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MRC Events

The Phoenix Centre's Transformers Program

is collaborating with Foundation House Victoria to provide training to school staff in Launceston and Hobart. The training includes:

Day One: Supporting Refugee Background Students in Schools - 13th May Launceston: This is a comprehensive training package recommended for those working in and with schools, the training covers:

- The refugee experience
- The impact of trauma on learning, wellbeing and behaviour
- The recovery framework
- Recovery goals and classroom strategies
- The role of teachers and those working in schools supporting recovery
- A whole school approach to support refugee background students

Day Two: Incidental Counselling - 14th May Launceston & 17th May Hobart

This training builds on the information and skills gained during day one, and has a focus on developing basic counselling skills in school staff to enable school staff to work with more confidence with their students and families from refugee backgrounds. This training is free. Places are limited and expected to fill up quickly, please register early. Please call Renee Valentino on 6221 0999 or email: rvalentino@mrchobart.org.au

Families In Cultural Transition Workshops: FICT program for people who speak Tigrinya is held every Friday morning for the next nine weeks.

Sessions held at Glenorchy Civic Centre, 10.00am-1.00pm. Contact Ute Gonsior on 62 349138 for more information.

Stepping out of the Shadows: Mental Health Stigma Reduction workshops for members of Farsi speaking and Tigrinya speaking communities. Contact Ute Gonsior on 6234 9138 for more information.

African Elders Meeting: Next meeting on 19th May. Contact Lynn Lee on 62349138 for more information

Diversity In Health Conference 2010: Presentation by Renée Valentino, Project Officer / Counsellor Advocate with Phoenix Centre, on - **Creative methods in cross-cultural counselling: Supporting the mental health needs of young Tasmanians from refugee backgrounds:**

Each year, approximately 200 children and young people, representing a diverse range of ethnicities settle in Tasmania under the Humanitarian Entrant program. Humanitarian entrants face traumatic pre-migration experiences which frequently include multiple losses and torture. These experiences contribute to the vulnerability of their health and wellbeing. Many of the humanitarian entrants who settle in Tasmania have experienced horrors of war either first hand, as witnesses, or trans-generationally.

The Phoenix Centre in Tasmania offers a program for children and young people from refugee backgrounds under the age of 25 years, supported by the Department of Health and Human Services. The program aims to provide mental health support for clients,

training and support for teachers and other service providers, and to increase awareness of the specific needs of this group. Clients receive sensitive assessment by a specialised trauma and torture counsellor. Perceptions and explanatory models are carefully and respectfully explored, and treatment is provided through individual counselling and/or group work, utilizing creative arts and narrative approaches, aiming to facilitate the adaptation to trauma and development of positive relationships with self, others, and environment.

Recovery is supported through the recognition of the clients' inner strength, resilience, and desire to construct a better future. Successful outcomes demonstrate that healthier behaviour and positive emotional development can result from individualised and culturally appropriate counselling that respects the diversity of this group. Three case studies which highlight the strategies employed will be presented. These cases demonstrate through collaborative and creative approaches, positive outcomes can be achieved for some of Tasmania's most vulnerable youth.

MRC Youth Program – weekly activities:

Monday - Maths at the MRC- Must be registered, contact Georgi at MRC

Tuesday - Study Group Glenorchy- In the Derwent Room of the Library (Different Tutors available to support)

Wednesday - Sports Day- Mobile Activity Centre with PCYC at Eady Street, Glenorchy

Thursday - Life Skills Day- Starts this week at Pulse Youth Centre. Learn to make Scones! Q & A Session with Georgi Marshall, MRC's Youth Support

Worker and Pulse Youth Worker, All Youth 12-25 welcome.

Youth Week Activities with the MRC : HIP HOP WORKSHOP - with the Indigenous Hip Hop Project. Seven Young people had a great opportunity to participate in a dynamic two hour hip hop dance and lyrics workshop to launch youth week. Many thanks to the Southern Tasmanian Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre's Young Carers Program with the Women's Karadi Aboriginal Corporation who invited us to join this very unique workshop which was uplifting in sharing the Beyond Blue message for youth week: Look, Listen, Talk. The theme for youth week this year was live it!



Hobart Bike Kitchen Trip - To continue into youth week seven young boys joined Georgi Marshall, MRC's Youth Support Worker, to find the Hobart Bike Kitchen in Taroona. This is a new and exciting group which exists in Hobart that supports people to fix up

and build bikes. We were fortunate to take away 5 bikes from an afternoon of repairing.

Multicultural Youth (MY) Voices Council : Open Meeting at the MRC on First Friday of May- May 7th 4.30-6pm in MRC Acacia Room. Theme: OUR IMAGE with Guests and Refreshments.

