



# **Outer Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network**

**An Environmental Scan of the Engagement of Refugee Young People  
aged 10-19 in Education and Training in the OELLEN**

**and**

**Recommendations on Enhancing the Provision and Services for them.**

**Update March 2011**

The Outer Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network (OELLEN) has undertaken an environmental scan of refugee young people aged 10-19 years within the OELLEN area. Within the restrictions of the available data, the scan identifies their geographic location by school and Local Government Area (LGA), the education, training and employment in which they are engaged and where the learning and employment is being undertaken.

An analysis of the effectiveness of the existing provision of education, training and employment has been researched through program and service identification, stakeholder opinion and examination of the existing data. Identifiable gaps in the provision for refugees aged 10-19 years in the LLEN, within the framework of provision for the cohort, by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), Skills Vic, Centrelink, Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) - Youth Connections, and other Victorian Government initiatives have been noted.

Some recommendations to better meet the gaps identified have been made. It should be noted that the recommendations are for those things which the OELLEN can facilitate given its defined role. This report was published originally in October 2010 and has been updated at March 2011. It should be used as an ongoing document which will be updated as provision alters and analysis of it occurs. Users are invited to provide updates to the LLEN when changes occur.

## **1. Programs and services for 10-19 year old young people in the Outer Eastern LLEN.**

The following list is not inclusive of all programs and services provided in the area for the cohort. It represents the major provision, or examples of recent or current provision, which appear to lead to prospective ongoing change. As indicated in the introduction to this report, the manner in which programs and services are funded and provided changes frequently and ranges from small one-off projects to large ongoing ones. This list includes programs and services which assist major stakeholders in providing programs and services for refugee young people in the OELLEN area.

- 1) Blackburn English Language School, offer a 6 month program for newly arrived school aged young people (the program can extend to one year where the student requires additional basic tuition in English)
- 2) DEECD Targeted initiatives. All of these initiatives provide scope to address refugee young people's needs in government schools, and for some initiatives in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and in Adult and Community Education (ACE) .
  - Primary Welfare – Primary Welfare Officers allocation to a school is provided at campus level provided the Student Family Occupation density for the campus exceeds a threshold figure. Primary Welfare Officers in primary schools have varying time allocations from fulltime to part-time.

- VCAL Coordination - The role of the VCAL Coordinator is to coordinate the school's VCAL program. This provides scope for a school to tailor aspects of its VCAL program to meet the student cohort's needs. Funding arrangements for this position in government schools are outlined below.

Funding is allocated according to the following formula:

- A core credit amount of \$10,018
- A per student credit amount of \$853

(This is an indicative figure and may be adjusted once final enrolments are known).

- Funding is capped at \$125,219

Schools are only eligible to receive VCAL coordination funding for VCAL students who are enrolled in Years 11 and 12.

- Re-Engagement Program The available data and anecdotal information indicate disengagement is not a significant problem for refugee young people in the OELLEN area.
- Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) This initiative ensures that all students 15 years and over in government schools are provided with individual Career Action Plans (pathway plans) with associated support as a means to making a successful transition through the post compulsory years of education, to further education, training or full-time employment.

MIPs aims to help young people to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of education, training and employment options, and
- develop skills to effectively manage their careers and pathways throughout their lives.

Additional support is provided to students at risk of disengaging or not making a successful transition to further education, training or secure employment.

The funding is allocated to schools using:

- A base allocation based on years 10 to 12 students is provided to each school to support the pathway planning process for all students 15 years and older. This base allocation includes follow-up and associated support for exiting students.
- Additional funds are provided to schools with SFO densities greater than a threshold value. This additional allocation is intended to support students identified as being at risk of early school leaving or not making a successful transition to further education, training or full time employment.
- A significant allocation of funding is assigned for those designated as at risk.

- Vocational Education Training

- Funding for Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) comprises targeted funding allocated exclusively for schools to deliver vocational education and training programs. Targeted funding for VETiS in 2011 is based on an eight level funding model. It is allocated to schools for every eligible VETiS certificate enrolment.
- VETiS funding also includes a rural weighting for VET students enrolled in secondary colleges with a location index of 0.2 and above.
- VETiS programs are considered standard curriculum, therefore government schools must provide VETiS tuition free of charge. Where the cost of VETiS delivery exceeds the targeted funding amount, schools are expected to draw on core SRP funding to meet tuition costs

### 3) Outer Eastern Youth Connections

The Youth Connections program, funded by DEEWR, provides a holistic approach to servicing young people at risk including support for individual young people and the broader community. It commenced in 2010 and is delivered in the OELLEN geographic area by Upper Yarra Community House Inc.

