

SYDWEST MSI



ANNUAL REPORT 2011

Printing: A1 Print Master Pty Ltd. Ph: (02) 994 89393
Editing and design: Anne Howell

Editorial team: Susan Vogels, Marilena Rubbo, Nikolayka Bentcheva, Elfa Moraitakis,
Bernadette Agyepong, Mustapha Bangura, Geodhini Sivaraj, Abulla Agwa, Marian
Wilcox, Mary Rose Leona, Saffna Mohamed, Sree Vithya Harilingam
Graphs: Mustapha Bangura and Sree Vithya Harilingam

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Chairperson's Report

It is my pleasure to report to you all that your organisation SydWest MSI, formerly known as Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre, has grown bigger and better year by year. Syd West MSI now offers more services to the communities settled in the vicinity.

The management committee, on the recommendation of the centre management, considered structural and legal status of this organisation and is now in the process of making those amendments in order for the organisation to perform more efficiently in future.

You would be pleased to know that the work of this organisation has not only been recognised by State and Federal agencies but has also been commended by her Excellency Governor General Quentin Bryce and Honorable Senator Kate Lundy, Federal parliamentary secretary for Immigration during their respective visits to the centre not long after the period of review.

I would attribute the magnitude of this success to the Board, centre management and their excellent staff, which through good financial planning, hard work and dedication has brought the centre to a very strong financial position. The work of this centre has changed lives of many and continuing to do so.

Taking into account the needs of the community, the Board of SydWest MSI decided to open an additional support centre in Mt Druitt which has commenced work recently and also purchased a bus which will be utilised to transport staff and clients during their projects which require them to be outside of the centre for any period of time.

In my role as Chairperson I extend my gratitude and sincere thanks to all the governmental and non-governmental agencies assisting SydWest MSI by contributing to the success of their projects and seek further and continuing support in the future.

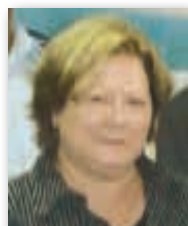
I thank you the board members for your input and cooperation which has made SydWest MSI one of the leading organisation in the Western suburbs.

Yours Sincerely

Ejaz Khan

Management Committee

Thank you to our other Management Committee members who have worked hard throughout the period under review:



From top row, left to right: Mark Wright, Noel Hiffernan, Dr Russel Dickens, Om Dhungel, Balraj Sangha, Kathy Meyer and Chandrika Subramaniyan.

Manager's Report



The longer I am in this position the more aware I become of the honour and privilege it is to be able to walk with people on their adventure into a new land. This leads me to acknowledge the first care takers of this land, the Dharrug people. It is with gratitude to them that I accept the responsibility to walk with our new arrivals and assist them in their learning process in becoming effective and contributing citizens of Australia. One of the programs that we have partnered with Blacktown City Council has the potential to carry on that responsibility for the care taking of the land handed on to us. Some of the communities with whom we engage have enthusiastically taken up the chance to learn about recycling, gardening and taking care of our environment. In Blacktown we are part of a dynamic multicultural culture, one that evolves and grows on a daily basis. This partnership provides an interesting place to live for residents of Blacktown and surrounding western Sydney regions. We now claim representation from every culture from every corner of the globe, and we include among our numbers more than 270 ethnicities, with speakers of 260 languages and who, between them, observe all the world's religions.

We need to acknowledge that we are here as partners and travellers on this journey. We do this to acknowledge what all the new communities can offer to Australia. I would like to highlight and celebrate, among our new arrivals, the activities and contributions being made to our country by the many new communities. The communities settling in Blacktown and the outer west are meeting the challenge of taking care of the environment and honouring the land and becoming independent contributing Australian citizens.

Australia has been a country of migration for many years, from the original aboriginal migration through many evolutions to today's refugees. We acknowledge and assist people to find their feet in a strange land. Actively acknowledging and appreciating the skills the current refugees and migrants offer this country is assisting them to quickly see themselves as valuable Australian citizens.

The close working relationship between SydWest MSI and the local service providers is putting Blacktown on the map. The good work done by SydWest MSI staff in the region is undertaken in collaboration with communities, thus building a bridge between the best aspects of the lives refugees have left behind and their new Australian life and all it offers. The more we work together in partnership the stronger that bridge becomes so that a sense of security is created.

I would like to thank all staff for working so hard throughout the period 2010-2011, to acknowledge the support and vision demonstrated by our management committee, our sponsors and partners, whom we have given special tribute to in this report, our volunteers and student supporters, and to the participation of all our community members and service providers.

Yours Sincerely

Susan Vogels



SydWest MSI

Our Vision

SydWest MSI is a not for profit community association which provides practical assistance and services for the relief of poverty, distress and misfortune to disadvantaged and marginalised people in the western Sydney area. It has been established to provide direct assistance and support for refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants in the process of settlement or at other critical times. SydWest MSI works to empower people irrespective of their ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds so they can participate equally in Australian society.



Our Volunteers

We at SydWest MSI would like to pay tribute to the generous and dedicated students and volunteers who have over the year contributed to our success. Not only do they obtain experience in working with our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients, we benefit greatly from their efforts. We would like to thank the following for their assistance this financial year:

Verena Menkarios
Sangeetha Srinivasan
Lucja Wajs
Ines Figueroa
Petula Shirodkar
Renuka Devi Raviraj
Pearlin Paul
Bryan Siu
Vanessa Siu
Susan Siu
Roewal Raminder Kaur
Jamshidi Akhtar
Simon Stojonovski
Estela Benitez & Jose Luis Benitez
Iole Baiteri & Rosseta Sciacchitano
Balasingam Hariliangam
Yumi Calaguas & Anita Santos
Ferdinand Wittmann
Rusdyan Cocks

Mervit Al Tarazi
Firas Abdulwahab
Loma Aboe
Mohamad Al-Juboori
Petros Petros
Isaac Zungua
Trish McMullan
Elizabeth Browne
Anna Ling
Vimala
Monica and David Rose
Don Jacobs
Margaret Smith
Justin Coholo
Prince Jaybeh
Noel Annabel
Ammanda Annabel
Vimala Arul
Nazima Pakar



The Languages We Speak

SydWest MSI supports refugees, humanitarian entrants or migrants who have come to Australian and specifically Sydney's western suburbs and surrounds, from a variety of countries around the globe. Our staff members are representative of the diversity of the cultures we service and support. Staff encounter the communication, humanitarian, ethical, philosophical and practical issues that arise from living and working in a multicultural environment, both in the workplace and outside it on a daily basis. Staff members working in our Blacktown and Mount Druitt offices speak the languages you see below.