School Holiday Info Session - At The Glenorchy Linc (Library) Room One-Thursday May 27th 2.30pm-4.30pm. Parents and Families welcome to come and ask questions, learn about activities with different youth programs, and register as a participant. (Under 18 must have parent/guardian signature).

MRC's Community Leadership Workshop : The first Community Leadership Workshop was held at the 50 & Better Centre on Saturday 24th April. It covered two modules;

1. Communities and Leadership; and,
2. Associations & basics of governance

14 Community members attended, representing seven communities. Each workshop includes expert guest presentations from relevant fields. Following workshops will cover Conflict Management; Strategic Planning & Grants; Government & Lobbying; and Strategic Partnerships.

MRC SERVICE UPDATES

New MRC Day Centre : MRC HACC in partnership with the Australian Croatian Club, is in the process of setting up a new service for the elderly of the Croatian Community – Croatian Day Centre. We are looking at starting this new service at the end of June. If you are interested in being part of this

Day Centre or you know of someone who would be interested, please contact Monika Dutkiewicz on 6221 0999. Those interested in accessing this service need to be assessed for HACC eligibility.

Meet the MRC Packaged Care Programs (CACP and EACHD)

Team: The Migrant Resource Centre's frail aged programs include Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) and Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia (EACHD) Packages. We call these Golden Age Packages. All of our 39 CACP and 4 EACHD clients have complex care needs, and all prefer to stay living in their own homes rather than moving into residential care. Funding is provided by the Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing, and some of our Packages are specifically offered to clients with special needs. These include people from either Chinese or German backgrounds, people who are socially and/or financially disadvantaged, people with challenging behaviours, and seven Packages specifically for people living in the Clarence region.

Introducing Kim Phong:

I came from Vietnam to Australia in May 1979. I am Chinese Vietnamese; I can speak Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese. I really enjoy the work in CACP and EACHD programs. I like to help people and am happy to see Clients getting the benefits of our work. I work as a Coordinator / Case Manager. I work together with our Team to make sure our clients get the best services. Our Clients come from different cultural backgrounds. The major groups are Chinese and German. We also have some clients from Italy, Portugal,

Finland, Greece, Lithuania, Iran, Russia, Latvia and Poland...

Introducing Wendy Ho:

I come from Hong Kong. Cantonese is my mother language. I also learned Mandarin and Japanese when I was in university. Because of my cultural background, I understand my clients and what they need. I would like to help my clients and I enjoy conversing with them.

As our clients are elderly migrants, many cannot speak English very well, and we arrange native speaking support workers for our clients. I need to liaise between the support workers and the clients as working situations change from time to time, such as personal care requirements, health issues and respite care.

We have 33 support workers. They are from Asia, South America and Europe. They can speak different languages, which include Cantonese, Chinese, (Mandarin), Japanese, Thai, German, Italian, Greek, Spanish, Farsi, Polish and Turkish.

Introducing Melanie Tekolf:

I came from Germany to Tasmania in December 2008. I worked there as a Social Worker. I speak German and English and Spanish if I have to. What I enjoy about working within the CACPs and EACHD packages is that we're in ongoing direct contact with our clients and therefore have the opportunity to support them as soon as an issue arises. I'm working as a Case manager within CACP and EACHD and am looking mainly after clients from a German background.

Most of our clients receive support services such as home, help and help with transport for shopping or doctor appointments. Some receive personal

care and help with preparing meals. More than half of the clients get some gardening too and some receive social support services.

Introducing Annette Hitchman:

I was born in Germany, moved to England at the age of 18, spent 2 years in the United States before moving to Australia in 1970. On my husband's sabbatical leave I spent several months in Marburg in Germany over the years. My children went to Kindergarten and pre- and primary school in Marburg and we all enjoyed travelling to Switzerland in their school holidays. I have made visits to Vietnam, China, South Africa and Indonesia on my travels to Europe. German is my native language. I speak English fluently and a little French and Spanish.

My role as German Bicultural Worker is assisting with case management, to arrange home visits and keep in contact with clients in our Program with particular emphasis on their cultural background. I very much enjoy working within these programs. It is very satisfying to meet so many people of different cultures and help them in their old age through the programs funded by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing. To me, the most positive aspect of the work we do is making such a difference to the sometimes very difficult lives of migrants in Australia.