The Youth Connections program is available to eligible young people who are most at risk of disengaging, or already disengaged from education, family and/or the community. Service delivery will be characterised by flexible and individualised case management to young people to remain engaged or re-engage them with education and/or further training, and to improve their ability to make positive life choices. Refugee young people are included in this program.

**4) Eastern Schools Refugee Action Network (ESRAN)** is a network for schools and service providers to share information and strategies to better provide for refugee young people in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. ESRAN is well attended by a range of providers of education and training services.

### 5) Swinburne TAFE

- The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is an English and Settlement program for newly arrived migrants and refugees funded by the Federal Government. Students may be eligible to join the AMEP if they:
  - are an adult, 18 years or older
  - are a migrant or refugee who has arrived in Australia recently
  - have been granted a permanent visa
  - speak little or no English

There is a need to register within three months of arriving in Australia and start classes within one year. Under the program a student can study English for up to 510

hours, during or at the end of the 510 hours, a student may be able to access additional training which is to assist the student in finding a job.

- The Language and Literacy Program (LLNP) is designed to help jobseekers improve their language, literacy and numeracy skills and is funded by the Federal Government. In the LLNP students can access 800 hours of training at no cost to them.

Centrelink or a provider of Job Services Australia (JSA) refers eligible jobseekers who wish to study in the LLNP to qualified training specialists. To be eligible for the LLNP, clients must:

- be of working age ( generally 15 to 64 years old)
  - be registered as jobseekers with Centrelink
  - not be in full-time employment
  - have no potential barriers to successful participation in the program
  - satisfy the eligibility criteria relating to benefit and visa status.
- TAFE and Registered Training Organisation (RTO) profile hours are available for students to undertake general Vocational Education and Training (VET) certificates. The courses are funded by Skills Vic (the State Government Department which provides strategic advice and analysis of Victoria's skill needs, and acts as the system managers for the vocational education and training sector).
  - UCan2 is a level 2 program. At Swinburne, most students are age 18 plus and came directly from the Blackburn English Language School. The age of the students referred to this program at the end of their time at the Language School is deemed more suited to an adult environment. See Foundation House below for details.

**6) Foundation House - Service Innovation Program (SIP)** offers several areas of assistance, both directly or to the providers of programs and services in the OELLEN. These include:

- School Support Team – with one staff member in the four metropolitan regions plus one staff member in rural areas;
- Refugee Action Network (RAN) strategy in which Foundation House works with up to 10 schools for 18 months. A whole school approach is adopted with each school having a Refugee Action Team (RAT) which has six hours of professional development for each RAT in the RAN. Two workshops of 1.5-2 hours are conducted each term for each RAT, preferably with the whole school staff. In 2011 a new RAN has commenced at Mount Lilydale Mercy College, Manchester Primary School, Pembroke Primary School, Tinternvale Primary School, Blackburn English Language School - Maroondah campus. Five other primary schools have expressed interest in joining the 2011 RAN.

Schools that participated in this LLEN area in 2009-10 are Blackburn English Language School - Maroondah campus, Great Ryrie PS, Mullum PS, Croydon SC, Ringwood SC, Aquinas College, Our Lady of Perpetual Help PS, Ringwood, Croydon PS, Roberts McCubbin PS.

In the previous Eastern Region RAN (2007/2008) the schools were - Eastwood PS, Maroondah SC, Mullauna College, Forest Hill SC, Mitcham PS, Blackburn English Language School, Sacred Heart PS. Not all of these schools are in the OELLEN geographic area.

- Family strengthening – Foundation House work with service providers, 2 advisory committees,
- Beaut Buddies (Vic Health funded). 1 year in each selected school. The program operates by bringing together students who are new to the school and who are newly arrived in Australia, with students who have been at the school for a long time and who have had significant schooling in Australia. Through structured activities and skill development, students are supported by the project worker and teachers at their school to work on a “2gether” project. Croydon Secondary School participated in this program in 2009-10.
- UCan2 - a program designed between the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House), Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES) and the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY). This is delivered in OELLEN at the Croydon campus of Swinburne University, TAFE Division.

