

Settling Well

Evaluation of a schools-based support program for refugees and asylum seeker young people in Geelong



In partnership with



Settling Well: Evaluation of a schools- based support program for refugees and asylum seeker young people in Geelong

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PROJECT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is a product of a partnership between CatholicCare Victoria and Australian Catholic University (ACU). In particular, the authors wish to especially thank Mr Nestor Estampa and Mr Chris McNamara of CatholicCare Victoria and Ms Vivien Cinque for their many contributions to this project.

The authors also wish to thank all the research participants who generously gave up their time through surveys or interviews with the researchers.

The project was activated by ACU's Stakeholder Engaged Scholarship Unit (SESU) which was established to provide an avenue through which ACU can address issues of social, cultural and economic importance as identified by communities. Completing this project through the SESU enables ACU to live its mission to be deeply engaged in and produce better outcomes for communities experiencing disadvantage or marginalisation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

In recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' spiritual and cultural connection to Country and in continuing ACU's commitment to Reconciliation, the authors acknowledge the First Peoples and the Traditional Owners and custodians of the Country where ACU campuses are located.

We respectfully acknowledge Elders past and present and remember that they have passed on their wisdom to us in various ways. Let us hold this in trust as we work and serve our communities.

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4	4. METHODOLOGY	56
Key findings	5	Past students survey	56
Other findings	5	Case study of past students	57
Recommendations	6	Administrators and stakeholders survey	58
1. BACKGROUND	8	Interview with Program Coordinator	58
Measuring good settlement for young people	9	Limitations of this study	58
Settle Well: A Geelong-based support program	10	TABLES	
Personal wellbeing	12	4.1 Summary of report samples and methods	59
Career and pathways	13	5. FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY	60
Group and community activities	13	Research Question 1	60
Education and training	15	Research Question 2	62
Why a schools-based intervention is needed	16	Research Question 3	63
TABLES		GRAPHS	
1.1 Settle Well program logic	18	5.1 Improvements to mental and physical health	65
1.2 Summary of Settle Well components	20	5.2 Belonging and connectedness	65
FIGURES		5.3 Academic engagement	66
1.1 Settle Well program description	22	5.4 Factors of educational disadvantage	66
1.2 Settle Well employment framework	23	5.5 School learning and interest in further study	67
2. REVIEW OF SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED TO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A REFUGEE, MIGRANT OR ASYLUM SEEKER BACKGROUND IN VICTORIA	24	5.6 Job readiness and securing employment	67
Key findings	24	5.7 Motivation to engage with community	68
Context and aims	25	5.8 Attitudes to Australian and home culture	68
Method: Inclusion criteria and review of services	25	5.9 Success of Settle Well in achieving its goals	69
Aims, delivery models and funding of programs	26	5.10 Understanding of supports and diversity	69
Well-being and mental health support	29	6. WHAT ELSE DID WE LEARN ABOUT SETTLE WELL?	70
Career preparation, training and pathways	33	TABLES	
Community connectedness and life skills	38	6.1 How enjoyable was Settle Well?	71
Learning and educational support	43	7. CONCLUSION	72
Conclusion	48	REFERENCES	74
TABLES		APPENDIX A: CASE STUDY QUESTIONS	78
2.1 Mapping Settle Well to similar Victorian-based services	50	APPENDIX B: ADMINISTRATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS SURVEY QUESTIONS	80
3. INSIGHTS AND UNDERSTANDINGS FROM THE SETTLE WELL PROGRAM COORDINATOR	54	APPENDIX C: PROGRAM COORDINATOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	82



Executive summary

Australia is becoming an increasingly diverse country, with 48.2% of the population having a parent who was born overseas, and 27.6% of the population having a birthplace other than Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Accompanying this increase is a growing number of young people with migrant and refugee backgrounds, whose unique and additional settlement needs are often unrecognised (MYAN, 2020). One program which focuses on the unique needs of migrant and refugee background young people is the CatholicCare Victoria Settle Well program offered in Geelong, Victoria, a regional primary settlement area for humanitarian entrants arriving via the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP; Department of Home Affairs, 2022a).

This report presents an evaluation conducted by the Australian Catholic University of the CatholicCare Victoria Settle Well program. This report sought to evaluate the supports Settle Well provides to asylum seekers and refugee young people who attend North Geelong Secondary College (NGSC) and Northern Bay College (NBC), located in Geelong, Victoria, as well as the supports the program provides to the engaged students' mothers. Additionally, this report evaluated the support provided by Settle Well compared to those provided by other support services in Victoria via a literature review.

The report includes a survey and case studies with past Settle Well students, a survey with administrators and stakeholders from organisations that support or partner with Settle Well, and an interview with the Settle Well Program Coordinator. The past students survey gathered information regarding the past students' health and well-being, levels of English fluency, adjustment to culture and education in Australia, and factors that they perceive might have disadvantaged them in their education. The case studies with past students who were deemed a success by the Program Coordinator, were used to gain further insight regarding past students' experiences of the Settle Well program, and what role, if any, the Settle Well program had in their success. The survey with administrators and stakeholders from organisations that support or partner with Settle Well provided insight into the effectiveness and success of Settle Well in achieving its goals from the perspective of the staff in organisations partnering with CatholicCare Victoria. The survey examined their perspective of students' well-being, academic, social and communal

engagement, job readiness and employment, and their understanding of Australian law and social services. Lastly, the interview with the Settle Well Program Coordinator was conducted to gain an understanding of the multifaceted roles and responsibilities undertaken by the Program Coordinator and to gain insight into his experiences as the Settle Well Program Coordinator.

Key findings

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE SETTLE WELL PROGRAM BEEN EFFECTIVE IN IMPROVING THE WELL-BEING AND CONNECTEDNESS OF REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER PARTICIPANTS PREVIOUSLY AT RISK OF DISENGAGEMENT FROM SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LIFE?

- 71.5% of past students reported that Settle Well helped them to form friendships, stay involved with life inside and outside of school, connect to their local communities and enhanced their sense of belonging
- Past students reported that the Settle Well Program Coordinator helped them to feel welcome and confident, which enhanced their mental health and general well-being and their connectedness with school and community life
- 66.7% of administrators and stakeholders reported Settle Well was effective in improving students' mental health
- 33.3% of administrators and stakeholders reported Settle Well is effective in improving students' physical health
- Administrators and stakeholders strongly agreed or agreed that Settle Well helps participants improve their sense of belonging and connection to family (83.4%), school (100%), culture (100%), local community (100%) and Australian society (83.4%).

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE PROGRAM BEEN EFFECTIVE IN ACHIEVING ITS LONG-TERM GOALS TO ENHANCE PARTICIPANTS' EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL AND COMMUNAL ENGAGEMENT?

- Past students reported that Settle Well, particularly the Program Coordinator, was very or extremely helpful in getting them ready for a job, assisting them to choose an appropriate career pathway and achieve long-term goals in career and education
- 100% of administrators and stakeholders agreed that Settle Well was effective in helping students be job ready
- 83.4% of administrators and stakeholders agreed that Settle Well was effective in helping students secure employment
- 83.4% of administrators and stakeholders agreed that Settle Well was successful in motivating students to engage with sporting or recreation groups.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE PROGRAM BEEN EFFECTIVE IN CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY HARMONY IN NORTHERN GEELONG?

- Settle Well provided past students with the skills, support, and connections needed while at school to be successful in settling into Australia
- 57.1% to 71.4% of past students reported feeling connected to the culture of their country of origin while also feeling comfortable adopting the Australian culture in various life areas
- 100% of administrators and stakeholders agreed that Settle Well was effective in achieving its goals of improving participants' health and well-being, enhancing their educational, professional, social and communal engagement, and positively contributing to social cohesion and community harmony.

Other findings

- Based on an extensive review of similar programs offered in Victoria, the Settle Well program has no major service gaps. Settle Well offers commensurate services for young people with a refugee, migrant and asylum seeker background in their four focus areas of well-being and mental health support, career preparation, training and pathways, community connectedness and life skills, and learning and educational support.
- The Settle Well program's set of strengths in comparison to most other programs offered in Victoria is in a) providing school-based support that is specifically tailored to the needs of refugee, migrant or asylum seeker students at the participating schools (rather than offered to all young people more generally, or to all refugee, migrant, or asylum seeker people rather than specifically to young people within this cohort, as with numerous other programs), and b) in the breadth of support offered to students relative to the smaller program resourcing as compared to other providers, with the program being managed by a single Coordinator and with support across all four program areas being integrated into a single program. While several organisations provide outreach services for school students or partner with schools to help them establish local programs, their educational programs usually form just one part of the organisation's delivery framework; other services they offer to refugee, migrant or asylum seeker young people are often provided by different or larger teams, rather than all services being encompassed within a single program with one Program Coordinator as is Settle Well.
- Past Settle Well students reported enjoying the program and would recommend that other people take part in Settle Well.



Images provided by CatholicCare Victoria

Recommendations

- 1 That the CatholicCare Victoria website include a full list of components offered under the Settle Well program, in order to create greater accessibility and broaden visibility and knowledge of program components amongst parents, students, and other organisations.
- 2 That the personal well-being components offered in the Settle Well program are made more visible and available to program participants and other stakeholders. Related to this, CatholicCare Victoria might consider expanding the components of some of the Settle Well programs (such as L.I.V.E. Well Club's Active Lifestyle and Well-being Program) to include physical health activities.
- 3 That the Justice Education Program and Group and Community Activities components are strengthened, and Education and Training component seek to further enhance students' academic engagement and English skills.
- 4 That the Settle Well program receive greater resourcing to alleviate the risk to its long-term efficacy, given that program knowledge, workflow, and relationships that have been established across multiple sectors largely rest on a single Program Coordinator.
- 5 That outcomes of the Settle Well program graduates are tracked, benefiting the records kept pertaining to Settle Well and CatholicCare Victoria, and that an 'alumni network' is created that would help current and past Settle Well participants connect, share experiences and skills and network.
- 6 That the categorisation and names of the four focus areas of the Settle Well program framework are refined and revised to reduce overlap in components offered under each focus area and to provide greater clarity regarding the program framework. A more integrated program outline would be beneficial if seeking to attract further funding or expand the program to other sites. For example, the career and pathways, and education and training focus areas provide similar offerings with some career preparation activities offered under the education and training focus area (e.g., Job Info and access to traineeships and apprenticeships). It would be beneficial for all career preparation activities to be placed under the career and pathways focus area and for the education and training focus area to be renamed (e.g., education support). In addition, the group and community activities component could be renamed to better reflect what those activities aim to achieve (for example, 'community connectedness and life skills', as it has been described in the literature review). As part of this work, revision of the Settle Well program framework and program logic to align more rigorously with the four components of 'active citizenship' as identified by MYAN Australia in their National Youth Settlement Framework would be beneficial.
- 7 That expansion of the Settle Well program to complement existing components might be considered for future service planning in the following two areas:
 - 7.1 Development of a family learning club to increase the capacity of families to support their children's learning, complementing the existing parents 'back-to-school' and CALD Women's group.
 - 7.2 Development of a peer mentoring network where Settle Well graduates who have secured further education, training or employment are trained to mentor current Settle Well participants on navigating schooling, settling into Australia, and finding a job, as a form of career preparation and social support.

1. Background

As of 2021, 48.2% of Australians had a parent who was born overseas, and 27.6% of Australians had a birthplace other than Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022). A large proportion of the migrant and young person population in Australia is comprised of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds. During the 2020–21 financial year, 3,578 young people arrived in Australia, representing 17% of Humanitarian, Family, and Skilled migration arrivals to Australia during that period (Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network [MYAN], 2022)¹. Thus, due to the extensive cultural diversity within Australia, it is critical that focus is placed on the settlement experiences and challenges faced by migrants in Australia, and the programs which support individuals during their settlement journey. Due to the unique and additional challenges faced by migrant and refugee young people during settlement, their needs often are unrecognised (MYAN, 2020). As such, asylum seeker and refugee young people settlement is a key focus of this report.

Settlement is defined by the Australian government National Settlement Framework as ‘... a time of adjustment as migrants and new arrivals seek to become oriented, established, integrated and independent in their communities ... settlement is multifaceted and complex’ (Department of Home Affairs, 2019, p. 2). The settlement process is non-linear and shaped by many factors, with migrants learning to navigate and understand Australian society through the development of cultural and social capital and skills (MYAN, 2020). With the correct supports available, migrants are able to be successful in their settlement and settle well (Department of Home Affairs, 2019).

During settlement, migrant and refugee young people face an array of challenges as they attempt to settle and adjust to their new environment. The challenges faced by migrant and refugee young people include but are not limited to problems with schooling (difficulty navigating an unfamiliar education system (MYAN & Refugee Council of Australia, 2016); attending mainstream schooling which does not meet their unique needs (Centre for Multicultural Youth [CMY], 2011b); management of parental expectations as to academic achievement and performance (MYAN, 2020); learning a new language (CMY, 2011b; MYAN, 2020); socio-economic disadvantage (MYAN, 2020); increased risk of mental health problems (MYAN, 2020); and responsibilities related to family member settlement (adaptation of family dynamics) (CMY, 2011b; MYAN, 2020). In addition to the challenges of settlement, migrant and refugee young people also must deal with the challenges that all young people face such as forming a personal identity. However, these challenges are

more complex than those experienced by their Australian-born, non-immigrant peers (Couch et al., 2021), and often compound with settlement challenges (MYAN, 2020).

Migrant and refugee young people, as well, experience a range of barriers, both structural and non-structural, to accessing services and support that their Australian-born, non-immigrant peers do not encounter (MYAN, 2020). Barriers to accessing services include the cost associated with services, limited numbers of bicultural and bilingual workers in services to help young people articulate their needs and explain services, limited English language skills, and exclusion from services due to delivery approaches and narrow policy requirements (MYAN & Refugee Council of Australia, 2016).

Given the complex and multifaceted challenges and barriers migrant and refugee young people face during their settlement in Australia, it is vital that young people are supported and empowered to settle well and become contributors and active members of Australian society (MYAN, 2020).

Measuring good settlement for young people: The MYAN National Youth Settlement Framework

The National Youth Settlement Framework (NYSF) developed by MYAN is Australia’s first (and only) framework designed to address the settlement rights and needs of young refugees and migrants (MYAN, 2020). The framework was first published in 2016 and an updated version was published in 2020. The framework is designed to set a standard of good practice

for services (government and non-government) within the settlement and youth sectors (MYAN, 2020). To create an understanding and facilitate good youth settlement, the NYSF is comprised of five components (MYAN, 2020, p. 9):

1. Understanding the refugee and migration experience for adolescents.
2. Understanding the Australian settlement context.
3. Understanding Australian youth work.
4. Facilitating good youth settlement through active citizenship.
5. Facilitating active citizenship through good practice capabilities.

The optimum settlement goal for migrant and refugee young people is active citizenship (NYSF components 4 and 5; MYAN, 2020), which is vital for young people to settle well (CMY, 2018a). Active citizenship is defined by CMY (2013) as ‘the formal and informal ways that young people engage and contribute to the community and broader society’ (p. 3). Concepts encompassed in active citizenship include agency, identity and belonging, participation and power, with agency being of particular importance for migrant and refugee young people as migrant and refugee experiences commonly diminish their sense of agency (MYAN, 2020).

Active citizenship consists of four interconnected major domains – civic participation (i.e. participation in democratic processes, participation in volunteering activities, understanding and enjoyment of civil, legal, and political rights, understanding and enjoyment of legal responsibilities); economic participation (acquiring English language skills,

¹ While this figure is down from previous years (9,474 young people 2019-2020, and 13,759 young people 2018-2019), declines occurred for total overseas born population during this period. See Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2022, April 26). Australia’s overseas-born population drops during pandemic [Press release]. <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/australias-overseas-born-population-drops-during-pandemic>

acquiring digital literacy, engagement in pathways towards employment, having stable income, having stable and safe housing); personal well-being (goals for the future and an understanding of pathways, positive [intergenerational] relationships, positive physical, mental, and sexual health, positive self-esteem, well-developed life skills); and social participation (bonding and bridging networks, freedom from discrimination and racism, participation in the community, positive peer networks). These four domains serve as key life areas where services can support migrant and refugee young people to settle well (MYAN, 2020). Within each domain are outcome-focused indicators of active citizenship (listed above), which can be used by service providers to assess how migrant and refugee young people are faring with regard to achieving active citizenship (MYAN, 2020).

Migrant and refugee young people who have achieved active citizenship have built the networks, skills and knowledge necessary to settle well in Australia and navigate their multicultural identity, understand the Australian culture and society, navigate and access services, have a sense of belonging, and comfortably express their culture and/or religion (MYAN, 2020).

Settle Well: A Geelong-based support program²

Settle Well is a holistic, school-based program offered by CatholicCare Victoria, for young refugees and asylum seekers aged between 15 and 20 years old, at risk of disengagement from school and community life. The program is co-located at two participating schools, North Geelong Secondary College (NGSC) and Northern Bay College (NBC), located in Geelong, Victoria, a regional primary settlement area for humanitarian entrants arriving via the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP; Department of Home Affairs, 2022a). Supported by numerous philanthropic grants, the program uses a trauma-informed framework to offer case management, counselling, group therapy, career planning and social support to facilitate the transition to further education, training or sustainable employment (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022b). The program aims to improve the health and well-being of refugees and asylum seeker students and enhance their educational, economic, social and civic engagement (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022b), consistent with the four major domains of active citizenship.

The Settle Well program officially commenced in 2010 (CatholicCare Victoria, 2019a) at NGSC, and has been run by the same Program Coordinator, a child and family refugee case worker at CatholicCare based in Geelong, since 2013. The program seeks to act as an early intervention to issues faced by individuals from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds, such as issues regarding their visa applications, poor employment prospects, no or limited government benefits (Centrelink) and disrupted education, helping to ensure that these individuals have a strong start to their life in Australia, and settle well in the Australian and local Geelong community.

The Settle Well program has expanded and changed since it commenced, with the program delivered four days a week at

NGSC and NBC, in addition to offering out-of-school hours and holiday programs. The program framework is flexible and has evolved organically over the years in line with the needs of the particular students each year, and in 2018 the program expanded to include a weekly women's group for parents. Changes and improvements to the programs have been made in light of feedback from the students as well as other stakeholders (e.g., teachers, school staff, and community organisation staff).

During each year of operation, the program has strengthened its partnerships with many organisations (e.g. Geelong Magistrates Court, CMY, Barwon Health, Geelong Football Club, City of Greater Geelong [COGG]), and is offered in addition to other services CatholicCare Victoria offer for refugees and asylum seekers, including their Job Readiness Program, Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS), housing, financial, advocacy and referral support for asylum seekers (CatholicCare Victoria, 2020a), English Conversation Program (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022a) and Refugee Dads and Kids Weekend (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022c). As of 2020-2021, there were 111 students from NGSC (n = 51) and NBC (n = 60) who were participating in Settle Well Program. While the program officially began in 2010, between 2016 and 2019, there were 140 student participants from NGSC (n = 95) and NBC (n = 45) who participated in the program.

Due to the unique service delivery of the Settle Well program within NGSC and NBC, the students who partake in the program are supported to connect more with their school and education, find pathways to further education, get training and employment, gain confidence to achieve their career aspirations and increase their sense of well-being and social participation. The efficacy of the program largely rests on the collaborative work of the Program Coordinator, Mr Nestor Estampa – the support he provides and the support he arranges for students within and externally to their school has played key roles in helping participants to settle well and achieve their goals.

This is evident when hearing from previous Settle Well participants. For example, through the Settle Well program, Nestor supported Mary, who had disrupted schooling, with mental health, educational and career support and liaised with Victoria University to help her get into her current university course. Mary said:

If I hadn't met Nestor, I think I would still be at home and not at university. I think I would have even repeated the whole of year 12!...Nestor is like the connector... He's like in the middle, connecting me to everywhere (Gellel, 2021a).

Other examples of Settle Well's success are the story of Vakshana who escaped Sri Lanka in the middle of civil war with her mother and siblings and is now a scholar pursuing her degree in psychology (Gellel, 2020), sisters Seira and Masooma who fled their home in Afghanistan due to instability and conflict and have now both completed diplomas and are employed in their desired fields and giving back to their wider community (CatholicCare Victoria,



² Settle Well program information included in this section was largely provided by the Program Coordinator and other CatholicCare staff involved in managing the program. As well, information was sourced from CatholicCare's annual reports, the Settle Well program logic (provided by CatholicCare), grant acquittal reports (provided by CatholicCare), media reports and other grey literature.



Images provided by Pexels/ Keira Burton.

2019b), and Mustafa who was forced to flee with his family from Afghanistan due to religious persecution and war and is now an apprentice chef (CatholicCare Victoria, 2020c).

Using a trauma-informed framework, the Settle Well program is structured according to four key focus areas, (1) personal well-being, (2) career and pathways, (3) group and community activities and (4) education and training of the participants (see Figure 1.1 illustrating the Settle Well Program Description, Table 1.1 demonstrating the Program Logic and Table 1.2 documenting the program activities at both schools).

CatholicCare Victoria has previously internally evaluated the various programs that form part of the Settle Well program and invested significant resources in ensuring the Settle Well program is achieving its aims and benefitting participants. Results from these internal evaluations suggest that Settle Well's programs have made some substantial positive impacts for the participants involved. However, currently, individual outcomes for Settle Well participants are measured through the number who have remained in education and/or transitioned to further education, training or employment, with no systematic process for measuring longer-term participant outcomes after they have exited from the program. In addition, the extent to which the program is meeting its broader aims – to assist newly-arrived young people to 'settle well' in Australia by becoming active citizens and demonstrating strong personal wellbeing, social, economic and civic participation, and to contribute to greater social cohesion and community harmony – has not been evaluated yet is necessary in order to determine the program's efficacy and identify potential service improvements.

Personal Well-being

Settle Well features two specialised components focused on personal well-being: (1) Individual and/or Group Counselling and (2) Case Management and/or Advocacy, with both components commencing in 2016. Both components are ongoing and target students in Years 7 to 12, with the aim to improve students' knowledge of good mental health, improve their personal well-being, feel confident about their future, and express their emotions in helpful and healthy ways. During its first year, 15 students were provided with Individual/Group Counselling, and currently, counselling has been provided to 115 more student participants as of 2020–21. In addition, during the first year of Settle Well's Case Management/Advocacy component, 15 students participated, and as of 2020–21, case management has been provided to 284 more student participants. Support provided to students as part of Case Management/Advocacy has included assisting students with applying for Youth Allowance and other Centrelink benefits, access to emergency relief programs for families with food insecurity, and applying for Working With Children checks.

The Well-being teams at NGSC and NBC and the Settle Well Program Coordinator work closely when providing personal well-being support to students, providing extensive case management and advocacy support to all Settle Well participants. Some students access support from Settle Well as well as from the Well-being teams; in these instances, with consent from the client, the Program Coordinator works collaboratively with the Well-being teams to reduce double

handling and to ensure that both interventions complement each other. As well, Settle Well clients who disclose issues with worry, anger or frustration during case management sessions are provided with incidental counselling, and Year 12 asylum seeker students are also provided therapeutic support to address feelings of anxiety and hopelessness when transitioning to post-secondary education because of the high level of uncertainty over career options.

