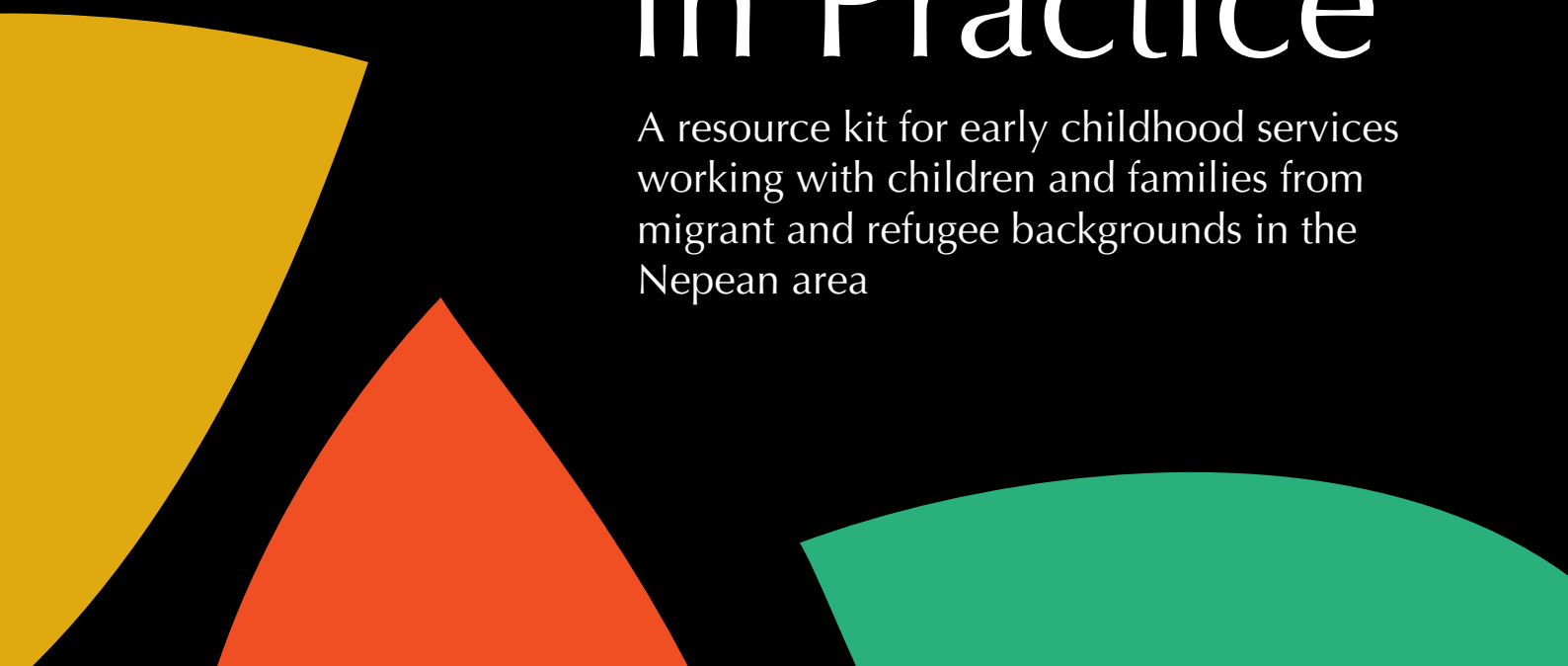




# Diversity in Practice

A resource kit for early childhood services  
working with children and families from  
migrant and refugee backgrounds in the  
Nepean area



# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the people who contributed to the development of this resource. Special acknowledgement and thanks to Family and Community Services/Community and Early Years, Families NSW and Penrith City Council for funding the project.

## Project Coordinator

Julianne Abood

## MARCS Working Group

Julianne Abood, Family Worker Training and Development Programme

Cindy Chilvers, Inclusion Support Agency, Sydney North West

Clare Darling, Nepean Blue Mountains Multicultural Health Team

Patricia Darvall, Department of Family and Community Services

Colin Edwards, Wesley Mission Brighter Futures Nepean

Marilyn Fischer, Department of Family and Community Services

Nerryl Liston, Mission Australia - Bronte Child and Family Centre

Kelera Mar, Children's Services Central

Nasren Nasrat, Nepean Migrant Access

Rosie Smith, Penrith City Council

Behnoosh Wirawan, Inclusion Support Agency, Sydney North West

© Family Worker Training and Development Programme, 2011

All rights reserved. Material in this resource may be reproduced, translated or adapted to meet local needs without the prior permission, subject to acknowledgement of the resource.

Copies available from [www.fwtdp.org.au](http://www.fwtdp.org.au)

# Contents

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **TIP SHEET 1**

Culturally Inclusive Service Assessment Tool for Early Childhood Services

### **TIP SHEET 2**

Celebrating Cultural Diversity in Early Childhood Services

### **TIP SHEET 3**

Enrolment Tips for Migrant and Refugee Families in Early Childhood Services

### **TIP SHEET 4**

Using Translating and Interpreting Services in Early Childhood Services

### **TIP SHEET 5**

Bilingual Children and Families in Early Childhood Services

### **TIP SHEET 5A (For Parents)**

Tips for Parents: What You Say Is Important!

### **TIP SHEET 6**

Working with Refugee Families in Early Childhood Services

### **TIP SHEET 7**

Migrant and Refugee Service, Resource and Referral Guide for Early Childhood Services in the Nepean Area

## **EYLF REFERENCE**

Excerpts from Belonging, Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009



# Introduction

*The Diversity in Practice – A resource kit for early childhood services working with children and families from migrant and refugee backgrounds in the Nepean area (DIP Kit) was developed by the Migrant and Refugee Children Support Working Group (MARCS) to assist early childhood service providers to improve access and the provision of culturally inclusive programming for migrant and refugee children and their families.*

Inclusion involves taking into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity in curriculum decision-making processes. The intent is to ensure that all children have equitable access to resources and participation, and that educators make curriculum decisions that uphold all children's rights to have their cultures, identities, abilities and strengths acknowledged and valued, and respond to the complexity of children's families' lives.

The DIP Kit is designed to support the development and inclusion of children in their early formative years by assisting early childhood educators to work more closely and effectively with parents and children from migrant and refugee backgrounds. The DIP Kit offers a range of topic specific tip sheets, service and resource information, and practical tips to assist early childhood educators better cater to the special needs of migrant and refugee families.

There are many benefits to providing and promoting culturally inclusive practice in early childhood services and to working in partnership with families from migrant and refugee backgrounds. References to **Belonging, Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009 (EYLF)** have been used

throughout this resource to link the relevant principles, practice and learning. Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming, designed to provide direction and inspiration for early childhood educators in early childhood settings to facilitate children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

## How to use this resource

This resource kit is not intended as a checklist or protocol but as a guide to raising awareness around diverse cultural practices and special needs or requirements that are most relevant to working with migrant and refugee children and families in an early childhood service setting. Each of the seven tip sheets provide a brief outline of topic specific information to assist early childhood educators to assess and identify how current programs and resources can be adapted and delivered so that they are culturally inclusive and appropriate to the needs specific to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) children and families.

The DIP Kit has been designed purposely in an 'A' frame calendar style spiral bound format so that it can be placed on your desk or in an accessible and visible position for workers to easily access. You can make additional copies of each or all tip sheets by photocopying your hardcopy or alternatively 'pdf' files are available to download on [www.fwtdp.org.au](http://www.fwtdp.org.au).

