.</li> <li>Pre-service teachers undertaking a Master of Teaching (Secondary), Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) or Bachelor of Education (Primary) degree at either University of Western Sydney and Charles Sturt University.</li> </ul>

<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RAS homework centres typically provide a combination of individualised and small group support to students.</li> <li>▪ Tutoring is provided by two cohorts of tutors per year in two 12-week blocks.</li> <li>▪ Tutors (pre-service teachers) receive course credit in recognition of activity.</li> <li>▪ Each tutor is required to provide four hours of tutoring per week. This includes tutoring both during and after school. During school hours, tutors can sit in on classes to observe or assist their students with classroom activities.</li> <li>▪ Each centre allows between two or three students per tutor and tutors are assigned to schools in teams of at least three. In many cases, schools are required to provide each student teacher with a classroom placement for a portion (e.g. four weeks) of the twelve-week tutoring period .</li> <li>▪ RAS is currently operating in nine secondary schools in Western and South-West Sydney and one school in the Riverina (Wagga Wagga High School through a partnership with CSU).</li> <li>▪ The program commenced in 2007 with four schools, 35 tutors from UWS and approximately 60 young people. In 2008, 82 tutors were recruited from UWS and placed across nine schools supporting approximately 220 young people.</li> <li>▪ The tutoring is coordinated locally by DET qualified teachers who supervise the school students and monitor the tutoring sessions.</li> <li>▪ A Community Liaison Officer is employed for three to six hours per week to support students and to help maintain communication with parents/caregivers.</li> <li>▪ As pre-service secondary teachers, tutors are enrolled in the Master of Teaching (Secondary) degree program at UWS or the Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) or Bachelor of Education (Primary) degree programs at CSU. In their preparation to participate in RAS, all tutors undertake approximately 15 hours of targeted literacy and cultural awareness training provided by ALNF.</li> <li>▪ In Sydney, further enrichment activities (drama forum and writing workshops) are being offered in Term 4 (2009) to each of the RAS schools as part of partnership between the ALNF and Bankstown Youth Development Services.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RAS is currently funded by the NSW Department of Education and Training, who provides the funding for the Coordinating Teachers and afternoon tea.</li> <li>▪ The RAS Project is also supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations under the National Projects element of the Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Program. These funds contribute to the Community Liaison Officer, the expansion into Wagga Wagga, the supplementary enrichment activity, and program management costs.</li> <li>▪ The RAS program benefits from in-kind support from the NSW Department of Education and Training, UWS and CSU.</li> <li>▪ Tutors volunteer their time and expenses (e.g. travel to and from the centres and to the various training sessions).</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limitations in current literacy pedagogy to meet diverse learning needs of refugee students in the high school context – i.e. the preparedness to teach students ranging from those who are pre-literate learners to those who are literate in another language is not necessarily elaborated in pre-service teacher training.</li> <li>▪ Students are focused on “task completion” thus placing pressure on tutors to spend a significant portion of time responding to immediate classroom tasks rather than on assisting students with skills that lead to more independent learning.</li> <li>▪ Program does not allow for continuity of student-tutor relationships – e.g. tutors only work with students for 12 weeks before a new cohort of tutors take over.</li> <li>▪ Difficulty in dealing with student and parental expectations – e.g. ‘Family pressures’ can be a concern as students are sometimes made to attend the tutoring session by parents and may not be motivated themselves.</li> <li>▪ At some school sites the number of refugee students seeking help far outweighs the supply of tutors. This requires coordinators to target groups of students with particular needs rather than all eligible refugee students.</li> <li>▪ Structural inconsistencies between schools – including how students are recruited, how they are allocated to tutors, the number of tutors at schools, and coordination/organisation of sites.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facilitating close, friendly interaction between students and tutors who are responsive to their needs allows students to enhance their English speaking skills, improve literacy skills and their understanding of Australian culture.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing tutors/pre-service teachers with the opportunity to understand the difficulties, frustrations and disadvantage experienced by refugee students (and no doubt many of their teachers) within 'the system', while reinforcing what they need to do in their future pedagogical practices.</li> <li>▪ The flexibility and fluidity of RAS has enabled it to change its structure when needed and adopt numerous improvements since its inception in 2007. Model can be adapted to structural needs of school.</li> <li>▪ Integration of RAS into core school business (e.g. running sessions during school time increases attendance) and integrating multiple support services (e.g. tutors working in conjunction with other learning support staff at the schools for students who require additional assistance).</li> <li>▪ As RAS tutors are also on student placements, some go on to secure graduate positions at these schools. This allows continuity of relationships for students and teaching skills acquired through RAS can have an ongoing institutional impact.</li> <li>▪ The involvement of university students who act as mentors provides a way to support refugee students' transition into and engagement with mainstream education.</li> <li>▪ The appointment of a Community Liaison Officer strengthens the links between the school and the local community and greatly assists refugee students with the cultural transition process. For tutors, the Community Liaison Officers are an invaluable resource, particularly in facilitating greater understanding of the refugee students that they work with.</li> <li>▪ Having coordinating teachers with a background in ESL teaching facilitates cultural sensitivity amongst tutors. Coordinating teachers are able to share various pedagogies and practices with tutors.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.alnf.org/programs/learning-to-read-and-write/refugee-action.php">www.alnf.org/programs/learning-to-read-and-write/refugee-action.php</a></li> <li>▪ (02) 9362 3388</li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 13</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>UCan2, Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES), Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) and Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture (VFST/Foundation House)</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To strengthen the opportunities available to young people from refugee backgrounds (16-24) who have arrived in Australia with significant disruption to their lives and education as a consequence of the refugee experience. It has been designed to support these young people in on arrival English language programs and as they transition into mainstream education, training and employment.</li> <li>▪ To increase the level of cooperation between providers of education, social support, training and employment services working with young people from refugee backgrounds in the 16 to 24 year age group.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Young people of refugee background aged 16-24 with disrupted education.</li> <li>▪ Providers of education, social support, training and employment services working with young people from refugee backgrounds in the 16 to 24 year age group.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ucan2 was initially developed by AMES, CMY and Foundation House. It is currently being piloted in a number of English language programs which provide for new arrivals or young people with disrupted education.</li> <li>▪ In partnership with their English language provider, young people are provided with education case management; an experiential curriculum which develops work and life skills and prepares the young people for part time work experience; a social support program and connections to mainstream through developing relationships with volunteers.</li> <li>▪ The English language provider leads delivery of the curriculum, Foundation House leads the social support program and CMY leads the volunteer component. Planning and case management meetings develop the program at the local level and initiate referrals for those young people requiring extra support outside the program.</li> <li>▪ The program is designed to run for 20 weeks. There are generally 16 sessions of 4-5 hours once per week, in the final semester of the young people's time with their English language service provider. In addition there is a holiday program for a day in the semester break. There are 4 fortnightly 'follow-up' sessions of 1-2 hours to offer additional support to</li> </ul>