Career and Pathways

The career and pathways support Settle Well provides includes, (1) Work, Further Education and Training support, (2) Engagement/Networking with Community or Educational Organisations, (3) a Career Expo for Year 12 Student Participants, (4) a Barista 101 course, and (5) their L2P Learner Driving Mentor Volunteer Program. These components are ongoing and aim to improve students' knowledge about education and career pathways, provide students with the skills needed to best engage in their education, be 'career-ready' and apply for employment, and connect and engage students with their community.

Settle Well's work, Further Education and Training component and Engagement/Networking with community or educational organisations commenced in 2016 and 2017, respectively. During the first year of the Work, Education, and Training component, 50 students participated, and since then, the component has provided its support to 528 more participants as of 2020–21. During the first year

of the Engagement/Networking component, 12 students participated, and as of 2020–21, 304 more participants have received support.

Settle Well's Career Expo for their Year 12 students and Barista 101 components commenced in 2016 and 2017, respectively. Due to COVID-19, both components' operations have been on hold since 2020. During the first year of the Career Expo, 12 students participated, and since then, 35 more students have participated. During the first year of Barista 101, which is delivered during the school holidays through two local community centres, six students participated, and as of 2018–19, 40 more students have participated.

Lastly, Settle Well's partnership with the schools and the CoGG enabled, from 2016, the referral of CALD students to the L2P Learner Driving Mentor Volunteer Program, which is administered by the CoGG. Due to COVID-19, L2P was on hold during 2020; however, it recommenced in 2021. During the first year of the component, 10 students participated, and as of 2020–21, 52 more students have been supported.

Group and Community Activities

The group and community activities Settle Well provides include: (1) Justice Education Program, (2) CALD Community 'Kitchen Rules' Program, (3) LIVE Well Club, (4) Shout Out Day/Story Telling and Public Speaking Training, (5) Confident Communications Training for Settle Well Public Speakers, (6) Weekly CALD Women's Group, and (7) Multicultural Beach Safety Program. All components are ongoing and are run in



Images provided by CatholicCare Victoria.

conjunction with various community partners.

Settle Well's Justice Education Program commenced in the year 2016 at NGSC, with 19 students participating in the program during its first year, and as of 2018-19, 57 more students have participated in the program. In 2019 the program expanded to include students from NBC, with eight students participating in the program during its first year. The Justice Education Program aims to educate participants on the Australian court system and law, the role of the police and other legal authorities, cultural differences and dealing with racism, how to stay safe, and the consequences of committing crimes, with the program running over 10 weeks. Throughout the program guest speakers discuss a range of topics with students, and during the last program session, students participate in a mock trial held at the Geelong Magistrates Court (Gellel, 2022), in which students undertake various roles (e.g. magistrate and defendant) with the intention of the mock trial improving students' judgement and decision-making skills (Gellel, 2019). The Justice Education Program is currently run with support from the fOrT-CoGG, Geelong Magistrates' Court of Victoria, Geelong CATS, Deakin CATS Community Centre, Victorian Multicultural Commission, CFA District 7, CatholicCare Victoria's Prison Chaplaincy team, Barwon Adolescent Task Force, VicPol Western Region Division 1, and Barwon Community Legal Service.

In 2017, Settle Well commenced the CALD Community 'Kitchen Rules' Program at NGSC and NBC with six students participating during the first year of the program, and as of 2018-19, 34 more students have participated in the program. The program consists of 10 weeks of kitchen classes with

participants completing various activities, including food preparation, coffee making, a supermarket tour, and learning about food and kitchen safety. The kitchen program aims to promote social skills and connectedness, kitchen and café skills (including food safety knowledge), employment skills, and knowledge of the services available to students. The program runs with support from Barwon Health, Norlane Community Centre, and Geelong Food Relief Centre.

Furthermore, Settle Well's LIVE Well Club (formerly LIVE Active Lifestyle and Well-being Program), Shout Out Day/Storytelling and Public Speaking Training, and Confident Communications Training for Settle Well Public Speakers aim to increase participants' confidence, self-expression, and connection with peers. The LIVE Well Club is a nine-week program run at NBC with participants learning art and music from mentors, and the 'tree of life', in addition to connecting with peers, learning problem-solving skills, and learning about their thoughts and emotions, and social supports that are available to them. The culmination of the club is a group presentation whereby students present their 'tree of life' and 'song of life' to their school principal. The LIVE Well Club commenced in 2018, as a two-day initiative with three students participating, and in 2019, the club evolved into its current nine-week format, with nine more students participating as of 2019-20.

Settle Well's Shout Out Day/Storytelling and Public Speaking Training, and Confident Communications Mentoring Program for Settle Well Public Speakers are new interlinked initiatives that commenced at NGSC and NBC in 2021, with 19 students participating in the Shout Out Day/Storytelling

and Public Speaking Training during its first year. The Shout Out Day/Storytelling and Public Speaking Training is a one-day workshop in which participants learn storytelling and public speaking and have the opportunity to share their experiences and passions with their peers (Gellel, 2021b). The initiative is run with support from CMY, NBC's EAL Office, and NGSC's Well-being Team. Students who complete the Shout Out training are invited to participate in the Confident Communications Mentoring Program for Settle Well Public Speakers. The program delivers six months of mentoring sessions (an hour per month after class at school) in which participants take part in public speaking lectures/exercises and have opportunities to get paid as public/Shout Out speakers and emcees in Settle Well components and activities such as the Justice Education Program and the CALD Women's Group End of Term Celebration/Footy Clinic/Christmas Hampers Distribution. The Confident Communications Mentoring Program is run with support from NBC, NGSC, and Upstart.

Lastly, in 2018, Settle Well expanded its support to the mothers of students participating in the Settle Well program (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022b), creating the Weekly CALD Women's Group and Multicultural Beach Safety Program. Refugee mothers must navigate resettlement while experiencing the challenges of supporting their children through schooling (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022b).

The Weekly CALD Women's Group aims to establish strong bonds between the women in the group and provide them with skills that will assist in their settlement in Australia. The group includes various supports, and regular activities to engage mums in community events, such as watching AFL games and the Footy Clinic through Geelong CATS, AFL Barwon and St Mary's Sporting Club; pathways to volunteering where mums volunteer weekly at Rosewall Community Centre and NGSC in Term 3. Information sessions include subjects such as Australian law, fire safety at home and in the community, mindfulness, social media, education assistance programs, career pathways, emergency relief programs, and a back-to-school program. This includes a session for parents on how to use the school COMPASS portal to access the school reports of their children and to book upcoming parent and teacher interviews.

The Multicultural Beach Safety Program is a subprogram of the Weekly CALD Women's Group. Beach Safety aims to teach participants about water safety and involves participation in various activities, including learning about water hazards and how to use paddleboards and bodyboards (CatholicCare Victoria, 2020b). The Weekly CALD Women's Group has been held weekly for parents at NGSC (Terms 1 to 4, since 2018 up to the present) and NBC (Term 3 in 2018). The Multicultural Beach Safety Program is held at the end-of-term celebration after Term 4.

During the first year of the Women's Group and Beach Safety Program, 94 parents participated, and as of 2020-21, 88 more parents have been supported. The Women's Group at NGSC is run in partnership with the Well-being and the EAL Teams and at NBC with the EAL Team. The Beach Safety Program is run with support from The fOrT/CoGG and Life Saving Victoria. The Women's Group is supported by speakers from

different organisations including CFA, VicPol, Geelong CATS/AFL Barwon, Geelong Food Relief Centre, Drummond Street Services, Wellways Australia, Rosewall Community Centre, Norlane Community Centre, Uniting Barwon, Centrelink, Salvation Army, and CatholicCare Victoria Emergency Relief Program.

Education and Training

Settle Well features two specialised components focused on education and training: (1) the Multilingual Homework Club and (2) Job Readiness Program. Both components are ongoing and aim to address key challenges that students with refugee backgrounds face, such as needing extra learning support and needing extra support around navigating post-secondary pathways and career decisions (Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, 2019).

Settle Well's Multilingual Homework Club commenced at NBC in 2018 and is open to students in years seven to twelve. During its first year, 19 students participated, and since then, the homework club has provided support to 48 more participants as of 2020-21. The Multilingual Homework Club aims to provide academic and English support for the students who take part. Aims of the club involve participation in activities, including reading and writing stories; learning and using high frequency English words; accessing library books and other resources to assist with learning, e.g., literacy and numeracy books, educational games, etc. The club is supported by CatholicCare Victoria's Volunteer Manager, CMY, Multicultural Education Aids from NBC's EAL Office, local churches, and volunteer tutors. These assist tutors and students each session and are trained by CMY.

Settle Well's Job Readiness Program commenced in 2020 and targets CALD mums and students from NGSC and NBC in post-secondary education. The program aims to build participants' confidence in relation to employment processes and equip participants with the skills required for employment (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022d). The Job Readiness Program offered to Settle Well graduates and students' mothers provides education and support around English language skills, applying for jobs, interview preparation, and workplace culture³ and provides participants with ongoing mentoring.

In addition to the two specialised Settle Well programs focused on education and training, Settle Well also provides students with career support, career preparation support, job seeking/learning support, and advocacy support. The supports are complementary and are designed to ensure participants' engagement in education and training into future employment. Career supports provided to students consist of the provision of information about appropriate education, training, and employment options for students to consider.

Career preparation support is dedicated to students who are looking for part-time work whilst in school, or are at risk of disengaging from school. Year 12 students who are transitioning to further education, training or employment are offered one-on-one support. Career preparation support also has linked students to employers for a one-week school-based

³ Also offered to refugees and asylum seekers living in Dandenong, Epping and Footscray by CatholicCare Victoria. See CatholicCare Victoria (2022). Job readiness program. www.catholiccarevic.org.au/directory/services/job-readiness-program.

work experience during the school holidays in 2021; there are plans to expand this school holiday work experience program in the future.

Job seeking and learning support focuses on preparation for employment (i.e., resumé, cover letter, conducting job searches and applications online). Advocacy support provides students with knowledge and support to navigate post-secondary pathways and career decisions. Encompassed within advocacy support are meetings with school careers teams; Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) leaders; personal counsellors at TAFE; coordination with the schools' careers offices; VCAL & VCE coordinators to assist refugee and asylum seeker VCE students with applications for university courses, scholarships and special entry access schemes (SEAS); applications through VTAC; engagement with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Combined Refugee Action Group (CRAG), and Bellarine for Refugees (B4R); job information sessions in partnership with Northern Futures Gordon, Gforce, Barwon Community Legal Services, and the fOrT/CoGG; linking participants with Job Services Australia providers, employers, and Centrelink. See Figure 1.2 illustrating Settle Well's Employment Framework.

Why a schools-based intervention is needed

Among resettled refugee young people, school attendance and educational success are highly valued opportunities (Correa-Velez et al., 2017; Morrice et al., 2020; Selimos & Daniel, 2017). The level of confidence that refugee young people have in re-joining education has a meaningful impact on their settlement success (Bond et al., 2007). Despite the importance of education, refugee children and young people often encounter significant disruptions to their formal education (Letchamanan, 2013). As a group, refugee young people are at risk for non-completion of secondary schooling (Correa-Velez et al., 2017), as well as experiencing numerous barriers that prevent their access to and engagement in education (Cowling & Anderson, 2021).

Barriers experienced by refugee young people in relation to academic participation and completion include: experiencing discrimination (Correa-Velez et al., 2017); lack of recognition of prior education (Earnest et al., 2015); not understanding or being familiar with the settlement country's academic expectations and education system (Morrice et al., 2020); unsuitable education level placement based on age not academic ability (Nunn et al., 2014); and insufficient support to catch up with the academic level of their non-refugee peers (Morrice et al., 2020).

In addition, age at migration can be a barrier to education participation for refugee young people, as migrating at an older age has been found to be associated with non-completion of secondary schooling (Correa-Velez et al., 2017). This may be in part explained by being unable to enrol in standard schooling after settlement due to ageing out of the schooling system while in refugee camps and detention centres (Earnest et al., 2015).

Conversely, numerous studies have identified the correlation between regular engagement in schooling and successful resettlement among refugee children and young people. Specifically, research findings suggest that education and academic achievement help facilitate refugee young people's resettlement (Earnest et al., 2015) and enhance future employability and socioeconomic status (Burhani & Sayed, 2017).

Regular schooling can provide refugee young people with a sense of safety and stability after extended periods of uncertainty or trauma (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007). Taking part in regular schooling also provides refugee young people with an environment that fosters the development of stable peer relationships (Correa-Velez et al., 2010), as well as a sense of belonging and social inclusion (Selimos & Daniel, 2017). Thus, refugee young people's access to and engagement in education enhances resettlement in their new country and provides stronger pathways to meaningful economic and social engagement and improved personal well-being.



TABLE 1.1

SETTLE WELL PROGRAM LOGIC							
ASSUMPTIONS, EVIDENCE OF NEEDS AND ISSUES	PROGRAM KEY COMPONENTS	INPUTS	PROGRAM OUTPUTS	PARTICIPATION OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES		
					SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
<p>VISA APPLICATION Bridging/TPV/SHEV for asylum seekers takes too long to process. The longer the wait the higher the anxiety.</p> <p>POOR EMPLOYMENT PROSPECT Employment rate for CALD 56% and 72% for Australian born. Resumés are rejected on the basis of their first name and surnames.</p> <p>LACK OF GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE No or limited Centrelink benefits for YP on sponsorship visas, and asylum seekers</p> <p>DISRUPTED EDUCATION FROM THEIR HOME COUNTRIES The need to find work to support themselves and their family</p>	<p>PERSONAL WELL-BEING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case management and therapeutic support Advocacy <p>CAREER AND PATHWAYS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career planning Job seeking/learning support Case management and counselling <p>GROUP AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justice Education Program CALD Community 'Kitchen Rules' Program L.I.V.E Active Lifestyle & Well-being Program CALD Parents Engage Program <p>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multilingual Homework Club Job Info Access to traineeships and apprenticeships 	<p>BEST PRACTICE APPROACHES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trauma-informed recovery goals Strengths-based Youth participation Reflective practice Advocacy Cross-sectoral collaboration <p>CAREER PATHWAYS NETWORKS</p> <p>Trades: Northern Futures, Centrelink, Job Active, Gordon East Geelong</p> <p>TAFE: The fOrT Online Homework Club, NGSC and NBC careers managers, TAFE career and personal counsellors, ASRC, CRAG, B4R</p> <p>UNI: Scholarship office, Well Being Team, Multicultural Office, ASRC, CRAG, B4R</p> <p>PARTNERSHIPS WITH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Houses CoGG Geelong interagencies Barwon Health Community volunteers 	<p>CASE MANAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency relief Sports and recreation Centrelink Job Active Housing L2P driving Mental health School career and VCAL leaders Legal <p>THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS Individual and group -based</p> <p>STRUCTURED PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly CALD Women's Group sessions/activities focusing on school, service, economic, and community engagement 10-week Justice Education Program; Weekly Homework Club 8-week Community CALD Kitchen Program 	<p>DATA Penelope data by school, gender, age, language, ethnicity, by program component/activity</p> <p>FRAMEWORKS Client's outputs measurement through Results-Based Accountability Framework across all activities</p> <p>ASSESSMENTS Hope and Dignity Scale (adapted for LIVE Well Club)</p> <p>Score Outcome Assessment (adapted for CALD Women's Group)</p> <p>PROGRAM CO-LOCATION MODEL North Geelong Secondary College, Northern Bay College</p> <p>PARTNERSHIPS ACU Engagement: Settle Well Program Evaluation</p>	<p>Students increase their knowledge in navigating a range of services</p> <p>Students are clear about their education and career pathways</p> <p>Students improve their knowledge on mental and physical health</p> <p>Students increase their understanding on legal issues and their rights</p> <p>Students increase their understanding on social supports at school and in community</p> <p>CALD Women's Group increase their knowledge of services; connectedness to school and community; and employment options</p>	<p>Students have more confidence utilising services</p> <p>Students feel more hopeful about their future</p> <p>Students express their emotions in helpful and healthy ways</p> <p>Students feel more connected to community life in safe ways</p> <p>Students utilising social supports to settle well</p> <p>CALD mums are engaged in economic, civic, school, community engagement program</p>	<p>Students are engaged in training or further education or employment</p> <p>Student personal well-being, social and civic participation improved</p> <p>Mum SCORE outcome assessment increased</p>

TABLE 1.2

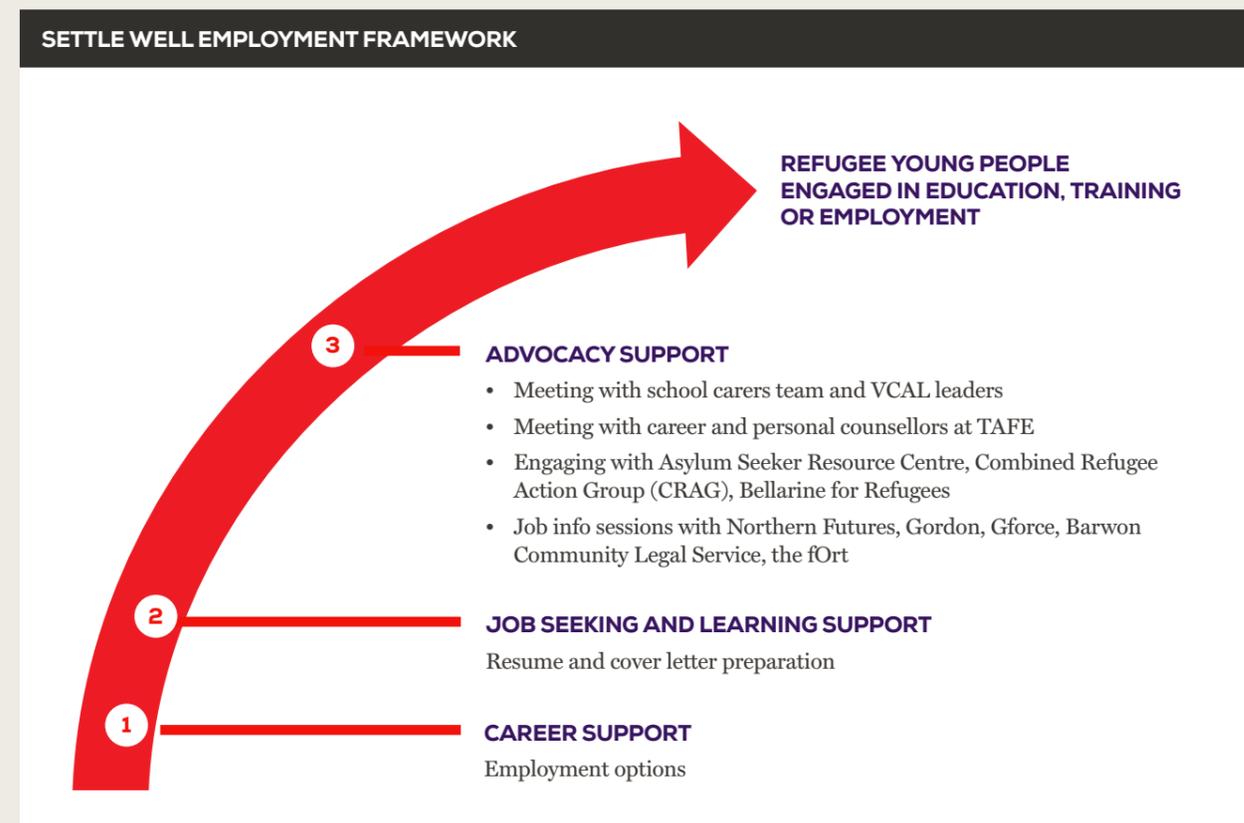
SUMMARY OF SETTLE WELL COMPONENTS				
COMPONENTS	YEAR COMMENCED	SCHOOL	TOTAL PARTICIPATED	PARTNERS
PERSONAL WELL-BEING				
INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP COUNSELLING	2016	NGSC & NBC	130	-
CASE MANAGEMENT AND/OR ADVOCACY	2016	NGSC & NBC	299	-
CAREER AND PATHWAYS				
WORK, FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING	2016	NGSC & NBC	578*	-
ENGAGEMENT/NETWORKING WITH COMMUNITY OR EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATIONS	2017	NGSC & NBC	316	-
CAREER EXPO FOR YEAR 12 STUDENT PARTICIPANTS	2016	NGSC & NBC	47	-
BARISTA 101	2017	NGSC & NBC	46	-
REFERRAL TO L2P LEARNER DRIVING MENTOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM/COGG	2016	NGSC & NBC	62	-
GROUP & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES				
JUSTICE EDUCATION PROGRAM	2016	NGSC & NBC	84	Barwon Adolescent Task Force, Barwon Community Legal Service, CMY, Deakin CATS Community Centre, the fOrT/CoGG, Geelong CATS, Geelong Magistrates Court, and VicPol
CALD COMMUNITY KITCHEN RULES PROGRAM	2017	NGSC & NBC	40	Barwon Health, Norlane Community Centre, and Geelong Food Relief Centre
LIVE WELL CLUB	2018	NBC	13	-
SHOUT OUT DAY/STORY TELLING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING	2021	NGSC & NBC	19	CMY, NBC EAL Office, and NGSC Well-being Team
CONFIDENT COMMUNICATIONS MENTORING PROGRAM FOR SETTLE WELL PUBLIC SPEAKERS	2021	NGSC & NBC	-	NBC, NGSC, and Upstart
WEEKLY CALD WOMEN'S GROUP AND MULTICULTURAL BEACH SAFETY PROGRAM	2018	NGSC & NBC**	182	Well-being Team and EAL Office at NBC and NGSC, fOrT/CoGG, Geelong CATS, Life Saving Victoria, and speakers from different agencies
EDUCATION AND TRAINING				
MULTILINGUAL HOMEWORK CLUB	2018	NBC	67	CatholicCare Victoria's Volunteer Manager, CMY, NBC EAL Office, local churches, and volunteer tutors
JOB READINESS PROGRAM	2020	NGSC & NBC***	-	-

* Figure may be reduced see footnote in relevant section. ** Parents of Settle Well students who attend NGSC and NBC. *** Past Settle Well students who attended NGSC and NBC and CALD Women's Group participants.

FIGURE 1.1



FIGURE 1.2



2. Review of support services provided to young people with a refugee, migrant or asylum seeker background in Victoria⁴

Key findings

As compared to the reviewed programs, Settle Well offers commensurate services for young people with a refugee, migrant and asylum seeker background in their four focus areas of well-being and mental health support, career preparation, training and pathways, community connectedness and life skills, and learning and educational support. No major service gaps in these areas could be identified.

Most other organisations providing support to young Victorians with a refugee, migrant or asylum seeker background target similar areas to Settle Well's four foci (reflecting the four components of 'active citizenship' as identified by MYAN) and hold similar aims to improve these young people's well-being and educational, economic, social and community engagement, and to contribute to social cohesion.

Across all four focus areas, Settle Well's strength in comparison to most of the reviewed programs is in providing school-based support that is specifically tailored to the needs of refugee, migrant or asylum seeker students at the participating schools. While several organisations provide outreach services for school students or partner with schools to help them establish local programs (Brotherhood of St Laurence [BSL], Refugee Education Support Program [RESP], Refugee Migrant Children Centre [RMCC], CMY and Foundation House), their educational programs usually form just one part of the organisation's delivery framework.