*We hope that this resource will assist you in developing your service to meet all children's needs.*

# Culturally Inclusive Service Assessment Tool for Early Childhood Services

'Respecting diversity means within the curriculum valuing and reflecting the practices, values and beliefs of families'

(EYLF: p. 13)

## The purpose of this tool

The Culturally Inclusive Service Assessment Tool for Early Childhood Services will help your service answer the key question, **"How inclusive is your service of children and families from migrant and refugee backgrounds?"** The purpose of using this assessment tool is to encourage greater awareness of some of the needs and issues that migrant and refugees families may face in early childhood services. The tool can also help to identify gaps and barriers within a service that may need improvement and can also assist to develop strategies to better provide culturally inclusive and appropriate care for all children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

## How to use this tool

This tool provides a framework to assist you to gain an understanding of where your service is at, and what needs to be done in terms of providing culturally and linguistically inclusive and responsive curriculum. This tool provides concrete examples of the kinds of practices that foster such an environment and can be used at the beginning of the assessment process to help set your direction and planning, and also at the end to evaluate your progress. It is suggested that you use this tool at your service team meetings to inform your Service Support Plan (SSP) and service review and that staff at all levels are actively involved in the process. It is particularly important that decision makers within your organisation are on board as some strategies may require involvement at various levels within your organisation.

1. Educational Programming	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
The Service has access to current data about cultural diversity in their local community					
Curriculum development reflects the cultural diversity represented in the service and of the wider community					
Educators utilise a range of strategies to support and promote children's cultural learning					
Resources, materials, and activities reflect cultural diversity					
Educators access opportunities to promote the use of children's home language in the service and at home					
The Service supports the ongoing consistent engagement of families in the program					
The service creates opportunities for family and extended family to participate in activities and share their culture					
Reflective Comments:					



## Tip Sheet 1

2. Communication	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
We collect data on the cultural background, practices and languages spoken by families					
Bilingual families are provided with appropriate linguistic support during the enrolment process					
Bilingual children are able to communicate their needs in a variety of ways					
Access to an interpreter is available to families					
Access to translated information about the service and day-to-day operations is available to families					
Access to translated parenting related resources are available to families					
Educators use children's names and pronounce them correctly					
Written material produced in English uses plain language and simple terms, avoiding jargon					
<b>Reflective Comments:</b>					

3. Physical Environment and Practice	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
The environment incorporates symbols and resources relevant to the cultural diversity in the community and in Australia. (e.g. maps, images on the walls, picture books, publications)					
Culturally inclusive practice is part of everyday routines					
Families can identify with their culture in the service environment					
Educators promote in children a strong sense of identity and sense of awareness of their own and other cultures					
Educators acknowledge and respect cultural practices specific to families					
Educators celebrate culturally diverse special events regularly					
<b>Reflective Comments:</b>					

## Tip Sheet 1

4. Staff Development	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
There is an ongoing commitment to professional development & training to promote culturally inclusive practices					
Educators are trained around cultural communication and support for migrant and refugee children and families					
Educators regularly reflect as a team on work styles and approaches to ensure culturally appropriate and inclusive program delivery					
Educators are confident in how to access and work with interpreters					
Educators develop skills for communication and support of bilingual children and families					
Educators are knowledgeable about local services in the area who can provide support for families					
<b>Reflective Comments:</b>					

5. Policy and Service Management	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
There is a written policy in place that addresses cultural diversity in practice					
Policy includes a mechanism to promote and monitor issues of access and equity for migrant and refugee families					
Policy is reviewed annually with input from all families					
The service prevents and challenges discrimination within the team and towards service users					
The service accesses the Bicultural Support Program, Inclusion Support Agency and relevant community support networks					
There are opportunities for families to be involved in management committees and/or can contribute to service management in a variety of ways					

## Tip Sheet 1

5. Policy and Service Management (continued)	Our service does this well	Our service has not yet addressed this well	Actions needed to improve on this	Resources needed to support this action	Target date
The service has culturally accessible promotion available at relevant agencies in the area which have contact with families from culturally diverse background					
The budget includes the use of interpreters, translators and multicultural resources					
The service has allocated responsibility for cultural inclusive practice to appropriate educators					
The service has an external referral process in place					
<b>Reflective Comments:</b>					

**Note:** Refer to **Tip Sheet 7** for *Services, Resources and Referral Guide* information.

### References

Belonging, Being, Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009

Introductory Guide to the Service Support Plan 2009, KU Children's Services

Building Culturally & Linguistically Competent Services to Support Young Children, Their Families and School Readiness by Kathy Seitzinger Hepburn, M.S, Georgetown University Center for child and Human Development, May 2004

Inclusive Local Government A guide to good practice strategies for engaging young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in local government services



# Celebrating Cultural Diversity in Early Childhood Services

'Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living, celebrate the benefits of diversity and have an ability to understand and honour differences'

(EYLF: p.16)

The *Early Years Learning Framework* talks a lot about diversity of culture and emphasises the importance of cultural competency to support the development of every child's sense of '**belonging, being and becoming**'. Educators need to always be looking to learn more about other cultural practices and develop skills for communication, and interactions across cultures.

## Things to consider

- Parents may come from different cultural backgrounds and may each be bi- or multi-lingual.
- Families can feel torn between cultures. It can be hard to find a balance so building strong connections to community support is important in times of transition.
- In some cultures it is inappropriate or challenging to have direct eye contact, so when you are speaking to someone they may have their eyes to the ground. Looking down may be a sign of respect so if you are unsure you may need to clarify this.
- In some cultures it is inappropriate to touch a child on the head, or anywhere.
- In some cultures it may be more appropriate to speak to the mother about the children than the father, however, keep in mind that the father may be the decision maker.
- In some cultures, men do not shake women's hands, and some find it inappropriate to meet alone in a room with someone from the opposite sex.
- Parents may not be accustomed to playing with or entertaining their children so don't assume that toys and books are readily available in the home or that this is something children are used to.
- Some cultures do not see play as important and may not be aware of the educational benefits of learning through play.

## Things to remember



It is important to remember that every family is individual. They are not a culture. In contemporary Australia there are many cultural variations. We need to respect the diversity of families and communities and the aspirations they hold for their children.

We need to uphold all children's rights to have their culture, identities, abilities and strengths acknowledged and valued. We need to be particularly careful not to group cultures according to where they come from, or use stereotypes.

Most cultural groups have many different languages, dialects, sub-cultures and practices within each group.

**If you are unsure about what to do, all you need to do is ask sensitively.**

## Tip Sheet 2

### What you can do as an educator

- Educators need to develop a relationship with families to build trust. It is suggested that you begin this process at the first interview with the family and take this opportunity to find out information you will need to ensure a positive experience for the family (refer to **Tip Sheet 3** on *Enrolment*).
- It is our job as educators working with families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to find out about their culture/s, and to show respect by asking questions to avoid misunderstandings or offending the family.
- If English is a barrier, use a language identification chart, and then contact the **Telephone Interpreter Service (13 1450)**, access translated resources or there are even applications on iPhones that will translate for you (refer to **Tip Sheet 4** on *Using Interpreters*).
- Remember, English may be their 2nd, 3rd or 4th language, so be clear and avoid slang or jargon in verbal and written communication.
- Educators should present themselves politely, but positively assertive, particularly when dealing with issues that may conflict with their own cultural beliefs or practices.
- Educators first need to identify the cultural background of the family. If you are unsure, remember all you need to do is ask. If possible, before a family comes in to the service to enrol, familiarise yourself with the family's cultural background and have some pictures or resources available to show your interest and respect (refer to **Tip Sheet 7** for *Resources*).
- Show a sincere interest about a family's cultural background when asking about spoken languages, geography, politics, religions, festivals, holidays etc.
- Get to know each child's family. Encourage the family and extended family members of the child to be involved and participate in programs and activities.
- Help children and families to meet and socialise with other families.
- Encourage families to talk about cultural diversity with their children.