	<p>program participants as they transition into their new mainstream setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Program participants are given the opportunity to try out part time work by doing 6 shifts of work experience over a 3 week period in a retail environment.</li> <li>▪ The pilot is being evaluated by the McCaughey Centre, Melbourne University.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ucan2 is funded by a private philanthropic trust.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working in a collaborative partnership with organisations which have different core functions requires considerable time to develop a shared understanding and ways of working together.</li> <li>▪ Restructuring the way organisations work to enable appropriate delivery of Ucan2 and increased support for young people from refugee backgrounds is difficult, with competing demands on already full curricula and extremely busy staff.</li> <li>▪ Developing relationships with retail organisations who are prepared to offer program participants work experience is time consuming</li> <li>▪ Managing the complex issues, roles and responsibilities of settlement is difficult for many young people from refugee backgrounds, and impacts on program attendance and participation in work experience.</li> <li>▪ Recruiting appropriate numbers of volunteers within the program time frame is difficult.</li> <li>▪ Systemic funding is required to enable Ucan2 to be embedded in on arrival English language programs beyond the initial pilots.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ucan2 students are engaged and motivated because of the relevant content and experiential nature of delivery, which leads to increased English language acquisition.</li> <li>▪ Activities are carefully planned to develop trust and positive relationships so that the group provides a therapeutic environment where members support one another.</li> <li>▪ Opportunities are created for participants to integrate their past and present experiences and set goals for the future. This assists with settlement and recovery from trauma, and enables referral for additional support where necessary.</li> <li>▪ Regular contact with volunteers provides connections, language support and understanding of Australian culture which extends participants' learning and settlement beyond that of a regular on arrival classroom.</li> <li>▪ Additional transition support increases the likelihood of vulnerable young people remaining engaged with education and training.</li> <li>▪ Part time work experience provides program participants with an experience similar to their Australian counterparts, and initiates the process of their obtaining part time work to support them as they follow education and training pathways. Some young people obtain casual part time work following work experience.</li> <li>▪ The collective experience and expertise of organisations working collaboratively provides opportunity to create blended services, which offer a holistic response to supporting young people from refugee backgrounds.</li> <li>▪ Cross fertilisation of ideas and shared learnings enhance capacities for both individuals and organisations involved in Ucan2 development and delivery.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (03) 9388 0022 <a href="http://www.foundationhouse.org.au">www.foundationhouse.org.au</a></li> <li>▪ (03) 9340 3700 <a href="http://www.cmy.net.au">www.cmy.net.au</a></li> </ul>

## Transition support

<b>CASE STUDY 14</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Place Based Service Initiative for Young Refugees, Centrelink – Fairfield</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To develop a service delivery response based on collaboration between the community, government and businesses in Fairfield to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- address issues faced by the young refugees jobseekers through a Personal Services Coordination model;</li> <li>- increase young refugees' access to education, training and employment opportunities and relevant support services; and</li> <li>- build community capacity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Place Based Service (PBS) Initiative for Young Refugees is a voluntary initiative for participants who are young refugee job seekers aged between 16 and 24 years, who have been in receipt of Newstart Allowance or Youth Allowance for 52 weeks or more and/or have participated in a support program without achieving the intended outcome and/or are at risk of social exclusion and need to be connected to support services.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On joining the initiative, participants take part in a structured in-depth discussion with a Personal Services Coordinator to identify their strengths and challenges. A Personal Assessment Checklist is used to identify barriers and aspirations.</li> <li>▪ With the assistance of the Coordinator, the participant then develops three goals that they want to achieve during their engagement with the Initiative which will allow them to establish clear pathways towards longer term social and economic participation.</li> <li>▪ To assist them to achieve these goals, the Coordinator works with the participant to develop a plan and to build the participant's confidence by motivating them and helping them to make connections with service providers that can assist them.</li> <li>▪ When a participant achieves their goals, the Coordinator remains in contact with the participant for a sufficient period of time to ensure the that connections are stable and the participant is moving towards their longer term social and economic participation goals.</li> <li>▪ Personal Services Coordinators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide personalised assessment, in conjunction with other relevant parties – Strength Based.</li> <li>- Tailor an individualised pathway to meet specific individual needs</li> <li>- Develop a Personalised Plan to help achieve identified goals</li> <li>- Work with existing services to connect young refugees to services and coordinate the service response</li> <li>- Facilitate progression and transition from one service to another</li> <li>- Work with up to 30 young people at the one time.</li> <li>- Develop interventions to meet the needs of participants, and coordinate the local service delivery network to achieve the desired outcome.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ To achieve the aim of the initiative, Centrelink, under the guidance of the Place Based Services Planning Office has adopted Action Research<sup>11</sup> methodology.</li> <li>▪ Action Research Group – 10 members meet every three weeks - responsible for review of program logic, development of action plan, feedback on documentation, advice to PBS initiative staff re: participants' progress.</li> <li>▪ The initiative works in partnership with key services, including: Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre, South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, Sydney South West Area Health Service, CatholicCare Refugee Employment Program, Fairfield City Council and Cabramatta Community Centre.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 year funding for Place-Based Service pilot initiative through Centrelink</li> <li>▪ 1 PBS Personal Services Coordinator and 1 PBS Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fostering greater integration of services is a long-term vision that requires a long-term commitment from all involved (i.e. services, systems, funding).</li> <li>▪ Sustainability of initiative – short-term funding.</li> <li>▪ Getting ongoing commitment and momentum across different agencies and services – requires leadership and buy-in.</li> <li>▪ Lack of tailored education/training programs to which to refer young people who are disengaged from school/IEC and not ready for TAFE. Many not really job ready and yet limited options in terms of suitable education/training.</li> <li>▪ Fragmentation between government and community agencies a systemic issue.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The PBS initiative confirms the value of a one-to-one tailored, seamless and supported service.</li> <li>▪ Having PBS Personal Services Coordinator who can spend time building relationship with young people, exploring their goals and supporting them to navigate systems/services to achieve these.</li> <li>▪ The work of the PBS initiative encourages a more integrated approach to servicing vulnerable refugee youth and their families. Integrated service delivery enables service providers to:</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> For more information about Action Research, see <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/whatisar.html>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify needs earlier and accurately</li> <li>- Deliver a coordinated package of support that is participant-centric (i.e. centred on the young person)</li> <li>- Help to secure quality outcomes for them</li> <li>- Achieved through collaboration and coordination across all sectors.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengths-based young person-centred approach increases young people's knowledge and confidence to navigate service systems and advocate for their own needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emilija Todorova</li> <li>▪ (02) 9203 8635</li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 15</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Newly Arrived Pathways Program, Auburn Youth Centre</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Newly Arrived Pathways Program (NAPP) aims to build newly arrived young people's capacity to access education and employment opportunities, to assist parents to understand and engage with school communities and to address misaligned expectations of their children's learning outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The NAPP works with young people aged 14 to 24 and their families who have arrived in Australia within the last five years and are on a humanitarian or family stream visa.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The NAPP has partnered with four schools and IECs in the Holroyd, Granville and Parramatta local government areas to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outreach career casework in schools;</li> <li>- Career workshops;</li> <li>- Parent information sessions;</li> <li>- Advocacy on behalf of the client group with the education system at both the school and department level.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Workshops focus on the education system, including vocational and tertiary education, as well as employment information.</li> <li>▪ The program operates as a connector, assisting newly arrived young people to take advantage of the opportunities and services that they are entitled to (e.g. assisting clients to map out plans and career goals and take steps towards them).</li> <li>▪ Students in the greatest need are identified and one-to-one casework is provided.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Settlement Grants Program, Department of Immigration and Citizenship</li> <li>▪ 1 full-time project worker</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Literacy is a major challenge for young people arriving in the older age group. There is not enough time available for the support needed and pathways for these students are limited.</li> <li>▪ Working with the 18+ age group presents the greatest challenges as they are considered adults by Australian education/training systems but haven't had the opportunity to gain the skills that are expected of adults.</li> <li>▪ There is a lack of a unified strategy across NSW in regards to education policy for refugees.</li> <li>▪ A lack of resources in schools to provide pastoral care to students with complex needs.</li> <li>▪ A lack of strategies and resources to support transitions between IECs and mainstream schools.</li> <li>▪ Limited time/capacity to advocate for systemic change while trying to manage a full caseload.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engagement of parents with regards to students learning/pathways – including running information sessions.</li> <li>▪ Outreaching to schools.</li> <li>▪ The commitment shown by partner schools has been outstanding. In a climate where there are more needs and problems than resources and services to solve them, it would be easy to let this client group slip through the cracks. Those schools that have partnered with the Auburn Youth Centre in delivering the program have been willing to take a risk and trial a new program, and their students have been greatly assisted as a result.</li> </ul>

