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Welcome to the Fifth Edition of the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Newsletter

News and Views *from the Director - Steve Bowman*

Welcome to this edition of our bimonthly Newsletter. With the end of the financial year, a number of changes have taken place at the Centre, with new programs, new staff/volunteers, and some staff moving on to new places. I take this opportunity to thank those staff who have contributed to the work of the Centre over the past 12 months and welcome those who have recently joined us. It seems we are constantly living with change as we grapple with climate,

economic and political change. All these are reminders to me of the enormous challenges faced by humanitarian entrants that are associated with great change in their lives including settling into new cultural surroundings so different from their birthplace. It is my hope that all Australians and centres like the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka will continue to be welcoming and active in building a supportive community.

Settlement Grants Program

The Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka provides generalist casework, referral and advocacy services to humanitarian entrants and migrants in the north metropolitan area. The Generalist's services provide settlement information which may include such topics as immigration and citizenship, finance matters, the employment process, education and training, overseas qualifications, form-filling, accommodation and housing, health and mental health issues, childcare and youth issues, aged care, domestic violence, legal and police matters.

The Generalists' services are available Monday–Thursday 9am–5pm, and Friday 9am– 4.30pm.

Our two SGP Generalists work in a job-share arrangement. Dolly Holzinger, who works on Monday afternoons, Wednesdays and Fridays, has had many years of experience working with the Burmese community. Marika Krstevska's experience has been in assisting newly arrived entrants in the Integrated Housing Settlement Scheme program. Marika is available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Their common email address is: ercgen@westnet.com.au

Phone 9440 0625 / 9440 1920

Dolly and Marika are very welcome additions to the professional staff of the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka.

Koondoola Integrated Services Program

Mandy Whitton, who replaces Chris Ward, started on 14 July, and with Chris, has been dealing mainly with housing issues, signing leases, completing applications, applying for Homeswest bonds, and doing the property reports.

Coordinator: Mandy Whitton.

World Youth Day



INTERNATIONAL
EDMUND RICE NETWORK
YOUNG ADULT
JUSTICE GATHERING

Over the past two centuries, the Christian Brothers have worked across the globe principally in education. In more recent times the 'Edmund Rice Network' has evolved to comprise many other men and women who are not members of the Congregation but that are employed or volunteer to work collaboratively in various ministries initiated and inspired by the Christian Brothers. Alongside many traditional and alternative education initiatives, the Edmund Rice Network is now also involved in healthcare, community development, social justice and advocacy programs, and

specialised ministries working with the poor and other people living at the margins of society, such as the ministry here at the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka. With the WYD Festival scheduled for Sydney, it was decided this was an opportune time the young adults of the Edmund Rice Network around the world to come together to celebrate, reflect and renew. One person from each ministry of the Edmund Rice Network was chosen and funded to represent their ministry. Joe Moniodis, Coordinator of the ERCM Multicultural Sports and Recreation Program, was chosen to represent the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka. He reports of some of his experiences:



THE WORLD YOUTH DAY EDMUND RICE YOUNG ADULT JUSTICE GATHERING

took place between 9th - 13th July at Mulgoa in New South Wales. Young adults from all over the world who are

associated in some way with the Edmund Rice Network were invited to attend. The conference was broken up into two main parts, with the first being a series of workshops relating to various social justice issues and spirituality, including the situation in Zimbabwe, a conversation with gay Catholics and interfaith dialogue. There were two key note speakers who gave amazing presentations on human rights issues, their practice in Australia and relation to doctrines of various religions.

The second half of the conference was designed to allow for the conference delegates to discuss specific ideas and projects that they might undertake when they returned home. This was particularly successful for the Perth delegation and the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka with one of the outcomes being a commitment from all the delegates to be part of the "Every Human Has Rights" campaign that has been embraced by our Youth Leadership Group. From the conference at Mulgoa, the Edmund Rice Network delegation, numbering some 100 people went on to World Youth Day, which was a memorable experience. The sight of so many pilgrims everywhere and the boisterous singing on the streets and in the trains was amazing. The Edmund Rice Network theme song and chant for the conference was "Those who love justice, shine like the stars, shine like the stars, for all eternity!" The Holy Father spoke to the people three times during the week, which was quite inspirational, along with the people chanting, in truly Aussie fashion, "Benedicto!" *Thanks, Joe.*



"This Gathering of Young Adults from across the International Edmund Rice Network is the first of its kind - It is a special time, created for people to share stories, hopes, dreams and visions".
The Staging Team—Richard Mavros et al

Indigenous Children's Program; Moorditj Koolangka

During the cold winter month of June, we were fortunate in hiring the Koondoola Community Centre. The children enjoy indoor games and rose to the occasion when Topoff's Entertainment challenged them to try a variety of tricks. Karla Hart, an Indigenous artist, encouraged them to be proud of their culture. In July, David Wirrapanda, Troy Cook, Bianca Franklin and Shannon gave talks about their own lives, and stressed the importance of education. The children were given various autographed articles to take home.

Coordinator: Br Phil O'Loghlen

News Briefs from our Program Coordinators

CBERS Redress Service

Overall, the development of the service is progressing well in the short three months during which they have been operating, having had over 200 clients up to June and 129 in July contacting the service the majority of whom live in WA. In response to the high demand for service, three new practitioners have been contracted and have commenced working with applicants. One immediate concern that has emerged is the need to visit unwell or infirm people and other clients unable to attend their offices, e.g. prisoners, within the time frame available.