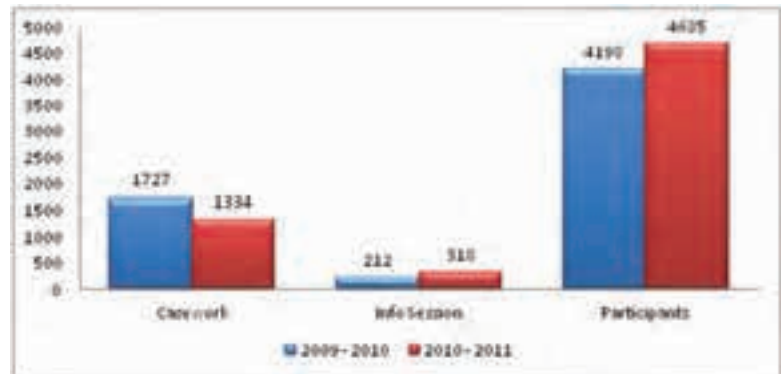


Settlement Services



The Settlement Services division of Sydwest MSI provides direct support and assistance to meet the settlement needs of refugees and humanitarian entrants and their families who have made a home in the Blacktown Local Government Area (LGA) and surrounds in the last five years. Our team provides casework and community capacity building initiatives aimed at empowering our clients and assisting them to reach their full potential. A key focus is to help new and short-term arrivals develop the skills, and the desire, to participate fully in Australian society and contribute to its development. Staff development and training was undertaken in the period to enhance team members' abilities to deal with issues as they arose. Staff training has involved the following: Safe In Our Place – Seminar on Family Violence and the Law, Making Partnerships with other Agencies Work, the Positive Parenting Program, Working with Family and Community Services among others. There was an increase in the number of student placements, from four in 2009-2010 to 12 in 2010-2011 which represents our commitment to give practical experience to students pursuing careers in welfare and social work.

Comparison of activities between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011



In the period under review, Settlement Services has increased and strengthened its relationship with stakeholders resulting in better engagement of service providers in identifying and understanding issues affecting clients. This provided further avenues for SydWest MSI to work collaboratively with other service providers to address the changing needs of multicultural western Sydney.



A number of new initiatives and innovative strategies were employed to give clients ownership of programs and an opportunity to contribute solutions to identified issues. One of our key focusses in the last financial year was to reach the new emerging refugee communities living in the Blacktown LGA and the outer west comprehensively. To achieve this, new bilingual workers were employed to provide services to the Bhutanese and Chinese communities and the hours of existing workers servicing clients from the Iraqi, Afghani and Pakistani communities were increased accordingly.



Partnerships

Settlement Services could not operate without its strong partnership relationships, which have solidified and expanded over the period. Parenting Skills Seminars were facilitated by Lyndal Power, Clinical Coordinator Adolescent Family Therapy and Mediation Service, Relationships Australia. Partnerships with other services were strengthened in the period in review. Resources were harnessed to address the needs identified in target communities and to celebrate significant events. Major events were celebrated in partnership with some of the region's key service providers including Centrelink, Macquarie Community College, Hillsong City Care, Blacktown City Council, Westpoint, Hoyts Cinema, Computer Pals and Blacktown Police. In order to bring awareness of refugee issues to the fore and to address them effectively, Settlement Services further partnered with agencies such as Relationships Australia, the Department of Human Services (DOCS), Refugee Research Centre, the University of New South Wales (UNSW).



Refugee Day Event

Wearing turbans and saris, pink beanies and hijab, people from many nations flocked to Hoyts cinema and Westpoint stage 4, Blacktown in June to celebrate Refugee Week 2011. They had come for the program of films based on a refugee theme, many made by young refugees. They had also come for the talks and performances from local refugee-based communities including dances by Tamil and Nepali groups and music. A drumming student group from Bert Oldfield Public School offered a performance of African drumming. Opened by the Mayor of Blacktown, Councillor Alan Pendleton, other notable guests included local member and leader of the NSW opposition, John Robertson and Bhutanese community representative Om Dhungel. Key speakers included coordinator of the NSW Police Force Multicultural Community Liaison Officer Program, Juliana Nkrumah, and Deng Adut, a solicitor from Grays Legal with a Sudanese refugee background. The event, which attracted 500 guests, was hosted by community service providers: SydWest Multicultural Services Incorporated, Macquarie Community College, Hillsong City Care, Centrelink, Blacktown City Council, Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE), Westpoint Blacktown and Blacktown Police.

(Continued on page 33)

Harmony Day

Harmony Day was the combined result of partnerships with Macquarie Community College, Hillsong City Care, Break Thru, Relationships Australia, Blacktown Police and Centrelink, and attracted 300 people. The event MC was the division's Mustapha Bangura, with performances including the team's Tenneh Kpaka, the Centrelink Choir, and a Brighter Futures performance for children. An exhibition of cultural artefacts was staged for the first time.



Settlement Services

Change of Focus



New Mount DrUITt Office

SydWest MSI opened its new Mount DrUITt office to make services accessible to clients settling in the area. The office is serviced by bilingual staff, with speakers available to assist in Arabic, Dinka, Persian, Dari, Urdu, Tamil and Sudanese. A range of issues facing clients are addressed at the centre including migration assistance, legal services, housing support, employment, health, accessing Centrelink material assistance, domestic violence, youth issues, homework support, crisis management and more. English language classes and classes in computer skills are also held at the Centre. The Family Safety Project Officer attends the office one day a week to assist clients.

Child Protection

Partnership with Human Services, formerly DOCS, was specifically formed to raise awareness of the Child Protection System in emerging communities, as well as build relationships between the department and the community. Nine sessions were held in the period under review with 180 participants from the following communities in attendance: Africa, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. Sessions were held in a friendly non-threatening environment. Feedback has demonstrated that participants gained a better understanding of Australia's Child Protection system.

Parenting Training for the Bhutanese and African Communities

Two six week-long parenting seminars were organised for the Bhutanese and African communities, at which 40 people participated. These seminars were presented by the Adolescent Family Therapy and Mediation Service Clinical Coordinator, Lyndal Power. The seminars were aimed at empowering participants by teaching skills such as effective listening, and strategies to build healthy relationships with their children and tips on how to parent effectively 'across cultures'.

Positive Parenting for the Pakistani and Burmese Communities

An introduction to the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) took place at the Ahmadiyya mosque for Pakistani clients and at SydWest MSI for the Burmese Community. Participants were offered strategies for managing parenting challenges facing them in the Australian environment. Topics included appropriate disciplining methods for children in relation to establishing good TV watching habits and Internet usage. It also addressed language difficulties that can hamper effective parenting. This project is funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

Training, Workshops and Special Groups

The Family Safety Project

The family Safety Project assists victims of domestic or family violence to access support services. It aims to provide education to community members to raise awareness on what constitutes inappropriate violence and trains community leaders to provide information on domestic and family violence to their communities.

Based on consultations and surveys held among African and South Asian communities a training manual was prepared by family counsellor Eric Hudson. The manual has been used to facilitate workshops for more than 110 men and women from the Sudanese, Sierra Leonean, Bhutanese, Sri Lankan, Afghani, Pakistani and Indian sub-continent communities. The workshops allowed community members to discuss various social and legal issues related to family violence including how to help victims and perpetrators in culturally appropriate ways and challenge some relevant traditional community practices.