In partnership with their English Language provider, young people within the project are provided with educational case management, a specialised curriculum and social support and mentoring

Education, training and employment opportunities are increased by engaging local networks, businesses, sporting clubs and the arts in the program

## **7) Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE)**

- Yarrunga Croydon Hills, Burmese catering program to commence in October 2010. No 19 and under age participants but a possibility for the future if students meet participant prerequisites.
- City of Knox – ACFE providers in the City of Knox provide no ESL specific programs, however Coonara Community House (Upper Ferntree Gully) has an outstanding e-learning program (being used in NT and other universities etc working with it). It does not deliver ESL as such, although it does have youth programs and a partnership with Channel 31. Possible scope for specific programs in the future.
- City of Maroondah
  - KYM have the largest delivery for ESL in the City of Maroondah (there are only 5 ACE providers in Maroondah).

- Mountain District Learning Centre (formerly Mountain District Women's Co-operative) has undergone some changes lately. It does provide VCAL and have youth attending and appears to have further capacity to provide other programs.
- Shire of Yarra Ranges
  - Morrisons have the capacity to provide for refugee young people in appropriate programs and
  - Upper Yarra Community House have the capacity to provide for refugee young people in appropriate programs.
- Swinburne University, TAFE Division, Central Ringwood Community House, and North Ringwood Community House have funding in a Community Learning Partnership (CLP) project. This project involved a skills assessment of Burmese refugees in the local area. The stage one report in September 2010 will inform some trial training. The project is funded from September 2009-to early 2011.

**8) VICPOL** – Victoria Police and corrections programs include Ropes diversion (1 day), Rebound (uses clinicians, Wildside (behavioural change), and

- ‘Fit to drive’ which uses 3-4 agencies to prepare and assist young people in schools in preparation for obtaining their Victorian drivers licences. It is best to do 3 cycles over years 7-12 in secondary colleges to gain maximum benefit for the young person. (Schools have shown reluctance to the 3 cycles being delivered, as, among other things, too 3 sessions would be too disruptive).
- Changing Faces: Changing Lanes is a supervised driving program for Maroondah refugee communities that commenced in 2010. With Maroondah City Council and community sponsorship, and Victoria Police and RACV support, the Adult and Multicultural Education Service (AMES), sponsored by the TAC, has established processes and coordinates volunteers, learner drivers and the use of the community car.

The program allows learner drivers the opportunity to gain night time driving experience. Other elements of the program include some prepaid driving lessons.

**9) Eastern Migrant Information Centre**

- Refugee Education Action group
- Youth settlement workers in schools
- Racism program
- Social wellbeing programs
- Other

## **10) Homework Programs/Clubs**

- Great Ryrie PS
- Mooroolbark PS
- Ringwood SC
- Maroondah SC
- Croydon SC
- Knox Library
- Mooroolbark East PS - commencing later in 2011
- Ringwood office of Upper Yarra Community House inc – terms one & two 2011

## **11) Eastern Health- Child Youth and Family Mental Health Service<sup>1</sup>**

The role of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community portfolio includes making connections and working closely with agencies that support and advocate for the CALD community in the Eastern region. When agency workers have concerns about a child or young person's mental health, information can be provided and initial queries answered (along with the Access<sup>2</sup> team). Referrals can be supported to ensure that the referral process is as smooth as possible. Primary and secondary consultations can be assisted with, and relevant people from an agency can be met.

- A Youth Hub in Box Hill is a drop in Centre for the Eastern Region
- A mobile unit attends individual cases at their homes.

**12) Eastern Access Community Health (EACH)** is committed to a healthy and inclusive community that promotes the wellbeing of all. EACH provides specific youth services in the LLEN area.

It is a creative, responsive and outcomes-oriented organisation that promotes and delivers integrated community health, disability and support services to individuals, families and groups in Melbourne's eastern region.