### Support Services

#### **Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) – Sydney North West**

Provide childcare services staff with practical advice and support in including children with additional needs into a quality child care environment.

**Phone: 02 4732 7843**

**Email: isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au**

#### **Calendar of Cultural and Religious Dates**

The Calendar aims to raise awareness of key cultural and religious events, festivals and national days.

[www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/calendar-australia/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/calendar-australia/index.htm)

#### **Community Information Summaries**

These summaries describe the communities living in Australia by country of birth, and their descendants and present a broad range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics from the *2006 Census of Population and Housing*.

[www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/index.htm)

**Refer to Tip Sheet 7 on *Services and Resources Guide* for more information.**

### Five Quick Programming Tips

- ▶ Make a point of acknowledging where all the children in the group come from by simply hanging a map of Australia in the middle of a wall and have the rest of the countries of the world positioned around it. You can put a tag with the child's name and country of origin attached to a string connected to the centre. This map can then be used for programming curriculum development.
- ▶ Showcase a country each week or month and take the opportunity to invite parents to share words or phrases from their language, songs, music, food, traditional dance and costumes.
- ▶ Celebrate culturally diverse calendar events regularly throughout the year.
- ▶ Display and make accessible multicultural and multilingual resources
- ▶ Use charts with simple explanations through pictures for daily routines or other regular activities.



# Enrolment Tips for Migrant and Refugee Families in Early Childhood Services

Belonging, Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) has been developed to assist educators provide all young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. The EYLF puts great emphasis on the value and importance of demonstrating respect for diversity and cultural competence within your child care service and states that 'learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families.'

(EYLF: p.12)

In genuine partnerships, families and early childhood educators value and trust each other, communicate respectfully and engage in shared decision-making. The enrolment process is an important process in establishing and building a trusting partnership between you as an educator, and with migrant and refugee families. If you ensure that this is a positive experience for all, a strong foundation will be laid. This will provide future opportunities for partnerships with families to find inclusive and equitable ways to achieve quality outcomes for children.

## Things to consider

- Don't assume parents can read and write in English if they can speak English.
- Families may be wary of providing personal information depending on past experiences with authorities (refer to **Tip Sheet 6** on *Working with Refugees*).
- If a family has become comfortable with a particular worker try to keep consistency between that worker and the family.

**If you are unsure about what to do, all you need to do is ask sensitively.**

## Tips on how to ask sensitive questions

- ▶ Explain clearly and simply why you need the information.
- ▶ Remember to use a relaxed and informal manner.
- ▶ Ensure quiet and uninterrupted space.
- ▶ Do not pursue questions that cause unease or discomfort.
- ▶ Only ask questions relevant to the information that you need.
- ▶ Some examples "do you mind if I ask you about ...." or "we would like to understand more about ... so that your child will feel more included in our centre, that is why we need to ask these next questions".

## Things to remember



- Be fully prepared for the enrolment interview beforehand including an initial assessment as to whether you may need an interpreter and/or access to other resources.
- Allow adequate time to explain how the service operates and reassure families of the professional skills and qualifications of educators.
- Explain the benefits of using the service, how it can assist the child's health, development and learning, for example, offer some examples of the educational benefits of learning through play.
- Encourage families to ask for support and information and to share their cultural practices with staff. (See *Tips on how to ask sensitive questions*.)



## Tip Sheet 3

### Quick Tips

- ▶ Provide an option to complete the form orally with the family and/or give the family the opportunity to take the form home to complete with clarification about what needs to be completed before enrolment commences.
- ▶ Adopt a sensitive and gradual approach to collecting information. If forms are lengthy, consider scheduling two or more meetings for gathering necessary information for the enrolment process.
- ▶ When you are arranging an enrolment interview, explain to the parents that they are able to bring an adult family member or another adult of their choice with them for support.
- ▶ If necessary, ensure you have organised an interpreter and have made the necessary preparations (refer to **Tip Sheet 4** on *Using Interpreters*).
- ▶ Do not use children as interpreters.
- ▶ Try to gather some background information on the family's cultural background.
- ▶ Schedule in ample time for the enrolment process. The use of interpreters when gathering relevant information from parents will take a longer time than usual to complete this process.
- ▶ Before you start to ask questions, explain the principles and requirements of the enrolment process so they are clear of what is expected.
- ▶ Consider the questions that are asked in the enrolment process. Before you start, explain why you are asking them and what you will do with the information. Reassure the parents that the information gathered is confidential.
- ▶ Consider how you ask the questions. Some questions could be considered too personal or intrusive. Always explain why you require that information.
- ▶ Be aware that families may not be able to answer all of the questions and may not have the required documentation (be prepared to assist the family with access to documentation). Manage this with sensitivity and understanding.
- ▶ Remember to take this opportunity to ask families whether there are any culturally specific practices or preferences around etiquette or religion that they would like to be observed, including childrearing practices and cultural dietary restrictions. Asking families about toileting, sleeping and feeding routines may allow for a soft approach for other more sensitive issues to be raised.
- ▶ Remind parents to bring their immunisation documents and/or other documents relevant to the enrolment process.

### Support Services

#### Bicultural Support Program

Provide time limited linguistic and cultural support to eligible children's services to assist with the inclusion of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugee and Indigenous children. Recruitment and training of new workers offered on an ongoing basis. To access the program you need to be referred by either Children's Services Central or by your regional Inclusion Support Agency.

**Phone:** 02 9569 1288  
**www.eccfcsc.org**

#### Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) - Sydney North West

Provide childcare services staff with practical advice and support in including children with additional needs into a quality child care environment.

**Phone:** 02 4732 7843  
**Email:** isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au

#### Resourcing Parents Network

A Families NSW funded initiative aimed at assisting parents looking for parenting information and parenting education includes a 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Resources' page with links to resources and information available in community languages about child development, health, feeding and nutrition, mental health, parenting, parent education, and safety/child protection.

**www.resourcingparents.com:80/cald.html**

# Using Translating and Interpreting Services in Early Childhood Services

'Developing inclusive assessment practices with children and their families demonstrates respect for diversity, helps educators make better sense of what they have observed and supports learning for both children and adults.'

(EYLF: p.17)

## Things to consider

- It is important not to make assumptions about a person's capacity to understand and communicate in English.
- Some newly arrived communities may not have had the opportunity or access to education so may not be literate in their first language – therefore their English literacy may also be limited.
- Slow down and simplify your use of language rather than raising your voice with people whose first language is not English.
- If a family cannot speak English well, or is experiencing difficulty communicating in English it is strongly recommended that a telephone interpreter or other suitable interpreter be used.
- If you need to use a face to face interpreter consider the gender, ethnicity and language/dialect of the interpreter. For example, it may be inappropriate to provide a male interpreter for a female family member.

## What is the difference between interpreters and translators?

- **Interpreters** are those who orally restate in one language what has been said in another language.
- **Translators** are those who convert the written materials from one language to another.

## When to use professional translating and interpreting services

Professional interpreters are bilingual, their language and interpreting skills have been tested, they are trained and they operate under a strict code of professional ethics which ensures that their services are impartial and confidential. It is essential to use professional interpreters:

- When conveying important or sensitive information about health issues, entitlements, rights and responsibilities or seeking informed consent, when your family member identifies that language is a barrier to communicating effectively.
- If the service requires important documents such as birth certificates, immunisation records in English, a family may need to have them translated. Some government services such as Centrelink will translate documents if relevant for their service provision.

