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AUSTRALIAN
multicultural
foundation



A Quaterly Update On The Northern Community Support Group

The Northern News

"THE BEST OF
PEOPLE ARE
THOSE THAT
BRING MOST
BENEFIT TO
OTHERS"

Exciting Times in the North

There has been plenty of activity over the last few months in the Northern suburbs. Excitingly, Imams and other community leaders at MyCentre and Preston Mosque have just embarked on an educational journey which will culminate with formal qualifications (Certificate IV in Youth Work). This will help them better understand and address the needs of young people. Both project sites have delivered addiction awareness presentations, and careers and training workshops. Younger community members at each project site have learned new skills in science and technology, and Preston Mosque has launched a book club, aimed at empowering and motivating women.

The Northern CSG is a pilot project auspiced by the Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF) in partnership with MyCentre, Preston Mosque and the Victorian Government. The project involves working with the Muslim community in the Northern suburbs of Melbourne. The aim is to provide young people and the broader community, with the support and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential and develop a sense of belonging in Australia.

For more information please write to
remzi.unal@amf.net.au

Imams and Community Leaders Training for Certificate IV in Youth Work



Course coordinator Sue Paten demonstrating to her students, the importance of Youth Work.

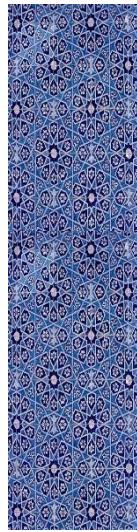
Imams and community leaders at MyCentre and Preston Mosque have just commenced training towards formal qualifications in youth work. The Certificate IV in Youth Work aims to upskill local imams and other community leaders in areas such as mental health and case management, so they are better equipped at addressing the increasingly complex needs of young people. The program is being delivered by New Futures Training (the registered training organisation of VICSEG New Futures), who have considerable experience working with diverse communities, and have tailored a training program to suit the Northern CSG cohort.

The program is being delivered predominantly online, with some classroom interaction (every 4-6 weeks). A two-week summer intensive program has been arranged for mid-January to fast track completion of the course. The topics being covered during this period include Working effectively with young people, Working with people with mental health issues and Responding to critical needs. Early classroom sessions have been very successful, with plenty of energy and lively discussion. Course coordinator Sue Paten has been very impressed with the genuine passion demonstrated by the students, for youth work and helping young people in general.

MYAF Drug and Alcohol Addiction Presentations at MyCentre



There was plenty of interest for the MYAF presentations, from both young females (above) and males (below).



Panelists speak to the audience about their 'journeys to success'



On Friday 2nd of November, MyCentre hosted a Boys Youth Night, focussing on the dangers of drug and alcohol addiction. Multicultural Youth and Families (MYAF) counsellors spoke to the young male participants, aged between 12 and 19, about the dangers of drugs and other addictive substances. Charity group Homeless Aid gave the young audience real life examples of what a drug addiction could lead to. Essendon footballer Adam Saad spoke about his pathway to the AFL, giving sound advice where possible. There was also plenty of interactive games and presentations, as well as a Middle Eastern themed dinner. Feedback from participants suggests, they walked away educated about the harms of substance abuse.

The following Friday 9th November, MyCentre organised a 'Girls Youth Night', to educate young females aged 12 to 19, about the dangers of drug and alcohol addiction. The evening had a heavy focus on faith and identity, building self-esteem and self-care. Speakers on the night included MYAF counsellor Manal Shehab, and youth leaders such as Aisha Yahya, Merjem Colan, and Rania Ahmad. The feedback from the girls was very positive, the positive atmosphere and the food were notable highlights.



MyCentre Conquer the 1000 Steps Kokoda Walk

On Tuesday 10th of January, MyCentre women's committee organised a trip to the 1000 Steps Kokoda Walk track, in the Dandenong Ranges. Apart from getting a physical workout, participants also had the opportunity to spend time with friends, embrace nature and enjoy beautiful scenery.

Activities such as this are vital in reducing social isolation, especially for female members of the community. Engaging in meaningful social activities improves overall health and wellbeing, and helps participants develop a sense of belonging to the community.

'Our Leaders: Journey to Success'

On Saturday 1st of December, Preston Mosque held an employment/networking event titled 'Our Leaders: Journey to Success'.

The program started with a presentation by Salim Mohamed from the Islamic Council of Victoria's Empower Muslim Youth program. This was followed by a resume writing/job interviews workshop delivered by Polyglot Group. Finally, Sam Haouchar from Muslim Professionals Association (MPA) facilitated a panel style discussion, where Muslim community leaders such as Dr Sara Hassan, Omar Marzouk, Dr Senem Eren and Baha Yehia provided the audience with career advice and told stories of their journeys to success.