<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (02) 9646 2122</li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.ayc.org.au">www.ayc.org.au</a></li> </ul>
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<b>CASE STUDY 16</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Gateways Program, NSW Department of Education and Training</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To engage students at risk of disengaging from school.</li> <li>▪ To provide highly practical TAFE vocational experiences for these students.</li> <li>▪ To help the students discover skills, areas of interest and pathways to success away from mainstream education.</li> <li>▪ To give the students an experience of TAFE and an adult learning environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students at risk of disengaging from school before completing the School Certificate.</li> <li>▪ Students with conduct and socialisation problems.</li> <li>▪ Migrants and refugees.</li> <li>▪ Works in small group of secondary schools in South Western area of Sydney</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students referred from schools, agencies, community</li> <li>▪ Interview assessment.</li> <li>▪ Course – 1 day per week for 8 weeks</li> <li>▪ Courses occur away from the school environment</li> <li>▪ Students expected to function in an adult environment</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding through NSW Department of Education and Training – Schools.</li> <li>▪ Negotiated access to Dept of Education TAFE NSW colleges.</li> <li>▪ All teaching time, venues, consumables and Personal Protective Equipment are financed by the Gateways program.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing and adequate funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Successful strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student are still connected to school-based support networks</li> <li>▪ Selection of the “right” vocation course teachers.</li> <li>▪ Highly practical courses with a product at the end.</li> <li>▪ Classroom support by an additional school-experienced teacher.</li> <li>▪ Program officer interaction morning and afternoon.</li> <li>▪ School-based mentors to support students.</li> <li>▪ Celebration and graduation at the end of the course to recognise the students’ success with course staff, school staff and parents.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chris Harvey – Gateways Coordinator</li> <li>▪ (02) 97934935</li> </ul>

<b>CASE STUDY 17</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b><i>Building Pathways: Resources to Support Transitions for Young People from Refugee Backgrounds (2007)</i></b>
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This resource provides a good practice framework and training materials aimed at improving the sensitivity and responsiveness of support provided to young people from refugee backgrounds as they move through education, training and employment.</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ People working with young people from refugee backgrounds as they move in or out of education, training and employment settings.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Downloadable resource includes a good practice framework and training materials aimed at improving the sensitivity and responsiveness of support provided to young people from refugee backgrounds as they move through education, training and employment.</li> <li>▪ The training materials outline five workshops for introducing and working through the issues and practices in the <i>Building Pathways</i> framework.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The materials for each workshop include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a session plan</li> <li>- participant worksheets</li> <li>- a marking guide with suggested responses to worksheets</li> <li>- suggested slides/overheads to accompany workshops</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <i>Building Pathways</i> resources were developed by a working group of the Victorian Settlement Planning Committee, which included experienced practitioners and policy officers from across government and the non-government sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/transitions.htm">www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/transitions.htm</a></li> </ul>

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

*These kids have tremendous skills and knowledge in a whole range of areas. They're not to be underestimated in terms of their intelligence or ability. It's just that they haven't had the opportunity to develop those areas that are required to participate fully here.*

(ESL teacher cited in Moore et al. 2008:42)

The following recommendations emerged from consultations with service providers and community representatives and through a comprehensive review of literature. They suggest ways in which the complex needs of post-compulsory learners from refugee backgrounds can be met at both a local and systemic level in order to harness young people's skills, high aspirations and determination to succeed.