## When to use non-professional interpreters

Non-professional interpreters such as relatives or friends should only be used for conveying general information regarding routine needs or day to day issues of your service. The use of non-professionals could result in a breach of confidentiality, they may not be impartial, they could have an emotional involvement and tend to filter information, their language ability may be limited, and particularly in complex situations, there is no guarantee of impartiality or professionalism. Do not use children as interpreters.

**If a family requires an interpreter for the enrolment process a professional interpreter or a bilingual staff member must be used.**

**Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)**



**13 14 50**



## Tip Sheet 4

### Tips for effectively using telephone interpreters

- ▶ Do you have your TIS registration code, job number and the name of the booked interpreter at hand?
- ▶ Check you have a speaker phone, dual handset or dual head set.
- ▶ Ask for the family member's name, write it out as spoken as well as how it is spelt.
- ▶ Ask for the family member's relationship to the child.
- ▶ Have a quiet area to conduct the interview and ensure the customer's privacy.
- ▶ Brief the interpreter – clarify the background and objective of the interview.
- ▶ Listen carefully and avoid using slang or jargon.
- ▶ Speak directly to the family member.
- ▶ Use two to three short sentences then let the interpreter speak.
- ▶ Write the important things down and check for clarification as you go.
- ▶ Allow sufficient time.
- ▶ Always check that the family member has understood what has been said before you move on to the next thing.

### Quick Checklist

- Have you checked if the family members require a professional interpreter?
- Have you accurately identified the relevant language and dialect?
- Have you checked if the family members require written notifications, correspondence and/or information in their first language?
- Have you arranged for an interpreter and/or written translations?

### How can I access TIS?

The **National Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)** available 24 hours a day 7 days a week for any person or organisation in Australia requiring interpreting services. Fees do apply.

See website for more information and downloadable resources including *need an interpreter* cards.

[www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/help-with-english/help\\_with\\_translating/](http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/help-with-english/help_with_translating/)

**Penrith City Council Childcare Services** have a code to access **free TIS services** – check with your local ISA office on:

**Phone: 02 4732 7843** or

**Email: [isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au)**

### Useful Resources

#### Centrelink Multicultural Training Products

Range of resources developed to assist professionals and customer service staff who have culturally diverse clientele. Resources include:

- Working with Interpreters DVD
- Multicultural Customer Service Training CD ROM
- A guide to Ethnic Naming Practices

**Phone: 02 8512 0827**

**Email: [multicultural.services.nat@centrelink.gov.au](mailto:multicultural.services.nat@centrelink.gov.au)**

### Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)



**13 14 50**



# Bilingual Children and Families in Early Childhood Services

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) acknowledges that communication is crucial to belonging, being and becoming. 'Children's use of their home language underpins their sense of identity and their conceptual development... They have the right to be continuing users of their home language as well as to develop competency in Standard Australian English.'

(EYLF: p.38)

## Things to consider

Communication between parents and children is fundamental to maintaining healthy family relationships. Studies show that where there is little communication between parents and children as a result of children's loss of language skills in their home language, the gap between parent's values and traditions and those of their children's widens. With additional support, bilingual learners can gain proficiency in both languages, maintain family connections, and develop a sense of identity that honours both their adopted and home cultures.

## What you can do as an educator

- Help parents understand the importance of their role in their children's literacy development.
- Help parents identify their language goals for their child and themselves.
- Create a "bilingual" learning environment through materials, labelling, and other strategies and learn a few helpful phrases to fit with daily routines in the child's home language.
- Ensure children are provided with additional support and resources, if required, such as those available through the Inclusion Support Agency and the Bicultural Support Program.
- Provide parents with resources in their language and take home learning tools that supports their home language and English language learning.
- Encourage parents who have limited English proficiency to consider building their own language skills.
- Support educators' professional development in learning about cultural diversity and building linguistic capacity.

## Things to remember



**Involving parents is essential to supporting children to maintain their home language.**

Many bilingual parents believe that they are doing their children a favour by not speaking their first language at home. In their eagerness to adjust to a new setting, parents may overlook or avoid this important aspect of their children's development. Yet knowing their parent's language is vital to children's cultural identity and maintaining healthy family relationships.

**'Communication between parents and children is fundamental to maintaining healthy family relationships.'**

## Tip Sheet 5

### Quick Tips

- ▶ Emphasise to parents that they are their child's first teacher.
- ▶ Being able to speak two or more languages is a strength and an advantage.
- ▶ Emphasise to parents their home language and English are both important to their child's growing up and will support the transition to school process.
- ▶ Early childhood service educators can assist with supporting the maintenance of the home language.
- ▶ Encourage parents to create their own resources. Record stories and songs for the children, use them in the centre or ask a parent to join in with songs or read a story in their home language.
- ▶ Label objects and areas in the classroom. Encourage parents to write the labels in their home language.
- ▶ Help parents connect with other families who speak their language.
- ▶ Encourage parents to meet with other families to talk about strategies, share materials, and resources for helping children maintain their home language.
- ▶ Manage parent's expectations. Learning and practicing two languages takes time, their child might mix up words or mix languages together. Some confusion is to be expected.
- ▶ Some government services such as Centrelink will translate documents if relevant for their service provision.

### Useful Resources

#### Book Garden

Online catalogue including multicultural children's books, early childhood curriculum and other resources.

[www.thebookgarden.com.au](http://www.thebookgarden.com.au)

#### Children's Services Central General Resource Library (Lady Gowrie Child Centre)

Specialist children's services resource pool, accessible online, includes multimedia, books, articles, videos, and a range of hands-on materials for children and staff, resources to support curriculum development and resources for staff professional development.

**Toll Free: 1800 157 818**

[www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au)

#### Connect Child and Family Services Inc (Possum Toy Library)

Operates Possum Toy Library and Parents and Educators Resource Library, includes multicultural resources.

**Phone: 02 4758 9966**

[www.connect.asn.au](http://www.connect.asn.au)

#### Free Kindergarten Association (FKA)

Multilingual, multicultural, educational materials for early childhood programs designed to support staff to incorporate multicultural perspectives in all programming.

[www.fka.com.au](http://www.fka.com.au)

#### Global Language Books

Resources including mono and bilingual children's books in over 70 languages, music, games, puzzles, resources for refugees, multicultural posters, and much more. You can filter by language, cultural group, by age or resource type.

[www.globallanguage.com.au](http://www.globallanguage.com.au)

#### Little Big Book Club

*New Arrivals Family Reading Pack* provides age appropriate reading materials in multilingual formats designed for the needs of migrant and refugee families with children aged five years and under. The aim of the resources is to encourage parents to talk and participate in early language and literacy activities with their children in both English and their first language.

[www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au)

#### Local Library Services

Check your local library catalogue for bilingual books or you can request books in over 40 community languages from the State Library of NSW free of charge.

#### My Language

Provide access to search engines, web directories and news in over 60 languages; translated training courses for the public.

[www.mylanguage.gov.au](http://www.mylanguage.gov.au)

### Support Services

#### Bicultural Support Program

Provide time limited linguistic and cultural support to eligible Children's Services to assist with the inclusion of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugee and Indigenous children. Recruitment and training of new workers offered on an ongoing basis. To Access the program you need to be referred by either Children's Services Central or by your regional Inclusion Support Agency.