Individual evaluations held among the participants indicate that more than 70% of the participants found the workshops “very helpful”. A multicultural women’s group was formed to support women and to educate and encourage them to seek assistance when required.



The women created a patchwork wall hanging including the flags and maps of their countries of origin, which was displayed during the Refugee

Day celebration held this year at WestPoint, Blacktown (see page 9 for more details).

The Multicultural Women’s Group

Some 30 women from Bhutan, Iran, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India are regular members of the weekly Multicultural Women’s Group. The activities include excursions, art and craft activities and information sessions on family violence and related issues. One important development is that the women have started to cross cultural barriers in assisting and supporting each other.

Settlement Services Tailored Programs

Refugee Driving Project

SydWest MSI extended its support for refugees and humanitarian entrants by offering extended practical support with the knowledge test for a learner's permit and on-road driving assistance to help people obtain a driver's licence. The new Refugee Driving Education Project, funded by the Department of Community Services (Community Builders) is tailor-made for residents living in the Blacktown LGA and surrounds.

Participants are familiarised with the full range of procedures involved in getting a driver's licence. An on-road driving lesson is provided by volunteers/mentors who have signed up from within the community. The project is divided into four components:

- Information sessions on road safety and rules;
- Preparation for the Driving Knowledge Test;
- On-road driving lessons granted to clients who obtain a Learners' Permit
- Basic car maintenance.

After advertising for mentors from the community to become driving instructors, the project obtained five candidates who have since been on the road with Settlement Services clients to ensure that they have a greater chance of success in their Driver's Licence Test. Further elements of the project include teaching participants about traffic offences, how the fine and demerit points system works

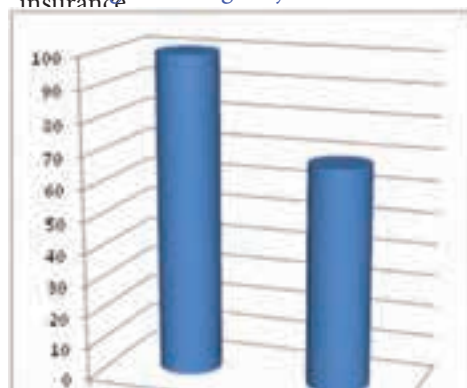
, the NSW road rules, buying a car and choosing



The African Foster Carer Project

The Foster Carer Recruitment Project was borne out of community awareness sessions that pinpointed a need for foster carers who could provide culturally appropriate care for African children. The aim of the African Foster Carer Project is to make sure that African children/ teenagers are placed in culturally appropriate families to facilitate maintenance of language, culture and the values of African community. Currently 38 applicants are undertaking assessment to determine their eligibility. The project is funded by Family and Community Services.

Refugee Driving Project Outcomes



Clients involved in the project

Clients who have obtained Learning Permits



Settlement Services Highlights



Settlement Services Tailored Programs



Environmental Education

The Environmental Education program held at the Grantham Sustainability Education Centre in Seven Hills took place over a six week period for our clients from Sri Lanka and Bhutan. It was a fun and interactive way for people to learn about the local environment, covering topics like worm farming, composting, farming in general, shopping for fresh food and cooking fresh produce. The project emerged from a partnership with Blacktown Council's Environment Education Centre.

Family Harmony Project

This project trains, assists, supports and builds the skills of CALD volunteers in order to provide information and peer mentoring for parents to identify and address intergenerational conflict and risk taking behaviours in children and young people in a culturally appropriate manner. Fifty four seminars were provided to newly arrived community members from Sudan, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The project partnered with schools, churches and community organisations to provide seminars. It built community capacity and social connectedness and linked volunteers and families to local service providers.

Participants enhanced their parenting skills, improved communication through effective listening with children and acquired knowledge of Australian cultural norms, information on Australian family law, child protection and family violence. Project activities provided knowledge and skills for volunteers to facilitate workshops in community languages to groups on family harmony and intergenerational barriers. Participants gained better understanding of child protection issues and young people had a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Participants also understood the effectiveness of problem solving through negotiation and mediation, the difference between discipline and punishment and effective and alternate ways of disciplining children to traditional methods like using the cane.



Raising Awareness, Taking Action

Financial Crisis DVD

Unguarded refugees and others settling in Australia can sometimes be enticed to make purchases they cannot afford. Feedback from casework has revealed that new arrivals are being targeted by door-to-door sales people including telecommunication professionals and mortgage brokers. In order to minimise this growing problem, a Financial Crisis DVD was created and launched at the SydWest MSI Annual General Meeting in December 2010. It was designed as an educational tool for service providers and communities to raise awareness of the pitfalls of interest-free purchasing, and other issues relating to credit facing new arrivals. The DVD was created with the participation of community members acting out hypothetical scenarios. The DVD provides information on preventative measures and good strategies, a range of support services available and information on the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS). Five hundred copies have been distributed to communities, and feedback from users has been unanimously positive.

African Men in Action: Out and About

In order to break social isolation, African Men in Action was formed two years ago and has been growing stronger ever since. After conducting a needs assessment survey, an excursion was held in June 2010 for 24 group members to the Entrance on the NSW central coast. Once on site, sessions on men's health were conducted by Blacktown Community Health professional, Dr. Mohamed Keynan. The roles of community leaders and elders in crime prevention was discussed by Blacktown Police spokesperson Assefa Bekele. A talk on leadership and effective communication skills was given by Blacktown Toastmasters speaker, Noel Annabel, and a session on family harmony was delivered by SydWest MSI staff member Edward Massimino.

Parents' Rights, Children's Rights

A consultation with African Communities was organised in partnership with Relationships Australia, University of NSW Centre for Refugee Research and SydWest MSI. This consultation was dubbed 'Parents Rights, Children's Rights'. Participants were given training in the Human Rights Framework by Dr. Eileen Pittaway of the Centre for Refugee Research UNSW. The Human Rights Framework was then used as the basis for the consultation. Various issues were raised including those relating to benefits, education, employment, child protection and housing.

Some of the participants were then selected to present the findings and proposed solutions to the identified issues to service providers working in the areas of concern.

In December 2010, the findings were presented to representatives from the following services: Blacktown Area Command, Centrelink, Department of Education and Training, Department of Human Services (DOCS) to mention a few. There was a commitment from all to work together to address the issues identified.