### 5.1 Enhanced on-arrival English programs

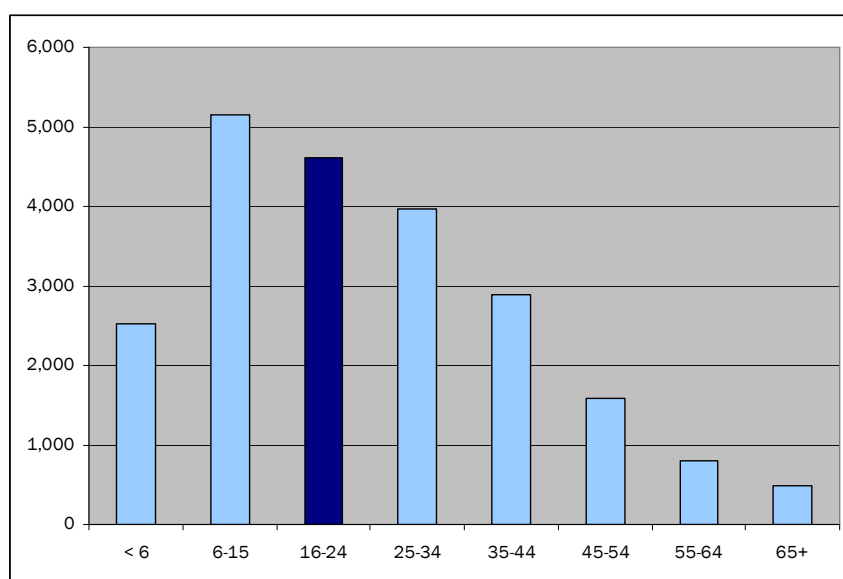
#### Increasing the flexibility and resourcing of Intensive English Centres

Current funding agreements between Federal and State/Territory Governments for the delivery of the ESL New Arrivals Program provide a set amount per eligible new arrival student (\$5,786 per new arrival and \$11,572 per humanitarian new arrival<sup>12</sup>). In NSW this means refugee and humanitarian entrant students are generally eligible to stay in an IEC for four terms, or one school year.<sup>13</sup> Although there are varying opinions about how long a young person should be eligible to remain at an IEC – and many young people are in a hurry to move on as quickly as possible and will not stay even where they are entitled to – there was a general consensus that there needs to be greater flexibility and resourcing of the ESL New Arrivals Program to allow those who *do* need this type of intensive support to remain in an IEC for *up to two years* (see also Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008; Francis & Cornfoot 2007b; ACTA 2009).

#### **Recommendation 1**

*RCOA recommends that State and Federal education departments work together to ensure there is increased funding for refugee and humanitarian entrant students to allow students who require more on-arrival intensive English support eligibility to remain in IECs for up to two years.*

**Figure 10. Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants to NSW by age group, 2004-2009**



(Source: DIAC Settlement Database, 2009)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Programs/EnglishasaSecondLanguageNewArrivalsProgram/Pages/Arrangements2009.aspx>

<sup>13</sup> Some IECs will allow extensions for particularly vulnerable students, although these extensions are unfunded (i.e. one IEC spoke about enrolling a student for seven terms)

## **Establishing an additional senior IEC in NSW**

Currently there is one senior IEC in NSW catering specifically to young people who settle in Australia aged between 16 and 25 (see case study 1 - Bankstown IEC). The effectiveness of this type of school-based intensive English program for older young people is reflected in its high demand and the distance that young people are willing to travel in order to access this centre. Grouping young people by age as well as language and literacy level has been shown to enhance not only educational outcomes but also social and settlement outcomes (see Moore et al. 2006). As young people of post-compulsory school age constitute a significant age cohort within the Refugee and Humanitarian Program (see Figure 10)<sup>14</sup>, the State Government should explore the possibility of establishing an additional senior IEC campus in NSW based on a similar model to that of Bankstown IEC.

### **Recommendation 2**

*RCOA recommends that the NSW Department of Education explore the possibility of establishing an additional senior IEC campus in NSW based on a similar model to that of Bankstown IEC and located in an area of high refugee settlement.*

## **Accountability and funding for youth-specific AMEP classes**

In NSW there are currently very few youth-specific classes offered through AMEP/SPP and catering specifically to the needs of young people is not stipulated within AMEP funding guidelines. However, experience in other states that do offer youth-specific AMEP/SPP classes suggest that these programs can be particularly effective and young people have better learning outcomes when they were placed in targeted youth programs, as they specifically tailor to the young people's ESL, educational and socio-emotional needs. For example, Moore et al.'s (2008:33-4) study found that refugee youth:

- *learn faster than their elders;*
- *need teaching that extends their generally rapid but superficial acquisition of oral English and that focuses on written English;*
- *need the basic knowledge, skills and discipline that come with formal schooling if they are to embark on educational and employment pathways that realise their potential;*
- *have high energy levels and require more active teaching and activities than those acceptable to older learners;*
- *have different emotional needs, including a generally intense need to interact with their peers (see also Cassity and Gow 2005: 52);*
- *benefit from sharing their problems with peers in and out of class;*
- *need productive relations with adult mentors and thus relate differently to their teachers than do older adults; and*
- *generally require and are more responsive to a more interventionist approach to attendance and punctuality, and to more explicit socialisation into appropriate behaviours.*

RCOA supports Moore et al's (2008) recommendation that a special per capita refugee youth loading be available to AMEP providers to be able to offer targeted youth-specific courses based on documented best practice, and DIAC refine criteria for its allocation and use to inform future tender specifications and accountability audits (see also Harding & Wigglesworth 2005; and Figure 11 below).

### **Recommendation 3**

*RCOA recommends that a special per capita refugee youth loading be available to AMEP providers to be able to offer targeted youth-specific courses based on documented best practice, and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship refine criteria for its allocation and use to inform future tender specifications and accountability audits.*

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<sup>14</sup> Note, due to data limitations, age group categories are not evenly distributed in this graph and should be read as indicative only.