**Phone: 02 9569 1288**

[www.eccfcsc.org](http://www.eccfcsc.org)

#### Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) – Sydney North West

Provide childcare services staff with practical advice and support in including children with additional needs into a quality child care environment.

**Phone: 02 4732 7843**

**Email: [isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au)**

#### Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care

Information available about Special Child Care Benefit (SCCB) for parents experiencing financial hardship and how to access free child care if studying Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) – see **Fact Sheet 11**. For children with additional needs, including children from culturally and diverse backgrounds, your child care service may be eligible for extra assistance through the Inclusion and Professional Support Program – see **Fact Sheet 14**.

[www.oceccc.gov.au](http://www.oceccc.gov.au)



# Tips for Parents: What You Say Is Important!

## Quick tips on how to maintain your home language when your child is learning English

- ▶ Only speak your native language in your home.
- ▶ Continue to talk, read and sing songs to your child in your home language.
- ▶ Look for bookstores that carry children's books in your home languages or use the Internet to find books, music and children's software in your home language.
- ▶ Ask at the library or your child's early care or education program to borrow books in your language.
- ▶ Have storytelling time at home using your home language. Share family history and describe what it was like for you growing up. For example, remember a special event from your childhood and describe who was there, what happened, and what you remember thinking and feeling.
- ▶ Create your own resources. Record your own stories and songs for your children. Share fairy tales and songs that you heard as a child.
- ▶ If you can't find your child's favorite picture book in your home language, maybe you can translate it yourself. Write the translation right on the page of the book for a bilingual edition. Or write on a label and cover up the English.
- ▶ Share your own resources with the early childhood service for educators to play or read during the days your child is there.
- ▶ Volunteer to write labels of objects and areas in the classroom in your home language.
- ▶ If you have a flexible work schedule, perhaps you could join in the activities and tell stories, read books or sing songs in your home language.
- ▶ Ask educators in the program to help you connect with other families who speak your language.
- ▶ Get together with families who speak your language on a regular basis. Only speak your home language while you are together.
- ▶ Meet with other parents to talk about strategies, share materials, and resources for helping children maintain their home language.
- ▶ Participate in community activities such as religious or social events or other celebrations and gatherings where your home language is spoken.
- ▶ Be patient! Learning and practicing two languages takes time. Your child might mix up words or mix languages together. Some confusion is to be expected.

Adapted from 'Special Education . . . a service, not a place Evaluation and Assessment in Early Childhood Special Education: *Children Who Are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse*' by Dr. Terry Bergeson, B.J. Wise, Douglas H. Gill, Anne Shureen, January 1997 from Pulido-Tobiassen, D., & Gonzalez-Mena, J. (1999). *A place to begin: Working with parents on issues of diversity, Chapter four: Language and bilingualism* (pp. 93). Oakland, CA: California Tomorrow.



## Tip Sheet 5A

### Things to remember



- You are your child's first teacher.
- Being able to speak two or more languages is a strength and an advantage.
- Children generally have a higher capacity to acquire and adopt a new language than their parents.
- Children need to develop their home language along with English so that they can maintain communication and relationships with their parents, extended family members and community.
- Your home language and English are both important to your child's growing up and supports the transition to school process.
- Early Childhood Service educators can assist with supporting the maintenance of the home language
- Other parents and your community can work with you too.
- If you also have limited English proficiency, consider building your own language skills.

### Helpful resources

#### Book Garden

Online catalogue including multicultural children's books, early childhood curriculum and other resources.

[www.thebookgarden.com.au](http://www.thebookgarden.com.au)

#### Connect Child and Family Services Inc (Possum Toy Library)

Operates Possum Toy Library and Parents and Educators Resource Library, includes multicultural resources.

Phone: 02 4758 9966

[www.connect.asn.au](http://www.connect.asn.au)

#### Global Language Books

Resources including mono and bilingual children's books in over 70 languages, music, games, puzzles, resources for refugees, multicultural posters, and much more. You can filter by language, cultural group, by age or resource type.

[www.globallanguage.com.au](http://www.globallanguage.com.au)

#### Leave it to Leslie

Multicultural and Indigenous products including musical instruments, games, puzzles, dolls and puppets, and baby goods.

[www.leaveittoleslie.com.au](http://www.leaveittoleslie.com.au)

#### Little Big Book Club

*New Arrivals Family Reading Pack* provides age appropriate reading materials in multilingual formats designed for the needs of migrant and refugee families with children aged five years and under. The aim of the resources is to encourage parents to talk and participate in early language and literacy activities with their children in both English and their first language.

[www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au)

#### Local Library Services

Check your local library catalogue for bilingual books or you can request books in over 40 community languages from the State Library of NSW free of charge.

#### My Language

Provide access to search engines, web directories and news in over 60 languages; translated training courses for the public.

[www.mylanguage.gov.au](http://www.mylanguage.gov.au)

#### Resourcing Parents Network

Provide parenting information and resources in community languages about child development, health, feeding and nutrition, mental health, parenting, parent education, and safety/child protection. Go to *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Resources* page.

[www.resourcingparents.com:80/cald.html](http://www.resourcingparents.com:80/cald.html)

### English Language Support for Adults

#### Learn English Online

Learn in class, by distance learning or with a home tutor. Course information for rural programs contact the Department of Foundation Studies at your local TAFE.

Phone: 02 9205 3466 or 02 9205 4367

[www.englishatames.com.au](http://www.englishatames.com.au)

#### NSW Adult Migrant English Service (AMES)

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is only available to eligible migrants and refugees settling in Australia who have been granted a permanent visa. Information on childcare in AMEP is available to download in English and 24 community languages.

[www.nsw.ames.edu.au](http://www.nsw.ames.edu.au)

#### TAFE NSW Multicultural Education – Kingswood Campus

Provide bi-lingual services, support and referral to interpreting and translating services, advice on overseas skills and qualifications recognition, advocacy and courses and tutorial support for students from non-English speaking backgrounds from Blue Mountains to Mount Druitt.

Phone: 02 9208 9595

#### TAFE NSW Western Sydney Region Outreach Unit, Mount Druitt

Offer free courses for Australian citizens and permanent residents that are designed to assist people from non-English speaking backgrounds to improve literacy, job seeking and computers skills.

Phone: 02 9208 6384

[www.wsi.tafensw.edu.au](http://www.wsi.tafensw.edu.au)

# Working with Refugee Families in Early Childhood Services

'The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) acknowledges that for children to develop a strong sense of identity they need to feel safe, secure and supported and that 'educators' knowledge of individual children is crucial to providing an environment and experiences that will optimise children's learning.'

(EYLF: p.33)

## Things to consider

### Geographic isolation, loss of family and social support networks, and difficulty building new social networks

The isolation and sense of lost felt by many parents during resettlement can be challenging. Early childhood services can support families by fostering opportunities to strengthen attachment among parents and children and help families to meet and socialise with other families.

### Childrearing practices

Don't assume refugee families will know about childrearing practices in Australia or are able to find out about them. Explain clearly what general expectations are, for example *'.... by this age we would expect your child to be starting to eat solid food – you could start with mashed banana and move on to....'*

### Communication and language barriers

Many refugees don't have the language skills to communicate effectively in English and struggle to communicate issues and concerns. They may not be aware that they can ask services to book an interpreter. When

booking an interpreter you need to consider the gender, ethnicity and language/dialect of the interpreter (refer to **Tip Sheet 4** on *Using Interpreters*).