## **13) Maroondah Youth Services Providers Network Refugee Action Group (MYSPN RAG)**

The MYSPN Refugee Action Group links with the community in a range of ways to:

- assist in achieving co-ordinated service responses and advocacy by the local service sector in regards to the needs of newly arrived and refugee young people
- identify and address local needs, issues and service gaps

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<sup>1</sup> This information and these programs exist in October 2010. It is understood changes may occur in 2011

<sup>2</sup> formerly Intake

- Share information (on programs, projects, research resources, etc)

Participation on the working group is ongoing and is open to any person interested in supporting the needs of Newly Arrived and Refugee Young People in Maroondah.

The group is facilitated by the Maroondah City Council Youth Services MYSPN Co-ordinator.

Appendix 1 - all data available for 2009-10. This appendix is not public as most data has been provided confidentially for LLEN planning.

## **2. Analysis of the effectiveness of the existing provision of education, training and employment identification of gaps in the provision for refugees within the OELLEN.**

### **School Students**

- 1) Current data is difficult to obtain due: twice a year a census is taken in government schools. A Cases 21 flag for refugee background students will be introduced in 2011. Currently no census or other data is available for non-government schools. The Catholic Education Office has some data on enrolments in its schools
- 2) Funding ESL - **ESL index funding** is made available to schools to staff ESL programs with appropriately qualified ESL teachers and Multicultural Education Aides. - ESL funding is based on an integrated weighted index for primary and secondary students.

This is applied to a school's profile of students from language backgrounds other than English as identified in the August census.

A school's ESL allocation will include a weighting to reflect the differing densities of Student Family Occupations.

This weighting reflects the high correlation between student outcomes and family occupation to target funding to schools with ESL learners with greatest need.

A school is required to reach a threshold before funding will apply.

- Contingency funding may be provided to schools, English Language Schools or Centres that experience significant changes to their ESL populations during the school year. Contingency funding may also be provided to English Language Schools and Centres for additional Outposting or Visiting Outposting classes during the year. Core funding for staff providing outposting programs (the assignment of primary teachers from an ELS/C to a mainstream primary school, or a cluster of schools, to provide an intensive new arrivals program) is included in ELS/Cs Student Resource Packages.

- English Language Schools and Centres (ELS/Cs) receive a special purpose SRP under the diverse settings provisions. English Language Schools receive a per student rate and a base to provide both safety net and support. Both of these allocations are multiples of the rates that apply in standard settings. English Language Centres receive a per student rate only. They do not receive the base as that base support is provided by the host school.

Funding to English Language Schools and Centres is based on target enrolments established by the Student Learning Division

The issue is how the funding is used within the school and the possible need for some funding or DEECD support when a few students of refugee background enrol in a school (especially a school which has not had refugee students before).

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/esl/default.htm>

### 3) Challenges regarding the qualifications of school staff for working with refugees

- Specialist trained staff. The need exists for specialist training for staff delivering ESL programs. It is not uncommon for schools to use the teachers of English, not ESL trained teachers with ESL and refugee students.
- Primary Welfare teachers. Not all schools have a wellbeing teacher and those that do, often have teachers who are not adequately trained for the role
- The complexity of having all staff trained to work with refugee students in a whole school approach to meeting the needs of refugee students.

### 4) ACFE

Data – there is a gap in provision in the Outer Eastern area but no hard data on what is being provided by ACE organisations.

ACE providers are not required to record refugee status. It is required that the providers sight the visa to establish student eligibility for enrolment. 2009 data from Skills Vic is still not validated. Previously staff had access to the Skills Vic data system but this is not possible now. No Memorandum of Understanding for data sharing exists between Skills Vic and ACFE.

In the Shire of Yarra Ranges there is currently no specific program provision for refugee young people.

### 5) English Language School

Students need:

- Pathways for post compulsory students. There is a need for realistic pathways to be available and readily accessible beyond the English classes.
- Bridging programs within mainstream schools or appropriate other refugee/ESL specific programs are identified as essential for students leaving the language school.
- Primary to secondary transitions to be addressed more specifically and in more depth.

### 6) TAFE

- Specific pathways beyond AMEP are needed in addition to those currently available. It is not always appropriate for refugee students to progress directly to the LLNP.
- Refugee students need a navigator style mentor. The navigator needs to be a qualified careers teacher and/or advisor. There is an AMEP vocational teacher funded but the task of appropriately servicing these students is too great, given the level of information and support needed for them. Students often see TAFE as less than the institution they are aiming for and are not clear on how that can be one step towards their goals.