**Figure 11. Consequences of different modes of SPP400/AMEP delivery for students, teachers and centre managers**

Program	Consequences for:		
	Refugee youth	Teachers	Managers
<b>Youth-specific programs including supplementary activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) targets youth learning trajectories, learning needs, aspirations and interests</li> <li>(ii) optimises class dynamics</li> <li>(iii) promotes rounded physical, social and emotional development</li> <li>(iv) allows pathway options to be more readily explored and evaluated</li> <li>(v) can provide full school days</li> <li>(vi) may be integrated within ongoing pathways.</li> </ul>	<p>Requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) teaching mixed proficiency levels, at least initially</li> <li>(ii) developing almost all one's own teaching resources</li> <li>(iii) high-energy teaching</li> <li>(iv) organising and participating in out-of-class activities</li> <li>(v) assuming above normal out-of-class pastoral responsibilities</li> <li>(vi) enjoying this type of teaching.</li> </ul> <p>Offers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(vii) considerable professional fulfilment</li> <li>(viii) opportunities to target teaching to youth needs.</li> </ul>	<p>Requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) suitable teacher(s)</li> <li>(ii) staffing consistency</li> <li>(iii) resourcing small classes until program gains credibility with refugee youth</li> <li>(iv) separate timetabling</li> <li>(v) sufficient classrooms to allow after-hours ILC access</li> <li>(vi) resources to fund travel for excursions and sport etc</li> <li>(vii) in some centres, separate budgets for differently funded students.</li> </ul> <p>Offers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(viii) scope to attract extra assistance and resources for special activities and projects.</li> </ul>

(adapted from Moore et al. 2008: 94)

## 5.2 Youth transition/bridging programs

### Funding transition/bridging programs targeting young people from refugee backgrounds

Currently, only a minority of refugee and humanitarian entrant young people aged 16-25 who access the AMEP/SPP or ESL New Arrivals Program exit with the English necessary for mainstream education, vocational training, entry to preparation English courses and/or semi-skilled employment. For example, according to Moore et al's (2008) study, "the majority (58 per cent) of those who completed their [AMEP/SPP] entitlements remained at the level at which they entered the program" (p. 29). In light of this and the realistic timeframes it is estimated to take a person with a history of disrupted education to acquire sufficient literacy to cope with Australian education/training system expectations<sup>15</sup>, it is recommended that a targeted funding stream be introduced to support the systemic development of youth transition programs that bridge the gap between on-arrival English programs and mainstream education, training and employment. Such a funding stream would ensure that effective models such as Granville TAFE's Migrant Youth Access Program or the NMIT Young Adult Migrant English Course (see case studies 4 and 5) have an ongoing reliable source of funding, and new programs can be introduced in areas with high refugee settlement.

As such, RCOA supports Moore et al.'s (2008:101-2) recommendation that:

*...in addition to normal AMEP tenders, a separate set of tenders should be advertised for full- or small-scale programs for older adolescent and young adult humanitarian entrants who have seven years' or less formal schooling. These tenders should seek submissions*

<sup>15</sup> "Collier's (1987) comprehensive and landmark study of school age learners concluded that: "Where all instruction is given through the second language (English), non-native speakers of English with no schooling in their first language take 7-10 years or more to reach age and grade-level norms of their native English-speaking peers" (p. 618). Reviewing more than two decades of research, Thomas and Collier (2002) stated that, for those *with* prior literacy, "the minimum length of time it takes to reach grade level performance in second language (L2) is four years" (p. 9). Hakuta, Butler and Witt (2000) found that, even in schools regarded as highly successful in teaching EAL learners, "oral proficiency takes 3 to 5 years to develop, and academic English proficiency can take 4 to 7 years" (p. 3; see also: Cummins 1984; Cummins and Swain 1990; Bigelow et al 2006; Howard Research 2006; August and Shanahan, 2008)." (ACTA 2009: 9)

for programs and activities that constitute/are part of/complement all or part of an initial two- to three-year study pathway (full-time or equivalent) leading to mainstream education, vocational training and/or employment. Tenders should be open to providers already offering youth programs, as well as to those with demonstrated capacity to initiate them. They should also allow for partnerships and cooperation between providers in the AMEP, VET, school and community sectors.

We suggest that criteria for awarding these contracts should address at least the following:

- targeted pastoral support and community liaison;
- targeted content and adjunct activities (including physical exercise and sport);
- concrete options and experiences that facilitate pathways into mainstream education, training and employment;
- appropriate and qualified ESL staffing;
- appropriate infrastructure and staffing already in place;
- the demonstrated and potential capacity of providers to forge substantive linkages with existing VET providers and other infrastructure;
- student travel allowances; and
- adequate childcare, preferably on the same site as the youth program and using bilingual childcare workers.

#### **Recommendation 4**

RCOA recommends that State and Federal education departments invest in initiatives that bridge on-arrival intensive English and mainstream education and training programs and target refugee and humanitarian entrants of post-compulsory school age.

### **5.3 Inclusive practice within mainstream education and training**

#### **National framework for assessing and funding English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) learners in schools**

Currently, once a student has exited the ESL New Arrivals Program and entered a mainstream secondary school, their English language and literacy learning needs become the responsibility of state/territory education departments through the allocation of Federal funding for schools. The equitable allocation of funding to State/Territory governments has been an area of some contention among commentators (see ACTA 2009; Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008; CRC 2006; Vickers 2007). In particular, the lack of differential funding for 'high needs' students, such as EAL/D learners with a background of disrupted education, is seen as problematic because costs are disproportionately borne by States with higher settlement of refugee and humanitarian entrants. As the Australian Council of TESOL Associations (ACTA) argues, these learners have distinct educational needs that go beyond the Federal government's focus on literacy and numeracy and are not appropriately identified or assessed through the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)<sup>16</sup>.

In addressing the need to appropriately assess and allocate resources to meet the learning needs of students with a background of disrupted education, RCOA supports the recommendations developed by ACTA (2009) around the need for a nationally consistent way of meeting the needs of EAL/D learners through:

- (i) data collection;
- (ii) State/Territory/system/school performance indicators;
- (iii) resource allocation;
- (iv) specifically targeted programs;

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<sup>16</sup> In 2008, the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) commenced in Australian schools. The program involves all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia being assessed using national tests in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation) and Numeracy. The data from the NAPLAN test results "gives schools and systems the ability to compare their students' achievements against national standards and with student achievement in other states and territories. It also allows the monitoring of progress over time." [www.naplan.edu.au](http://www.naplan.edu.au)



- (v) curriculum development;
- (vi) identification of necessary school support services; and
- (vii) professional development opportunities for teachers. (ACTA 2009: 3)

### **Recommendation 5**

*RCOA recommends a review of national frameworks for assessing and allocating resources to meet the learning needs of students with a background of disrupted education as outlined by the Australian Council of TESOL Associations (2009).*

### **Expanding professional development opportunities for teachers**

There are some excellent examples of initiatives across Australia that support teachers and other school staff to understand and engage more effectively with young people from refugee backgrounds. While there are professional development supports available for teachers in NSW (for example, through the DET Refugee Transitions Program and STARTTS' school liaison officer), these are limited in reach and could be further enhanced with increased funding and/or greater collaboration between schools and community organisations with expertise in working with young people from refugee backgrounds. An example of a model that could be explored in NSW is the School Support for Refugees Program in Victoria run by Foundation House and funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (see case study 10).