Youth Projects



In 2010-2011 SydWest MSI improved the delivery of youth driven programs to support refugee and migrant young people aged 12-24. Numbers of participants in the youth programs have increased by at least 15% in the year, and the services and activities were tailored to meet current and emerging needs. Staff numbers and volunteers have increased to meet new demands. The section offers programs designed to reflect the needs of the target group to help create a smooth settlement process for these new arrivals. Sports and recreation, education support, school holiday activities, resilience building, case management (including referrals and workshops) were the broad spectrum of programs designed and implemented for the young people from diverse cultural backgrounds living in Blacktown Local Government Area (LGA). Through the efforts of a diligent team of youth workers and volunteers, as well as partners such as Football United, Youth off the Street (YOTS), Blacktown Youth Services Association (BYSA), Basketball Australia, Hillsong City Care and Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, strong outcomes impacting on the integration process of these young people were achieved. Highlights of the year have been: the

annual Sudanese National Basketball Tournament, the development of award winning playwriting workshops, and the development of films by young people that were shown to cinema audiences during Refugee Week. Approximately 260 young people attended from both north and south Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Burma, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Ghana, Philippines and DR Congo. The programs were designed to empower them through different activities including information and training activities that assist young people to make healthy choices and to accelerate their settlement process in Australia. Feedback has shown that the programs have also helped reduce isolation and disengagement of young people through the delivery of culturally appropriate information sessions and programs in partnership with the appropriate service providers.

Sports and Recreation

Sports and recreational programs have been a powerful medium for social change. These programs have been successful in bridging cultural gaps, resolving conflict and educating young people in ways that very few activities can. About 70-80 young people from various cultural backgrounds such as Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Kenya and Philippines attended the basketball training program and the futsal (in-door soccer) every week at Blacktown Police and Community Youth Clubs (PCYC). These programs were viewed by participants as both a form of entertainment and as an educational program that helps them keep fit, healthy and instils qualities such as team work, discipline and a competitive spirit that proves valuable in adulthood. The program





forms part of their human and social development and contributes to social cohesion, tolerance and integration. It allows them to overcome barriers such as language and cultural differences and move towards integration and social inclusion. Basketball and futsal programs delivered in the year as follows:

- Three basketball training sessions, held at the Blacktown PCYC, for three different age groups—under 16, under 18, and under 22.
- The Sudanese Australia Interstate Basketball Tournament was held 17th–19th December 2010 at Penrith Sports Club. The tournament was attended by 28 teams from NSW, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, ACT and Queensland. There were approximately 270 players who participated in the tournament with over 800 spectators. One of the outstanding achievements of the program is the short film which is being produced by Basketball Australia about the young people. This tournament showcased the talents of the community, but also strengthened partnerships between the project and mainstream sporting bodies.
- Grand Final Winners in the Mount Druitt Basketball League. SydWest MSI has supported STAR Basketball Recreation to enter teams into the local league at Mount Druitt. Teams play every Friday evening with transport provided by YOTS. One of the junior teams won their league competition Grand Finals.
- PCYC Basketball Competition in Marrickville. As part of a Sydney-wide PCYC competition, SydWest MSI and STAR Basketball participants partnered with the Blacktown Local Area Command (LAC) PCYC Liaison Officer to submit a Blacktown team into the competition.
- The basketball gala at Stanhope Gardens was organised in partnership with BYSA and YOTS.

Fifteen young people from Star Basketball participated in the event.

- The Saturday Football in Campbell Park was delivered in partnership with Football United with an average attendance of 60+ children per week including both genders.
- Girls Soccer Camp held in partnership with Football United at Narrabeen Sport and Recreation Centre. A range of orientation sessions organised on sexual issues, and physical and mental health. Speakers included the Warehouse, Muscle Sprouts, formerly Western Sydney Area Health Services (WSAHS) and Youth Safe (injury prevention). Participants were Iraqi, Bhutanese, Togolese, Afghani and Liberian.
- Futsal (indoor soccer) program runs in partnership with YOTS at Blacktown PCYC every week, with an average attendance of 50+ young people at each session.
- Grand Finalists Winners in the Tyndale Futsal Competition. In partnership with Football United and YOTS three teams (one of under 16 mixed gender, and two of 18 years and under boys teams) entered into the local Futsal League held at Tyndale High School. The competitions were held twice a week with 23 young people participating in the program. All teams made it to the semi-finals with two teams winning the Grand Finals.

Education Support Programs

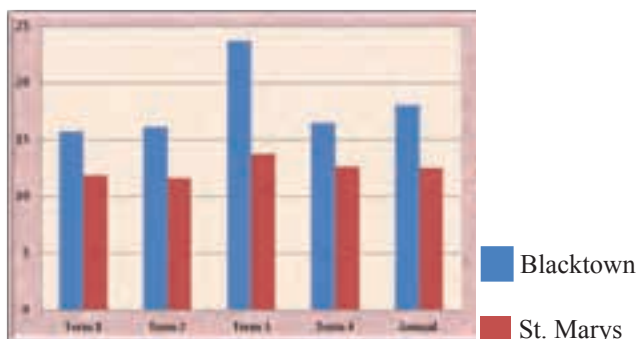
Many migrant and refugee young people face serious difficulties at school after missing several years of structured learning before migrating to Australia. Often difficulties arise when these students with severely limited literacy and acute settlement needs are placed in mainstream school classrooms after the initial supportive environment of the Intensive English Centre (IEC). To address these issues, both on-site and off-site, this year school programs were delivered in partnership with schools, the Department of Education and Training (DET), TAFE and other relevant institutions for successful learning and quicker transition. On-site school programs included living-skills and resilience building programs delivered at Evans High School Intensive English Centre and Blacktown Girls' High School. Off-site school programs were the homework support programs at St Marys Community Centre

Youth Projects

and SydWest MSI creative writing skills workshops, Higher School Certificate (HSC) preparation and study skills workshops, and service tours. The following is a selection of programs that ran in the period:

- Two Living Skills sessions on healthy eating and budgeting were delivered in conjunction with “Muscle Sprout” for nine IEC students at Evans High School. The participants learnt about various kinds of food and how they help in healthy body maintenance. As a conclusion to these sessions, participants were divided into groups and given real-life shopping and budgeting exercises.
- The homework support program. This ongoing program is delivered after school once a week at SydWest MSI, and as an outreach program in St Marys weekly for students from communities such as Uganda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Liberia, India, Burma, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. Running for five years, it has provided a high level of academic support and social interaction to assist students in their cognitive and social development. The program also teaches ethical behaviour. Average weekly attendance at SydWest MSI was 18, and at St. Marys, 12.
- Creative writing. Two-day workshops on creative writing and poetry were held for CALD young people from 12-17 years in order to improve their skills in logical thinking, expression of thought and writing style. These were delivered at SydWest MSI.
- HSC study skills and preparation. A one-day session for six 2011 HSC students at the Max Webber Library, Blacktown, to prepare them for HSC examination questions, with a special focus on English.

Average Weekly Attendance at the Homework Program



- A local service tour. In partnership with STARTTS, for IEC students at Evans High School with 13 students in attendance, ages 12 – 16 years, from Samoa, Vietnam, China, Sierra Leone, Burma, Philippines and Uganda. Students visited the Max Webber Library, BYSA, SydWest MSI and the Blacktown Police Station where a talk was conducted on the role of the police.
- The Blacktown Girls High School Social Inclusion Program for Refugee Youth program, delivered in partnership with the DET, TAFE, Centrelink and SydWest MSI, finished this funding period with a celebration lunch at TAFE Nirimba Outreach Office catered for by Hospitality students.