### Lack of knowledge of how the systems work and lack of confidence in approaching services

Service systems operate quite differently in other countries. Many refugees are also unfamiliar with the concept of Children's Services and any other support services that you may be referring to so take the time to assist these families understand what is available to them.

### Rights and Responsibilities

Due to the unfamiliarity with the Australian service system many refugee families lack of awareness of their rights and responsibilities. Their rights and responsibilities as parents and services users should be explained to them.

### Distrust or fear of professionals

Ensure that family members are welcomed to your service. Involve the family in decision-making regarding their options as this may help them to feel included.

### Traumatic experiences can result in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

PTSD can affect peoples' capacity to retain information or take in instructions, so you may need to repeat things. If you suspect that a family member is showing signs of PTSD you can call the Service for the Treatment & Rehabilitation of Torture & Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) for advice and referral. See contact details overleaf.

### Family circumstances and composition

Sensitivity is required when asking about absent partners as families may have been separated by war and dislocation. Children may not all be the biological children of the parents you see. They may be the children of siblings or of their husbands other wives or the children may have lived part of their lives separated from their parents.

### Program planning

Be aware when planning activities that some refugee children may be sensitive to loud noises or music if they have come from a war torn country or may be disturbed by pirate play if they have arrived by sea. To assist these children to feel safe provide predictable routines and name what is coming up next as an activity.



## Tip Sheet 6

### Things to remember



A sensitive approach to people from refugee backgrounds can help to rebuild trust in people in authority that may have been damaged through previous mistreatment by others. It can also provide reassurance to those who experience fear of the system and authority figures. As a result of establishing a trusting relationship, the family may ask you to help them with all sorts of issues that you can't help them with. It is important to know your services' boundaries, have knowledge of local support services, and have an external referral process in place. You may be able to assist the family by first asking them if they would like you to refer them and how you can support the family through the referral process (refer to **Tip Sheet 7** on *Referral*).

#### What is the difference between a refugee and a migrant?

Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their countries because they have been persecuted while migrants make a conscious choice to come to Australia. One of the most significant differences is that migrants can go home at any time if things do not work out as they had hoped or if they get homesick. Most refugees cannot. Humanitarian entrants are refugees who have been selected by Australia from overseas for resettlement and asylum seekers are refugees who are having their application for protection assessed.

#### How do I know if a family is from a refugee background?

Refugees do not necessarily want to identify as such so you will need to be aware of which countries refugees are arriving from, for example, in 2010/2011 in the Nepean area, refugees were mainly from Sudan, Burma, Iraq, and Bhutan. Once you have found out which country the family is from you will be able to find out more information online or ask the family directly in a sensitive way.

### Tips on how to ask sensitive questions

- ▶ Explain clearly and simply why you need the information.
- ▶ Remember to use a relaxed and informal manner.
- ▶ Ensure quiet and uninterrupted space.
- ▶ Do not pursue questions that cause unease or discomfort.
- ▶ Only ask questions relevant to the information that you need.

### Support Services

#### NSW Refugee Health Service

Provides free clinical assessment advice and referral for recently arrived refugees. Refugee health fact sheets, community profiles, guide books for working with refugees and multilingual resources are available.

**Phone: 02 8778 0770 or go to [www.refugeehealth.org.au](http://www.refugeehealth.org.au)**

#### NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)

Provides a range of professional services to facilitate the healing process for refugees who have been exposed to torture and trauma. Resources and publications available include group program training kits for newly arrived refugee and migrant families *Families in Cultural Transition* and for children and young people, and *Settling In*.

**Phone: 02 9794 1900 or go to [www.startts.org.au](http://www.startts.org.au)**

Refer to **Tip Sheet 7** on *Services and Resources Guide* for more information.

### Quick Tips

- ▶ **Form filling** - adopt a sensitive and gradual approach to collecting information. Questioning especially when the family member doesn't understand the need for the information you are gathering may be reminiscent of interrogation.
- ▶ **DO bear in mind that asking refugees to repeat their traumatic stories may have a re-traumatizing effect on the individual.** Although you may be curious about their past, they might not be comfortable about divulging too much. Let people tell their stories in their own time.
- ▶ **Be aware of different cultural practices and beliefs,** particularly in relation to childbirth and parenting. It is important to ask the family if they have particular cultural practices or beliefs that they would like to be acknowledged (don't assume all people from a particular country and/or culture do things in the same way).
- ▶ **Financial resources** - many families have limited resources to access available services and resources as they are often supporting family members still in refugee camps or in other difficult living situations.
- ▶ **Literacy** - parents may not be literate in English or in their own language. Whilst translated material is helpful it is also important to ask whether the person can read, or has someone who they can go to who will read it for them.



# Migrant and Refugee Service, Resource and Referral Guide for Early Childhood Services in the Nepean Area

'Partnerships also involve educators, families and support professionals working together to explore the learning potential in every day events... so that children with special needs are provided with daily opportunities to learn...'

(EYLF: p.12)

This tip sheet provides information on the range of services and resources available to **support migrant and refugee families** with young children 0-8 years old in the **Nepean** area. It covers issues such as child care, health, government assistance, and settlement support.

Services can be a **gateway** to a network of support by providing information on the different types of services and resources that are available. It is important that service providers help families to become familiar with the key early childhood services in their local and regional area.

Early childhood services can play a **valuable role** in assisting families to access information and support to help them with the many challenges of resettlement, including housing, education and health services. **Providing information and facilitating referral** will help to overcome the lack of family and community support that many of these families experience.

Families from migrant and refugee backgrounds are often **unaccustomed** to seeking assistance from health and social services, particularly in early childhood health and development. Their home countries may have lacked these services or they may have been too expensive to access.

These families may not be used to seeking care outside the home, particularly from strangers. They may also see it as shameful. Many parents are therefore **unfamiliar** with the concept of early childhood services, early intervention or health promotion and how these can benefit families.

Services need to **be aware** of, and address, the factors that create barriers to accessing support services. Services may need to adopt more **flexible** procedures to improve access.

Workers need to develop a relationship with families to **build trust**. As a result of establishing a trusting relationship, the family may ask you to help them with all sorts of issues that you can't help them with. It is important to know your services' boundaries, have knowledge of local support services, and have an external **referral process** in place. You may be able to assist the family by first asking them if they would like you to refer them, to provide some information about the service you suggest for referral, and how you can support the family through the referral process.

## Tips on facilitating referral

- ▶ You may need to make an initial call to the referred service to establish a point of contact for the family
- ▶ Indicate if an interpreter is needed
- ▶ Assist in making an appointment
- ▶ You may need to arrange someone to take the family member to the appointment
- ▶ Provide clear directions including estimation of transport costs
- ▶ Follow up with the family to ensure your support is no longer needed.



## Tip Sheet 7

### Service and Resource Listing

1. Cultural and Linguistic Service Support
  - 1.1 Multicultural Playgroups
2. Migrant and Refugee Family Support Services
  - 2.1 English Language Support for Adults
3. Family Support Services
4. Health
  - 4.1 Mental Health
  - 4.2 Refugee Health
5. Interpreters
6. Training and Service Development

#### 1. Cultural and Linguistic Service Support

##### Bicultural Support Program

Provide time limited linguistic and cultural support to eligible Children's Services to assist with the inclusion of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugee and Indigenous children.

Recruitment and training of new workers offered on an ongoing basis.

To access the program you need to be referred by either Children's Services Central or by your regional Inclusion Support Agency.

Phone: 02 9569 1288  
[www.eccfcsc.org](http://www.eccfcsc.org)

##### Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) – Sydney North West

Provide childcare services staff with practical advice and support in including children with additional needs into a quality child care environment.

