

Newsletter

Issue 45

October 2016



From The Director

High demand for ERCWA programs

Since our last newsletter, the annual Harmony Weekend Family Camp has been held at Camp Kelly in Dwellingup. Once again, it was an extremely successful event with close to 100 people attending from diverse backgrounds. Thanks to staff from Aquinas College and the Edmund Rice Centre WA for organizing the weekend program and to Lotterywest for their financial support.

Our weekly educational programs for adults, children and youth from refugee migrant backgrounds as well as programs for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to be in high demand and I take this opportunity to thank staff, volunteers, funders and supporters for their generous commitment to the ongoing work of The Edmund Rice Centre WA. We continue to "Reach out" together, in bringing positive change in our own lives and the lives of others!

"I loved this day. Makes me feel so happy to see all the flowers."

Floral Fantasy

Enjoying the Beauty of the Wildflower Festival

On Wednesday 14 September 2016, in the glorious Spring sunshine, the Lifeskills Group excitedly boarded the Edmund

Rice Bus to enjoy the beauty of The Kings Park Spring Wildflower Festival. This excursion was part of the Lifeskills Program funded by the Department of Social Services.

The group was interested to learn that the Park covers about 4kms and was originally called Perth Park. It was renamed Kings Park in 1901. They also learnt that over 5 million people each year visit Kings Park; our group was impressed to learn they were part of about half a million people who would enjoy the Festival in 2016.



During our wander through the gardens, students learnt that the Park is an important area for the Aboriginal people who have celebrated cultural ceremonies here for over 40,000 years.

Here is some feedback from those who came along to Kings Park:

"Isn't our God or Allah or whoever ... just so amazing ... look at all that beauty!"

"Now I know the bus number to come here, I can bring my family during the school holidays."

"Thank you to everyone at the Edmund Rice Centre for organizing such a lovely day out for us."



You can help us to save money!

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Banksia United

Noongar Soccer Program

Banksia United is a soccer program for indigenous children who are more interested in playing soccer than AFL. The program has been running for five years now, each year with new and old players. The program was originally run in Banksia Grove but has since been moved to Koondoola Reserve to serve the growing indigenous community in the area. The Banksia United program is run every Saturday from 10:00am to 12:30pm.

During the sessions, children are taught soccer skills, while also acquiring team work, leadership and communication skills. The soccer session is then followed by a healthy eating session where they learn about healthy eating and self-care. The partnership between Edmund Rice Centre WA and Relationships Australia has been a major factor in the growing success of the program. This year, Banksia United has branched out from the regular soccer sessions at Koondoola Reserve, to playing matches against local soccer clubs such as



Balcatta FC and the Hamersley Rovers, as well as extension opportunities such as attending Perth Glory games.

The future of Banksia United looks bright, and with the continued support from Football West, Relationships Australia and the Edmund Rice staff, it can only get better.



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Driver Education Program

Twenty clients obtain their driver's licence

The Driving Program has been a success for the 20 clients who have passed their practical assessments since January

2016. This has proven to be life-changing. As a result of passing their practical assessments, 8 mothers have gained their independence and can now take their

"I don't have to ask my neighbour or friend to take me to my appointment anymore. I feel so good!"

children to school, and drive themselves to their English classes and appointments. This has provided these women with a sense of confidence and belief in themselves which will no doubt be reflected in their family life.

In addition, 3 young men have obtained employment after passing their practical assessments. Now, they can confidently drive their own vehicle to and from work and are heading towards a happier and more comfortable life. There is a great deal of appreciation from our clients for the Driving Program.

The Drive Safe class has consistently been a success with most of the class attendees passing their practical assessment. They have been keen to attend the Drive Safe theory class as it has supported their practical experience. As one client said "I can connect the class discussions with my practical session and then it all makes sense." The class has from 6 to 11 clients each term.

Homework Club

A new program at Koondoola

The Homework Enrichment Club has commenced at Koondoola Primary School as a Koondoola Integrated Service Centre program. It runs after school on Wednesdays, currently for four children. The children meet at the new demountable where they get a healthy afternoon snack before the session. The aim is to help the children in areas where they are experiencing difficulties and to help prepare them for the transition to High School.

A Koondoola Primary School teacher facilitates the program.

"This is great,
it really has helped me with my maths"

"I feel so lucky to have been chosen
to be in this club"

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Harmony Camp 2016

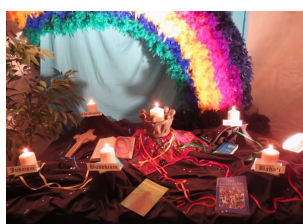
Celebrating our cultural diversity

It was another fantastic few days of sharing stories, culture, food and fun at the annual Edmund Rice Centre WA Harmony Camp.

Over the weekend of 26 – 28 August 2016, 103 people participated in the Harmony Camp at Camp Kelly in Dwellingup. Approximately 60 women and children came from ERCWA programs while other participants came from the wider ERC network, schools and the wider community.

It was a time to celebrate our cultural diversity – so the theme of the weekend was “Rainbow”. A variety of activities including a local Indigenous welcome and knowledge, family and children’s games and sporting activities, music and dancing, and a multi-faith celebration encouraged sharing and learning from each other. Group sessions provided opportunities to listen to the stories and life experiences of refugee families and to learn to appreciate the gifts they bring to our communities. Naturally, eating together being such an enjoyable way of sharing cultures, the Ethiopian coffee ceremony, a multicultural dinner and an Aussie BBQ were highlights!

The weekend was an opportunity to take some time from busy lives to breathe and to share with other families our common hopes for peace and happiness.



REACHING OUT, CHANGING LIVES

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We Need Your Help



If you would like to support our work, your donation will be most gratefully accepted. Your donation will enable people from refugee and Indigenous backgrounds to continue to benefit from our educational programs. The Edmund Rice Centre Western Australia is a registered charity.

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

Please make cheques payable to "Edmund Rice Centre"

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