School Holiday Activities

Tailored activities, both gender-specific and general, were designed and implemented during school holidays for young people from different cultural backgrounds. These featured:

- A visit to the Botanical Gardens in the October 2010 holiday break, included an Indigenous Tour to look at bush tucker and Aboriginal history. Twenty five young people with Burmese, Iraqi, Sudanese and Bhutanese backgrounds attended.
- A visit to Minnamurra Falls, in the Illawarra, in January 2011. Twenty four participants from Afghani, Bhutanese, Iranian, Sudanese and Ethiopian backgrounds attended.
- The first stage of a series of two-day PlayWriting Australia Drama workshops was held in September 2010. The facilitators introduced exercises in script writing, acting and the sessions concluded with a group play. The second phase, held on four days in January, 2011, and involving four facilitators, involved participants with Bhutanese and African backgrounds. The participants developed a series of short plays

and performed them. Ten plays were selected and performed at the Playwriting Australia National Festival in March, 2011 at Parramatta Riverside Theatre. One of the participants in the Blacktown workshops, Mandela Mathia, was among the best ten, and his play voted as one of the best four plays at the Festival.

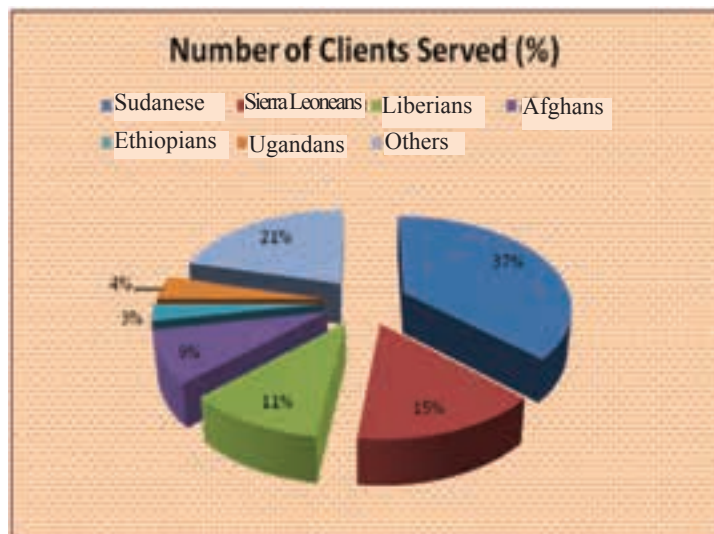
- Seven digital story-telling workshops were designed for old and young participants to tell their own 'true stories'. Held by SydWest MSI, in partnership with the Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE), the theme for the filming was 'water', and included a sight-seeing journey to Blacktown Reservoir. The resulting film series titled 'Upstream' was shown at Hoyts cinema to over 200 people as part of SydWest MSI's Refugee Day event.

Case Management

Casework was provided for 39 clients and 77 casework contacts were made for these clients. Issues addressed were 20% document help, 19% education and training, 13% employment and others included health issues, life skills, family and relationships, accommodation, driving, Police or court, and financial support.

As a result of casework the following outcomes were achieved: An increased understanding of apprenticeship/traineeship programs and pathways to TAFE/University; knowledge about the different options available after exiting the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) or the IEC; confidence in accessing mainstream service providers such as Centrelink and the Transport Road and Transit Authority (RTA); understanding about the implications of violating rules and regulations in Australia especially in driving and riding a train; knowledge about employment pathways; and knowledge about dealing with social and cultural issues within the community.

In this financial year, 138 referrals (112 informal and 26 formal) were made. A total of 17% of these referrals were made to TAFE/Technical College, 10% to Job Network Provider, 10% were Health Related, 8% were made to Youth Services, and 7% to Centrelink. These referrals increased clients understanding about the services provided by the different organisations and how to access these services. Through referrals, clients' confidence is increased in terms of making appointments and getting assistance from service providers.



Percentage of Casework According to Clients' Background

A total of 32 information sessions in relation to casework was conducted with an average attendance of 17 in the funding year. Overall, sessions were delivered on physical and mental health, sexual education, living skills, sports, education, employment pathways and social support programs in which young people from diverse backgrounds participated. As a result of these sessions, the participants had the chance to interact with each other, break barriers, promote social connectedness, understand more about community affairs and the Australian system, increase their ability to deal with social and cultural issues, and their ability to make decisions. Young people have also become more informed and empowered to make informed life choices.



Sponsors and Partners

We would like to thank the range of organisations and their members who have assisted and supported us throughout the period under review including special thanks from our divisions within SydWest MSI to the following sponsors and partners.

SydWest MSI Management

Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship
Australian Government Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Australian Government Attorney General's Department
NSW Department of Family and Community Services: Ageing Disability and Home Care
NSW Department of Family and Community Services: Community Services
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
NSW Office of Communities, Sport and Recreation
NSW Cancer Council
Blacktown City Council
Blacktown RSL
Job Quest NSW
Families NSW
(Please see page 33 for further sponsor and partner acknowledgements under Blacktown and Mount Druitt Migrant Interagency item.)

Settlement Services and Youth Projects

Department of Immigration and Citizenship	Blacktown Area Command
Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs	Police and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC)
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet	Evans High School Intensive English Centre
Attorney General's Department (Commonwealth)	Department of Education and Training (DET)
NSW Department of Sports & Recreation	Breakthru Employment Solutions
Blacktown RSL Club	Hillsong Community Care
NSW Department of Community Services	Play Writing Australia
Cancer Council	Blacktown Girls High School
Blacktown City Council	Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA)
Community Relations Commission	Road Safety Officer (Blacktown City Council)
Macquarie Community College	Mitchel High School
Westpoint Blacktown	Doonside Technology High School
Hoyts Cinema	Max Webber Library
Relationships Australia	Blacktown Youth Association
Centre for Refugee Research the University of New South Wales (UNSW)	Blacktown Community Health
Computer Pals	Bert Oldfield Public School
The Centrelink Choir	Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW
Information and Cultural Exchange	NSW Department of Fair Trading
Western Sydney TAFE Outreach	NSW Department of Health, Western Sydney
Ahmadiyya Mosque	Local Health District, NSW
	Blacktown Toastmasters Club
	Commonwealth Bank

CALDACS All Care Services

Department of Health and Ageing
NSW Department of Family and Community Services
Australian Tamil Seniors' Association (NSW) Inc.
(Wentworthville)
Australian Tamil Seniors' Association (NSW) Inc.
(Mt Druitt)
Hills Day Care Centre
Blacktown Indian Sub-Continent Seniors Social Group
The Tamil Senior Citizens' Association (NSW) Inc.
(Strathfield)
Tamil Seniors Granville
Brahma Kumaris Australia
Sathya Sai Organisation
Seven Hills Day Respite Centre
Sikh Temple Members (Glenwood)
Hindi Samaaj Sydney Australia
Hindi Community – Richmond Hindu Temple
Hindi Community – Toongabbie Hindu Temple
Sydney Murugan Temple Westmead
Lighthouse Community Care – North Parramatta
Coptic Church – Apostoles and St. Abonob
PICAC NSW - Multicultural Communities Council of
Illawarra