Other services they offer to refugee, migrant or asylum seeker young people are often provided by different or larger teams (as in the case of CMY), rather than all services being encompassed within a single program with one Program Coordinator as is the case with Settle Well.

Another area where Settle Well offers a point of difference across services offered is in providing support in numerous ways to mothers of students with a refugee, migrant and asylum seeker background.

While few program gaps were identified, two initiatives that may be considered for future service planning include:

- Provision of family learning clubs to further increase the capacity of families to support their child's learning (as seen in CMY Learning Beyond the Bell program, RMCC and RESP) may further support existing engagement with parents through the 'back-to-school' program and the CALD Women's Group.
- The provision of a peer-mentoring network where Settle Well graduates who have secured further education, training or employment are trained to mentor current Settle Well participants on navigating schooling, settling into Australia and finding a job, as a form of career preparation and social support (as seen in CMY Envision and Aspire to Lead programs).

Context and aims

The key questions this review seeks to answer are:

- 1 How have other programs in Victoria addressed the needs of refugee, migrant and asylum seeker students or young people experiencing vulnerability, and how do these compare to the support provided by Settle Well?
- 2 How have other programs for young refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in Victoria sought to enhance their personal well-being, economic engagement, social/community and civic engagement, and educational engagement, in accordance with the aims of the Settle Well program?
- 3 How, if at all, have other programs sought to contribute to social cohesion via community connectedness within their local community?

The review focuses on assessing similarities and differences in other programs' service models and aims, and participant outcomes and community impact where possible. Similar programs have been assessed in comparison to Settle Well's program framework, which outlines the four areas in which the program provides support, (1) personal well-being, (2) career and pathways, (3) group and community activities, and (4) education and training (see Figure 1 in the section 'Background' for a visual representation of Settle Well's program framework).

After discussing the approach taken to conducting the review, an overview is provided of the aims and service models utilised by the primary organisations offering support services to

refugee, migrant and asylum seeker young people. Following this, the services and programs offered by these organisations are reviewed according to the four areas outlined in Settle Well's program framework: well-being and mental health support; career preparation, training and pathways; community connectedness and life skills; and learning and educational support. The support Settle Well provides under the focus of 'Group and community activities' has been included under the category of 'Community connectedness and life skills'. We suggest this best describes what the activities aim to achieve. The category also aligns with a common area of support offered by similar programs. Finally, the conclusion draws together the key findings of the review.

Method: Inclusion criteria and approach to reviewing programs and services

Organisations and their programs were reviewed according to the following measures:

- 1 Program aims and how they compare to Settle Well's aims – to improve participants' well-being and educational, economic, social/community and civic engagement, and to contribute to social cohesion or community connectedness.
- 2 Service delivery model and/or program framework used, including program resourcing.
- 3 Similarities and differences to Settle Well according to

⁴ When this review was conducted all reviewed programs were running; however, prior to project completion various programs ceased. Programs that ceased are included in the review but are indicated as no longer being in place. As well, some sources cited for information are no longer available. In line with APA conventions, nonrecoverable sources have been referenced as personal communications in the text and are not included in the reference list.

the four key focus areas of the Settle Well framework; these include support other programs offer that Settle Well does not, and areas in which Settle Well provides support where other programs do not.

4 The impact of the program on participants, their family, school and local community.

Organisations and programs included within the review were either identified by CatholicCare Victoria staff as offering potentially similar services to Settle Well or were identified by the researchers through an online search and were included because of similarities to Settle Well. Accordingly, the review focuses on the four organisations that were identified as doing work most similar to Settle Well: CMY, Diversitat⁵, BSL, and RMCC. Programs offered possessing the four foci for young Victorians in general, and not specifically for those with a refugee, migrant or asylum seeker background, were excluded from the review.

All information about these organisations and programs was obtained from publicly available material, including organisations' websites, evaluations and reviews, annual reports and case studies provided by the delivering or funding organisations. Thus, a limitation of this review is that its findings are based on publicly available materials published by the organisations or their funders. It should be kept in mind that a program description an organisation includes on their website may not fully capture everything that a particular program delivers to young people. Information on outcomes for participants, families and communities has been provided where the information was available, though in many cases this was difficult to locate, particularly where programs had not been formally evaluated.

There is some available data that points to the reviewed programs having positive impacts on participants and their families, schools and local communities in the areas of training or employment pathways and increased leadership skills, confidence and sense of belonging to their community, and increased educational engagement and further education. It will be important to compare this data against the data collected from participants regarding their experience of the Settle Well program.

It should also be kept in mind that, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, many of the programs had to be either paused or reoriented to online formats. Many organisations experienced barriers to effectively meeting program aims, for example, placing students in work placements (AMES Australia, 2020a; CMY, 2020a; Cultura, 2020). For these reasons, program numbers and outcomes during that period may have been affected.

Though services offered have been reviewed according to the four key focus areas identified as important to refugee young people, and which define the Settle Well framework, some services and programs are designed to produce numerous benefits across multiple focus areas. For example, many of the reviewed career preparation support programs not only aim to increase employability and career pathways – they also aim to increase participants' social and community connectedness and build leadership and other skills. Where it is the case that programs bridge two or more categories, they have been included in the category that most relates to their

core aim, though aims that belong to other focus areas are also mentioned. More broadly, most of the services reviewed here could be considered as improving participants' well-being, in addition to the primary support they provide relating to education, employment preparation or social connection. Given the group or social nature of the activities, and the fact that they all constitute a form of support, such overlaps between service categories and the language adopted should be kept in mind when reading this review.

Aims, delivery models and funding of programs

Support services for refugee and asylum seeker students and young people in Victoria are provided by a range of not-for-profit (NFP) community service organisations, government departments, schools and other educational or training organisations. An overview of their aims, funding and service delivery models in relation to Settle Well is provided.

Working for over 30 years, Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) is an NFP organisation based in Victoria. It provides specialist knowledge and support to multicultural young people with refugee and migrant backgrounds from ages 12 to 25 years. CMY is funded by its long-standing partnerships with several state and federal government departments and strong relationships with its key philanthropic foundations and partners (CMY, 2019b). CMY has a large reach, with 148 full-time, part-time and casual staff members working in 10 locations across Victoria in the 2020–21 financial year (CMY, 2021). Their work is focused in Melbourne's North West and South East regions, as well as in the regional areas of Ballarat and Gippsland (CMY, 2019a; CMY, 2021). CMY aims to create a society in which multicultural young people can reach their full potential and live a well-connected life (CMY, 2019a). To do this, they focus on four areas, (1) working with young people by delivering direct leadership opportunities; (2) working with decision-makers by providing evidence-based guidance and advocacy; (3) working with services and forging sector and community partnerships that improve their service delivery; and (4) working with researchers to document young people's challenges in order to develop new interventions and innovation in the organisation's approach (CMY, 2020a).

As outlined in their 2018–22 Strategic Plan, CMY services align with four key areas: My Community, My Journey, My Voice and My CMY (CMY, 2018b). My Community aims to deliver programs that strengthen community connection, provide early intervention and crime prevention, and reduce racism and discrimination (CMY, 2018b). My Journey focuses on strengthening young people's engagement in education, supporting their transition to further education and training, and creating employment opportunities and networks (CMY, 2018b). My Voice is dedicated to increasing opportunities for young people to develop as leaders and active citizens, and to delivering programs that prioritise young people's voices and experiences (CMY, 2018b). My CMY focuses on developing CMY as a strong partner and leader to build capacity across sectors, via developing their staff capabilities and measuring their impact (CMY, 2018b).



Image provided by Pexels/Keira Burton.

Diversitat (also known as the Geelong Ethnic Communities Council or Cultura) is an NFP charitable community service organisation that offers a range of education support and employment pathways programs to refugee and newly arrived young people in the Geelong and Colac region; Such support includes mentoring to assist young refugees to access training and/or employment, homework clubs, and an apprenticeship/traineeship program. Affiliated with 48 cultural communities in the region, Diversitat aims to empower multicultural individuals and communities to reach their full potential as equal members of the community (Cultura, 2022). Based in Norlane, Diversitat is primarily funded through government grants, client services income and other grants, and their programs are supported by numerous NFP organisations, businesses, and educational institutions in the region, including Council of Greater Geelong (CoGG) (Cultura, 2020).

Diversitat's service focus areas include the delivery of settlement services (running the HSP and SETS), education and training (providing English language and other courses as a Registered Training Organisation), disability services to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities and aged care services, as well as several social enterprises. They provide services to young people in each of the four key areas that Settle Well prioritises: education, employment and training; well-being (including case management and referral support for newly arrived families, a parenting program and sports programs for young people) and community programs and events that increase social connection, though with a focus on education, employment and training.

Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) is a social justice organisation whose primary goal is to address the fundamental causes of poverty in Australia (BSL, 2022a). To achieve their goals, BSL partners with organisations in the broader community and nationally, including twenty-one philanthropic partners and six corporate partners (BSL, 2022e). BSL offers various programs for refugee and migrant young people. Their previously run ReSource Youth program received support from the Australian Department of Social Services and the Victorian Government Office for Youth (BSL, personal communication, 2021). Their programs align with their five-year strategy, which prioritises economic security, well-being and social inclusion for individuals and communities, and advocacy for those experiencing poverty and disadvantage (BSL, 2022a). Given their focus on eradicating poverty and ensuring economic security, their services for refugees and migrants focus on education support and employment pathways, rather than well-being or mental health (though well-being is an overall focus across all their services).

The BSL Youth Transitions Support Program (YTSP) aims to foster community participation and ReSource aims to improve leadership skills. Though not specifically a focus area, their programs contribute to improving community connectedness and life skills. BSL also provides other initiatives for young people that are not reviewed here (for example, their Education First Youth Foyers and David Scott School for young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengagement from school, or the First Jobs Project and National Youth Employment Body). These programs are not designed

⁵ n.b.: Diversitat is now called Cultura. Cultura emerged as a new organisation from the merger of Diversitat and Multicultural Aged Care Services (MACS) in 2022. See Cultura (2022). Diversitat and MACS. <https://www.cultura.org.au/about-us/diversitat-and-macs/>. They are referred to as Diversitat throughout this review.



Images provided by Pexels/Monstera.

specifically for those with a refugee, migrant or asylum seeker background, though some participants may have it.

The Refugee Migrant Children Centre (RMCC) is an NFP charity located at Sunshine. RMCC works with schools and community organisations to address the social and educational needs of children and young people aged between 5 to 18 years old from refugee and migrant backgrounds, focusing on Melbourne's Western suburbs (RMCC, 2017; RMCC, 2021a). The RMCC seeks to 'empower refugee and migrant children and youth to create their own opportunities' (RMCC, 2017). RMCC offers several school-based mentoring programs, a school holiday program, and well-being support, and also provides educational materials (RMCC, 2017). Their programs are supported by numerous philanthropic organisations, enterprise partners, and in-kind support from numerous businesses (RMCC, 2021a). The RMCC's programs have been developed around four key pillars that are similar to those of Settle Well's program framework: mental health and well-being; life skills; identity and belonging; and education. However, as they focus on school-aged children, RMCC does not target career preparation and employment. Instead, they focus on addressing the educational and social barriers and the settlement difficulties that children and young people face (RMCC, 2017).

Numerous other Victorian organisations provide similar education, career preparation, well-being and community engagement support for young refugees and asylum seekers. These organisations include numerous providers of the Commonwealth-funded SETS program, delivering settlement support for humanitarian and other entrants with low levels of

English who have arrived in Australia within the last five years (Department of Home Affairs, 2022b).

Other such bodies include:

- Jesuit Social Services' Flemington-based Homework Club (Jesuit Social Services, 2018) or Migrant Information Centre's Eastern suburbs-based homework support programs (Migrant Information Centre, n.d.).
- Uniting's Newly Arrived Youth Specialist Service (NAYSS) program, which assists newly arrived young people aged between 12 to 21 years old to develop and maintain strong connections to family, work, education, training and their local community by providing counselling, group work, skills workshops, mediation and practical support for their family (Uniting Vic. Tas, 2022).
- Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre's (SMRC) Homework Support Program (STAR Club), which provides homework support to young people and career advice, including help with TAFE and university applications, guidance on study skills and time management, and support with resumé building (SMRC, 2022b).
- Arabic Welfare's Youth Settlement program (based in the Northern metropolitan region) provides education, employment and well-being support to newly arrived clients aged 12 to 25 years old via case management, information sessions, organisational site visits, sporting and recreational activities, including school outreach workshops on mental health, conversational English, digital literacy and interviewing and job-seeking skills (Arabic Welfare, 2022).

These organisations have not been included in the review, which instead focuses on the services provided by four organisations doing the most similar work to Settle Well – CMY, Diversitat, BSL, and RMCC – with some reference to numerous other organisations and programs such as AMES Australia and the Refugee Minor Program (RMP). Table 1 below provides an overview of the aims, delivery models and programs offered by CMY, Diversitat, BSL, and RMCC as compared to the four-component program framework of Settle Well, and summarises the contents of this review.

Well-being and mental health support

Well-being and mental health are priority areas for programs that support young people with a refugee, migrant or asylum seeker background. Support in this area is provided through a range of departmental and community service programs. Settle Well seeks to support the well-being and mental health of its students through the provision of individual and/or group counselling, and case management and advocacy support with relevant other social service providers. Well-being and mental health support provided to young refugees, migrants and asylum seekers by other organisations are similar and commonly include individual counselling, case management support and referrals to relevant social and health services and recreational programs (RMCC programs, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing [DFFH] RMP), as well as initiatives to help reduce the stigma

surrounding mental health (CMY Mental Health Literacy and REVERB programs). Similar to Settle Well, several programs that provide well-being support specifically target young refugees and migrants who are either disengaged from education or employment (Department of Education and Training [DET]-funded Reconnect program) or require extra settlement support (CMY and Foundation House Ucan2 program) and aim to increase participants' social connection and re-engagement with education or employment and training pathways.

Many of the career preparation programs provided to young refugees, migrants and asylum seekers also aim to improve participants' sense of social connection and well-being. Thus, there is some overlap with some programs concerning the categories of support offered. In addition, numerous recreational, sporting and social activities provided by programs reviewed in the following section on Community connectedness and life skills can also be understood as contributing to young people's well-being and mental health. Though there is overlap in program aims, in this section, programs that primarily seek to improve the well-being of young refugees, migrants and asylum seekers are reviewed.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT AND INITIATIVES TO REDUCE MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

Most SETS providers offer case management, advocacy and referral support to young people with a refugee, migrant or asylum seeker background and their families to assist their settlement, educate them about the Australian service, education and legal systems and link them in with appropriate support. This includes referrals to counselling and mental health services and other health providers (Department of Home Affairs, 2022b).

Similar to SETS in its provision of case management and referral support to assist settlement, the Refugee Minor Program (RMP) provides case management and advocacy support to refugees under the age of 18 years old without a parent or guardian (DFFH, 2017b). Case management for the client and their carer is delivered around the key areas of carer/custodian support, health and education of the individual, and reunification with family arriving in Australia (Department of Health and Human Services, 2017) and includes, as does Settle Well, linking clients to education, training and employment pathways, mentoring and counselling at school, assistance to find recreational and social activities and to maintain Centrelink payments. However, the program is structured differently to Settle Well, in that its target group is unaccompanied minors arriving in Australia (rather than those already living in Victoria with their family or relatives).

Moreover, while, like Settle Well, RMP aims to support young refugees to settle into their new community, a key aim is to help prevent a breakdown in care arrangements during the settlement period. This is achieved through early intervention assistance to maintain care arrangements and reunification with family members (DFFH, 2017b). Another key difference between programs is that Settle Well provides many services in-house directly out of the students' schools (via the Program Coordinator, school staff and volunteers), including case management, counselling, the homework club and job readiness assistance, in addition to supporting employment pathways by arranging visits to other organisations. RMP, however, is a DFFH-run program (previously Department of Health and Human Services) and support is coordinated by departmental RMP case managers based in Footscray and Dandenong (or case contracted to other organisations across regional and rural areas), where clients must be referred to other providers to access educational, employment and well-being support (DFFH, 2017b). For example, program staff can aid individuals in finding employment by putting them in contact with service providers that help develop job-seeking skills and educate them on their work rights (DFFH, 2017a). Thus, while the support provided is similar to that of Settle Well in numerous ways, the program aims differ somewhat, and support is not school based.

Refugee Migrant Children Centre (RMCC) provides a suite of interventions that aim to improve the health of young refugees, including one-on-one mentoring and guidance consultations within schools for children at risk of school disengagement or of developing mental health problems (RMCC, 2017). They also provide physical education workshops utilising sports such as basketball, soccer and

mini-Olympics, nutrition workshops with a nutritionist from the Royal Children's Hospital, and referrals to partnering organisations and healthcare specialists (RMCC, 2017). As well, the Migrant Information Centre's youth workers provide outreach to young refugees and migrants at select schools once a week (Migrant Information Centre, n.d.), similar to the in-school mentoring and guidance consultations provided by RMCC and RESP.

In terms of initiatives that aim to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, CMY are leaders in providing youth-led advocacy through their Mental Health Literacy and REVERB programs. In partnership with Orygen Youth Mental Health, CMY offered the Mental Health Literacy Program, which worked with young people and the broader community to design and develop a range of culturally appropriate audio-visual resources to improve the mental health literacy of young people and their families from Arabic, Vietnamese, Karen, South Sudanese and Pasifika backgrounds (CMY, 2019h). Similar to CMY's Mental Health Literacy Program, their REVERB program is co-designed with young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds and aims to address the stigma surrounding mental health. Young people, CMY and mental health services co-facilitate culturally relevant conversations through workshops held with young people, mental health service providers and community members (CMY, 2019l). The workshops offer lived experiences of overcoming mental ill health and provide practical strategies that encourage better mental health outcomes for young people (CMY, 2019l). During 2020–21, the REVERB program delivered three workshops to 25 mental health services providers and 11 workshops to over 200 young people (CMY, 2021).

SUPPORT TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL CONNECTION AND ENGAGEMENT IN TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

As does Settle Well, several programs specifically target young refugees and migrants who are either disengaged from education or employment (Reconnect program) or require extra settlement support (CMY and Foundation House Ucan2 program). These programs provide well-being, case management and social services support, with the view to increasing participants' social connection and their re-engagement with education, or employment and training pathways.

The Victorian Government-funded Reconnect program aims to help Victorians experiencing disadvantage overcome the barriers preventing them from engaging in education, training and employment (DET, 2022a). The program does not specifically target young refugees, asylum seekers or migrants – persons from most age groups who are unemployed or not engaged in education or training are eligible. As well as asylum seekers of any age, eligible young people include those aged between 17 to 19 years old who have not engaged in education or training for six months or more and those aged 17 to 24 years old who have been or are currently on, Youth Justice Orders (DET, 2022a). Registered providers across Melbourne's Local Government Areas (LGA) provide tailored supports that aim to address learning and non-learning needs and develop an agreed learning plan. The plan may include referrals to counselling and mentoring, housing and mental





health supports, foundation skills, employability skills, and careers information, planning and advice (DET, 2022a). By providing wrap-around support the program aims to transition participants into sustainable education, training and employment pathways (DET, 2022a).

Registered providers of the Reconnect program for refugee or migrant young people include CMY (for Wyndham and Melton LGAs), Diversitat (for Greater Geelong, Surf Coast, Golden Plains and Colac Otway LGAs), and Migrant Resource Centre North West (for Brimbank, Hume, Whittlesea, Banyule LGAs), as well as numerous other community service organisations and training providers (DET, 2022a). Diversitat supported 107 participants in the 2019–20 year (this number includes adult participants), while AMES Australia reported in mid-2020 that 269 young people were currently a part of their program (Cultura, 2020; AMES Australia, 2020a).⁶

As well as providing the Reconnect program, CMY also runs the Ucan2 program with Foundation House. This provides support to newly arrived young people aged between 16 to 25 years old with a refugee or migrant background while settling into life in Australia (Block et al., 2017). Funded by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, support focuses on enabling trauma recovery, forging social connections and building employment and education pathways for participants (Block et al., 2017). Volunteers offer support on-site within English language programs for one day a week over six months (CMY, 2019r). Through a variety of group activities, volunteers work with program facilitators to share their work, study and life experiences, help young people to practise English, and help build their confidence

to make social connections and further develop their skills (CMY, 2019r). In 2020–21, CMY supported over 200 young people across the program (CMY, 2020a). CMY report that the program provided greater support for student participants during the transition from Year 10 to Year 11, helped develop participants' knowledge of post-secondary education options and increased their confidence in career and education pathway planning (CMY, 2020a).

The well-being support provided in the programs reviewed in this section mirrors the case management, counselling and advocacy support provided by Settle Well. While CMY's Mental Health Literacy and REVERB programs also work to improve mental health literacy and reduce stigma, Settle Well's LIVE Well Club similarly aims to improve young people's mental health literacy. Although they do not run programs that specifically aim to reduce stigma around mental health, the self-care techniques taught in the LIVE Well Club, together with the counselling and case management support provided to students, can be considered as means that encourage young asylum seekers and refugees to seek help and prioritise their well-being.



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Career preparation, training and pathways

Career preparation and support in pursuing further training and employment pathways are key features of programs providing support to refugee and asylum seeker young people in Victoria, given the barriers young refugees and asylum seekers face in completing their studies and gaining employment in Australia. These services are reviewed below where they appear to most closely resemble the support offered by Settle Well, including career planning support (assistance with resumé and cover letter writing and conducting job searches and applications online), access to work experience and linking into further education, training and employment providers, advocacy support to access careers counsellors, and information sessions and opportunities to network with community and educational organisations.

Many of the reviewed programs aim to provide career preparation support, increase employability and define and provide career pathways; they also aim to increase social connectedness, community engagement, confidence, and leadership skills among young refugee, migrant and asylum seeker participants (for example, AMES Australia Engage! program, BSL Youth Transitions Support program, CMY Envision). These aim together to strengthen economic, social and civic engagement and are integrated into the programs. It is thus difficult to discuss career preparation and pathways, and social and civic connectedness separately. However, programs that primarily support career preparation and

pathways are included in this section, and those that primarily support community connectedness are discussed in the section Community connectedness and life skills, later in the review.

Services available commonly focus on providing individual and group career preparation support, exposure to workplaces, and service referrals for further support. Support is provided in several ways, including assistance with job searching and resumé writing (CMY Employment Empowers); networking opportunities via workplace tours and industry guest speakers (AMES Australia Engage!, BSL Youth Transitions Support program); work experience and volunteering opportunities (BSL Youth Transitions Support program); leadership projects and programs (AMES Australia Engage!); mentoring and coaching (AMES Australia Engage!, CMY Employment Empowers and My Career Pathway); information sessions and workshops on key topics (CMY Envision, Employment Empowers and My Career Pathway); social and sporting activities (AMES Australia Engage!, CMY Envision); and goal mapping and referrals to identified related services (CMY Envision).

Some services also provide job skills training in specific areas, such as barista or first aid training (Migrant Information Centre youth services and AMES Australia Engage! respectively). While most of the programs aim to prepare participants for or transition them into education, training or employment, some programs also offer direct employment opportunities (CMY Employment Empowers and Envision Employment).