Coordinators: Philippa White & Gail Green

Settlement Grants Program

Over 45 clients in June and over 79 in July were given one-to-one services, 47 of whom were first-time clients. The main issues included Centrelink payments, citizenship, Homeswest Review applications, Keystart Shared Equity, Housing Loan applications and Legal Aid assistance. The majority of clients were Sudanese, followed by Somalians, Burmese, and other African and Middle East countries, such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Eritrea, and Afghanistan.

Generalist Workers: Marika Krstevska & Dolly Holzinger

Driver Education Program

This new program is creating a lot of interest due to the issues facing humanitarian entrants when they need to obtain a driver's licence. At this stage, a promotion plan has been developed, as well as criteria for applicants, and "memorandums of understanding" with the Defensive Driving School, who will actually teach the driving skills, and AMES who are developing the teaching modules, including the costings that have been agreed upon. We hope that the course will be up and running by mid-August.

Coordinator: Chris Ward

DSR Sports Program

Refugee Program

June's sports program focused on Netball for boys and girls. For one of the weeks, Rusty, from the West Coasters Netball Club, which trains many girls from CaLD backgrounds, came and took the session. During the month, some challenges presented themselves and appropriate sanctions have been agreed to.

July's sports focus was on indoor beach volleyball and basketball. Jessie, with the help of Brooke and Br Jim, ran the sessions while Joe was away.

Indigenous Program

The Indigenous Program began with two sessions of indoor cricket, followed by a basketball match against the Refugees group with one of the Youth Leaders refereeing the match. The Aboriginal youth responded well to the Youth Leaders. The numbers are still low, although there are hopeful signs of gradual increases. We find that getting participants into clubs is proving very difficult.

Youth Leadership Group

The main focus in June was the National Refugee Week Universal Declaration of Human Rights Project. Achievements for July include:

- ⇒ One leader on a Mirrabooka Police Station Open Day committee;
- ⇒ Six leaders went on an out-going together;
- ⇒ One leader was on a panel at 6EBA FM to discuss the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Project (including their eminent leader, Joe!).

Coordinator: Joe Moniodis

Ogaden Community Program

During the months of May/June 12 clients were assisted with settlement related issues including accommodation, document and financial assistance. Two information sessions regarding mental health were well attended.

Unfortunately, this program had to be closed on 30 June as the grant was not renewed.

Coordinator: Maryan Ibrahim

Thank you Maryan and Bahsan. We miss you.

ESL Program

During July, there were 189 participants being taught in 18 separate classes each week. Our Basic Beginners classes have five separate teachers all following a similar program. The demand for places is high, while the space available in each room is limited!

Coordinator: Angela Broderick

Lifeskills Program

With the financing of the 2007/08 grant, over 100 sessions were delivered across three locations. Student evaluations confirm that the program has been beneficial.

The new grant period commenced from 1/07/2008. We look forward to the fresh achievements and challenges presented by this new grant.

Coordinator: Ros Trestrail

"Women Together" Program

Very tasty foods are being prepared (*and eaten!*) each Monday during this delightful program, as well as busy work such as knitting, crochet, and patchwork quilting being done.

Although numbers are picking up gradually, there are very few African women participating, as they are more intent on learning English which is on at the same time.

Coordinator: Sally Herzfeld

Youth Leisure Program

During June, one excursion was to Mawson Park where the group members honed their skills in football, soccer, and basketball, and then enjoyed a barbecue. The group also participated in the ERCM Human Rights Day. Three new participants from Sudan and Ethiopia have joined the group.

Coordinator: Br Jim van der Zalm

**Edmund Rice Centre
Mirrabooka Inc**

**Sponsored by the
Christian Brothers**

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We are on the Web!

www.edmundricecentremirrabooka.com



***World Youth Day
Sydney 2008***
*Congratulations to the many
ministries of the Edmund Rice
Network for their generosity
in supporting such a successful
International Adult Youth
Justice Gathering during the
visit of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI.
It was certainly a momentous occasion
to be remembered and savoured.*



Volunteers Needed

The Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka is an incorporated, not-for-profit, charitable organisation managed by a Committee of Management under the auspices of the Christian Brothers.

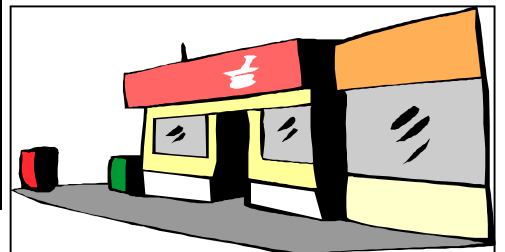
The day-to-day operation is managed by a full-time Director, nine part-time Program Coordinators, a full-time Community Settlement Worker, several part-time receptionists and a team of volunteers. Many of these volunteers are qualified teachers.

The Centre continually develops new programs in response to expressed needs and in accord with the various skills offered by the team of volunteers.

As classes increase, there is an ever-growing need for more volunteers to help us to serve the needs of our refugee families so that they may settle happily in their new country.

Forthcoming Events of Interest

⇒ Volunteers & Staff Meeting
5.00pm, Thursday 7 August 2008,
followed by Buffet Tea at 6.15pm
where we farewell Maryan and thank Nel
for her work in the finance area..



If you would like to support the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc, your donation will be most gratefully accepted. Your donation will enable people from Refugee and Indigenous backgrounds, including youth, to continue to gain benefits from our educational programs.

I enclose a donation to assist the work of the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc:

\$20 \$50 \$100 \$500 Other

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Donations can be made by cheque or by direct deposit.

Please make cheques payable to "Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc" or deposit directly into "Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc", Account BSB 066 183, Account No: 1009 1408.

Reference: *Your Surname & Don e.g. Smith Don*

Title _____ Given Name _____ Family Name _____

Address _____ Post Code _____

Phone () _____ Fax () _____ Email _____