PICAC Victoria - Centre of Cultural Diversity in Ageing
Cumberland Prospect Commonwealth Respite and Carelink
Centre
Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre – Inner West
Dementia Advisory Service – Western Sydney and Inner West
Blacktown and Mt Druitt Aged Day Care Centres
Hills Aged Day Care Centre
Jesmond Aged Care Facility – Strathfield
Hardi Aged Care Facility (Blacktown, Seven Hills and
Guilford)
Care Connect
Auburn Diversity Services
KinCare Community Services
Presbyterian Aged Care – Inner West
Multicultural Health Network
Wesley Mission
Baptist Community Services
Anglicare
Living Care
Diverse Community Care
Uniting Care Ageing – IW and W
Catholic Community Services
(Please see further sponsors and partner acknowledgements,
page 22)

Families NSW Project

The Department of Community Services (DOCS)
Blacktown Roving Child Care
Mission Australia
Sikh Temple, Glenwood
Anglicare
The Hills Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre
(THHP MRC)
Hills Community Aid
Hillsong City Care
Hills Shire Council
Wesley Mission
Sydney West Area Health Services (SWAHS)
WASH House (Mt. Druitt)
Sports and Recreation
Nirimbah TAFE
NSW Department of Education and Training (DET)
Bert Oldfield Public School
Mount Druitt Public School
Blacktown Women's and Girl's Health
Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency (MECA)
Blacktown Hospital
Blacktown Library
Blacktown Arts Centre

Swinson Cottage
Family Relationships Centre
Westmead Children's Hospital
Centrelink
Legal Aid
Australian Taxation Office (ATO)
Cancer Council
Pakistani Community's Young Women's Program
Angels of Mercy & Burnside Father's Unit
Penrith Council
Royal Life Saving Society
Playgroup Australia
Bodyshop Consultants
Housing NSW
NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre
NSW Department of Fair Trading
NSW Rural Fire Services
Afghan Australian Cultural and Sporting Association
Blacktown Children's First,
FWTDP
Hills Community Health Centre

CALD All Care Services

CALD All Care Services has been operating a number of programs funded by both the State and the Federal Government.

The Home and Community Care Program is funded by the Department of Family and Community Services Ageing Disability and Home Care to provide assistance to the elderly, people with disabilities and their carers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds residing in the local government areas of Blacktown, Parramatta, Holroyd, Baulkham Hills and Auburn. The Program this year focused on building its Social Support service and increasing general information on healthy ageing for a number of communities in the region. The expansion of the program means that it currently provides Case Management for people with complex care needs and a Multicultural Carers Support Group has been established.

The Community Aged Care Packages program, funded by the Department of Health and Ageing, provided 120 packages to CALD clients in the Blacktown LGA, and this year focused on further expanding its language-specific social support time for all care recipients. The Community Partners Program reached a large number of Tamil and Arabic speaking community members in the Great Western Sydney and Inner West regions. The need for more culturally appropriate information and assistance in accessing Aged Care Services saw a change of focus from the Arabic to the Hindi community. The CALD All Care Services Brokerage Program assisted a number of mainstream service providers in the area by providing culturally appropriate direct services to care recipients.



Further Partnership Strengths

We would like to give thanks to the following organisations for their support in the period under review. Please also see our list of partners and sponsors mentioned previously on page 21.

Community Transport – Inner West
Department of Family and Community Services,
Ageing Disability and Home Care
Blacktown City Council
Parramatta City Council
Holroyd City Council
Auburn Council
Hills Council
Marrickville Council
Strathfield Council
CPSA Health Promotion Service
COTA NSW
Centrelink – Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Parramatta,
Auburn and Inner West
NSW Fair Trading
STARTTS – Auburn
Community Resource Network (CRN) Inc
Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW
SWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service
Tri Community Exchange
Fire and Rescue NSW

CALD All Care Services

Languages Spoken by Our Community Care Workers



CALD All Care Services



Home and Community Care

The service types currently available through the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program are Personal Care, In-home Respite, Social Support, Case Management for people with complex care needs, Counselling, Information, Support and Advocacy.

Counselling, Support, Information and Advocacy

The growing service type has this year assisted over 1700 care recipients and callers from the region.

The majority of services requested were for domestic assistance, lawn mowing and home modifications.

An increase in the referrals made to the ACAT teams in the region for Community Aged Care Packages assessments was also noted.

Shopping Trips

This year under the Social Support service the team commenced shopping trips for seniors that are in need of assistance while doing their shopping and also provided them with some extra social support time.

Trips take place every second Thursday from 10am – 2pm and seniors are picked up and dropped off at home.



Direct Service Delivery

Although in home Respite has remained within the same levels as last year (1072 hours comparing with 1046 in 2010) there was a substantial increase in the hours of Personal Care service provided to residents of Blacktown LGA (see above chart).





Carers' Support Group

The expansion of the HACC team addressed an imminent need in the region which was the formation of the Multicultural Carers' Support Group and the Filipino Mothers Group, who have young children with disabilities.

The groups meet on a monthly basis and are provided with a number of information sessions, addressing their needs, as well as a number of outings to offer them a break from their very stressful role as carers.

Attributing significantly to the success of this project has been the partnership support of the Department of Family and Community Services Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC), as well as the Case Managers in the region. A highlight of the period under review, was the successful Carers' Week full-day celebration organised together with ADHC and held at SydWest MSI's premises.

2011 HACC Conference

Social Support has been the main focus of the HACC team. The 2011 HACC Conference provided us with the perfect opportunity to showcase our Case Study, the Bhutanese Social Support Group.

The social isolation of the frail members of the Bhutanese community in the region, due to cultural and linguistic barriers, was becoming obvious and was successfully addressed by facilitators of the program.

The Conference gave participants a historical and cultural introduction to the group and an opportunity to hear the impact the ADHC funded Social Support service type has in their lives.

The Group meets weekly. Further funding from ADHC for the purchase of a 12 seater bus allows a number of group members to be picked up and dropped off home on the day.



CALD All Care Services

In 2011 HACC Social Support services saw the establishment of a Filipino and an Afghani mens' group. The number of hours offered to CALD care recipients since last year has dramatically increased from 9,634 to 12,142.



Vaishaki Celebrations

One hundred and ten Tamil and Punjabi members of the Social Support service this year participated in the Vaisaki New Year celebrations. The event was planned by the Facilitators of the groups and young members of both communities offered their time and entertainment skills to the seniors.