Another recommendation aimed at ensuring teaching staff are better equipped to understand and meet the needs of refugee learners with disrupted education in their classrooms is to encourage education faculties within tertiary institutions to incorporate curriculum about the refugee experience and teaching language and literacy into pre-service teacher education courses (see also REPP 2007:5; Naidoo 2008). The Refugee Action Support (RAS) Program (see case study 12) is an example of an initiative that combines the goals of enhancing pre-service teacher training as well as providing homework support for refugee students in schools, offering an innovative model that could be replicated more widely across other universities providing teacher training.

### **Recommendation 6**

*RCOA recommends the NSW Department of Education explore the possibility of investing in enhanced professional development opportunities for teachers in NSW working with students from refugee backgrounds, using as a basis the School Support for Refugees Program model trialled in Victoria.*

### **Recommendation 7**

*RCOA recommends the expansion of the Refugee Action Support (RAS) Program to all NSW universities providing teacher training.*

### **Pastoral care in schools, AMEP and TAFE**

“The learning in the classroom is one thing but all of those surrounding issues that you need to support young people with are very difficult for an organisation that's only funded really for educational provision. We have to put in a whole range of other supports. The pastoral care issues with this group are immense.”

(AMEP Manager cited in Moore et al 2008: 56)

The vast majority of service providers consulted spoke about the vital role of pastoral care in enabling the ongoing engagement of young people from refugee backgrounds in schools, AMEP and TAFE. Providing support to newly arrived young people who are dealing with complex settlement, family and educational issues requires time and resources, including skilled welfare workers who are able to work intensively one-on-one with students or specialist group programs (see also recommendation 9). While there are examples of good practice in school settings (e.g. the Refugees Transitions Program, case study 9), AMEP youth programs (e.g. AMES Youth Program, case study 2) and TAFE settings (e.g. Granville TAFE Multicultural Youth Access Program, case study 4), some of these programs identified a lack of resources and recognition of the importance and intensity of pastoral work by funding bodies as a major challenge (see also Chegwidden & Thompson 2008: 30). This is particularly the case within

TAFE (adult education) environments where there are embedded assumptions that students will be relatively autonomous and self-directed learners.

In terms of recommendations, those consulted suggested a number of ways in which pastoral care supports can be made an integral part of any education or training program involving 'at risk' young people. This included:

- Increasing capacity of TAFEs to provide pastoral care to 'at risk' students;
- Enhancing partnerships between schools, TAFE and community organisations to enable greater outreach of support services in educational settings (see also recommendation 12);
- Funding sport, recreation, music and life skills programs within AMEP and IEC settings; and
- Increasing allocation of student welfare funding for schools with high numbers of students transitioning from IECs to enhance the capacity of in-school counselling supports.

### **Recommendation 8**

*RCOA recommends increased funding for pastoral care initiatives in all education and training environments catering to learners from refugee backgrounds.*

## **5.4 Community support programs**

### **Coordinated and strengthened Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs across NSW**

For young people with a history of disrupted schooling who are struggling to catch up with their peers and remain engaged in mainstream education and training, out-of-school-hours homework support programs can be an incredibly important source of support. As the Refugee Education Partnership Program (2007:8) found:

“A properly designed after-school program can have strong positive effects on children’s academic, social and emotional lives. This is especially true for students whose personal circumstances put them at higher risk of school failure. There is growing evidence that quality out-of-school opportunities matter – that they complement environments created by schools and families and provide important “nutrients” that deter failure and promote success – and that they matter in ways that are observable and measurable.”

Again, there are many examples of good community-based homework clubs and Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs (OSHLSPs) across NSW. And while these are often cost-effective and have multiple benefits in terms of settlement and community strengthening (see also Miralles-Lombardo et al 2008), they also vary enormously in terms of quality and consistency, particularly where they rely on volunteer coordination and tutors. One way in which these programs can be strengthened without losing the valuable contribution of volunteers and local solutions is through exploring the introduction of a model similar to Victoria’s Learning Beyond the Bell initiative (see case study 11), which aims to:

- Provide resourcing, support and coordination to Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs across Victoria;
- Increase the consistency and accessibility of OSHLSPs; and
- Increase the connectedness of refugee and migrant young people to school and the community.

### **Recommendation 9**

*RCOA recommends that the NSW Department of Education allocate resources to coordinating and strengthening Out of School Hours Learning Support Programs across NSW based on the Learning Beyond the Bell model trialled in Victoria.*

## **Therapeutic programs and peer mentoring**

In Cassity & Gow’s (2006) research on newly arrived African young people in NSW schools, teachers, students and parents all acknowledged that the refugee journey can make settlement in Australia and adjustment to schooling difficult. The authors make a number of recommendations for how past traumatic experiences can be acknowledged and addressed through therapeutic programs and peer mentoring groups both within and outside school settings (see also Chegwiddden & Thompson 2008: 30):

*Firstly, these issues could be addressed by improving interaction between the communities and the schools, by utilising peer support and buddy systems and by linking the communities with refugee support services. By this we mean recognising that communal approaches toward working with young people are most effective – not only through ethnic community organisations, but also through peer mentoring groups and sustained opportunities for debriefing about traumatic experiences in the past. [...]. Opportunities and peer mentoring need to link young people with others who have been in Australia for longer periods of time and who know how to access resources for support.*

(Cassity & Gow 2006: 13)

The former Newly Arrived Youth Support Service at Granville Multicultural Community Centre and Auburn Youth Centre (which did not have its funding renewed in 2010) initiated a number of excellent group projects in school settings with a therapeutic benefit (i.e. strengths-based, creative, providing a safe space for young people to explore refugee and resettlement experiences), although these tended to be limited to only a small number of schools and were predominantly short-term initiatives. It is recommended that schools, TAFE and community agencies work together to ensure young people are able to participate in group programs with a therapeutic benefit, including using peer mentoring initiatives.