- Mental health issues include the effect on learning for those who have been severely impacted by trauma. One way this can manifest itself is in the low retention of information.
- Some young people have behavioural issues in class.
- MIPs are provided for in youth programs funded by profile hours which are Victorian funded. However those students in the Federally funded AMEP or LLNP are not provided with MIPs or similar pathways planning.
- Insufficient funds for excursions, which are key elements of programs, is a problem for refugee students.

## **7. Mental Health**

- How best to present information on mental health issues to young refugee people and their families is a problem.

### **3. *The project recommendations on what needs to change or be introduced OELLEN to facilitate the recommendations.***

The information provided for this paper indicates that very few refugee young people in the Cities of Knox and Maroondah and the Shire of Yarra Ranges are not disengaged. This is atypical of most other areas in Victoria with young refugee populations.

**Recommendations** on some possible changes relating to better providing for young refugees in the OELLEN include:

#### **1) General –**

- For teachers in both primary and secondary with small cohorts of refugee young people or who have irregular contact with refugee young people, provide fact sheets on refugee culture, backgrounds prior to arrival, parental expectations and communication, and the use of translators.
- Migrant Education Assistants in schools are crucial to students' progress and should be provided more extensively.
- The development of community champions for each facet of life affecting refugee young people eg basketball, employment etc, would assist meet their inclusion in the local community.
- Develop targeted subgroups within the existing service networks eg workshops of separate secondary and primary providers to better meet the needs of providers.
- Work with Regional Offices of a range of State and Federal Govt Departments to better address key issues relating to refugees. The recently announced Positive Pathways for Victoria's vulnerable young people may overcome this problem.

## **2) Primary**

- Provide transition to Secondary schooling programs for parents
- Provide transition to Secondary schooling programs for students. This may involve developing possible activities and materials for teachers.
- In the transitions programs include:
  - an understanding of technologies available, use by students of it
  - the style of discovery learning
  - the importance of absences inhibiting learning and the Victorian attendance at school requirements
  - types of lunches suitable for school students

## **3) Secondary**

- Bridging programs are essential. Although providing specific ESL support at each level 7-12, may be a suitable alternative way of doing this.
- Integration enhancement cultural programs are strongly desired by students.
- Targeted pathways planning information, counselling and development for refugee young people is needed. This could be extension of basic MIPs.
- The issue of the ability of refugee young people to access extra-curricular activities and excursions more readily be explored.

## **4) TAFE**

- Provide pathways mentoring or the provision of a pathways navigator.
- Provide targeted pathways planning information and counselling and development.

## **5) Data collection**

- Suggestion that all relevant providers and groups collect data on the number of refugee/ESL young people participating in programs or activities and successfully completing a program or course.
- That data collection as above, be incorporated into all government funded programs and initiatives. This may need representation to government departments to embed data collection of ESL/refugee participation.

## **6) Mental health**

- Focus groups to be held on how best to present information on mental health issues to young refugee people and their families.
- Kool Kids Positive Parents (KKPP) Program which is not actually delivered yet but is a possibility for refugees. The program is for teachers, students and parents. It involves 8-10 Children and runs for a school term. Teachers meet weekly and participate fortnightly for staff professional development.

## List of contributors to the Project

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Centrelink	Sally Chan
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Eastern Health- Child Youth and Family Mental Health Service	Kerry Francis
Eastern Metropolitan Region DEECD	Madeleine Parker
Eastern Metropolitan Region DEECD	Geoff Flett
Eastern Schools Refugee Action Network	Meeting 24 August 2010
ESL Branch, DEECD	Provision of some data and consultation
Foundation House	Sharrin Murphy
Great Ryrie Primary School	Barbara Nicoll
City of Maroondah – Maroondah Youth Services <i>and others</i>	Heather Cummings, Diana Bell and Leanne Wilkinson
Maroondah Secondary College	Lynne Dyer
Maroondah Student Wellbeing Network	Meeting 3 September 2010
Migrant Information Centre, Eastern Melbourne	Youth Settlement Workers - 5 staff plus 2 others
Ringwood Secondary College	Kay Priestly and Cathy Kinnear
School Focussed Youth Service	Judi Byrne
Swinburne University, TAFE Division	Lois Gijspers
Victoria Police	Stuart Sorrell
Youth Connections - Upper Yarra Community House	Sophie Corbett