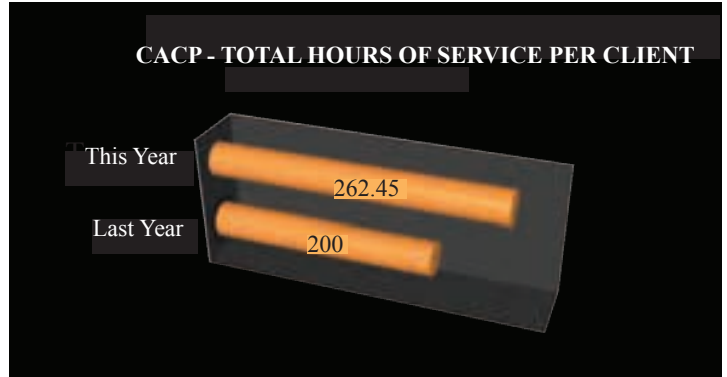
Senior's Week



Some of the major highlights for the CALD Social Support Program include gentle exercises for seniors, meditation sessions, laughter therapy sessions and numerous day trips for all. The major event for all participants this year was Senior's Week which took place at Glenwood Neighbour Aid Centre on the 23rd of March with the theme 'Seniors Have Talent'. Participants had the opportunity to showcase their singing and dancing talents and they were judged by a panel. Joy and laughter were the main objectives for the day and were successfully delivered.

Community Aged Care Packages

Each Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) recipient received an average of 262.45 hours of services this year with an increase in the number of language specific social support time for all clients. Further from the language specific funded packages the CACP team has a flexible number of multicultural packages which are currently servicing the following backgrounds: Arabic (7), Spanish (10), Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (1), Serbian/Bosnian (4), Italian (6), Iranian (5), Slovenia (1), Belgium/French (3), Fijian/Indian (2), Croatian (3), Turkish (1), Singhalese (1).

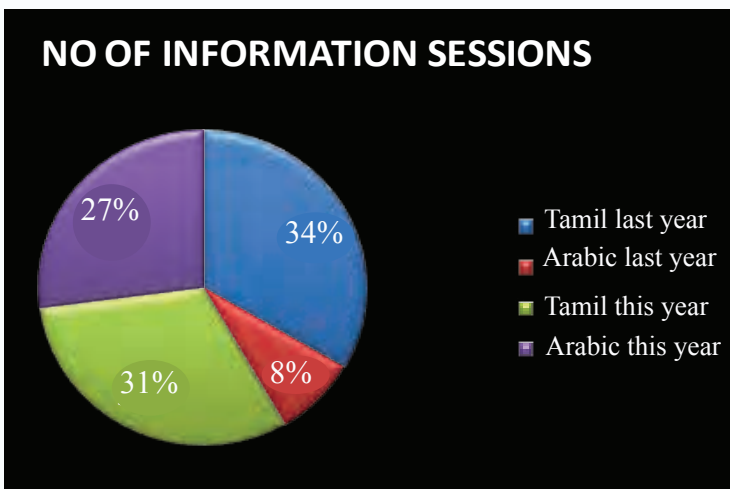


Community Partner's Program

The Community Partners Program (CCP) increased the number of service providers reached in both the Western Sydney Region and the Inner West. The objective was to familiarise Aged Care service providers with sensitive cultural issues they need to be aware of while servicing seniors from Tamil and Arabic speaking backgrounds. The Program changed focus in 2011 working solely for the Tamil and Hindi communities in the two regions.

An increase was also noted in the number of education sessions for the Arabic speaking community in order to assist them in accessing Aged Care Services and making informed decisions about aged care support services.

As a result of these education sessions an increase in the number of requests for assistance was noted. The majority of requests for referrals were for domestic assistance and community transport in both regions.



CALD All Care Services

Psychology of Healthy Ageing

In 2011 CALD All Care Services reached out to all CALD communities in the region by providing a number of free information sessions to assist in the psychology of healthy ageing. Topics covered were: Healthy Body & Mind, The Psychology of Happiness, Positive Thinking and Meditation, Inner Happiness and many more. Our main partners in achieving this were Dr. S. Naidu, G. Groves and Dr. Ben De Silva.

Seniors Broadband

Seniors Broadband Kiosk was a great success for our CALD elderly. An average of 12 people per week were visiting the kiosk and learning with great enthusiasm how to use the Internet and how to communicate with loved ones overseas. The kiosk will be continuing in the future with the assistance of our invaluable volunteers.

Professional Development

The CALDACS team is always seeking further professional development and undergoing training to improve their skills and quality of service provided to our care recipients. A vital part of this year's activities was also our team building outing on the Nepean Belle as pictured below.



Families NSW Project

Families NSW Project continues to strengthen its partnerships and tailor its programs to support refugee and migrant parents, and their children aged 0-8 years old, living in Sydney's western suburbs and surrounds. The Families NSW Project has been working as the twin divisions Perinatal Project and Early Intervention Project. After a review these divisions were amalgamated between April and June 2011, and will be effective as of July 1, 2011. Families NSW Project operates with SydWest MSI and is funded by Families and Community Services (FACS).



Perinatal Project Services: This project provides assistance for families needing support, cultural training for service providers, conducts support groups and play groups, offers information sessions and parenting programs, provides antenatal classes for expectant mothers, and aims to support parents to raise a happy and healthy young family, providing information and contact to local services and working with emerging communities to identify and address their issues.



Early Intervention Project Services: This project provides parenting workshops, and information sessions on law, health, education and family skills. It provides women's support groups and play groups, employment training, family activities, service tours, cultural events, home visits, support for parents with young children, and more. On an average basis the division's activities form equal areas of focus in the fields of: Health, Education, Creative Arts, Parenting and Events.



Support Through Events

This financial year key events held by Families NSW were: The Hills Cultural Festival, International Women's Day, Mother's Day celebrations at Glenwood and Mt Druitt, Easter celebrations, Families Matter and the Sudanese Forum. These events were staged specifically for client participation, with several being also open to the broader community.



The Hills Cultural Festival

The Cultural Festival was held in May 2011 at Rouse Hill Town Centre with over 400 people attending to engage in the interactive activities offered. Music and performances included traditional Chinese Dragon and Aboriginal dances, as well as dances from Bahai Junior Youth, the Hornsby Chinese Seniors Group and the Sierra Leone Cultural Dance group. There was Bolivian flute playing and an impersonation of Michael Jackson. Roving entertainment included African drumming. The success of the event can be attributed to the strong support from sponsors, event partners and our volunteers. Partners were the Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC, The Bahai Community of Baulkham Hills, The Hills Shire Council, Hornsby Council, KU Children's Services, SydWest MSI, Rouse Hill Families Connect/Wesley Mission and Rouse Hill Town Centre.

Families NSW Project Events



Mother's Day Celebrations

In the year under review, Families NSW staged Mother's Day events, one of them at Glenwood combining guests from its three groups: the Punjabi, the Indian sub-continent group and the Hills Multicultural group. This involved a day of professional pampering, a Bollywood dance lesson by Lotus Dance School and henna tattooing by SydWest MSI clients. Forty five women and 30 children attended at the Glenwood Neighbourhood Centre. Event partners were Hillsong City Care and the Body Shop Consultants. The second event was a Mt Druitt Mother's Day event held at Mission Australia for the Pakistani and Afghani groups, demographically strong in the area. Eighteen women and 12 children participated. This gave them a chance to discuss their thoughts on a mother's need to be celebrated and appreciated, as a Mother's Day event is something

that is not a part of their original cultures. A session of group performance and games took place.