### **Recommendation 10**

*RCOA recommends that the NSW Government invest in group and mentoring programs with therapeutic benefits targeting young people from refugee backgrounds.*

### **Services targeting refugee young people who have become disengaged**

Among other things, a report capturing learnings from the CAT Pilot and the POEM Pilot initiatives<sup>17</sup> found that:

- *young people do not make a single transition. They are more likely to make a number of transitions in life, which will be complex and multi-faceted. A framework for effective support through these transitions should include a learning pathways plan, access to professional career and transition support, mentoring and follow up; and*
- *learning delivered in community settings, by a partnership involving education and community providers, offers the best possible opportunity for engaging disconnected young people in appropriate education.*

(Miles Morgan 2004: 4)

These learnings were echoed in consultations regarding how to re-engage those young people who had ‘fallen through the gaps’ in education and training systems. Again, there are good local examples where this is happening that could be replicated in other areas with appropriate funding. In particular, the Centrelink Place Based Services for Refugee Young People piloted in Fairfield in 2008-09 (case study 14) provides an excellent, albeit short-term, model of local service collaboration and targeted individual pathways support. Certainly there is a need for more re-engagement initiatives such as this in areas with high refugee settlement.

### **Recommendation 11**

*RCOA recommends that the NSW Government invest in culturally-appropriate services targeting young people from refugee backgrounds who have become disengaged from education and training pathways.*

## **5.5 Enhancing flexibility and cross-sector collaboration**

### **Greater flexibility moving between IEC, AMEP, schools and TAFE**

Australian education and training systems are largely premised on linear pathways – that a young person will move from IEC to school or from AMEP to TAFE. Without fully understanding the expectations and reality of Australian education systems, young people (and their families) can be in a hurry to move on quickly from on-arrival English programs and make the transition into mainstream school and TAFE.

<sup>17</sup> [www.dest.gov.au/sectors/career\\_development/publications\\_resources/other\\_publications/learnings\\_from\\_cats\\_and\\_poems.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/career_development/publications_resources/other_publications/learnings_from_cats_and_poems.htm)

Once they have exited the IEC or AMEP, it is very difficult to return. The teachers, managers and young people interviewed in Moore et al's study, as well as a number of service providers consulted as part of this research, argued that new arrivals should not be held to initial choices with such far-reaching consequences:

*It's the age thing. That's absolutely critical. I think it's got to be very, very flexible, so that they can move in and out of that school-AMEP system. Because they often go to school thinking that'd be great, and then they realise they're three feet taller than anybody else in the school and they're ten years older than a lot of the kids in the school, and they think, 'What am I doing here? I feel ridiculous.' And they want to get out. Or the opposite - they'll go to an [AMEP] class which is full of old people, and their mother might be in the class, and their father might be in the class, and they go, 'Whoa, I don't want to be part of this. I want to get into the school system.' So there's got to be all of that flexibility where they can move in and out. They've got to be allowed to make mistakes, and learn from them. [And not be held to a] five minute interview: 'Do you want to go into this class or do you want to go into the school?'*

(Teacher quoted in Moore et al 2008: 52)

In terms of recommendations, Chegwiddden & Thompson (2008:30) argue that programs such as AMEP and IEC need to be given more flexibility in their guidelines to enable students to move in and out of these programs, to ensure that students achieve an outcome of functional English. More specifically, RCOA supports Moore et al's (2008: 100) recommendation that "eligibility requirements for the SPP400/AMEP be revised to allow those aged 16-24 with seven years or less of schooling who have enrolled in an Intensive English Centre or school to transfer into the SPP400/AMEP (on the recommendation of their case workers or the Intensive English Centre/school principals) for up to the first term after enrolment in the school sector." In addition, there should be increased flexibility for young people who have prematurely transitioned out of an IEC or AMEP without using up their eligible number of hours to be able to return to access these within 12 months of exiting.

### **Recommendation 12**

*RCOA recommends that DEEWR and DIAC work together to review eligibility criteria and flexibility of on-arrival English programs for young people of post-compulsory school age arriving under the Refugee and Humanitarian Program.*

### **Fostering collaboration between schools, TAFE and community services**

There are many examples of initiatives that have involved collaboration between education and training providers and community services to achieve good outcomes for young people (see case studies 3, 14 and 15). It makes sense that education and training providers cannot be everything to young people from refugee backgrounds who are juggling complex settlement issues, and that there are many different services and supports that schools and TAFE could draw upon to help students stay engaged. In documenting case studies of good practice, partnership or cross-sector collaboration came up as a successful strategy in a wide range of interventions. However, collaboration across different sectors does not necessarily happen naturally or easily. Moreover, cross-sector networking and relationship-building is often not factored into project budgets, even though this is a necessary and often time-consuming prerequisite for effective collaboration.

Services consulted recommended a number of ways in which greater collaboration could be fostered between education and training providers and community groups and services. These include:

- Establishment or strengthening of local service networks, such as that modelled by Centrelink's Place Based Services for Refugee Young People project in Fairfield (see case study 14);
- Enhancing capacity of schools/teachers to attend network meetings and develop collaborative relationships; and
- Encouraging school executives to develop a culture of collaboration in their schools (e.g. exploring opportunities for community services to do more outreach in schools; working in partnership with TAFE to develop bridging/pathways programs).

### **Recommendation 13**

RCOA recommends that the NSW Department of Education conduct a review of the capacity of schools to work collaboratively with vocational education and training providers and community services.

## **5.6 Research, data collection and resources**

### **Research into pedagogy and older pre-literate learners**

Research and consultations have highlighted the considerable complexity of teaching older pre-literate learners<sup>18</sup>, a sub-group that many young people from refugee backgrounds fall under. So much of existing pedagogy with regards to English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) is premised on older students having some knowledge of written language and an understanding of 'how to learn', particularly in a senior school context. However, more work is needed to understand effective pedagogy with regards to pre-literate learners, building on the work already done in the AMEP sector around pre-literate adult learners (see McPherson 2008). Research into this area could enhance teacher training and provide education and training institutions (including schools) with a greater understanding of the tools needed to teach these learners more effectively, drawing on a deeper understanding of the way that pre-literate adults learn and engage with both language and concepts (see Dooley 2009).

One suggestion for how research and resources (see recommendation 14) could be developed and disseminated is through the replacement of the former AMEP Research Centre<sup>19</sup> with a holistic resource and research centre which is capable of researching and innovating across the age spectrum of new arrivals. As one service provider commented, "there has been much that schools could learn from AMEP approaches to explicit language teaching, and much that AMEP could learn from the strong pedagogies that are foundational in schools – the field is one that can be researched and resourced from one source, and there would many benefits in doing so" (Service provider consultation).

### **Recommendation 14**

RCOA recommends that DEEWR and DIAC explore the development of a holistic resource centre which is capable of research and innovation in language learning across the age spectrum of new arrivals.