⁶ AMES Australia was funded to provide the Reconnect program up to the end of 2020 (AMES Australia, 2021).

The reviewed programs share some common themes and purposes. They aim to educate participants about job pathways and options in Australia; increase confidence and self-knowledge of personal and professional strengths, skills and goals; provide connections to peers and social, educational and employment programs in the community; and provide referrals to relevant employment or social service supports. While all of the reviewed programs are targeted at young people with a refugee, migrant or asylum seeker background, few are specifically offered for school students, with the exception of CMY My Career Pathway and a component of their Envision program, as discussed below.

The Youth Transitions Support program is a federally funded program provided by a small handful of organisations at select locations across Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria (Department of Home Affairs, 2021).

In Melbourne, the program is provided by both BSL and Foundation House. The program aims to increase workplace readiness and community engagement for newly arrived young refugee and asylum seekers aged 15 to 25 years old through work, education, and sport (Department of Home Affairs, 2021). At BSL, the program offers career and training services, including career guidance, linking in with employers, employment preparation support and work experience and volunteering opportunities (BSL, 2022i). Participants are offered 'tasters' that include workplace tours, industry guest speakers and conversations with people from various organisations (BSL, 2022i). BSL work with Arabic Welfare, Banksia Gardens Community Services, CMY, Hume City Council, and Spectrum to run the program in the Hume LGA in Melbourne's Northern suburbs (BSL, 2022i).

The Youth Transitions Support program has been evaluated twice, with the most recent provided between January 2016 and December 2018 (Department of Home Affairs, 2021). This evaluation found that Youth Transitions Support services have been effective in assisting young migrants and refugees to improve their education and career opportunities, employability and vocational skills, and positive social interactions (Department of Home Affairs, 2021). Most participants reported that they felt the support provided helped improve their understanding of the pathways available to them (Department of Home Affairs, 2021).

Similarly, BSL's previously run ReSource program aimed to empower young people aged 15 to 25 years old from refugee and migrant backgrounds (including those born in Australia) to make informed decisions about education, employment and volunteer pathways, and to increase their social inclusion and confidence (BSL, personal communication, 2021). Based out of BSL's Epping office, the program was open to young people who lived, worked and studied or had a connection to the LGAs of Whittlesea or Darebin and surrounding suburbs, and was funded by the Australian Department of Social Services and the Victorian Government's Office for Youth (BSL, personal communication, 2021). The ReSource program developed employment and education skills and enhanced participation in employment, education, training, and volunteering through two initiatives: jobs coaching and youth-led projects (BSL, personal communication, 2021).

The jobs coaching initiative offered career preparation

support for individuals and assisted them with job searching, resumé writing, and referrals to other compatible organisations (BSL, personal communication, 2021). The initiative also provided workshops that offered information on education and employment pathways, workplace culture, volunteering opportunities and interview skills (BSL, personal communication, 2021).

The youth-led projects initiative provided an opportunity for young people to design and implement joint leadership projects (BSL, personal communication, 2021). A Youth Committee was established, and it was planned for this committee to meet regularly in Epping throughout 2020 (BSL, personal communication, 2021). However, program delivery was altered to an online format in response to the COVID-19 restrictions (BSL, 2020, Responding to COVID-19), otherwise, little information about the specific projects developed is publicly available.

BSL also offer two other programs (Community Employment Connectors and Given the Chance – both still running at time of writing this report). The programs provide employment pathways that are open to, though not tailored specifically to, young people with a refugee or asylum seeker background. The Community Employment Connectors program offers individualised support, referrals and mentoring to increase employment and training pathways for jobseekers from CALD backgrounds across Melbourne's Inner and Outer Northern suburbs (BSL, 2022b). The program provides resumé and interview preparation support, connection with local employers and job opportunities, and education on Australian work rights, and includes an Employment Connector specifically for young people (BSL, 2022b).

BSL's Given the Chance program is a social enterprise that supports job seekers experiencing disadvantage into paid employment by partnering with a network of businesses across various industries (BSL, 2022h). The program is open to individuals facing disadvantages while looking for work, including young people, people seeking asylum, refugees, and people from CALD backgrounds (BSL, 2022h).

Similar to the ReSource program jobs coaching initiative, Diversitat previously offered the youth Job Club, which provided support in assisting young people aged 15 to 25 years old to prepare and apply for future employment (Diversitat, personal communication, n.d.). Diversitat ran the Job Club weekly on a drop-in basis at their community hub in Geelong's North during school terms, with volunteers providing information, resources and individual support to young people to aid them in obtaining employment (Diversitat, personal communication, n.d.). Diversitat reported that over 90 young people accessed the Job Club during its run period (Diversitat, personal communication, n.d.). Diversitat continue to offer a non-youth-specific job club which has offerings similar to those of the discontinued youth Job Club; although not designed specifically for young people, it is open to young people with a refugee/asylum seeker or migrant background. Diversitat offers several other initiatives that aim to provide employment opportunities for young people. One available option is support from Community Employment Connectors who meet with migrant or migrant background job seekers (including young people seeking employment) to understand



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their employment interests and provide tailored referrals to other services which will support them in preparing for and securing employment (Cultura, n.d.-a). Another initiative Diversitat continues to provide is the social enterprise My Maintenance Crew (similar to the BSL Given the Chance program), which provided 28 young people from the Geelong region with commercial and residential maintenance employment opportunities during the 2020–21 year (Cultura, 2022).

In addition to BSL and Diversitat, CMY offers several programs that aim to support young refugees and asylum seekers' career preparation and provide employment opportunities. Their programs include Employment Empowers, My Career Pathway, and Envision.

In CMY's Employment Empowers program, volunteer mentors work one-on-one with participants over 12 months to share their knowledge of the Australian job market and workplace culture (CMY, 2019d). They assist participants with applying for work (creating a resumé, preparing for interviews), help expand their social and professional networks and to find employment, a traineeship, or a paid work placement opportunity (CMY, 2019g). Participants in the Employment Empowers program can engage in paid casual job opportunities that are provided by CMY's partners in retail, hospitality, tourism, sport and recreation, administration and event management (CMY, 2019g), and Employment Empowers staff also match job seekers with employers based on recruitment needs (CMY, 2020a). The program is open to people aged 18 to 25 years old from a refugee or migrant background, living in Melbourne, and

looking for work, a traineeship or an internship (CMY, 2019d). The program also runs Career Convo webinar sessions that provide participants with tips from professionals to gain a competitive edge in securing employment (CMY, 2019g). In 2020–21, 96 mentor-mentee pairs were supported in the program, and 63 participants secured employment (CMY, 2021).

CMY's My Career Pathway provides newly arrived students from Years 10 to 12 with information and support around vocational, career and education pathways through group information sessions and follow-up one-on-one career coaching (CMY, 2020a). In 2019–20, the project officer facilitated two group workshops per term with 41 English as an Additional Language students around education and vocational pathways and provided follow-up one-on-one career coaching for students (CMY, 2020a). The program also supports students' family members who experience increased barriers to accessing and engaging with vocational and career pathways (CMY, 2020a). In 2019–20, this involved facilitation of a family engagement session with the assistance of school Multicultural Education Aides (CMY, 2020a).

A SETS-funded service, CMY's Envision program uses a strengths-based framework to assist newly arrived participants to forge social connections and work towards their personal and professional goals, supporting their settlement into their local community (CMY, 2020a). The program is open to young people of ages 12 to 25 years old who have been in Australia for five years or less, and live, study or work in the North West or South East regions of Melbourne (CMY, 2019c). Envision consists of numerous



components, including information sessions on topics such as education pathways, mental health, becoming involved in sports and volunteering, and workplace culture and rights, led by young people with settlement experience (CMY, 2019c). The program offers individual and group sessions that map participants' strengths, needs, goals and pathways to employment, and then organises referrals to CMY and external supports, including education, employment, sports, legal, driving, as well as English language and computer literacy programs (CMY, 2020a). Based on the mapping exercise, select participants are invited to join the Envision employment program, where volunteer mentors help participants to find work and better understand what it is like working in Australia. This is similar to CMY's Employment Empowers program (reviewed above) (CMY, personal communication, 2019e; 2020a).

As part of the Envision program, CMY staff and peer facilitators also offer free information sessions and leadership workshops-in-school to newly arrived students aged 12 to 25 years old (CMY, 2019c). The information sessions are peer-led and cover topics similar to the online sessions. The workshops focus on increasing self-awareness, individual goal setting, and developing new skills (CMY, 2019c). In the 2020–21 financial year, 147 young people engaged in the program intake sessions and close to 200 young people engaged in the group program and information sessions (CMY, 2021).

Similar to CMY's Envision program, AMES Australia also runs Opening Minds, Building Futures in partnership with CMY, a free career education program provided for young people from Pasifika and South Sudanese backgrounds aged 13 to 17 years

old (AMES Australia, 2020b). The program aims to expand the skills and knowledge young people need to pursue a career that interests them, rather than traditional sectors usually available to them. It includes career counselling, workshops, and information sessions, and support to develop a career plan (AMES Australia, 2020b).

AMES Australia's Engage! program works with young people (particularly CALD and newly arrived young people) to bolster their participation in community, educational, vocational or employment-related activities (AMES Australia, 2020c). The program aims to support participants' settlement journey and increase social participation, knowledge of Australian work culture and work rights, and improve outcomes for pathways into education, training and employment (AMES Australia, 2020c). The program is run across Melbourne's South East, Inner East and West metropolitan regions (AMES Australia, 2020a). The program offers a range of educational and social inclusion activities, including bus trip industry tours to different organisations that demonstrate to young people the different roles available in a diverse range of industries and assist them to explore the employment pathways available (AMES Australia, 2020c). During 2019–20, 513 young people participated in the program. Activities available included: free driving lessons, a digital literacy program, engagement nights to build confidence and provide a space to practise English language skills, mentoring, first aid training, sports programs, and a Youth Leadership Program (this included a Food Leadership program) (AMES Australia, 2020a). Though significantly affected by COVID-19 restrictions, during 2020–21 the program continued to provide the bus trip industry

tour, the Youth Leadership Program, free driving lessons, and activities to enhance young people's digital literacy skills (AMES Australia, 2021).

As compared to the services reviewed, Settle Well provides similar career preparation, training and pathways support to refugee, migrant and asylum seeker young people, including job searching and resumé writing assistance, networking opportunities and organisational visits.

Similar advocacy support to help forge training and employment pathways is also provided, including job information sessions facilitated by community partners, liaison with the schools' careers offices, VCAL & VCE coordinators to support refugee and asylum seeker VCE students with applications for university courses, and TAFE careers and counselling teams, engagement with local community refugee organisations, linking in with Job Services Australia providers and support to access Centrelink benefits.

One point of difference is that career preparation support for specific cohorts of students is offered to Settle Well participants one-on-one rather than in a regular group program as with some of the other programs reviewed. This means that support is more individualised, while Settle Well participants still benefit from attending group activities that provide both social and career support: for example, their Career Expo, Barista 101 course, and Smart Resumé and Goal Preparations Workshop, as well as the job information sessions offered in partnership with local community and educational organisations.

While Settle Well participants are offered career counselling through their school and local educational providers, and education and support with job preparation and workplace culture via the Job Readiness Program, the provision of a peer-led mentoring network as seen in CMY's Envision and Aspire to Lead programs may be an area to consider implementing if resourcing existed to support this.

CMY's Envision program, for example, which offers online and in-school information sessions to help assist newly arrived participants to forge social connections and work towards their personal and professional goals, is led by young people with settlement experience who are called peer facilitators (CMY, 2019c). Similarly, CMY's Aspire to Lead program offers a series of in-school workshops and group peer mentoring sessions to develop an event or project for their school; in these, previous participants act as peer mentors to new groups of students (CMY, 2019s).

While many other programs offer mentoring from individuals from all backgrounds (e.g. CMY Employment Empowers program or RMCC Sidekicks Seniors program), the Envision and Aspire to Lead programs specifically provide mentoring led by young people with settlement experience. Similarly, Settle Well graduates who have secured further education, training or employment might be trained to mentor current Settle Well participants on navigating schooling, settling into Australia and finding a job. This might serve to further empower young Settle Well graduates to gain confidence in sharing their knowledge and journey with younger participants and encourage social engagement among young new arrivals, as well as potentially reduce some of the load



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from the coordinator to educate participants about Australian culture, education, and workplace norms.

While there exists a wide range of career preparation, training and pathways support services offered to refugee, migrant and asylum seeker young people, few programs are provided specifically to students or are offered within schools (with the exception of CMY's My Career Pathway and a component of their Envision program), which largely sets the Settle Well program apart in this space.

Community connectedness and life skills

Ensuring that young people from refugee, migrant and asylum seeker backgrounds forge numerous social connections and feel as though they belong within their new community is an important focus for the organisations examined and a key component in achieving positive settlement outcomes for young people.

For Settle Well, it is in the Justice Education Program, CALD Community Kitchen Rules program, and CALD Women's Group where this focus comes to the fore, providing education in the Australian justice and legal system, cooking and food safety skills, and social connections and skills that assist with settlement for students' mothers. Though part of their career and pathways support focus, Settle Well's involvement in the L2P Learner Driver Mentor Volunteer Program also assists with strengthening participants' social and life skills, in addition to forging career pathways and independence.

Sporting and recreational programs in particular are commonly adopted by other organisations to foster community connection, as well as opportunities to develop and enhance life skills in numerous areas, many of which mirror the support Settle Well provides. Numerous programs also provide support to parents and families of young people from refugee, migrant and asylum seeker backgrounds to forge social connections and encourage community cohesion. These programs also appear similar to the support Settle Well provides to parents and families. One area where Settle Well specialises, where few others appear to, is in the support provided to mothers of students to improve the mothers' social connections, life skills and well-being.

INCREASING SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY CONNECTION THROUGH SPORT AND RECREATION

Sporting and recreational programs enable young people from refugee, migrant and asylum seeker backgrounds to forge stronger social connections and civic participation, aiming to reduce social disconnection, in addition to supporting their health and well-being (Olliff, 2007). Given this, many key organisations offer sporting and recreational activities to promote good settlement.

Among the sporting programs offered, Diversitat and CMY have provided numerous options. Sporting programs offered by Diversitat aim to build participants' community integration and reduce attraction to anti-social behaviour. Sporting programs offered by Diversitat include a Netball club, and a Futsal and Netball academy (Cultura, n.d.-b). The Netball club and academy are targeted at girls aged 10 to 18 years old,

and the Futsal academy is targeted at boys aged 10 to 18 years old (Cultura, n.d.-b). Based on a 2019 evaluation of the Futsal academy's delivery in 2018-19, young people in the academy reported improved attitudes and/or opinions, including increased confidence and an improved sense of belonging to the community (Diversitat, personal communication, 2019). They also reported that they learnt new skills ranging from leadership and sports to how to cope with discrimination and manage their anger (Diversitat, personal communication, 2019). Additionally, Diversitat host the annual Pako Festa festival, which brings together the Geelong community to celebrate multiculturalism and diversity through global food, arts and activities (Cultura, 2022).

CMY has also offered sports programs to strengthen participants' community connections. This includes the previously offered Women's Sports Hub. The Women's Sports Hubs offered weekly sports sessions for young women aged 12 to 25 years old with a migrant or refugee background living in or connected to Melbourne's South East region, with the sport changing each week (including soccer, frisbee and badminton sessions; CMY, 2019n). As well as sports participation, this program offered participants opportunities to develop their capability as leaders, accredited coaches, and referees in the sports sector (CMY, 2019n). In 2019-20, the Women's Sports Hubs delivered 56 weekly sessions with a total of 75 young women participating (CMY, 2020a). During this time, the Sports Hubs were effective in increasing the sports engagement and awareness of sports and leadership opportunities among young women from refugee and migrant backgrounds and enhanced community awareness of how to

include young women from refugee and migrant backgrounds in sports opportunities through family and club engagement (CMY, 2020a).

Also previously offered by CMY was the Welcome Football program, which used football (soccer) to help newly arrived young people and their families in the City of Hume to build leadership skills and connections with their local community (CMY, 2019n). The program involved participation in in-school, after-school and school holiday programs and events, as well as opportunities for young people to undertake leadership, coaching, and referee training (CMY, 2019n). In 2019-20, 210 young people were directly involved in the Welcome Football program; four schools participated in 13 in-school sessions; 10 out-of-hours sessions were delivered, and 54 young people attended the school holiday program at Hume City Football Club (CMY, 2020a). Young people who participated in the 2019 soccer season reported that through being part of football clubs they felt a greater sense of belongingness to their community (CMY, 2020a). As noted earlier in this review, CMY also partner with BSL to provide opportunities to support the engagement of newly arrived young people aged 15 to 25 years old in the City of Hume in education, employment and training within the sporting industry through the Youth Transitions Support program (CMY, 2019n).

In terms of recreational programs, RMCC offer their school holiday program, in which children and young people participate in community-based activities that aim to build their communal connection and trust towards their mentors, peers and the Australian community more broadly (RMCC,

2017). Activities have ranged from trips to Melbourne Zoo, to visiting Scienceworks and the MCG (RMCC, 2017). In 2016–17, RMCC reported that 36 kids participated in school holiday programs across 26 sessions (RMCC, 2017).

ENHANCING LIFE SKILLS AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Opportunities provided to young people with a migrant or refugee background to develop and enhance life skills provide new pathways. They assist the young people's navigation of Australian systems. They also enhance their social networks through group activities and foster a sense of community connectedness.

Similarly to Settle Well's involvement in the L2P Learner Driver Mentor Volunteer Program and partnership with Life Saving Victoria Multicultural Beach Safety Program (as part of their CALD Women's Group), the Migrant Information Centre based in Melbourne's Eastern suburbs offers a driver education program as well as swimming programs and beach safety excursions to young people. These programs are conducted in partnership with Life Saving Victoria (Migrant Information Centre, n.d.).

The Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre (SMRC) offer a Driving program that provides driving education and professional driving lesson support to newly arrived refugees (SMRC, 2022a). During 2019–21, AMES Australia's Engage! program offered participants free driving lessons (AMES Australia, 2020a, 2021).

Settle Well's CALD Community Kitchen Rules program is mirrored in the 10-week Cooking for Confidence program that was previously run at one of Diversitat's social enterprises, the BASE, in 2019–20. Cooking for Confidence also included adult participants (from their English classes and Department of Justice participants). The course also included the accredited Food Handler Certificate (Cultura, 2020). Because of a significant reduction in customers due to COVID-19, Diversitat closed the program and no longer offer the course (Cultura, 2020).

As mentioned above, AMES Australia's Youth Leadership Program also includes a Food Leadership program which, during 2020–21, had 40 participants complete two units of competency, Provide First Aid and Hygienic Practices in Food Safety (AMES Australia, 2021).

As noted above, RMCC also offer nutrition workshops with a nutritionist from the Royal Children's Hospital (RMCC, 2017). While these programs focus on increasing participants' understanding of food safety as does CALD Community Kitchen Rules, another difference is that they often (except RMCC) lead to recognised qualifications.

Settle Well's Shout Out Day and Public Speaking Training is inspired by CMY's Shout Out program and is delivered with training provided by CMY. Privileging their experiences, Shout Out trains young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in public speaking and storytelling to share their knowledge and experiences with the broader community (CMY, 2019m). Organisations can book a Shout Out speaker to present at their event on diverse issues ranging from mental health, racism and discrimination, and the refugee experience, among others (CMY, 2019m). In 2019–20, CMY received 44

requests for speakers from 30 different organisations. In that year, CMY recruited and trained 17 new speakers, taking the total number of speakers engaged in the program overall to 34 (CMY, 2020a). The Shout Out program is similar to other initiatives that aim to increase young refugee, migrant and asylum seekers' leadership skills and confidence. These others include the youth-led projects initiative which is part of BSL's ReSource program; CMY's Aspire to Lead; AMES Australia's Engage! and the sporting programs reviewed above.

Lastly, as part of their 'life skills' focus, RMCC offer workshops to children and young people on numerous themes, including Australian wildlife, climate, craft, gardening, nutrition, science and sport; they aim to enable participants to develop social skills, leadership, persistence, and problem-solving skills (RMCC, 2017).

In Victoria, few initiatives can be identified that provide a dedicated and extensive education program on the Australian justice system for young people with a refugee or migrant background. One such is Settle Well's Justice Education Program. Another is CMY, for which youth justice is a priority area.

Settle Well partners with CMY to support the Justice Education Program. However, CMY focuses more on protecting the rights of young people in police custody (for example, through their Youth Referral and Independent Person Program [YRIPP]) and on early intervention and crime prevention case management and referral support (via their Change it Up, Handshake and Listen Up programs; CMY, 2020a).

CMY have also co-designed a prevention and early intervention youth justice model; this is designed to reduce the number of young people entering and re-entering the youth justice system. CMY advocate across the sector for the model's implementation, (CMY, 2021). Arabic Welfare, in partnership with Victoria Police, has also provided education on legal issues for students at Hume Central Secondary College as part of their Settling Into Youth Sessions (Arabic Welfare, 2020, pp. 16–17).

However, Settle Well's Justice Education Program is different from these initiatives; it is a 10-week program that aims to empower students in their knowledge of the legal system and prevent encounters with the youth and criminal justice systems – it also educates participants on how to deal with challenges such as racism and cyberbullying and includes guest speakers and the opportunity to take up various roles in a mock trial held at the Geelong Magistrates Court.

SUPPORTING MOTHERS WITH CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An area where Settle Well appears to offer a point of difference across the services offered is in providing support in numerous ways to mothers of students. Many of the other organisations examined offer support to young people's families as well as to the young people themselves. Examples are learning support services such as RESP, RMCC's Sidekicks Seniors, and CMY's Learning Beyond the Bell and My Career Pathway. These programs connect with families through family learning clubs or engagement sessions. As well, case management services in several programs are offered to the parents or carers and



families of young people (CMY Navigator, Reconnect, RMP, and SETS and HSP providers). However, as pointed out above, focus is usually on families or parents generally, rather than mothers specifically.

Although many of the parents engaged in these programs offered by other organisations may be mothers, Settle Well specifically targets mothers as a special category. Settle Well provides numerous supports to mothers of students to improve mothers' social connection, life skills, well-being and employment options. Their weekly CALD Women's Group aims to build strong connections between the women and improve their connection to their local community and to the program, and to assist them to settle well in the local community. As well as providing links to community services, group activities include a Multicultural Beach Safety Program (with Life Saving Victoria), Welcome to Geelong event (ran by Geelong Football Club) and Mums & Kids Footy Clinic (organised with the Geelong Football Club and St. Mary's Sporting Club), as well as an RU Okay Day Celebration and a Christmas End-of-Term Celebration and Beach Picnic. Further support Settle Well provides to students' mothers includes their Job Readiness program, which helps connect mothers with training to assist with finding work and, for all parents, a 'back-to-school' program to enable parents to feel engaged with school life.

Only two other programs that focus on mothers were identified. The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights provides information sessions to women on understanding the Australian context, including understanding the school and education system, as well as school readiness programs and parenting programs (Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights, n.d.). Second, the BSL Stepping Stones to Small Business program provides opportunities for women to achieve financial well-being through starting a small business or finding employment or training opportunities (BSL, 2022g). The program is open to all women from refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking backgrounds (BSL, 2022g).