International Women's Day 100 Year Celebration

For the past three years the Families NSW Project has been hosting the International Women's Day event at the organisational level. The event at Max Webber Library, Blacktown, was well attended this year with over 60 women and 35 children. This was the 100th Year Celebration. The event featured a

talk on success for refugee women, an introduction to flower arranging and an interactive dance performance from Lotus Dance School. SydWest MSI clients were the event guests. SydWest MSI's Seema Dar was event MC.



The Easter Hunt

Easter was an occasion for another celebratory day Families NSW hosted in the period to encourage clients to engage in a fun group experience with their young children.





Family Matters

For the second year Family Matters has been running on a monthly basis to support multicultural families with young children. Since relaunching in May 2011, an average of 20 mothers and 25 children have attended monthly. A range of specialised topics is on the annual program, with the initial session on Positive Parenting presented by Families NSW's Geodhini Sivaraj. The second session 'How to Have Happy Children at School' was presented by the Department of Education and Training (DET) Wendy Eves. Held on the premises of Hillsong City Care, Family Matters is conducted by the Families NSW Project from SydWest MSI playing the leading role, with crucial support from The Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC, Rouse Hill Families Connect, NSW Education and Training, Hills Community Aid, NSW Human Services, Hills Shire Council and NSW Western Sydney Local Health Network.



Sudanese Forum

A forum day was held for Sudanese mothers at which sessions were conducted on the topics of early literacy for children, and the challenges of refugees and migrants as well as the role of the father in family life.

Twenty one mothers and 24 children attended the event at the Max Webber Library, Blacktown. Partners were Angels of Mercy, Burnside Uniting Care Father's Unit and the Department of Education and Training. The children were entertained by a clown.



Families NSW Project Groups

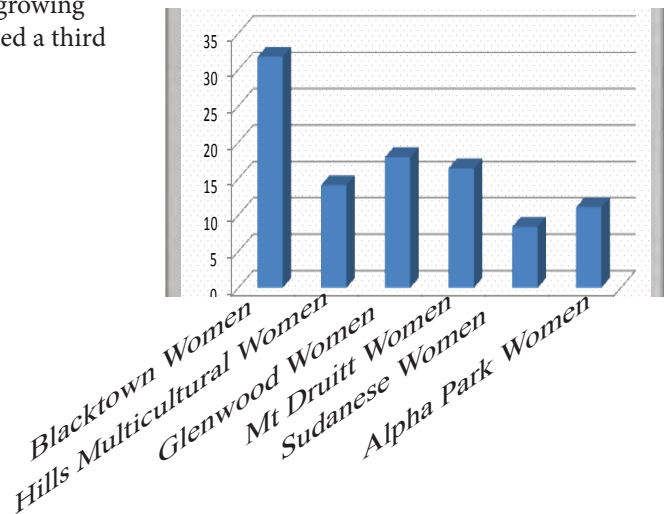
Families NSW Project services its clients through running groups on a regular basis throughout the year. All the groups service mothers, or carers with children aged 0-8 years of age. This method of providing support is the result of research conducted by the division that demonstrates that groups are the most effective way to provide support for the client-base. Group interaction brings out the broader issues that the clients face in resettling themselves in Australia, breaking their isolation. It also introduces them to information and activities in a congenial, safe and child-friendly setting. During this financial year the following groups have been running:

- Pakistani Women's Group (Mt Druitt)**
- Play Group (Multicultural Blacktown)**
- Sudanese Women's Group (Blacktown)**
- Punjabi Women's Group (Glenwood)**
- Indian-subcontinent Women's Group (Blacktown)**
- Multicultural Women's Group (Hills)**
- Afghani Men's Group (Blacktown)**
- Afghani Women's Group (Mt Druitt)**

A Men's Group was initiated by the Early Intervention Project, due to a need established by male carer clients. The Hills Group has doubled in strength over the period, with 18 consistent members notably from the Chinese and Assamese communities attending. To answer a growing Punjabi community need, the Punjabi group has this year attracted a third more clients.



Group Breakdown of Clients Served in the 2010-2011 financial year by Families NSW





Blacktown and Mount DrUITt MIGRANT INTERAGENCY

The Mount DrUITt and Blacktown Migrant Interagency has been running strong for 14 years. At present our list of members is over 175, with core participants of 30 people on average attending each monthly meeting. Members are made up of professionals working in community services that support refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants in Blacktown and Mt DrUITt LGAs.

The MI hosted the 2010 Community Services Expo, a one day event in October that showcased over 85 service providers working in the sector. It was supported by sponsors and partners: Blacktown Council, Blacktown RSL, Job Quest NSW, Families NSW, Hillsons City Care, MECA, Centrelink, Blacktown Police, TAFE, Brighter Futures, Macquarie Community College, Relationships Australia, Family Relationship Centre, Sydney Western Area Health, Community Relations Network (CRN), St John's Ambulance and Westpoint. It provided a one stop shop for refugees and migrants to access information from services catering for their settlement and related needs. Over 350 people attended.

In the period under review MI meetings have continued to be strongly attended with a core program of Hot Topics and the introduction of community representative speakers every second month. These interactive talks have attracted univormously favorable feedback. Speakers have included representatives from Sierra Leone, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Indigenous Australia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Philippines and more. Hot Topics have included talks by speakers from Centrelink, Blacktown Police, the Evan's Intensive English Centre, Blacktown Council and SydWest MSI representatives from our All Care Services, Families and Settlement Projects divisions.

Settlement Services Refugee Week

(Continued from page 9)

SydWest MSI manager Susan Vogels says that the Refugee Day 2011 event was a success and acknowledged this was thanks to the support of SydWest staff and its partners and community participation. This was the first time the event was held there, Ms Vogels says the move to the WestPoint venue was a success.

“The venue allowed for the first screening in a cinema setting of some refugee-made films supported by the group Information Cultural Exchange (ICE). The enormous cinema attendance proved how popular this element on the program was.”

She also noted the inspirational appeal of the film about Foot Ball United taking a refugee team to the World Cup. Event convenor Malathy Uthayachandran from SydWest MSI agrees the film component had a powerful impact on the audience. She says another highlight was the performances including that from the Napali group, which had not been staged in public before.

“People see performances and while they may not draw on their own traditions, they can get a sense of these other cultures in their midst,” she says.

SYDWEST MSI



SydWest Multicultural Services Inc

Address: Level 2 and Ground,

125 Main Street Blacktown 2148

Website: www.sydwestmsi.org.au

Email: info@sydwestmsi.org.au

Main Office:

Phone: (02) 9621 6633

Fax: (02) 9831 5625

CALDACS Office:

Phone: (02) 8825 3777

Fax: (02) 9621 4702