### **Providing teachers with learning resources which are appropriate for young people**

*Post-elementary grade learners with minimal/no previous schooling face the daunting and complex task of simultaneously learning a new language and culture, acquiring literacy and gaining school-specific knowledge. So, for example, in addition to developing their spoken English, these older learners must acquire pre-literacy and "learning-how-to learn" skills (for example, how to hold a pencil or a book, form letters, tell the time from a clock, sequence items, find page numbers and follow a sequence of instructions). Learning these skills must be embedded in content appropriate to their physical, emotional and cognitive maturity, life skills and socio-cultural experiences, and social, cultural and educational aspirations. This content is quite different from anything appropriate to either infant classrooms or older English speakers who lack literacy skills.*

(ACTA 2009: 15)

While individual teachers and schools have produced some excellent resources for this older age group that are appropriate both in terms of content and learning level, these resources are often not shared with other teachers and institutions because there is no central clearinghouse of resources or because

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<sup>18</sup> Moore et al (2008:31-2) refer to *pre-literate* learners as "Those with no English whatsoever, no literacy in any language and no previous schooling. This group were described by teachers as having "no concept that what we say we can write down in one form or another". These learners come from societies that do not use written language, for example, Dinka tribespeople and herders in the rural areas of southern Sudan. A common teacher description was that these learners don't know how to hold a pen. They were also said to have no notion that writing is sequential or that pages are numbered. Other educational needs less overtly related to literacy were described as learning to tell the time, acquiring spatial/temporal/numerical concepts and gaining the basic cosmological, geographical, historical and scientific understandings that come with school learning... In interview, one teacher explained: *We're basically taking [these] students from that visual and tactile world that they've learned so much to a much more abstract form of learning. And that takes time.*

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/>

teachers do not have the time to develop them to the extent to which they can be made more widely available. Linked to Recommendation 13, the establishment of a resource and research centre that could develop and centralise resources as well as provide expertise and professional development opportunities for teachers who are developing resources, could be a more time and resource- effective way of ensuring teaching resources are available that meet the needs of post-compulsory school age young people with a background of disrupted education.

**Recommendation 15**

*RCOA recommends that a central clearinghouse be established to increase the accessibility of learning resources targeting young people of post-compulsory school age with a background of disrupted education.*

**Framework and implementation of data collection to track young people from IEC to further pathways**

RCOA supports the future direction identified in the 2008 NSW Department of Education and Training's Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement Report that there be "further refinement of the new Enrolment Registration Number (ERN) data management system for ESL Annual Survey and ESL New Arrivals Survey data collection and reporting" (DET 2009a: 10). Enhancing this data collection will enable greater identification of young people's pathways from IECs.

More broadly, though, RCOA supports Moore et al's recommendation "That DIAC initiates discussions within appropriate authorities to produce and gain comprehensive cross-sectoral data on the educational and employment pathways for the five-year period following entry to Australia of humanitarian entrants aged 16 and older who have seven years' schooling or less." (Moore et al. 2008: xvii). This would enable greater identification of the transitions points for young people of post-compulsory school age and at which point many young people fail to get the assistance they need.

**Recommendation 16**

*RCOA recommends that DIAC initiate discussions with appropriate authorities to produce and gain comprehensive cross-sectoral data on the educational and employment pathways for the five-year period following entry to Australia of humanitarian entrants aged 16 and older who have seven years or less of schooling.*

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## 7. APPENDICES

### Organisations/individuals consulted

Name	Program/department/role	Organisation/institution
Misty Adoniou	Lecturer Language, Literacy and TESL	School of Education and Community Studies, University of Canberra
Andrew Ang	Institute Multicultural Education Coordinator (IMEC)	Granville TAFE
Rosie Antenucci	President	Australian Council of TESOL Associations
Judith Bainbridge	Secretary	River Nile Learning Centre (Vic)
Bol Bol	University student and Catholic Education Office Community Liaison Officer	Sudanese community and Catholic Education Office
Diing Bul	University Student	Sudanese community
Eric Brace	Project Officer, Refugee Action Support (RAS) program	Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation
Kim Cootes	Refugee Student Support Officer	Multicultural Programs Unit, DET
Father Don Edgar	Committee Member	River Nile Learning Centre (Vic)
Mohsen El Dreih	Community Worker	Iraqi community / Gateways Program, DET
Virginia Francis	Refugee Liaison Officer	Catholic Education Office - Sydney
Chris Harvey	Program Manager	Gateways Program, DET
Dorothy Hoddinott	Principal	Holroyd High School
Gillian Kerr	Project Officer, Ucan2	Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture
Mark Lack	Community Relations Manager – AMEP & IHSS	ACL
Angela Ljubic	Multicultural Coordinator	Illawarra TAFE
Gerri Lonnon	School Counsellor	Bankstown Senior College and IEC
Samantha McGuffie	Schools Program Coordinator	Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture
Edna McKelleher	Place Based Service Initiative Manager	Centrelink, Fairfield Office
Elisabeth Pickering	Student Support Worker / Trainer	Cabramatta IEC / STARTTS
Adele Rice	Principal	Milpera State High School (Qld)
Mary Rogers	Teacher	River Nile Learning Centre (Vic)
Sue Ross	Teacher	River Nile Learning Centre (Vic)
Max Schneider	Schools Liaison Officer	STARTTS
Ellen Stoddart	Treasurer	River Nile Learning Centre (Vic)
Amanda Thompson	Youth Worker	Newly Arrived Youth Support Service, Granville Multicultural Community Centre
Cameron Thompson	Newly Arrived Youth Transitions Program Worker	Auburn Youth Centre
Robyn Tribe	Coordinator – Learning Beyond the Bell	Centre for Multicultural Youth
Jonelle Upton	PhD Student / ESL Teacher	University of Wollongong
Jane Wallace	Refugee Student Support Coordinator	Multicultural Programs Unit, DET

### Interview questions

1. What is your program/department's experience of providing education/training to refugee young people? What sort of programs do you run?
2. What do you think is successful about what you're doing?
3. What are the challenges?
4. What programs/initiatives you think are working really well with this group? Why are they so successful?
5. Where are the biggest gaps in terms of education/training pathways for newly arrived young people who arrive aged 15-24 in NSW?
6. What you think needs to happen to address these gaps (policy and program recommendations)?
7. Is there anyone who you think it would be good for RCOA to speak to about these issues?