Other parenting programs similar to that offered by the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights exist. One program includes BSL's Refugee Child Outreach program. This provides parents with support to access early childhood services and health centres, and assistance with parenting and with understanding employment and education services, among other supports (BSL, 2022f). The program is open to families with young (rather than secondary-school-aged) children located in the Whittlesea and Hume regions who are of a refugee background, are seeking asylum or arrived in Australia on community detention (BSL, 2022f).

Another parenting program is run by Diversitat in collaboration with CoGG and is offered to Karen and Karenni parents (Diversitat, personal communication, n.d.). This program resembles the CALD Women's Group that Settle Well provides for refugee and asylum seeker mothers (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022b). However, this Diversitat program is targeted at parents in general not specifically mothers.

Of the programs that provide support to parents, the support offered largely relates to involving them in support of their child's education rather than their own education

or employment pathways. For example, the family learning clubs, and engagement sessions offered by RESP, RMCC and CMY focus on parents understanding and supporting their child's education at home. The support provided to women by the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights also focuses on assisting women in supporting their child's schooling and development generally. An exception is BSL's Stepping Stones to Small Business program, which, like Settle Well's Job Readiness program, aims to create viable job options for women.

While helping parents to understand and support their child's education is an important component of successfully strengthening the students' educational engagement, which Settle Well is also involved in, Settle Well's programs also aim to develop mothers' own volunteering and employment pathways, well-being and community connectedness. Such aims appear to be fairly unique among the programs reviewed.

In summary, like Settle Well, numerous other organisations' programs are designed to increase young people's life skills, and social and community connections, and support parents' civic and community engagement. However, Settle Well programs are unique among programs provided. One area of difference is the focus on programs supporting mothers. For example, although the Migrant Information Centre offers swimming programs and beach safety excursions, these programs are provided to young people and not mothers, unlike Settle Well's Multicultural Beach Safety program.

Several organisations also offer food safety and cooking classes or nutrition workshops, though these mostly differ from Settle Well's CALD Community Kitchen Rules program in leading to recognised qualifications. Other programs offered in skill areas similar to Settle Well programs include public speaking training and art and music activities. The Justice Education Program offered by Settle Well is unique among programs offered by all other organisations.

Unlike other organisations, given its focus on supporting education and career preparation, Settle Well does not include a regular sporting or recreational component. However, students together with their mothers can take part in numerous recreational activities which promote engagement in sports and community connectedness.

Similarly, while Settle Well does not run a local youth camp, CatholicCare Victoria offers a Refugee Dads and Kids Weekend; these are held throughout the year in different locations outside Melbourne, and are open to all refugee and asylum seeker families (CatholicCare Victoria, 2022c). Through their school, Settle Well students may also have opportunities to become involved in sporting programs, camps or school holiday activities.

Learning and educational support

Numerous programs focus on supporting refugee and asylum seeker students in their schooling and on engaging participants at risk of, or already disengaged from, their education. One BSL program (Engagement) and two CMY programs (Navigator and Aspire to Lead) that focus on supporting students' re-engagement with their education are reviewed first.

Aside from these programs, the main form of learning and educational support provided to refugee and asylum seeker students in Victoria are the out-of-school-hours learning support programs (OSHLSP), which are reviewed next. Otherwise known as Homework Clubs, these programs are designed to strengthen students' English language, subject and study skills as well as build social and community connectedness.

OSHLSPs are provided by many organisations and Settle Well's Multilingual Homework Club is one of them. The OSHLSP provided or supported by CMY, RMCC, Diversitat, BSL, and RESP mirror Settle Well's Multilingual Homework Club and are reviewed below. RESP is reviewed in more detail as it provides an OSHLSP most similar to Settle Well in being school-based, and it has undergone an extensive evaluation. While Settle Well's homework club appears to offer the same type of support as the other programs reviewed here, one other support identified that Settle Well might consider incorporating is a family learning club (as supported by CMY Learning Beyond the Bell, RMCC Family Learning Club, and RESP).

SUPPORTING REENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATION

BSL's Engagement Program is a voluntary education re-engagement program provided for students in years 7 to 9 at Monterey Secondary College in Frankston (BSL, 2022c). It provides a differentiated curriculum for groups of up to 20 students at a time in a small group setting, as well as individual and family therapeutic support, and involvement in community projects (BSL, 2022c). The Engagement Program mirrors the Settle Well program in being an in-school program that aims to improve students' connection to school, and educational and well-being outcomes. The target cohort for the program differs, however, as it is open to students who are challenged by the mainstream school setting and require intervention to improve engagement, or who require support to transition into mainstream school (BSL, 2022c).

Similarly, CMY run the Navigator program, designed for Pasifika and South Sudanese high school students (CMY, 2020a) based in Melbourne's South East who have up to 70% non-attendance at school (CMY, 2019p). The program aims to support these disengaged learners and their families with intensive case management and assertive outreach and builds relationships with schools to better support participants (CMY, 2019p). In 2019–20, the program had 11 schools referring into the program and received around 50 referrals in a school year (CMY, 2020a). CMY report that the program resulted in students being engaged in meaningful and effective education pathways, and meeting their goal of turning around 70% disengagement to 70% engagement (CMY, 2020a).

Additionally, the Aspire to Lead program offered by CMY focuses on re-engaging participants in their education, but with a focus on developing confidence and leadership skills (CMY, 2019s). The Aspire to Lead program is available to schools in the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services; the program is designed for students who are experiencing challenges engaging with their education and at risk of expulsion (CMY, 2019s, CMY, 2019p). Using a strengths-based approach, the program offers 10 weeks of in-school sessions per term consisting of workshops and group peer mentoring. During the sessions participants collaborate on developing an event for their school (CMY, 2020a). The program is then held in subsequent terms with previous participants acting as peer mentors to the newest group of students (CMY, 2019s). Emphasis is on increasing participants' educational engagement by building social cohesion among different groups at school and developing participants' leadership skills (CMY, 2019s). In 2019–20, 85 young people participated in the program and eight different events or projects were designed and implemented across six schools in the City of Casey and the Shire of Cardinia (CMY, 2020a). As well, 20 graduates of the program were trained and acted as mentors to future groups of students (CMY, 2020a).

CMY report that the program is effective in increasing participants' engagement in school-based activities, in giving them a sense of inclusion and ultimately improving educational outcomes for participating students; this is reflected in school attendance and positive feedback from teachers and leadership teams (CMY, 2020a).

OUT-OF-SCHOOL-HOURS LEARNING SUPPORT PROGRAMS (OSHLSPS)

CMY's Learning Beyond the Bell program supports a network of over 350 OSHLSPs, including homework clubs, family learning clubs and peer-to-peer learning approaches (CMY, 2019o). The clubs are run for primary and secondary students in schools, libraries and community centres; they are attended by more than 6,000 students weekly and are supported by approximately 1,800 volunteer tutors (CMY, 2019f). The program aims to support students with literacy, numeracy and study skills, as well as help build their confidence and connection to school and their wider community (CMY, 2019f), and in this way supporting student well-being. The program also aims to involve families in their child's learning and assist them in better understanding the Australian education system and explore ways they can support their child's learning at home (CMY, 2019f).

CMY supports the programs across Melbourne (and several in regional areas) by providing consultation and guidance on designing, establishing, managing and evaluating an OSHLSP, volunteer recruitment and working with refugee and migrant students and their families (CMY, 2019o). CMY supports OSHLSPs by linking coordinators with other programs in the sector, and they have designed a suite of training programs that they offer OSHLSP coordinators to assist them to manage their programs effectively (CMY, 2019q, CMY, 2016). In addition, CMY offer extensive online resources for coordinators and volunteers to assist with running an



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OSHLSP (CMY, 2019k) and provide training for school staff to assist with supporting and engaging students and families from refugee and migrant backgrounds (CMY, 2019p).

CMY have supported numerous programs in Geelong, including the GREAT programs at Northern Bay College Wexford Campus and North Geelong Secondary College run by Diversitat; two library-based clubs run by Diversitat for students in Year 7 to Year 12 and one run by Anglicare (CMY, 2019f). However, the Corio Library homework club run in partnership with Diversitat has since ceased operating and while NGSC still run their homework club, Diversitat, since COVID, no longer comes onsite at NGSC. An evaluation of Learning Beyond the Bell conducted toward the end of its first four-year funding term reported that participants felt connected to the program and to their school (CMY, 2011a).⁷

Though not a part of the CMY network of clubs, BSL partners with Woodleigh School in Frankston to run a weekly homework club, Frankston Emerging Communities Education Group, off-site for South Sudanese students and their families. The club provides Maths, English and Science support, and assists with study skills and planning further education and career pathways including job application support, English language support and informal mentoring (BSL, 2022d).

Similarly to the Learning Beyond the Bell program, RMCC's Sidekicks Seniors program provides weekly after-school individual mentoring for secondary school students, offering educational, social and mental health support on-site at numerous schools in Melbourne's Western suburbs (RMCC, 2021b). Volunteer mentors provide support in the areas of education, social identity and belonging, life skills, and

mental health and well-being (RMCC, 2021b). In 2016-17, 74 mentors and volunteers supported 293 children and young people (including their program for primary school children) and 100% of parents or guardians reported seeing an improvement in their child's engagement in their learning (RMCC, 2017).

As part of these programs, RMCC also provides school well-being coordinators and teachers with professional development workshops on how to best support refugee and migrant background children at school, and guidance concerning ways to engage their parents with the school community (RMCC, 2021b). Similarly to Learning beyond the Bell and RESP, this extends to engaging parents to support their child's learning at home through a family learning club (RMCC, 2017). Pointing to the efficacy of their program, and the importance of involving parents, RMCC report that prior to receiving the organisation's support, 57% of participating children did not have a parent or guardian who could help with schoolwork from home (RMCC, 2021b). RMCC also provides educational materials for students, such as backpacks, stationery and learning materials to ensure financial constraints do not hinder their ability to learn (RMCC, 2021b); 100% of students participating in RMCC have reported that they have the necessary learning materials for school and studying at home due to RMCC support, up from 49% of students not having resources to study at home (RMCC, 2021b).

REFUGEE EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM (RESP)

Consisting of both OSHLSP and targeted support to schools, RESP is a state-government-funded initiative established in 2012 (DET, 2022b) and is provided by CMY and Foundation House in collaboration with Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) and Independent Schools Victoria (ISV; DET, 2022b). Through RESP, CMY (who provide out-of-school-hours learning support) and Foundation House (who provide resource and consultation support to schools), support clusters of government and non-government schools in identifying and implementing strategies to improve students from refugee backgrounds' achievement, engagement and well-being outcomes (DET, 2022b).

The involvement of the two large-scale education institutions, ISV and CECV, who between them represent over 700 schools across Victoria (CECV, 2020; ISV, n.d.), means that RESP can reach a significant number of refugee students in the state. Collaboration with CMY and Foundation House who are well established in supporting refugees, provides specialist expertise to the administration and implementation of the program, while the involvement of the state government means that the program receives funding to be implemented across the state.

CMY's 2020 annual report notes that in the 2019-20 financial year RESP supported 61 schools and 30 school projects to enhance refugee students and families' educational and well-being outcomes (CMY, 2020a). The DET reports that over 150 schools have participated in RESP since its establishment (DET, 2022b).

RESP aims to provide holistic and targeted support to participating schools to support the learning outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds (CMY, 2019j). The RESP delivery model is implemented through CMY and Foundation House and focuses intervention in four main areas, (1) providing education to school staff to improve their understanding of the experiences of students and families from refugee backgrounds; (2) conducting an audit of the school and developing a specific action plan; (3) providing ongoing support and advice to schools as they implement the action plan; and (4) developing local partnerships to provide out-of-school-hours support to students (Foundation House, 2015).

The exact services the program provides vary based on the action plan developed for the specific school's needs, as well as the local partnerships available. This means that the programs and delivery partners are never the same and match the needs of the specific program and the partnerships that are available. Though each program is unique there are groups of activities and supports that frequently appear in case studies provided by CMY. The primary recurring supports include OSHLSPs (most-often-used support) and family learning clubs, though classroom and sporting activities were also provided in specific projects (CMY, 2020b; 2020c; 2020d; 2020e).

While not a part of the RESP program, other organisations not reviewed here have also undertaken similar engagements with families to support their child's education. For example, Arabic Welfare ran their Ya Hala program at Hume Central Secondary College Dimboola Road Campus in 2019-20, where they both supported staff with family engagement

⁷ For a more recent and comprehensive review of the efficacy of homework clubs see Centre for Multicultural Youth (2018). State of the sector: Out-of-school-hours learning support 2018. https://cmcy.wpenpowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/State-of-the-Sector-Report-2018_digital-1.pdf



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strategies and ran parent workshops and English conversation classes to improve parent engagement with the school (Arabic Welfare, 2020, pp. 16–17).

The RESP's impact and effectiveness was reported in a 2015 DET-commissioned evaluation based on consultations with the DET, delivery partners, schools, principals, students and parents. The evaluation reviewed the second round of RESP, which ran from July 2014 to October 2015 (Foundation House, 2015). In terms of the impact on students, schools and local communities, the review found that RESP:

- increased engagement between the school, staff, community and families from refugee backgrounds, which culminated in a better learning environment for students from refugee backgrounds
- built the awareness and skills of teachers, providing them with practical tools they could use in their teaching
- provided helpful and relevant advice to support schools with issues that may impact students and families from refugee backgrounds. RESP implementation partners were reviewed positively for their professionalism, knowledgeability and support of the school's improvements
- brought to attention issues impacting students and families from refugee backgrounds within the schools
- fulfilled all outcomes detailed in the unique action plan of each project beyond expectations. The professional learning developed skills and knowledge that could be applied and cemented through out-of-hours supports (Foundation House, 2015, pp. 1–2).

While the review recognised that the long-term outcomes of the program could not be directly measured, it noted that RESP appeared to provide 'largely sustainable benefits to schools and students' (Foundation House, 2015, p. 1).

Further evidence of the impact of RESP can be seen in the case studies provided by the CMY. The outcomes stated in these case studies mirror the broad findings of the evaluation, while also providing greater insight into local outcomes for students, families and schools. In the case study of 'The Grange' learning support club, the students who participated showed an increase in confidence, social connectedness with peers and school staff, and engagement in learning. The students also began running their own events, took part in public forums and planned extra-curricular activities, pointing to an increased connectedness with the community (CMY, 2020e).

The Cranbourne Carlisle Primary School family learning club case study saw participating students show an increase in academic achievement throughout the year (CMY, 2020b). Several positive outcomes were also reported for the school, including an increased ability to cater for the needs of refugee background students and greater engagement with families, and the families themselves reported that they were more engaged with the school and their child's learning (CMY, 2020b).

In the Tarneit College learning support program case study, numerous positive outcomes emerged for the school and participating students. For the school, they showed an increased ability to meet the needs of refugee students as well as a greater engagement with families (CMY, 2020d).

For the students, the outcomes included improved learning outcomes such as taking more creative risks and higher levels of engagement, increased leadership and becoming more comfortable in the group (CMY, 2020d).

Settle Well's and RESP's delivery models and foci differ in two main ways. RESP focuses on supporting the education of refugee students, whereas Settle Well has a more holistic approach to supporting refugees, incorporating the educational support of an OSHLSP with interventions designed to support personal well-being, career pathways and community connectedness. However, RESP's focus on education support often includes engagement with families through family learning clubs. Settle Well provides a 'back-to-school' program to enable parents to feel engaged with school life, providing information on the options that are available on the school campus, how the school year runs, important dates and events and including parent-teacher interviews. It also engages parents in other ways (for example, through the CALD Women's Group). The provision of a family learning club within the context of the homework club, as seen in CMY's Learning Beyond the Bell program and RESP, may further encourage greater engagement of families with their child's learning and school, if this is found to be an area that needs further support.

Second, RESP's primary mode of aiding the students is by first supporting and educating the schools involved in the program and establishing local partnerships to deliver OSHLSPs, whereas Settle Well's support primarily targets students in the first instance. One of Settle Well's strengths is in the targeted support that is provided directly to students and their families,

and the breadth of that support. In contrast, RESP's strength is in the specialist support it provides for schools themselves, such as the professional development of school staff.⁸ Through their partnerships with CMY and Foundation House, both schools at which Settle Well is delivered are supported to understand the special needs of Settle Well students, with staff receiving professional development regarding the refugee experience, working with trauma, and other relevant topics concerning multicultural young people as needed, eliminating the need for Settle Well to provide this directly.

⁸ In addition to the professional development they offer school staff as part of RESP, Foundation House has also developed School's In for Refugees, an interactive online professional learning resource that assists schools to understand the journey of and provide whole-of-school support to students and families of refugee backgrounds. See Foundation House (2020) Schools in for refugees. <https://foundationhouse.org.au/specialised-programs/sifir/>

Conclusion

This review of support services provided to refugee and asylum seeker young people in Victoria has brought to the fore Settle Well's core strengths as a program, namely, (1) the targeted yet holistic support that is provided to students and their families and the breadth of that support, which often matches that provided by programs that receive government funding or have larger resourcing; and (2) the provision of a school-based program that is targeted at students, where most programs in the sector are targeted at young people more generally and offered at community hubs or on an outreach basis. Settle Well also stands out in offering support specifically tailored to mothers of students, whereas other programs target parents more generally.

Settle Well is unique in being a within-school program that is specifically tailored to the needs of students at the participating Geelong schools. The only other dedicated within-school program identified that mirrors the Settle Well program is BSL's Engagement Program, but that is smaller in scope. Although most of the reviewed support services are open to school-aged young people, many of the services are not school-based but are located at community hubs.

Numerous programs aim to encourage engagement in education and/or training and employment pathways and improve well-being and social connection and are either targeted at students or are school based. These include RESP, RMCC's Sidekicks Seniors program and guidance consultations for children, CMY's Aspire to Lead, Navigator and My Career Pathway programs and components of their Envision and Welcome Football programs, and CMY and Foundation House's Ucan2 program.

Among the numerous organisations reviewed, CMY provides the most extensive range of programs in Victoria for refugee and migrant young people that are specifically targeted at students and/or provided in schools. However, these programs form a part of different delivery areas and are provided by different teams, who are in turn supported by a group of executive or senior managers (CMY, 2019i).

For example, CMY's Aspire to Lead program forms part of their Youth Leadership programs offering, while their Navigator program forms part of their education focus; the two programs are run by different project officers, program managers or other staff across different sites. This model differs significantly from that of Settle Well, where programs across all four focus areas are managed by a single program coordinator employed by CatholicCare Victoria yet located within the schools, and where support across all four areas is integrated into a single program.

Settle Well's support is embedded within the schools and designed with the needs of the participating students in mind, resulting in tailored, wrap-around care and enabling easier access to the support offered. Relative to the program's resourcing, the breadth of support the Settle Well program offers across the four domains that help facilitate 'active citizenship' for refugee and migrant young people is commendable (economic, social and civic participation and personal well-being as identified by MYAN, 2020).

In most cases, where Settle Well itself does not provide a particular service, participants benefit from existing partnerships that have been established with external organisations that offer the relevant service. While targeted to the needs of students attending the two schools, the Settle Well program does not operate in isolation. As well as working closely with leaders and staff at the two schools, it collaborates with community, refugee, local government and educational organisations to provide the full breadth of support to its participants.

For example, Settle Well works in partnership with CMY to provide training for their Shout Out Day and Public Speaking Training and to supply training to Multicultural Education aides and tutors for their Multilingual Homework Club. Job information sessions are provided via local partnerships with Northern Futures, the Gordon, Gforce Employment and Recruitment, Barwon Community Legal Service and the fOrT/CoGG. The partnerships that have been developed over the past nine years that enable participants to connect to the broader Geelong community should also be considered a strength of the Settle Well program.

Several support options that other programs offer have been identified that Settle Well does not currently offer, including family learning clubs as a form of homework club that engages parents, and the development of a peer mentoring program, where Settle Well graduates who have secured further education, training or employment could be trained up to mentor current Settle Well participants on navigating schooling, settlement and career challenges.

Overall, when compared to the main programs and organisations offering well-being support, career preparation, community engagement, and educational support to refugee and asylum seeker young people in Victoria, Settle Well offers commensurate services and no major gaps in service areas could be identified.