Introducing Marianne Potma

I was born in Holland and came to Tasmania via the Bonegilla Migrant Hostel with my family as a little girl. Like many Dutch families our family is large, with half of the siblings born in Holland and half in Tasmania. At the time of our arrival it was the norm to fit in with the Australian culture as soon as possible, and as a family we helped each other to

become fluent in English. I have a teaching background but have worked in community organizations for over 20 years including 14 years in aged care programs within the MRC. My role as manager of the two packaged care programs has provided an opportunity to contribute towards developing and growing our services, and towards enabling our staff and support workers to access training, mentoring and support. We also link into many other local service organisations working together to promote quality services for our clients.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR COMMUNITIES

MRC's Community Development Officer, Gavin Murphy is currently assisting six community groups develop project plans & grant applications. Gavin is also assisting the Bhutanese community develop a constitution in readiness for the creation of an association.

Gavin is working with the Phoenix Centre on the Suicide Prevention project and is looking forward to organising a number of activities & sessions for the men's Health & Wellbeing groups.

Gavin will be coordinating the MRC's Diverse Australia Project to coordinate a number of fun activities that create opportunities for cross-cultural learning and understanding amongst CALD community members and the wider community.

MRC STAFF UPDATES

New Staff :

MRC welcomes Virginia Bashford into the MRC Team, as the Settlements Coordinator effective, Tuesday 6th April. Virginia has a Social Work Degree from the University of Tasmania and has most recently worked with Centacare in the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) program since 2006, doing case management, complex case management and workshops for both IHSS and Settlement Grants Program (SGP). Virginia is committed to bringing positive changes to settlement outcomes for people from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds in her new capacity with the MRC, stating that she has 'learned much from community members life journeys and experiences'.

We also welcome Suzanne Clauson – Strategy Development Officer into the MRC fold effective Tuesday, 6th April. Suzanne has a BA (Hons) degree in History of Art and Architecture (Trinity College) and a Masters in Business (University College Dublin). Suzanne recently worked at the transmission electricity company, Transend Networks Pty Ltd as Project Co-ordinator on their revenue reset project. Previous to this position she worked at the President's Office of University College Dublin, Ireland. When Suzanne worked at University College Dublin, she assisted migrants and refugees to settle into University life. Suzanne will be working closely with the MRC staff and management team in bringing positive changes to MRC.

The Settlement Team would like to welcome Ruth Morgan. Ruth is a Cert IV Student at the Polytechnic, studying Youth Work. Ruth will be on placement at the MRC one-day a week for 5 months.

Positions Vacant :

MRC HACC will be looking at filling two positions in our new Croatian Day Centre – Croatian Bi-cultural worker and Cook for the Croatian Day Centre. If you are interested please contact Monika Dutkiewicz at MRC on 6221 0999.

Focus on our Volunteers: Marguerite V Byard – MRC Top Gear Volunteer



MY VOLUNTEERING INTEREST AT MRC:

I first became involved in the top gear program at Claremont with Dean Walker and later on with the MRC Top Gear program. In my three years of volunteering with this program, there have been 19 successes with the Top Gear automatic car, 15 in my manual car and six clients succeeded in their own cars.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH CALD COMMUNITIES:

My experience with CALD communities and my love for African people began when I spent 3 years in Chad, Africa as a

missionary nurse. Then some people from Rwanda, Sudan, Ethiopia/ Eritrea, Burundi, Congo and Zimbabwe started to come to my church – the Way Christian Church. I befriended them, taught them basic driving skills and let them practice driving in my car, to prepare them for the provisional test. These people have become my closest friends.

My favourite life experience:

As a Christian, I like to be involved and help people in many areas of their lives to achieve their goals and become an integral part of our society here in Australia.

I presently spend my daylight hours:

Being involved in my church, working part time on the relief team at Family and Child health and giving time to help a lot of African people drive. I also love to spend time with my friends and be involved in their family's activities. I recently went to Rwanda with a friend to attend her sister's wedding.

I admire:

I admire the resilience of my African friends in settling in Tasmania, becoming a part of our community, being successful and making a significant contribution to our society.

I laugh when :

I certainly laugh with them when they succeed in getting their licenses which is very difficult for many people

The biggest challenge I find is?

Watching my friends succeed after many attempts. During their attempts, I cry with them, and often wonder to myself if I have the ability to adequately help, since I am not a driving instructor. Probably a bigger challenge is how to say yes to some and no to others. I have at least ten clients, five in auto and five in manual that I am actively trying to help and about ten or more asking

me to help. There are not enough hours in my day.

My wish for the CALD communities of Tasmania:

My wish is for them to achieve their goals in driving, and as in every area of life to be independent and safe in this state they have made their own.

My multicultural hero:

People like Nelson Mandela who have faced trauma and for his beliefs and against all odds, come back to lead his country. Many of my friends have faced similar difficulties and succeeded in making a new life for themselves.

If you'd like to contribute an article relating to CALD communities in Tasmania, then Email reception@mrchobart.org.au before Tuesday, 25th May 2010.

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