

## CASE STUDY: Welcome Football

*Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)*

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Welcome Football works with young people and their families to create a positive settlement experience for newly arrived refugees, in order to facilitate positive community interactions. Through a variety of football-based programs and events, Welcome Football strives to:

- Provide opportunities for children and young people to participate in familiar and engaging activities, promoting engagement in their local community and increased social connections.
- Provide newly arrived parents with knowledge of local services and opportunities to participate in their local community.
- Provide newly arrived young people with capacity-building and increased employability and professional development opportunities.
- Increase the local community's awareness of the newly arrived refugee communities.

### Engaging and supporting young people

Young volunteers aged 16 to 30 have been recruited as Community Champions by CMY to deliver the program to newly arrived young refugees in the local community. The volunteers received free training on coaching, leadership and project management to help run the Welcome Football program. The Community Champions include young people from recently arrived communities, as well as those who have grown up in Australia. They play important roles promoting the program's activities throughout their communities and co-delivering the football sessions.

The Welcome Football includes;

- A school program for children aged 5 to 12 delivered in cooperation with local schools by CMY. The program takes place in school facilities, however is not part of the curriculum.

- An after-school hours program for young people aged 15 to 30 providing an informal opportunity for young people to take part in a familiar activity and get to know some other local young people.

### Engaging and supporting parents and families

Welcome Football also includes a school holiday program and the Welcome Football Cup which aim to engage parents and families as well as young people.

The school holiday program delivered by Community Champions includes a range of football activities for young people and provides opportunities for parents to meet new people from the wider community. A key aspect of the school holidays program has been to promote local football clubs, encouraging and supporting young people to join these clubs' programs for the upcoming football season. Parents are also encouraged to engage with these local football clubs, alongside their children, through volunteering for the local club as referees, coaches etc., to increase their local connections and their social networks.

The one day 'Welcome Football Cup', on the other hand, provides an opportunity for young people and their families to connect with local people, services and organisations from the wider community under the banner of a football tournament. Local service providers offer information to parents on various opportunities and services available locally, such as further education, employment and health services. The event also brings together local families with newly arrived families, increasing their social connections.