TABLE 2.1

MAPPING SETTLE Well TO SIMILAR VICTORIAN-BASED SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A REFUGEE, MIGRANT OR ASYLUM SEEKER BACKGROUND					
SERVICE PARAMETERS*	SETTLE Well	CMY	DIVERSITAT	BSL	RMCC
FOCUS COHORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students of NBC and NGSC, Geelong with refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds aged 15 to 20 years old Mothers of students within this cohort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people with refugee and migrant backgrounds aged 12 to 25 years old in Melbourne's North West and South East regions, Ballarat and Gippsland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All ethnic and multicultural communities in the Geelong region, including refugee and newly arrived young people and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Australians experiencing disadvantage (Melbourne-based) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people aged 5 to 18 years old from refugee and migrant backgrounds in western suburbs of Melbourne
DELIVERY MODEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of wrap-around support to enhance the well-being and educational, economic, social and civic engagement of refugee and asylum seeker students and families via a trauma-informed, strengths-based framework Four focus areas: educational engagement, career preparation, training and pathways, well-being, community connectedness and life skills School-based setting with external activities provided via cross-sectoral partnerships Single Program Coordinator employed by CatholicCare Victoria supported by Community Participation Manager, school staff and volunteers Support across all four areas integrated into a single program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with young people, decision makers, researchers and services, informed by young people's voices and experiences Four strategic focus areas: My Community (strengthening community connection), My Journey (improving educational engagement and access to training and employment opportunities), My Voice (centralising young people's voices and promoting leadership and active citizenship) and My CMY (developing CMY as a sector leader) 148 staff members working in 10 locations across Victoria Programs form part of distinct delivery areas coordinated by different teams of Executive/Senior and Program Managers, Project Officers and volunteers across different sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused on empowerment of CALD individuals and communities to reach their full potential and supporting multiculturalism in Geelong via community and government partnerships Four delivery areas managed across 7 Units, including: settlement services (HSP and SETS), education and training (RTO offering English language and other courses), aged care services, social enterprises (My Maintenance Crew) Programs form part of distinct delivery areas coordinated by different teams of Unit and General Managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with people experiencing disadvantage to address the causes of poverty in Australia and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals Programs are aligned to strategic focus areas: ensuring economic security, well-being and social inclusion for individuals and communities and advocating for those experiencing poverty and disadvantage through research, services and partnerships Programs form part of distinct delivery areas coordinated by different teams of Directors and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with schools, families and community organisations to address the social and educational needs of children and young people and the settlement difficulties they face School-based mentoring programs developed around four focus areas: education, identity and belonging, life skills, and mental health and well-being Programs coordinated by small team of Managers/ Coordinators and staff supported by volunteer mentors
WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case management and advocacy with service providers Therapeutic counselling and group work as required 9-week LIVE Well Club to increase mental health literacy amongst students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to reduce mental health stigma (Mental Health Literacy [with Orygen Youth Mental health] and REVERB program) Work to improve the mental health literacy of young people and their families (Mental Health Literacy program) Workshops co-designed with young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to encourage better mental health outcomes for young people (REVERB program) Case management and referrals to well-being, social services and employability support to increase re-engagement in education, training and employment (Reconnect program in the Wyndham and Melton LGAs open to but not specifically tailored to young refugees or asylum seekers) Group activities, volunteer mentoring and English language support to help newly arrived young people aged 16-24 forge social connections and build employment and education pathways (Ucan2 program - with Foundation House) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case management and referrals to well-being, social services and employability support to increase reengagement in education, training and employment (Reconnect program in the Geelong, Surf Coast, Golden Plains and Colac Otway LGAs - open to but not specifically tailored to young refugees or asylum seekers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a specific focus area but enhancing well-being and social inclusion for individuals and communities is a broad aim across services Individual and family therapeutic support (Engagement Program, Monterey Secondary College, Frankston) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-based one-on-one mentoring and guidance consultations for children at risk of school disengagement or of developing mental health problems Physical education and nutrition workshops Referrals to partnering organisations and health care specialists

TABLE 2.1 CONTINUED

MAPPING SETTLE WELL TO SIMILAR VICTORIAN-BASED SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A REFUGEE, MIGRANT OR ASYLUM SEEKER BACKGROUND					
SERVICE PARAMETERS*	SETTLE WELL	CMY	DIVERSITAT	BSL	RMCC
CAREER PREPARATION, TRAINING AND PATHWAYS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job searching and application support Work experience opportunities Access to traineeships and apprenticeships Job Info sessions with local providers Case management, counselling and advocacy: linking in with school careers teams and VCAL leaders, TAFE career and personal counsellors, local refugee organisation, JSA providers and Centrelink Career expo for year 12 students Barista 101 course Support to prepare for and understand Australian job market and workplace culture for CALD mums and post-secondary students (Job Readiness Program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job searching and application support and Career Convo webinars: professional tips to secure employment (Employment Empowers) Support around vocational, career and education pathways for newly arrived year 10–12 students via school-based group information sessions and one-on-one careers coaching (My Career Pathway) School-based information sessions, leadership workshops, goal mapping and referrals for newly arrived school students aged 12–25 (Envision) Information sessions and workshops on Australian job market and workplace culture and rights (Envision, Employment Empowers and My Career Pathway) Peer-led mentoring support (Envision and Aspire to Lead) Direct employment opportunities (Employment Empowers and Envision Employment) Family engagement sessions with school MEAs to support family training and career pathways (My Career Pathway) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job preparation and application support via weekly drop-in youth job club during school term Support and referral to services to provide support with employment preparation and securement (Community Employment Connectors) Direct employment opportunities (My Maintenance Crew) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job searching and application support; workplace tours and industry guest speakers; work experience and volunteering opportunities; information sessions and workshops on key topics (ReSource and Youth Transitions Support Program [YTSP]) Job application and English language support and informal mentoring (Frankston Homework Club) Support, referrals and mentoring to get job ready and increase employment pathways for CALD jobseekers, including young people (Community Employment Connectors Program) Support to transition job seekers experiencing disadvantage into paid employment (Given the Chance) Opportunities for women from refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking backgrounds to achieve financial well-being (Stepping Stones to Small Business program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A (limited by focus cohort of school-aged children)
COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS AND LIFE SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-week Justice Education Program Shout Out Day/Story Telling and Public Speaking Training (training by CMY) Confident Communications Mentoring Program for Settle Well public speakers (training by Upstart) 10-week CALD Community 'Kitchen Rules' Program Referral to L2P Learner Driving Mentor Volunteer Program/CoGG Sports and recreation: Welcome to our Game and Mums and Kids Footy Clinic, Multicultural Beach Safety Day for students and their mothers Weekly CALD Women's Group sessions (during term) focusing on school, service, economic and community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early intervention and crime prevention case management and referral support (Change it Up, Handshake and Listen Up programs) Shout Out public speaking program Sports participation and leadership roles via Women's Sports Hub (for women aged 12–25 with a migrant or refugee background living in or connected to Melbourne's southeast region) and Welcome Football program (for newly arrived young people and their families in the City of Hume) Social and sporting activities (Envision) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pako Festa festival in Geelong (celebration of multiculturalism and diversity) 10-week Cooking For Confidence program run at social enterprise The BASE (also included adults) Futsal academy for men aged 14–18 of Middle Eastern background Netball program for girls aged 9–15 Parenting program for Karen and Karenni parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a specific focus area but some programs aim to foster community participation and sports involvement (YTSP) or improve leadership skills (ReSource) Support for parents of young children seeking asylum or in community detention to access early childhood and health services and to navigate employment and education services (Refugee Child Outreach Program – Whittlesea and Hume regions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School holiday program activities and outings Workshops in different life skill areas (e.g., Australian wildlife, craft, gardening, nutrition, science and sport)
LEARNING AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multilingual Homework Club Training of Multicultural Education Aids (MEAs) and volunteer tutors (from CMY) Professional development for school staff via CMY and Foundation House 'Back-to-school' program to educate and engage parents of refugee and asylum seeker students with school life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigator program for Pasifika and South Sudanese high school students in-school Aspire to Lead 10-week in-school program Over 350 OSHLSPs - homework clubs, family learning clubs and training to manage and evaluate OSHLSPs (Learning Beyond the Bell) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two library-based homework clubs and two school-based homework clubs for students in Years 7–12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within-school Engagement Program for years 7–9 at Monterey Secondary College, Frankston providing differentiated curriculum, individual and family therapeutic support, involvement in community projects Weekly homework club in Frankston for South Sudanese students and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly after-school mentoring for secondary students, offering education, social and mental health support at numerous schools in Melbourne's western suburbs (Sidekicks Seniors) Family learning club Professional development for school staff Educational Material Aid

*As noted in this review, numerous career preparation, training and pathways programs also aim to increase social connectedness, community engagement, well-being and leadership skills. However, they have been included in the Career preparation section only in this table. In addition, numerous recreational, sporting and social activities that also support young people's well-being and mental health have only been included in the Community connectedness and life skills section.

3. Insights and understandings from the Settle Well Program Coordinator

The program coordinator of Settle Well is Mr Nestor Estampa. Nestor has a background in development work with vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, families and communities in both Australia and internationally. Nestor has trained at a tertiary level in Social Sciences and Public Policy. His background in community work in the Philippines is seen as a strength to the Settle Well program. It provides him with a multicultural perspective and experience in grassroots work that involved education for young people, health and income-generating projects. He has worked in engaging communities in the development (and monitoring) of plans and budgets, as well as subsequent evaluations with whole-of-community engagement. Nestor also has a lengthy work history in government roles in the Philippines. In those roles he worked in development, coordination and collaboration of various programs, especially ones with a focus on young people. Nestor regularly feels the benefit of such experience in his work here in Australia with the Settle Well program.

Located in Geelong and funded through philanthropic donations, Nestor describes the Settle Well program as being aligned with the National Youth Settlement Framework of Australia. It is school based and currently operates out of two schools in the Geelong area. The features of the program are described elsewhere in this evaluation, but of note are the areas that Nestor identifies as being of significance. It can be summarised that the program has four main components: (1) personal well-being; (2) careers and pathways support; (3) group and community activities; (4) education and training.

Through these components, the program engages refugee and asylum-seeking young people in both school and their local

community, as well as providing support to parents. Settle Well encompasses components that focus on personal well-being where case management, advocacy, and therapeutic support are combined to holistically support the young people who are participating in the program. The program also works to support the participants with their careers and job pathways. This includes work readiness training, participation in work experience as well as transition to further education, including university scholarships. The program also connects participants to their community. This is achieved through group work in youth engagement programs that integrate justice education, homework club and a community kitchen. Overall, participants are given the opportunity to create and strengthen friendships and foster real world social connection through a range of activities that include, but are not limited to, training in public speaking, group facilitation and leadership.

The program coordinator role is multilayered and can seem fluid at times. It involves a diverse range of duties and responsibilities, ranging from program development and planning, collaboration, and networking with stakeholders, to facilitating and supporting the delivery of focused programs. The coordinator role gives Nestor the opportunity to work one-to-one with program participants to provide case management, counselling and referrals, and advocacy support.

The collaborative nature of the community networking ensures that, through the relationships built by the program coordinator, community stakeholders are willing and able to contribute to various aspects of the overall delivery of the

multitude of Settle Well programs. Nestor sees that authentic connection with other local agencies is essential in the ultimate success of the Settle Well program.

Many of the programs embedded within Settle Well that support the students rely on the contribution – some small, some large – of a range of local services. This includes the connections created between the two schools, local justice organisations, CMY, Barwon Health, Victoria Police, Upstart and the local neighbourhood centre. When supporting parents, the program also relies on relationships with other service providers such as the AFL, VicHealth, Life Saving Victoria, Catholic Education, Legal Aid and CatholicCare. Nestor describes these diverse and various networks as working collaboratively to ensure the successful delivery of the program.

A vital component of the program is the relationship the program coordinator builds with the participants. Nestor identifies that young people access the various aspects of the Settle Well program via a number of potential avenues. He sees the initial relationship building that occurs in this space as integral to the ultimate success of the program. Young people often experience their first engagement with the program through just one aspect, such as the homework club, the public speaking program or the community kitchen. Once the initial rapport is established, participants are able to engage at a broader level and will usually then enter into other aspects of the program.

Nestor understands that once this connection is made, when trust is built, the greater needs of any individual can be identified and responded to. The element of trust and genuine relationship between program coordinator and participant can't be underestimated. Once genuine rapport is established, other aspects of the program can be introduced, such as advocacy, case management or therapeutic counselling.

Nestor identified that due to his long-standing participation in this role, he is well known, and young people may sometimes also self-refer themselves to the services and programs of Settle Well.

'...once this connection is made, when trust is built, the greater needs of any individual are able to be identified and responded to.'

The Settle Well program is essentially a youth engagement program, but as Nestor describes, it is also more than that. It offers the components already mentioned, but also offers opportunity for parent engagement.

The parent engagement program runs for one hour a week during each school term and supports the parents to understand the systems and processes of the secondary schools and encourages engagement through the community that is built. Parents are educated on how to access education assistance, legal aid and housing support. The parent engagement programs have grown and evolved over time to a point where they currently encompass a range of supportive programs that include personal support, exposure to volunteering opportunities, education and skills training to be job ready.

The Settle Well program is not necessarily static in its delivery – it adapts and evolves according to the needs that are identified. Nestor understands that while the essential elements of the program are always present, the program content and the delivery mechanisms can change, based on the needs of the young people and feedback from students, partners and stakeholders. Being open and willing to adapt in such a way ensures ongoing growth and program enhancement – an important feature when considering that the program will always work with newly arrived refugee and asylum seekers who may present with different and emerging needs.

The Settle Well program develops confidence in the participating students and their families. That confidence can be observed in a variety of ways. Rooted in the aspiration that students will be supported to complete their secondary education, the program fosters hope and a sense of optimism for their future. The role of the program coordinator is pivotal in this landscape of hope and relies on a practice that is adaptive, attentive and tailored to the needs of each individual student.

Nestor feels it is imperative that he accompany each student, offering guidance and supportive advice that is customised to their unique hopes, goals and abilities. It is not uncommon for students to convey that they feel armed with choices, and informed about the options that lay ahead of them as they leave the program.

For some students that means pathways to further education; for others it is a roadmap to employment. Accompanying that sense of completion for students is the growth in confidence among the families. The Settle Well program finds that it often supports the mothers in the families, and, through the Parent Engagement Program, these mothers demonstrate increased engagement in economic, civic, educational and community programs.

As seen through the eyes of the program coordinator, the Settle Well program has three main strengths. First is the model of co-location. Being located across two schools that have a high population of refugee students means that the program can draw on the supports, infrastructure and resources within those schools. Second, the philanthropic funding behind the program enables flexibility in the approach to service delivery to ensure the program is always responsive to the presenting needs of the participants. Third, the holistic model of the program creates a wrap-around model of care and support for the students and their families. Looking ahead, an increase in staffing to support the various elements of the program and to assist in tracking demographic and school data will assist in the ongoing success and longevity of the program.

4. Methodology

This project adopted a mixed-methods approach to collecting data to answer the research questions. Both qualitative (case study and interview/qualitative inquiry) and quantitative (survey) research techniques were used to collect data from:

- High school graduates who had participated in the Settle Well program, hereafter referred to as *past students*⁹.
- Administrators and stakeholders from partner organisations with CatholicCare and the Settle Well program, hereafter referred to as *administrators and stakeholders*, and
- The *Program Coordinator*, Mr Nestor Estampa.

Survey is primarily a quantitative research method used to study and describe the characteristics of a population, investigate relationships between variables (correlational research), or their cause-effects relationships (quasi-experimental and experimental; Fraenkel et al., 2012). Surveys can be cross-sectional to examine several samples at one point in time, or longitudinal to examine one sample at several points in time. It can contain closed-ended or open-ended questions. In this project, we used surveys to collect cross-sectional data from *past students* and *administrators and stakeholders*.

Case study is a qualitative research method that provides a holistic, in-depth investigation with a number of selected cases rather than either broader or more specific sampling (Feagin et al., 1991; Yin, 2018). Case study is designed to bring out the details that may remain hidden from other research techniques from the viewpoint of the participants. To confirm the validity of the processes, triangulation is used where data

from other sources or research methodologies is used to ensure accuracy and alternative explanations (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). In this project, we used case studies to collect more in-depth data from *past students*.

Qualitative inquiry is guided by the belief that the insights and understandings of those people involved must be noted and recorded. It is, as Babbie (2010, pp. 393–394) says, the ‘non-numerical assessment of observations made through participant observation, content analysis, in-depth interviews ... for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships’. In this project, we used a qualitative inquiry design when analysing the data collected in the interview with the *Project Coordinator*.

A brief summary of the samples and methods used are presented in Table 4.1, but unpacked in detail in the following text.

Past students survey

A cross-sectional anonymous online survey was used to collect data from individuals who had formerly been participants in the Settle Well program. A weblink to the survey’s landing page was circulated by the Program Coordinator to potential participants. This page held information about the survey, a consent form, the survey items, and a debriefing statement.

A series of questionnaires which took half an hour to complete collected data about the participants’ health and well-being, levels of English fluency, adjustment to Australian culture and to education in Australia, and factors that they perceive might have disadvantaged them in their education.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

Eight former participants of the Settle Well program participated in the online survey. On average they finished participating in the program 2 years ago (1 participated 5 years ago, 1 participated 3 years ago, four participated 2 years ago, and 2 participated last year).

The sample were 5 women and 3 men, with ages ranging from 19 to 23 ($M = 20.75$, $SD = 1.58$). They had a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, including Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Kenya, Burma, and Afghanistan. Four reported having no religious affiliation, the rest of the sample included two Muslims, one Buddhist, and one Hindu. None of the sample were native English speakers; however, all were competent in the English language (and filled out the survey in English). Their native tongues included Karenni, Burmese, Swahili, and Hazaraghi). Four of the participants were Humanitarian Visa holders (that is, were refugees/asylum seekers), three had become permanent residents (that is, had a migrant background), and one had become an Australian citizen. Their average age of arrival to Australia was 15 ($SD = 1.85$).

All participants had arrived in Australia during their high school years: 2 arrived in year 8, 2 arrived in year 9, 3 arrived in year 10, and 1 arrived in year 11. Only one had previously attended a school that taught in English, the other 7 were new to English as they started school. Now that they had finished school, they were engaged with a range of work and education activities: 4 were working, 2 were completing higher education (one was also working part-time), 1 was doing an apprenticeship, and 1 was a stay-at-home parent.

Case study of past students

Case studies were conducted to collect data from individuals who had formerly been participants in the Settle Well program and were considered as successful by the Program Coordinator due to moving on to further study or being accepted for employment after having graduated from high school. The Program Coordinator selected and contacted six successful cases with a brief explanation of the study and an invitation to contact the relevant researcher. Once contacted, the researcher arranged time for a 30- to 45-minute online interview via Zoom. The participants read an information letter and filled out a consent form before being interviewed. The interviews consisted of semi-structured questions (attached in Appendix A) and were video recorded. The videos were deleted after being transcribed. Participants involved in the case study who chose to remain anonymous were assigned pseudonyms to be used instead of their real names.

Triangulation was done by data collected from other data sources including past student and administrators and stakeholders surveys.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

Of the six cases selected by the Program Coordinator, two of the former participants of the Settle Well program considered successful returned the invitation and participated in an online interview via Zoom.

Kiritja (a pseudonym) was a 22-years old male from Thailand, who arrived in Australia at 7 years old with no English

⁹ Current high school students who are participating in the Settle Well program, unfortunately, were not able to participate in this research due to restrictions introduced pertaining to research within the Victorian education system during COVID-19.

language skills. He identified himself as a Christian with advanced skill in his native language (Karen) and both parents from the same ethnicity. Kiritja started his formal education in Australia from Year 1 and has finished high school. Attending university is not considered important by his parents and family. He participated in the Settle Well program for 2.5 years and is currently working and studying as an engineering intern at Northern Futures.

Mohammed (a pseudonym) was a 23-years old male from Afghanistan, who arrived in Australia at 12 years old with no formal education or English language skills. He identified himself as having no religious affiliation, only basic skill in his native language (Afghani) and both parents from the same ethnicity. Mohammed started his formal education in Australia from Year 7 and has finished high school. Attending university is not considered important by his parents and family. He is not sure how long he participated in the Settle Well program, and currently is a qualified chef, working full time in hospitality. He holds a Humanitarian visa and has a responsibility to look after his family.

Administrators and stakeholders survey

A cross-sectional online survey was used to collect data from organisations partnering with CatholicCare Victoria and who had participated in the Settle Well program. The Program Coordinator selected and contacted the stakeholders, inviting them to participate in the online survey, which was anonymous; however, participants were provided with an opportunity to include potentially identifiable information in their responses if desired. Prior to commencing the survey, participants read an information letter and filled out an online consent form.

A series of closed-ended and open-ended questions (attached in Appendix B) which took about 15–20 minutes to complete collected data from the stakeholders' perspective of Settle Well's effectiveness and success in achieving its goals, and asked questions relating to students' well-being, academic, social and communal engagement, job readiness and employment, and understanding of Australian law and social services.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

Six staff associated with organisations that support or partner with Settle Well, participated in the online survey. The organisations which staff were associated with include, Upstart HQ (2 participants), Community Care Chemist (1 participant), Northern Futures Ltd (1 participant), and Geelong Food Relief Centre (1 participant). One participant chose to remain fully anonymous and not disclose the organisation which they work for. Organisations which the sample were from helped deliver training and services to Settle Well participants in various areas including communication, mentoring and coaching, facilitation, home fire safety and emergency, Multilingual Homework Club, Justice Education Program, LIVE Well Club, food supply and cultural cooking class, referral system, tertiary education, work experience and

employment opportunities.

The sample of 4 women and 2 men held varied roles in their organisations, but most held some decision-making power, with staff positions including: CEO, director, manager, executive assistant, and program coordinator. The majority (4 participants) of the stakeholders were born in Australia; however, two were from Europe. None of the stakeholders identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Duration of stakeholder involvement with Settle Well varied greatly, with one participant having been involved in the program since 2013, whilst most of the sample had been in the program for between 2 and 5 years. One participant had been involved with Settle Well for less than 1 year.

Interview with Program Coordinator

The methodology employed for the interview with the Program Coordinator for this research was qualitative in nature and grounded in the contention that the views and assessments of the research participant are valid and hold a truth that is of equal value to the statistics and commentary created about them.

The interview was recorded and later transcribed by a professional transcription service. The content of this transcription was then categorised using a process that included thematic analysis and qualitative themed grouping. The interview was semi-structured in nature and undertaken in an informal environment. The guiding questions, which were used as a catalyst for the interview discussions, are attached in Appendix C. These questions are indicative of the framework from within which the questions and discussion arose; that is, they served as a guide and prompt, not as a rigid structure.

Limitations of this study

Due to COVID-19, we were not able to carry out a planned focus group study and another survey, both with samples of current students. Therefore, we were not able to gather data from current students as initially planned. Nor were we able to gather data from school administrators as part of the administrators and stakeholders survey, due to difficulty obtaining ethics approval.

The sample sizes of the past students survey and administrators and stakeholders survey were relatively small (n=8), although we believe that they were randomly chosen and hence can legitimately represent their respective populations. Additionally, the past students in the case study had left high school and Settle Well for several years and may not remember their experience very well. It is also worth noting that these students are considered 'successful' cases, hence expecting to report positively about Settle Well.



Image provided by Pexels/ Charlotte May.

TABLE 4.1

SUMMARY OF REPORT SAMPLES AND METHODS			
NAME OF GROUP	METHOD	SAMPLE SIZE	DESCRIPTION
PAST STUDENTS	Survey	8	Former participants of the Settle Well program – 5 women and 3 men
	Case study	2	Past students considered successful by the Settle Well Program Coordinator – 2 men
ADMINISTRATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS	Survey	6	Staff associated with organisations that support or partner with Settle Well – 4 women and 2 men
PROGRAM COORDINATOR	Interview	1	Nestor Estampa is the Program Coordinator – this role involves program development and planning, stakeholders' management, program delivery, etc

5. Findings of this study

Findings are grouped in accordance with and presented in order of the research questions, which are centred around three key areas:

- Personal well-being and connectedness (Research Question 1)
- Achievement of long-term goals in educational, social and communal engagement (Research Question 2)
- Enhancement of social cohesion and community harmony (Research Question 3).

Research Question 1: To what extent has the Settle Well program been effective in improving the well-being and connectedness of refugee and asylum seeker participants previously at risk of disengagement from school and community life?

PAST STUDENTS

Former Settle Well participants who completed the survey agreed that Settle Well helped them to make friends, stay involved with life inside and outside of school, and connect to their local community in North Geelong (see Table 6.1). Similarly, both former Settle Well participants (Kiritja and Mohammed) who completed case study interviews, reported similar positive effects due to participating in Settle Well.

Kiritja and Mohammed highly valued and appreciated the help and support provided to them through the Settle Well program, especially the support provided by the Program Coordinator, Nestor Estampa. Both participants were impressed by the enthusiasm and goodness of Nestor, his good advice, broad knowledge and connections. They both acknowledged Nestor's instrumental role in their career success, through career advice and training, helping them get driving lessons and licences, and navigate Australian systems (e.g., social services and finance).

Kiritja shared that Nestor helped him feel more welcome at school but did not recognise any particular Settle Well program or help that was linked to his academic performance. He felt at ease inserting himself into school and community life due to arriving in Australia at the tender age of 7 which allowed him to start school from Year 1 and learn English quickly. He did not mention having received help for personal well-being or perhaps was not aware of it or in need of it. However, towards the end of the interview, he suggested more support for personal struggles that participants might experience (see the section below on what else was learnt about Settle Well).

Mohammed also does not seem to have received direct support for personal well-being, but he recognised Nestor as a 'wonderful mentor', who 'had a good, pure heart, always open to other people,' and who was 'always there' when needed. Due to arriving in Australia at 12 years old with no English language skills or formal education, Mohammed experienced big challenges because of his lack of English language and social skills, in addition to the significant change in culture and lifestyle.