Phone: 02 4732 7843  
Email: [isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:isa@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au)

#### 1.1 Multicultural Playgroups

##### Blue Mountains Multicultural Playgroup

Phone: 02 4782 1555  
Email: [bmfss-yola@pnc.com.au](mailto:bmfss-yola@pnc.com.au)

##### Penrith Multicultural Playgroup

Phone: 02 9623 9199  
Email: [jasprizzalausj@missionaustralia.com.au](mailto:jasprizzalausj@missionaustralia.com.au)

### Resources

#### Book Garden

Online catalogue including multicultural children's books, early childhood curriculum and other resources.

[www.thebookgarden.com.au](http://www.thebookgarden.com.au)

#### Children's Services Central General Resource Library (Lady Gowrie Child Centre)

Specialist children's services resource pool, accessible online, includes multimedia, books, articles, videos, and a range of hands-on materials for children and staff, resources to support curriculum development and resources for staff professional development.

[www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au)

#### Connect Child and Family Services Inc (Possum Toy Library)

Operates Possum Toy Library and Parents and Educators Resource Library, includes multicultural resources.

[www.connect.asn.au](http://www.connect.asn.au)

#### Early Words

Program designed to encourage and support families to read to their children, and help prepare them for reading and writing in the school context. Print materials, including tip sheets for parents, posters, DVDs, and book bags are translated into 10 community languages.

[www.earlywords.info](http://www.earlywords.info)

#### Foundation House

Provide publications and resources to enhance the understanding of the needs of people from refugee backgrounds, including *Raising Children in Australia - A resource kit for early childhood services working with parents from African Backgrounds* (2007); *Healthy Eating and Living in Australia* (2000); and *Information to Shop Well, Eat Well and Feel Well*.

[www.foundationhouse.org.au/resources/publications\\_and\\_resources.htm](http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/resources/publications_and_resources.htm)

#### Free Kindergarten Association (FKA)

Multilingual, multicultural, educational materials for early childhood programs designed to support staff to incorporate multicultural perspectives in all programming.

[www.fka.com.au](http://www.fka.com.au)



## Global Language Books

Resources including mono and bilingual children's books in over 70 languages, music, games, puzzles, resources for Refugees, multicultural posters, and much more. You can filter by language, cultural group, by age or resource type.

[www.globallanguage.com.au](http://www.globallanguage.com.au)

## Leave it to Leslie

Multicultural and Indigenous products include musical instruments, games, puzzles, dolls and puppets, and baby goods.

[www.leaveittoleslie.com.au](http://www.leaveittoleslie.com.au)

## Little Big Book Club

*New Arrivals Family Reading Pack* provides age appropriate reading materials in multilingual formats designed for the needs of migrant and refugee families with children aged five years and under. The aim of the resources is to encourage parents to talk and participate in early language and literacy activities with their children in both English and their first language.

[www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au)

## Local Library Services

Check your local library catalogue for bilingual books or you can request books in over 40 community languages from the State Library of NSW free of charge.

## Modern Teaching Aids

Go to SOSE/HSIE/Inclusion pathway and scroll down for multicultural teaching aids and resources.

[www.teaching.com.au/sose.asp](http://www.teaching.com.au/sose.asp)

## My Language

Provides access to search engines, web directories and news in over sixty languages; translated training courses for the public.

[www.mylanguage.gov.au](http://www.mylanguage.gov.au)

## Resourcing Parents Network

Go to *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Resources* page with links to resources and information available in community languages about child development, health, feeding and nutrition, mental health, parenting, parent education, and safety/child protection.

[www.resourcingparents.com:80/cald.html](http://www.resourcingparents.com:80/cald.html)

## 2. Migrant and Refugee Family Support Services

### Nepean Migrant Access Inc. (NMA)

Provide information, assistance and settlement support to migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants. Services provide range of casework, community development, language/ethnic specific groups, advocacy and referral.

Phone: 02 9833 2416

[www.nma.org.au](http://www.nma.org.au)

### Penrith Refugee Program – The Mamre Project

Refugee Women's Program provides English language, health and vocational education support, currently focusing on women from Southern Sudan in and around Penrith LGA. There is a free crèche and transport. Referrals and inquiries can be made to Sister Janet.

Phone: 02 9670 5321

### Centrelink Multilingual Telephone Information Service

Free service allows the enquirer to speak in their own language to sort out Centrelink issues. *Note: you can ask for an interpreter if required at any Centrelink Office.*

Phone: 13 1202

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

### Family Assistance

Provide multilingual service information fact sheets in 26 languages.

Phone: 13 6150 | Multilingual call: 13 1202

[www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au)

## Resources

### Beginning a Life in Australia Booklets

Available in 38 community languages, provide useful national, state/territory and local settlement information for migrants, humanitarian entrants, their sponsors and service providers.

[www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/settle-in-australia/beginning-life/booklets.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/settle-in-australia/beginning-life/booklets.htm)

### Calendar of Cultural & Religious Dates

Aims to raise awareness of key cultural and religious events, festivals and national days.

[www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/calendar-australia/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/calendar-australia/index.htm)

## Community Information Summaries

Describes the communities living in Australia by country of birth, and their descendants and present a broad range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics from the *2006 Census of Population and Housing*.

[www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/index.htm)

### Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care

Information available about Special Child Care Benefit (SCCB) for parents experiencing financial hardship and how to access free child care if studying Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) – see **Fact Sheet 11**. For children with additional needs, including children from culturally and diverse backgrounds, your child care service may be eligible for extra assistance through the Inclusion and Professional Support Program – see **Fact Sheet 14**.

[www.oceccc.gov.au](http://www.oceccc.gov.au)

## 2.1 English Language Support for Adults

### Learn English Online

Learn in class, by distance learning or with a home tutor. Course information for rural programs contact the Department of Foundation Studies at your local TAFE.

Phone: 02 9205 3466 or 02 9205 4367

[www.englishatames.com.au](http://www.englishatames.com.au)

### NSW Adult Migrant English Service (AMES)

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is only available to eligible migrants and refugees settling in Australia who have been granted a permanent visa. Information on childcare in AMEP is available to download in English and 24 community languages.

[www.nsw.ames.edu.au](http://www.nsw.ames.edu.au)



## Tip Sheet 7

### **TAFE NSW Multicultural Education – Kingswood Campus**

Provide bi-lingual services, support and referral to interpreting and translating services, advice on overseas skills and qualifications recognition, advocacy and courses and tutorial support for students from non-English speaking backgrounds from Blue Mountains to Mount Druitt.

Phone: 02 9208 9595

### **TAFE NSW Western Sydney Region Outreach Unit, Mount Druitt**

Offer free courses for Australian citizens and permanent residents that are designed to assist people from non-English speaking backgrounds to improve literacy, job seeking and computers skills.

