



Refugee Council
of Australia

Media release - Refugee Week June 2018

Whittlesea Community Connections working for a safer, stronger and more inclusive community

Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC) is pleased to be partnering with the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) to promote the Face to Face (F2F) program across Whittlesea. The F2F program aims to build social cohesion, address negative perceptions about refugees and to increase awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by refugees and their contributions to Australia. The F2F program includes presentations and workshops and is co-presented by a speaker from a refugee background and a community educator.

WCC has worked for decades to welcome refugees and practically support them to adjust to their new home and settle well in Whittlesea. We are a strong advocate for the fair treatment of refugees and those seeking asylum and hold the belief that refugees and their experiences, skills and expertise strengthen our community. We want to give people who have come to Australia as refugees a chance to share their journey with different audiences to help us become a more aware, understanding and engaged community.

The North West region of Melbourne, of which Whittlesea is part, is a focal point for refugee resettlement in Victoria. The cultural, ethnic and religious diversity within our community has increased substantially in the last 15 years and this can raise tensions between individuals, groups and communities as a whole. Whittlesea Community Connections through the Face to Face program wants to help raise awareness across the local community to help prevent or address these tensions directly.

The F2F program contains information that helps people better understand the refugee experience and gives them an opportunity to ask questions in the hope we can build a stronger community, one that appreciates refugees as an asset now and into the future. Through the program

- Refugees share personal stories of their journey to Australia – why they leave, their experiences en route to Australia and their settlement experience in Australia
- Refugees co-present with a community educator who provides information that includes how refugees are defined, where they come from, why they leave and their contributions to Australia.
- Presentations are interactive and include opportunities for question and answer

- Presentations are customised to meet the needs of the audience
- Presentations usually last around 45 – 50 minutes depending on the requirement of the group or organisation
- Presentations are for primary and secondary school students, community groups, professional development for teachers and health professionals, government departments, councils, teachers unions, employer groups etc.

Whittlesea Community Connections, in partnership with Refugee Council of Australia, would be happy to discuss ways that Face to Face presentations can be designed to take your group or organisation's specific needs into account in the design of the sessions.

Contacts

For further information and bookings please contact:

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