Nestor had helped him find his feet by assisting him with school enrolment and connecting him with the right people and programs. These programs and people assisted him in improving his English language skills, academic work, socialisation, communication, and employability, as well as enabling him to quickly adapt to his new life. It was through this help and support that Mohammed gained enough confidence and mental strength to actively engage in school and community activities. His transformation was commendable, and within 5 years, he became a member of the local football (AFL) and netball club, in addition to a soccer club, and the school's sports captain in Year 12.

Despite having positive experiences with Settle Well, neither Kiritja nor Mohammed were able to remember the names of programs or activities run by Settle Well or its partners. As well, neither recalled receiving direct support for personal well-being, although they did receive help in the other components of the program (career and pathways, and education and training), which enhanced their general sense of well-being, boosted their confidence and strengthened their mental health. There is a possibility that they might not remember accurately or be aware of what they had received since they had left the Settle Well program several years ago. The findings discussed below in relation to administrators and stakeholders further support our findings in relation to the past student case studies.

'Nestor just helped me feel more welcome in the school.'
(Kiritja)

'Especially a person like Nestor, who was there any time I needed help, he was always there for me and for many individual young men... He's got a good heart. He's got a good and pure heart, and his heart is always open for other people.' (Mohammed)

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Among stakeholders, 66.7% agreed that Settle Well was moderately, or extremely effective in improving participants' mental health. However, this percentage decreases to 33.3% in relation to effectiveness in improving Settle Well participants' physical health (see Graph 5.1). These differences in the ranking of the effectiveness of Settle Well in improving participants' mental and physical health are likely due to the greater focus of Settle Well on providing direct mental health support through therapeutic counselling, rather than suggesting the program is ineffective at improving the students' physical health.

Furthermore, stakeholders believed that Settle Well helps to improve participants' sense of belonging and connection to their school, cultural community, and local community, and to a lesser extent their family and Australian society (see Graph 5.2).

CONCLUSION

Based on the data gathered from past students and stakeholders, we found that Settle Well has a general positive effect in improving the well-being and connectedness of refugee and asylum seeker participants who would otherwise be at risk of disengagement from school and community life. Among stakeholders, Settle Well was perceived to be more effective in improving mental rather than physical health, but this is potentially due to a greater focus on mental health among program components, an approach which aligns with research findings that mental health is one of the most common problems among refugees and asylum seekers (McPherson 2017). While not a limitation of the program, it may be beneficial to make services relating to personal well-being more visible and available to Settle Well participants and other stakeholders.

Research Question 2: To what extent has the program been effective in achieving its long-term goals to enhance participants' educational, social and communal engagement?

PAST STUDENTS

Former Settle Well participants who completed the survey demonstrated only modest current academic engagement (see Graph 5.3). When asked about potential factors which have impacted their ability to study successfully (see Graph 5.4), past students indicated the biggest barrier they experienced was their language skills, closely followed by mental health and disability status, then ease of access to a computer and financial situation. Ease of access to the internet, physical health, living situation, parents' education, and gender received the same score from participants, and the lowest score was levels of computer skills. We note that gender could have a more significant impact, as women are usually disadvantaged educationally but there were 3 male respondents in the survey.

Similar to the Past Students Survey findings, neither case study participant (Kiritja or Mohammed), directly linked Settle Well to improving their academic performance during high school. While Kiritja and Mohammed did not discuss their participation in Settle Well in relation to their high school academic performance, through the interviews, it is clear that Nestor's help in career and pathways support received the highest appreciation from them both.

Kiritja was most thankful for Nestor's support to discern career paths (choosing between mechanics and engineering), and for helping him move into the chosen path with a valuable internship in engineering. He was most impressed by Nestor's enthusiasm to help, his broad knowledge and his wide connections regardless of what areas the student wanted to explore or get into. Kiritja also made special mention of Nestor's assistance in applying for a tax file number, filling out forms, and receiving free driving lessons (and eventually

a driver's licence) through the L2P Learner Driver Mentor Volunteer Program.

Mohammed was very appreciative of Nestor's availability to mentor and guide him whenever he needed. Through Settle Well, he was able to participate in some career ready programs where he learnt how to write a resumé and cover letter and apply for jobs. Mohammed also shared that, through Nestor's help, he was able to learn how to adapt to his new life, improve his social and communication skills, and could now 'speak perfect English' – words he said with pride. All of these enabled him to secure two kitchenhand jobs – one was, according to him, at a 'prestigious place along the coast', and made it possible for him to now become a qualified chef, working with a passion. Mohammed was also greatly thankful for Nestor's help in applying for citizenship and getting his driver's licence through the L2P Learner Driver Mentor Volunteer Program.

The impact of Settle Well on Kiritja and Mohammed's communal engagement differed. Kiritja identified himself as naturally a social and relatable person, who did not need help to mix in and engage with school and communities. Being a Christian, Kiritja said he had always been active at church. Kiritja was also well engaged with his cultural and Australian communities, was trained and participated in soccer and other sporting activities.

For Mohammed, Nestor and the Settle Well program seemed instrumental in enhancing his social and communal engagement through directly or indirectly helping him improve his English language, communication, and socialisation skills. Although Mohammed did not appear to engage in community activities other than sports, his achievement of climbing from having no English language skills or education to becoming the school's sports captain in Year 12 was laudable.

Despite their social and communal involvement, neither Kiritja nor Mohammed were able to mention or name any programs or activities run by Settle Well or its partners that enhanced their engagement with the community and/or society.

Past student case study findings discussed in this section are supported by findings discussed below in relation to administrators and stakeholders. This support is mainly in regard to the success of Settle Well in preparing participants to become job ready and gain employment.

Nestor always prepared for me to get a job after school... Or if I wanna study, he just talked to me about it, although I didn't know what to do...' (Kiritja)

I've met many wonderful people through my journey, I've had such good mentors... such as Nestor Estampa from CatholicCare, who has helped me get my driver's licence through the L2P program and apply for my citizenship...' (Mohammed)



Image provided by Peres, Kevin, 2018.

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders reported Settle Well to be extremely or very effective in helping participants engage in learning at school and be interested in further education and training opportunities in the last few years of high school (see Graph 5.5); 100% of stakeholders believed Settle Well to be effective in helping participants become job ready and 87.5% of stakeholders believed Settle Well to be effective in helping participants secure employment (see Graph 5.6). Lastly, in terms of the success of Settle Well in motivating students to engage with various community engagement activities, stakeholders believed Settle Well to be successful in motivating participants' engagement with community activities and community services, and to a slightly lesser extent, engagement with volunteer work and sports or recreational groups (see Graph 5.7).

CONCLUSION

Based on the data gathered from past students and stakeholders, we found that Settle Well is effective (somewhat) in achieving its long-term goals to enhance participants' educational, social and communal engagement. The success of Settle Well in terms of helping participants establish helpful connections and achieve educational and career goals could be directly attributed to two program components: career and pathways; and education and training. However, case study participants were not able to name any Settle Well program or activities that enhanced their academic, communal or social engagement. Data gathered from past students seems to suggest that educational engagement (in addition to social

and communal engagement) is an area that could benefit from further investigation¹⁰. Lastly, we believe it would be beneficial for greater promotion and availability of group and community activities, and education and training to occur.

Research Question 3: To what extent has the program been effective in contributing to social cohesion and community harmony in northern Geelong?

PAST STUDENTS

Former Settle Well participants were found to have varying levels of need for help to adapt to and settle into Australian culture and society. Kiritja did not seem to need much help to adapt to the Australian culture. However, the assistance Kiritja received in the career and pathways Settle Well focus area, which ultimately helped him to obtain his engineering internship, would have contributed to the confidence, mentality and status needed for him to easily insert himself into Australian society. The impact of Settle Well in the case of Mohammed is even more clear. From his interview, it is clear that he would not have the skills nor connections to succeed in life or engage with school, the local community or Australian society without the help of Nestor and the Settle Well program. Another point: while both Kiritja and Mohammed recognised that Settle Well had given them more knowledge about Australian law, it is not clear if they participated in any Justice Education Program offerings.

¹⁰ As mentioned earlier, we had planned to examine these areas with current students; however, due to difficulties pertaining to receiving ethics approval this could not be carried out.



Image provided by Pexels, Angela Roma

Findings from the survey on past students suggest a moderate degree of social cohesion and harmony with 57.1% to 71.4% of former participants feeling they maintained a connection to the culture of their country of origin while also being comfortable adopting the Australian culture in various situations (see Graph 5.8 for participant responses for various domains). Furthermore, former Settle Well participants agreed that Settle Well helped them to connect with their local community in North Geelong and enhanced their sense of belonging to their community (see Table 6.1). Together, these findings suggest that Settle Well has been effective in contributing to social cohesion and community harmony in Northern Geelong.

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders reported Settle Well to be extremely or very successful in achieving its overall goals of improving participants' health and well-being, enhancing their educational, professional, social and communal engagement and contributing positively to social cohesion and community harmony (see Figure 5.9).

Whilst still viewed as fairly successful, stakeholders rated the success of Settle Well in helping participants understand their legal rights and responsibilities lower than the program's success in helping participants understand the social supports available to them, respect for cultural diversity, and appreciation of multicultural Australia (see Figure 5.10). Stakeholders rated Settle Well as most successful in helping participants appreciate multicultural Australia. They highly regarded its success in helping participants to respect cultural

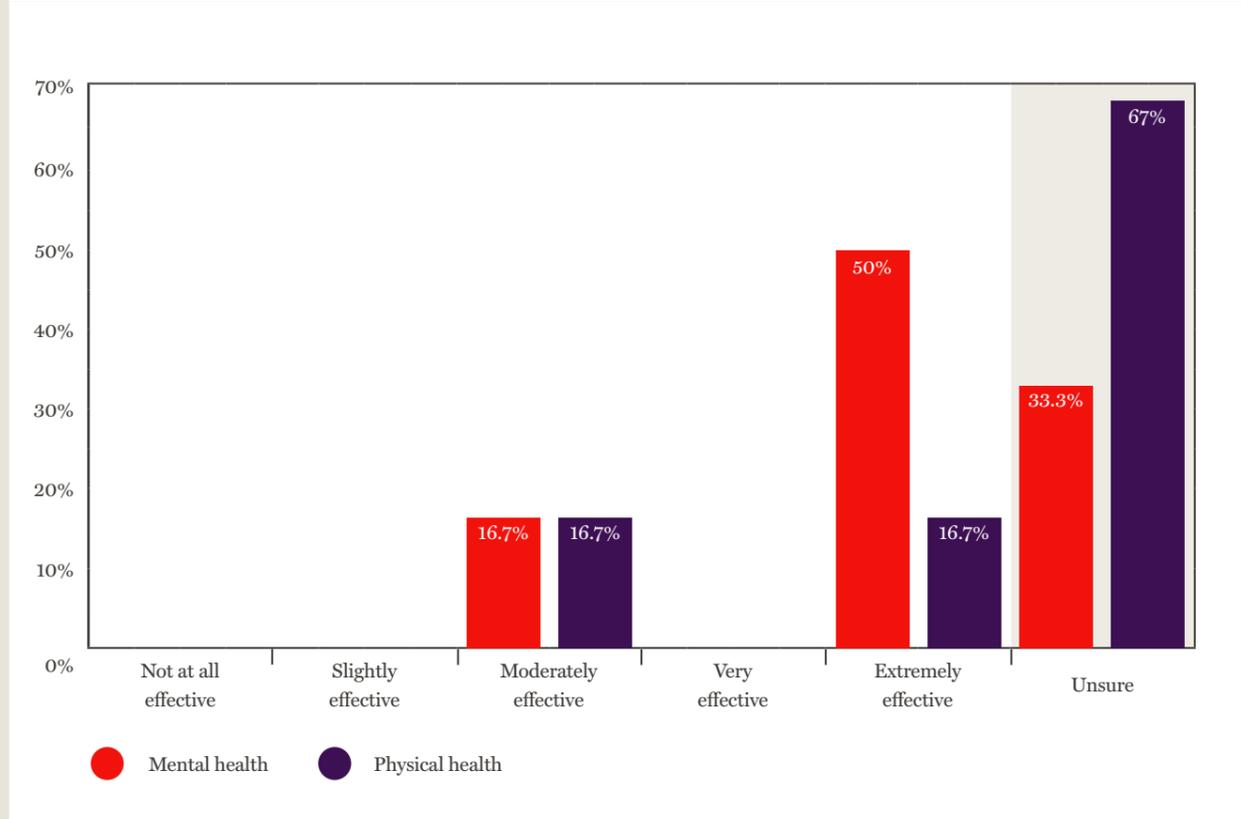
diversity, indicating high social cohesion and community harmony. These findings are consistent with earlier discussed findings of stakeholders' views of the Settle Well program's effectiveness in helping participants engage with different groups (findings discussed under Research Question 1). Stakeholder opinions that the program is least successful in helping participants to understand their legal rights and responsibilities suggests the potential for further work and improvement of the Justice Education Program.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data gathered from past students and stakeholders, we found that Settle Well positively contributed to social cohesion and community harmony in Northern Geelong. We recommend the further promotion of and more systematic access to relevant program components and focus areas such as group and community activities and the Justice Education Program. Although rated as successful features of Settle Well by stakeholders, that same group rated understanding of legal rights and responsibilities and social support as the least successful type of help provided by Settle Well.

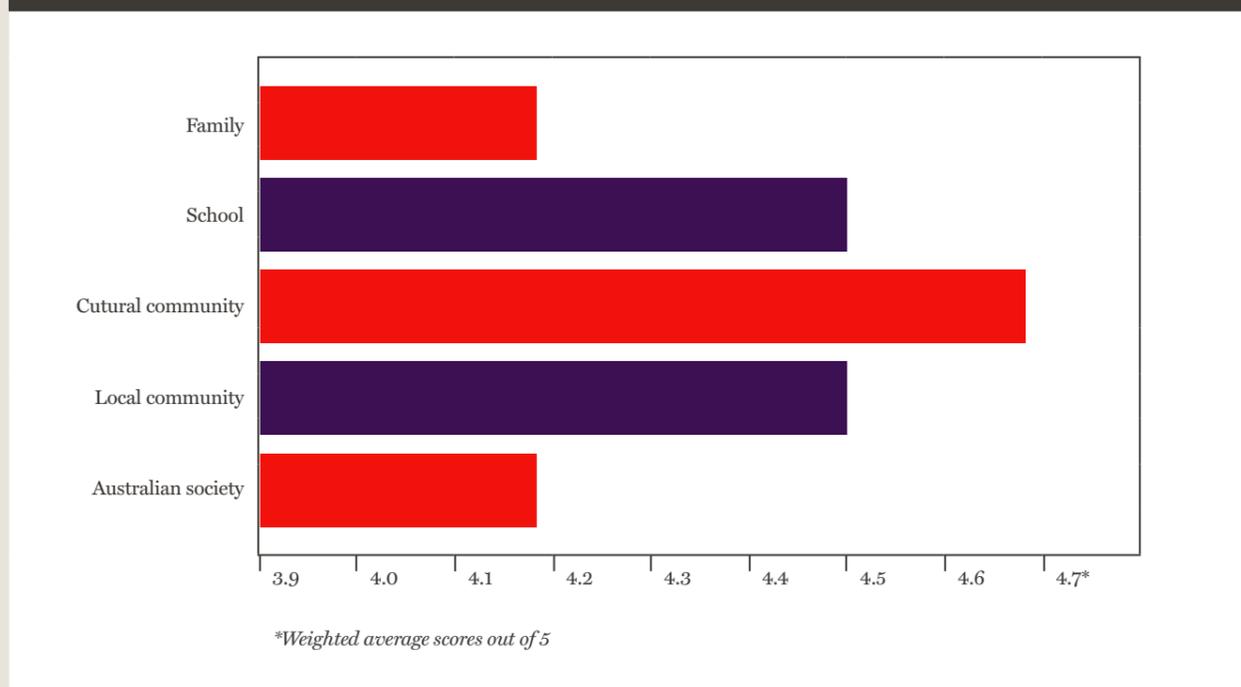
GRAPH 5.1

ACCORDING TO STAKEHOLDERS, HOW EFFECTIVE IS SETTLE WELL IN IMPROVING PARTICIPANTS' MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH?

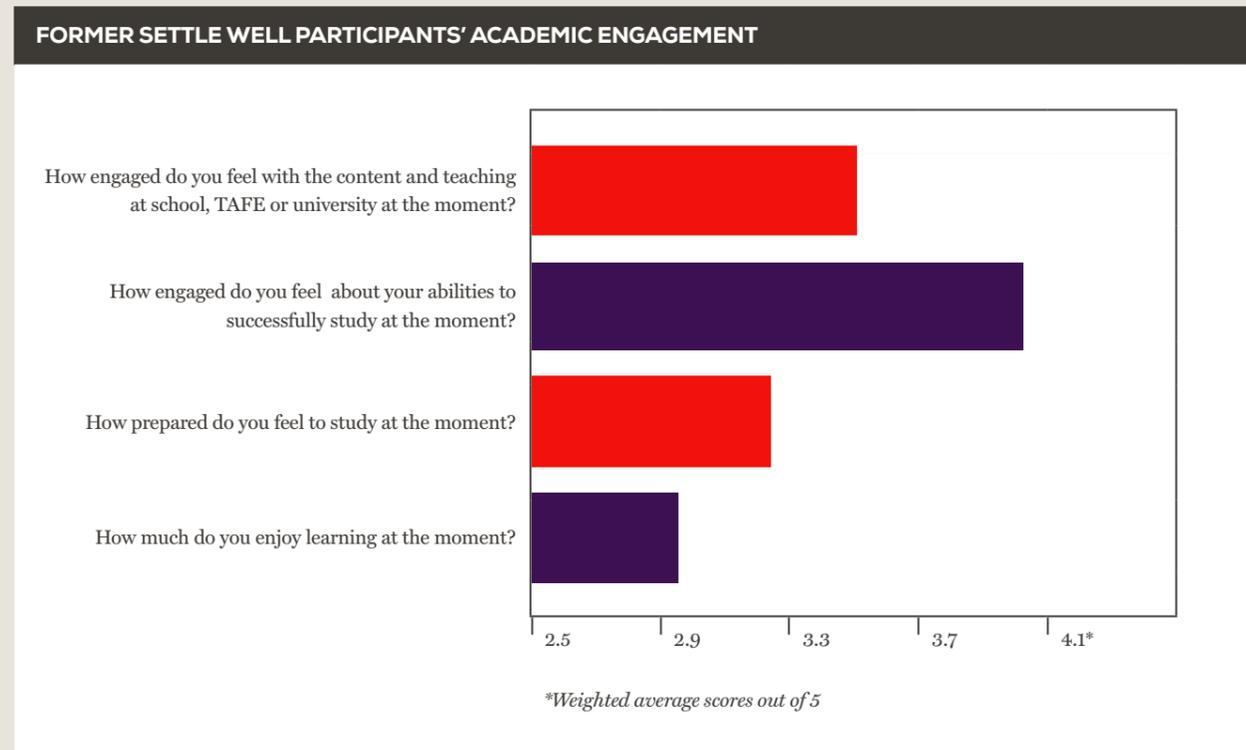


GRAPH 5.2

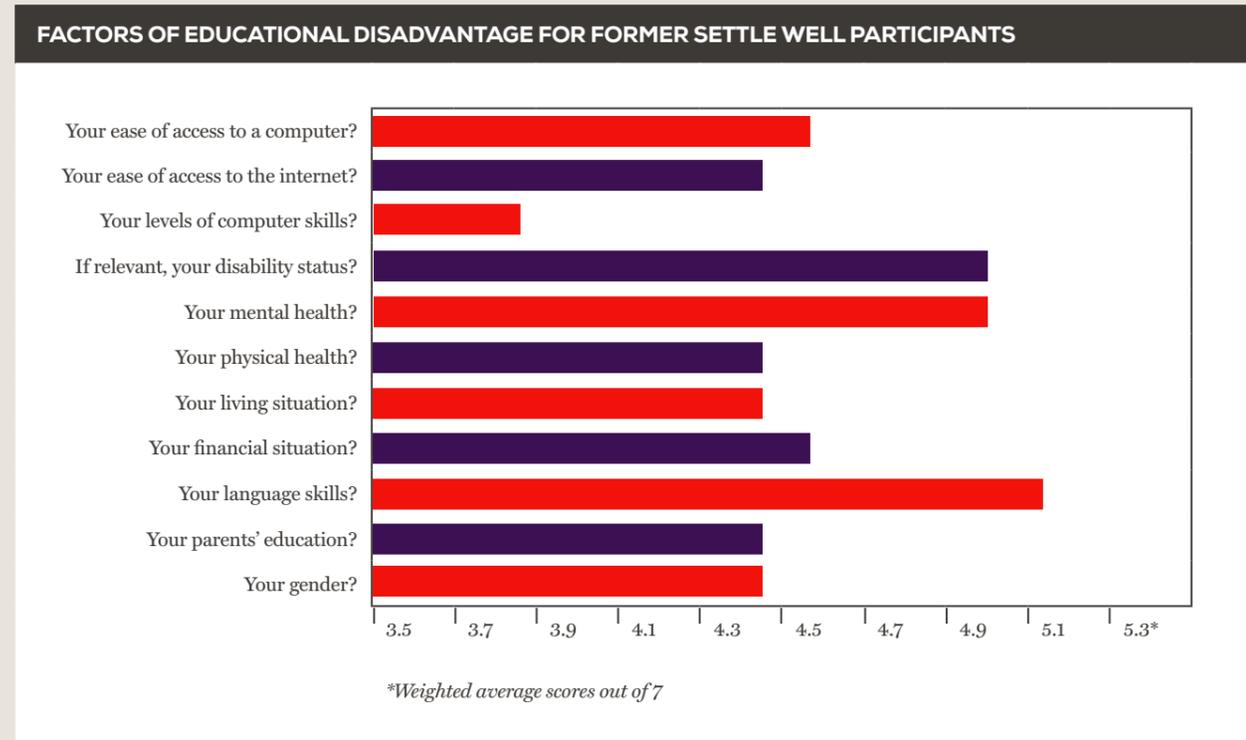
ACCORDING TO STAKEHOLDERS' AVERAGE SCORES, HOW MUCH DOES SETTLE WELL HELP IMPROVE STUDENTS' SENSE OF BELONGING AND CONNECTION TO VARIOUS GROUPS?