Phone: 02 9208 6384  
[www.wsi.tafensw.edu.au](http://www.wsi.tafensw.edu.au)

## 3. Family Support Services

Mainstream local community organisations that provide a number of services for families needing additional support including young parents, children with disability, and parents from culturally diverse/Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

### **Anglicare (Financial Support)**

Phone: 02 4728 4466  
[www.anglicare.org.au](http://www.anglicare.org.au)

### **Barnardo's Penrith Children's Family Centre**

Phone: 02 4729 1211  
[www.barnardos.org.au/barnardos/html/penrith\\_centres.cfm](http://www.barnardos.org.au/barnardos/html/penrith_centres.cfm)

### **Catholic Care Penrith Family Support**

Phone: 02 4721 5331  
Email: [penrithoffice@ccss.org.au](mailto:penrithoffice@ccss.org.au)

### **Blue Mountains Family Support Services**

Phone: 02 4782 1555  
Email: [bmfss@pnc.com.au](mailto:bmfss@pnc.com.au)

### **Bridging the Gap Brighter Futures and Play Therapy**

Phone: 02 9673 1211  
[www.btg.org.au](http://www.btg.org.au)

### **Connect Child and Family Services - Nepean**

Phone: 02 4758 9966  
[www.connect.asn.au](http://www.connect.asn.au)

### **Gateway Family Services - Blue Mountains and Penrith**

Phone: 02 4739 5963  
[www.gatewayfamilyservices.org.au](http://www.gatewayfamilyservices.org.au)

### **Mission Australia Nepean Parenting Networks – Penrith and Hawkesbury**

Phone: 02 9623 9199  
[www.missionaustralia.com.au](http://www.missionaustralia.com.au)

### **Mountains Outreach Community Services (MOCS)**

Phone: 02 4758 6811  
Email: [admin@mocs.org.au](mailto:admin@mocs.org.au)

### **Nepean Community & Neighbourhood Services (NCNS)**

Phone: 02 4721 8520  
[www.spyns.org.au](http://www.spyns.org.au)

### **NSW Department of Family and Community Services**

Promotes the safety/wellbeing of children and works to build strong families and communities. (Helpline 132 111)

Phone: 02 9205 1500  
[www.community.nsw.gov.au](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au)

### **Peppercorn Family Services - Hawkesbury**

Phone: 02 4587 0222  
[www.peppercornservices.com.au](http://www.peppercornservices.com.au)

### **Uniting Care Burnside New Parent Infant Network (NEWPIN)**

Phone: 02 9637 1522  
[www.newpin.org.au](http://www.newpin.org.au)

### **Wesley Mission Brighter Futures Nepean**

Phone: 02 4723 9200  
[www.wesleymission.org.au](http://www.wesleymission.org.au)

## 4. Health

### **Primary Care and Community Health Network in Sydney West Area Health Service (SWAHS)**

The network provides community based Child and Family Health Services primarily across Blue Mountains, Penrith and Hawkesbury Local Government Areas. Requests for interpreters available for child and family health services can be made via the central referral service, or through the nearest community health centre.

### **SWAHS Central Referral Service for Child and Family Services**

Phone: 1800 222 608

### **Nepean Blue Mountains Multicultural Health Team**

Team covers the Blue Mountains, Penrith, Lithgow and Hawkesbury LGAs, and can assist local CALD residents with navigating the health system, through health education and health promotion sessions.

Phone: 02 4734 1600  
[www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs/](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs/)

## Resources

### **NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS)**

Provide a wide range of publications available for download in many languages on topics including early childhood, infant and child feeding and health, and parenting.

[www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au)

## 4.1 Mental Health

### **Transcultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC) CALD Children and Families Mental Health Program**

Provide culturally appropriate interventions to children, adolescents and/or their parents/families from CALD backgrounds who may be experiencing mental health difficulties or are at risk of experiencing a mental health problem. This is a free service.

Phone: 02 9840 3328  
Toll Free: 1800 648 911  
[www.dhi.gov.au/tmhc](http://www.dhi.gov.au/tmhc)



## 4.2 Refugee Health

### NSW Refugee Health Service (RHS)

Provide free health assessment advice and referral for recently arrived refugees. Refugee health fact sheets, community profiles, guide books for working with refugees and multilingual resources are available.

Phone: 02 8778 0770  
[www.refugeehealth.org.au](http://www.refugeehealth.org.au)

### NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)

Provide a range of professional services to facilitate the healing process for refugees who have been exposed to torture and trauma. Resources and publications available include group program training kits for newly arrived refugee and migrant families *Families in Cultural Transition* and for children and young people, and *Settling In*.

Phone: 02 9794 1900  
[www.startts.org.au](http://www.startts.org.au)

## 5. Interpreters

### National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd (NAATI)

Provide a directory of accredited and recognised translators and interpreters available for work.

Phone: 02 9267 1357  
[www.naati.com.au](http://www.naati.com.au)

### Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

Nationwide 24 hours, 7 days a week translating and interpreting services in over 100 languages and dialects.

Service providers please note there are user charges, for more information including eligibility for fee-free services call 1300 131 450.

Phone: 13 14 50  
[www.immi.gov.au/tis](http://www.immi.gov.au/tis)

## Resources

### Centrelink Multicultural Training Products

Range of resources developed to assist professionals and customer service staff who have culturally diverse clientele. Resources include *Working with Interpreters DVD*; *Multicultural Customer Service Training CD ROM*; and *A guide to Ethnic Naming Practices*.

Email: [multicultural.services.nat@centrelink.gov.au](mailto:multicultural.services.nat@centrelink.gov.au)

## 6. Training and Service Development

### Children's Services Central

Professional development and training opportunities available to further develop the skills and knowledge of childcare professionals.

[www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au)

### Family Worker Training and Development Programme

Provide local, affordable training tailored to meet the needs of family workers and children's service providers.

[www.fwtdp.org.au](http://www.fwtdp.org.au)

### Youth Action & Policy Association (YAPA)

The *Access and Equity Guide for services working with young people*, resource can assist organisations to identify their own policy gaps and access barriers to culturally and linguistically diverse people and provides examples on how to develop a policy and action plan along with examples of practical strategies to address barriers and gaps once they are identified.

[www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/topics/refugee.php](http://www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/topics/refugee.php)

'Services can be a gateway to a network of support by providing information on the different types of services and resources that are available. It is important that service providers help families to become familiar with the key early childhood services in their local and regional area.'

# Belonging, Being & Becoming

## The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009

(Excerpts relevant to  
providing culturally inclusive  
programming)

### OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY

Educators promote this learning, for  
example, when they:

- support children in times of change and bridge the gap between the familiar and the unfamiliar
- build upon culturally valued child rearing practices and approaches to learning
- are emotionally available and support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings
- recognise that feelings of distress, fear or discomfort may take some time to resolve
- promote children's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing
- maintain high expectations of each child's capabilities
- build on the culturally valued learning of individual children's communities
- show respect for diversity, acknowledging the varying approaches of children, families, communities and cultures
- build upon culturally valued approaches to learning
- actively support the maintenance of home language and culture

### OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

Educators promote this learning, for  
example, when they:

- expose children to different languages
- engage in interactions with children
- explore the culture, heritage, backgrounds and traditions of each child within the context of their community
- explore with children their ideas about diversity

### OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING

Educators promote this learning, for  
example, when they:

- welcome children and families sharing aspects of their culture and spiritual lives
- draw on family and community experiences and expertise to include familiar games and physical activities in play

### OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS

Educators promote this learning, for  
example, when they:

- build on the knowledge, languages and understandings that children bring to their early childhood setting
- explore the diversity of cultures and social identities
- promote in children a strong sense of who they are and their connectedness to others – a shared identity as Australians
- share and transfer knowledge about children's learning from one setting to another, by exchanging information with families and with professionals in other settings
- understand that competence is not tied to any particular language, dialect or culture

### OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- value children's linguistic heritage and with family and community members encourage the use of and acquisition of home languages and Standard Australian English
- recognise that children enter early childhood programs having begun to communicate and make sense of their experiences at home and in their communities
- model language and encourage children to express themselves through language in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes.

**'All children  
experience learning  
that is engaging and  
builds success in  
life'**

(EYLF: p. 7)