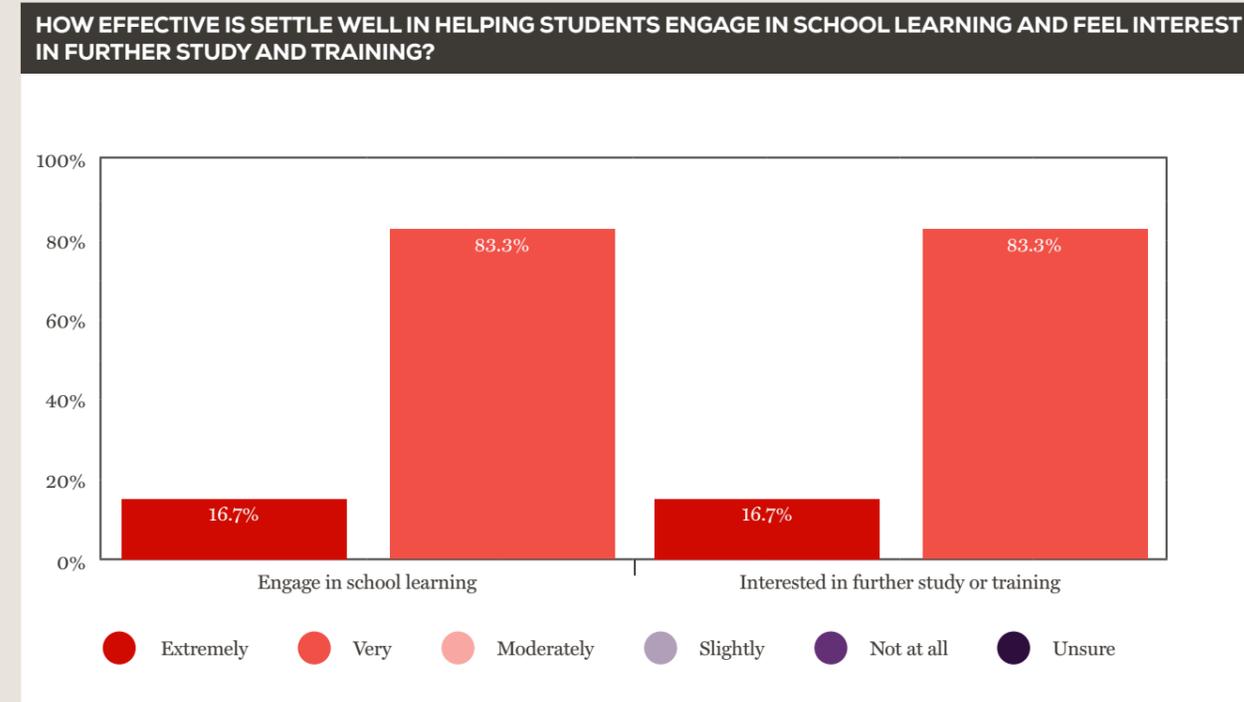
GRAPH 5.3



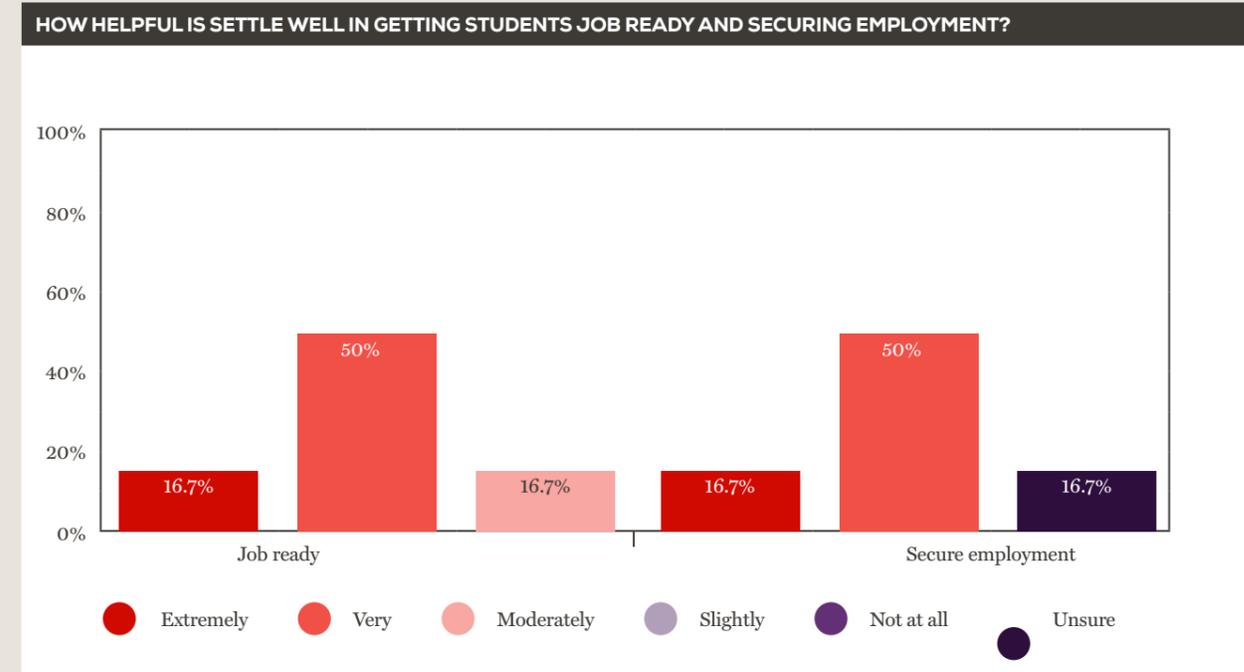
GRAPH 5.4



GRAPH 5.5

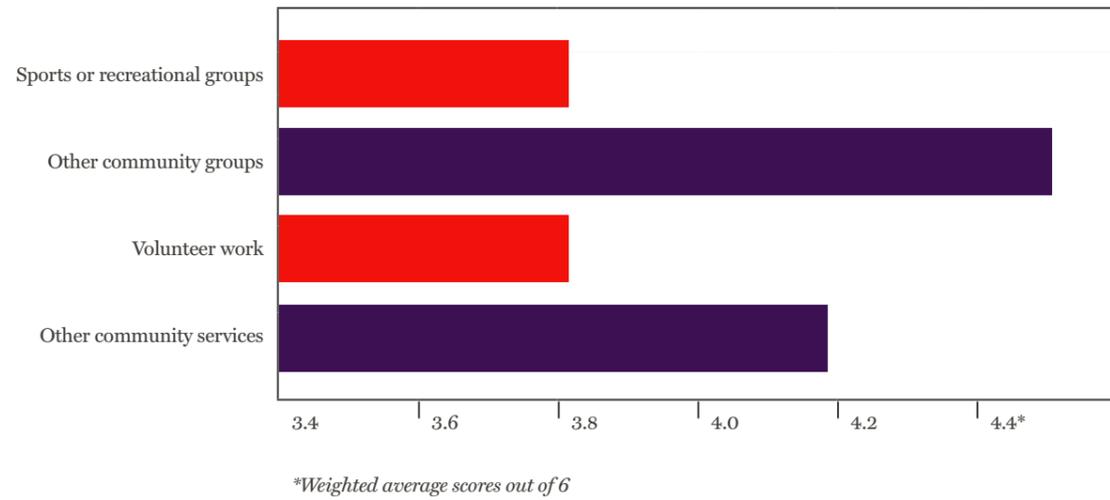


GRAPH 5.6



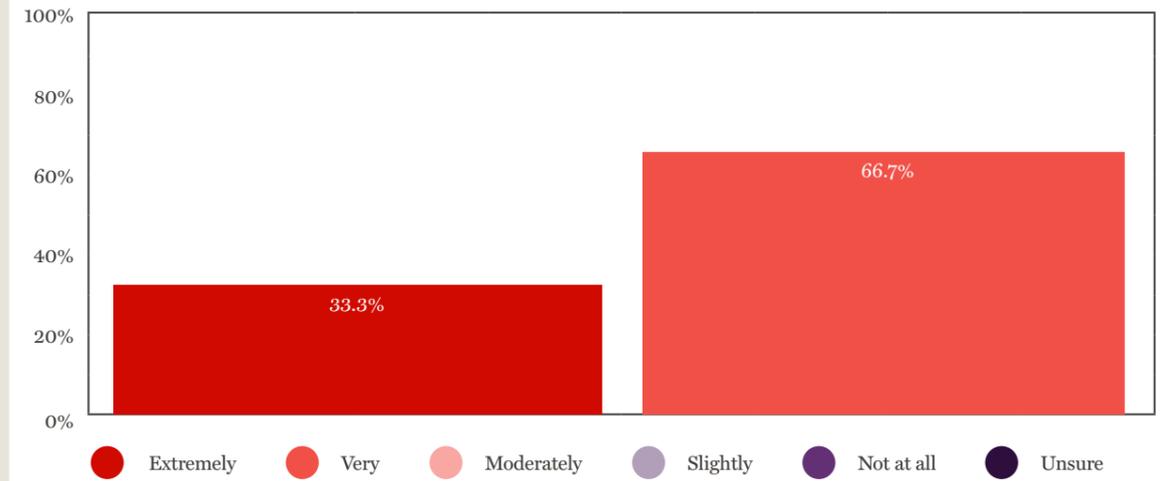
GRAPH 5.7

HOW EFFECTIVE IS SETTLE WELL IN MOTIVATING PARTICIPANTS TO ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES?



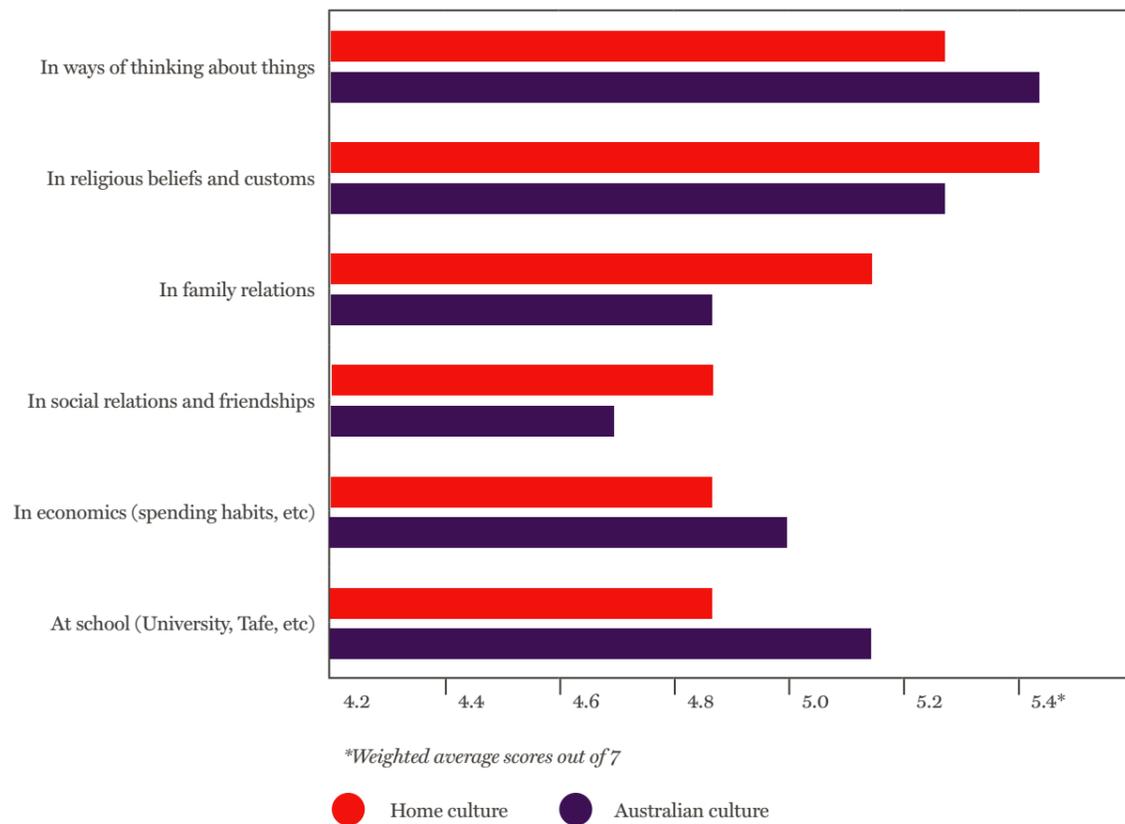
GRAPH 5.9

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE: OVERALL, HOW SUCCESSFUL IS SETTLE WELL IN ACHIEVING ITS GOALS?



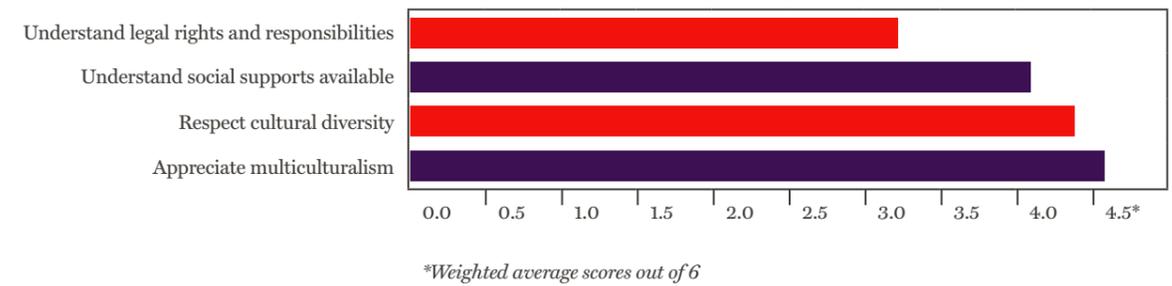
GRAPH 5.8

FORMER SETTLE WELL PARTICIPANTS' ADOPTION OF AUSTRALIAN CULTURE AND MAINTENANCE OF HOME CULTURE



GRAPH 5.10

STAKEHOLDER RATINGS OF THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF SETTLE WELL IN HELPING PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND THEIR RIGHTS AND AVAILABLE SOCIAL SUPPORTS, RESPECT CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND APPRECIATE MULTICULTURALISM



6. What else did we learn about Settle Well?

PAST STUDENTS

Former Settle Well participants were asked to complete a series of questions about how much they enjoyed the Settle Well program. Participants rated their endorsement of each question using a five-point scale; the average responses to each item are presented in Table 6.1. On average, the typical response to each item was 'agree' (the second highest response possible on the scale), suggesting that former participants enjoyed the program, and found it valuable across a range of dimensions.

At the end of the case study interviews, participants were asked what advice they would like to give to young refugees or migrants like themselves. As with the survey responses, Kiritja and Mohammed strongly advised others to join Settle Well, affirming its positive effect. Kiritja strongly believed that new migrants and refugees should join Settle Well because it was very helpful and supportive; without programs like Settle Well he said, they would not have enough support from school and might just abandon it.

Mohammed passionately affirmed the help of Settle Well and advised new refugees and migrants to 'just hang in there' even though they might have to face difficulties and challenges because of their new culture, lifestyle and language 'Good people would come in time to help them find the right path', as Mohammed himself had experienced with Settle Well.

When asked if there was anything they did not like about the Settle Well program, Kiritja and Mohammed said there was nothing they did not like, but they made some suggestions for improvements to the program. One of these was to have more, and more systematic (rather than random) opportunities to

meet with Nestor. Another suggestion was to have deeper support in 'behind the scenes' personal struggles.

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders were asked to identify the most effective or most helpful components of the Settle Well program. Respondents attributed the greatest amount of Settle Well's success to components that they were involved with (4 responses), connections or referrals that staff were able to help students establish with the wider community (2 responses), or staff's experience, care and passion (1 response).

A further two respondents attributed Settle Well's success to students' enthusiastic reception, the outcome of their training or the connections established for students, while a further one respondent answered 'unsure' due to lack of involvement with the program.

Some responses from stakeholders to this question are set out below:

'I believe the program is successful because of the passion and experience of staff involved in the program. They genuinely care and look for different ways to connect participants to the broader community.'

'The most effective or most helpful component of the program is the award-winning Bi-lingual Homework Club because it has engaged and motivated newly arrived students every year since its establishment 4 years ago.'

'With reference to the Confident Communications Coaching program within Settle Well, I found the most effective and helpful components to be giving participants the skills, practice and confidence to share their stories with a range of audiences. The program helped them reflect on their experiences, compile interesting and informative presentations, identify their aspirations and provide encouragement and feedback to others.'

Stakeholders were asked as well to identify the least effective or least helpful components of the Settle Well program. Four respondents could not identify anything because 'the program seemed to be very effective all around'; one respondent was unsure because of lack of involvement with the program, and the other three respondents identified the following issues:

- Lack of broad awareness of the program
- Programming during class time interrupting the sequence of learning in the Multilingual Homework Club
- Some services are overstretched or not offered locally.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the Settle Well program is viewed as successful and recommended by former Settle Well participants and stakeholders alike. However, both groups had some suggestions for areas of improvement to the Settle Well program including increased promotion, availability and resources for the program.

TABLE 6.1

ACCORDING TO PAST STUDENTS SURVEY RESPONSES, HOW ENJOYABLE WAS SETTLE WELL?

SETTLE WELL SURVEY QUESTIONS	AVERAGE
I enjoyed attending the Settle Well program	4.0
I found the program fun	3.9
I found the program useful for improving my school work	4.3
I found the program helped me make friends	3.9
The program helped me stay involved in school	3.9
The program helped me in my life outside of school	3.9
I would recommend that other young people take part in Settle Well	4.3
Settle Well helped connect me to my local community in North Geelong	3.9
Settle Well helped me feel a sense of belonging to this community	3.9

7. Conclusion

This report presents an evaluation conducted by the Australian Catholic University of the CatholicCare Victoria Settle Well program. The program aims to provide asylum seekers and refugee young people who attend North Geelong Secondary College (NGSC) and Northern Bay College (NBC) with support as they adjust to living in Australia and to participating in secondary education in Geelong, Victoria. The program also aims to provide support to the students' mothers.

The data within this report evaluated the support provided by Settle Well compared to that provided by other support services for refugee and asylum-seeker young people in Victoria. The comparison was carried out by means of a literature review, and new evaluative data from people with first-hand experience of the program. This latter data was acquired through a series of interviews and surveys. The data was provided by alumni of the program and key stakeholders and administrators, including Mr Nestor Estampa who designed and originated the program. The findings of this report show that Settle Well was generally evaluated as being a very successful, effective, and highly recommended program for young refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

Specifically, the report provides evidence which suggests that the program contributes positively to participants' well-being and to their connectedness to school and community life during their schooling years. The evidence also suggests longer term positive impacts to educational, professional, social, and communal engagement, and to social cohesion and community harmony.

A key limitation of this study is the lack of data from current students and school staff. The project was initially designed prior to the wide-ranging impacts of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic being felt. Although the aims and research questions of the project did not change, several planned elements of the method and design needed to be abandoned due to these unforeseeable restraints. Of note, due to restrictions placed on research during the pandemic by the Research in Schools and Early Childhood settings process at the Victorian Education Department, no data could be collected at the schools involved.

As a result, there is no data in this report from either current students, or teachers at the schools. Some data in this report was supplied by previous students who had participated in the Settle Well program several years earlier. Hence these responses rely on retrospective memories. The findings based on such data should be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

Taken as a whole, this report suggests that programs such as Settle Well are important to assist with the resettlement and adjustment of asylum seekers and refugee young people in Victoria. The programs facilitate participation in secondary education and improve education-relevant outcomes; they also enhance asylum seeker and refugee young people's adjustment to life in Australia outside the educational domain. The areas apart from the educational sphere include health and well-being and longer-term impacts including future job prospects, English language skills, and integration into the broader community.

There are clear positive outcomes for students who participate in the program, but also for their family and members of their extended cultural communities. The Settle Well program has been expertly crafted by Mr Estampa through multiple iterations. He has clearly done an excellent job and he is genuinely appreciated by those who are directly impacted by the program.

However, it has become clear through the information generated by this report that the success of Settle Well has been heavily reliant on the labour, skills, and dedication of a single program coordinator. That has implications for Settle Well's reproducibility and sustainability.

For this reason, this report has provided a series of recommendations to consider for future iterations of Settle Well. The recommendations include increased promotion of the program components; improved visibility of its component; input of increased resources; keeping track of alumni, refining the program framework and program logic; and expanding the program to complement existing components.

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Appendix A. Case study questions

1 How helpful did you think the Settle Well program was to your school and community life?

- a. Did it help you feel more connected to school? Community? More comfortable taking part in school activities? Community activities?
- b. Which school/community activities did you participate in? Which made your study more enjoyable? Achieve better academic results?
- c. Did you feel satisfied with what you achieved?
- d. Did you relate well with teachers, friends and others at school?
- e. What activities were most helpful in this respect?

2 How helpful did you think the Settle Well program was to your health and wellbeing?

- a. Did it help improve your physical and mental health? General wellbeing?
- b. What activities were most helpful in this respect?

3 How helpful was the program in helping you achieve your education, training and career goals?

- a. Did it motivate you to take an interest in other education or training opportunities in the last few years offered at or outside of school?
- b. Did it prepare you well with skills to apply for a job or further education or training?
- c. To be ready to take a job or further training or education?
- d. To get the job, training or education you are doing?
- e. What activities of the program were most helpful in this respect?

4 How helpful did you think the Settle Well program was to your engagement with your cultural and local communities?

- a. Did it help you feel more connected to your cultural community? To your local community?
- b. Comfortable taking part in community activities?
- c. Which community activities did you participate in?
- d. Enjoy your community activities (for e.g., cultural activities, sports, recreational, volunteer work, community services...)?
- e. To feel more confident?
- f. Feel satisfied with what you have achieved?
- g. Relate well with others in your communities?
- h. What activities were most helpful in this respect?

5 How helpful was the program to your engagement with communities of different backgrounds and to Australian society generally?

- a. Did it help you to overcome barriers and participate in activities outside your own communities?
- b. To feel more confident?
- c. Have more awareness of your legal rights and responsibilities?
- d. Have more awareness of the social supports available through school, educational institute, the workplace and in the community?
- e. Respect the differences in other cultures?
- f. Appreciate cultural diversity in the local community and in Australia generally?
- g. What activities of the program were most helpful in this respect?

Appendix B. Administrators and stakeholders survey questions

- 1 One of the objectives of the Settle Well program is to improve participants' physical and mental health. From your perspective, how effective do you think the Settle Well program has been in this respect?
- 2 From your perspective, do you think the Settle Well program helps participants improve their sense of belonging and connection to family/school community/cultural community/local community/Australian society?
- 3 How effective do you think the Settle Well program is in helping participants engage in learning at school and have interest in educational and training opportunities in the last few years of high school?
- 4 How helpful do you think the Settle Well program is in getting participants to be job ready and secure employment?
- 5 How successful do you think the Settle Well program is in motivating participants to engage with sports or recreational groups/other community activities/volunteer work/other community services?
- 6 How successful do you think the Settle Well program is in helping participants understand their legal rights and responsibility, understand the social supports available through schools and in the community, participants respect cultural diversity/appreciate multicultural Australia?
- 7 Overall, how successful do you think the Settle Well program is in achieving its goals of improving participants' health and well-being, enhancing their educational, professional, social and communal engagement, and positively contributing to social cohesion and community harmony?



Appendix C.

Program Coordinator interview questions

1. Welcome and introductions.
2. Tell me about yourself.
3. Describe the Settle Well program to me.
4. What do you think the program achieves?
5. What is your role? How do you describe your role?
6. What duties does your role include?
7. Is the Settle Well program static, or does it change?
Please explain.
8. Does your role change? If so, how?
9. What are the strengths of the program?
10. Are there aspects of the program that are 'essential' and are there some that are 'optional'? Please explain.
11. How do you think students experience this program?
What do they 'get out of it'?
12. Do you feel that schools, communities, families benefit from students participating in this program? If so, how?
13. Do you feel the program could be improved in any way?
14. Anything else you would like to add?

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