The presentations proved very popular, with several participants signing up for the Empower Muslim Youth program, as well as seeking assistance from Polyglot group with their resumes.

Wellness Workshop for Women at Preston Mosque

On 23rd of November, Preston Mosque hosted a women's only wellness/yoga workshop titled 'Giving Shukr (Gratitude): Living Life as a Gift'. Psychologist Dr Senem Eren spoke about the importance of gratitude in Islam, and how it contributes to overall happiness and wellbeing. The presentation was complimented with mindfulness exercises delivered by female Muslim yoga practitioner Aly Kamille. The event proved very popular, with similar programs being planned in the future.



Dr Senem Eren explains to the audience, the importance of self-care

STEM Robotics Workshop at MyCentre

In December, MyCentre facilitated a two-day STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) Robotics workshop for school children. The young participants learnt about coding, designing, developing and operating robots, thereby developing their understanding and application of various disciplines.

Educational robotics is an emerging field. Because it is more interactive and creative, learning is more fun and easy, as compared to the more traditional methods of education. This helps develop student interest in subjects such as mathematics, coding, engineering, science and technology.



Students hard at work designing their robots.



A finished product

A major aspect of learning through Robotics is the ability to solve a problem by trying and failing, until one succeeds. Students explore and think creatively to achieve a solution. This is the basis of innovation. As students learn and apply their knowledge in STEM, they prepare themselves to be problem solvers and innovative leaders of the future.



Preston Mosque Drug and Alcohol Awareness Presentation

On Thursday 22nd November Preston Mosque hosted an addiction awareness program targeting youth. Notable scholar Belal Assad delivered a religious talk on contemporary issues facing youth, including drug and alcohol addiction. This was followed by Multicultural Youth and Families (MYAF) presentation on the harms of addiction, as well as the services available to individuals and families. The MYAF Program offers support to individuals and families in the Muslim community who are experiencing alcohol and drug related issues. The program offers help with counselling, youth support, education programs, support groups and referrals to other support services. Approximately 90 people attended the event, which was open to both males and females.

ask the experts >>>

Q: *A relative of mine suffers from substance addiction. Is there any help available to him?*



A: The Muslim Youth, Adult & Families (MYAF) program was established to support individuals and families from the Islamic Community who are experiencing alcohol and drug related issues. MYAF offers help with counselling, youth support, education programs, support groups and referrals to other support services. The MYAF program is strengthened by significant Islamic community partners, principally MyCentre with endorsement by the Islamic Council of Victoria.

The MYAF program is a service delivered to the community free of cost and is based at MyCentre Support Services at 831 Pascoe Vale Rd, Glenroy 3046. For further information or assistance, please contact 9078 3840.

Raising Great Kids at Preston Mosque

During October/November, Preston Mosque delivered a six-week effective parenting program titled 'Bringing Up Great Kids'. The evidence based program, was facilitated by two experienced early childhood professionals. The program focussed on effective communication strategies between parents and children, and supporting children in developing a positive identity. 20 mothers/carers from various cultural backgrounds and age groups attended each session. At the end of the 6 weeks, participants were presented with certificates.



Effective communication is the key to effective parenting.

MyCentre Careers Night



Takedean Mohtadi speaking about the importance of being productive.

MyCentre Careers Night took place on Friday 9th December. The program opened with a religious talk delivered by Takedean Mohtadi, focussing on education and employment, and the importance of being productive in Islam. This was followed by a presentation by Selcan Kurnali and Salim Mohamed from the ICV-Empower Muslim Youth program (a DHHS funded program which provides intensive, coordinated support to young people to strengthen their health and wellbeing, their connection to community, their engagement in education and training and their pathways to employment). Participants then split up into smaller groups and took part in networking activities and further discussion around resume writing and interview tips.

MyCentre Excursion to Funtopia Playcentre

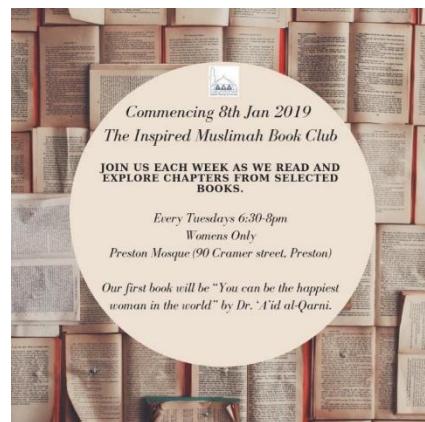
On Wednesday 9th of January MyCentre organised an excursion to Funtopia adventure playcentre for primary school aged children. Participants had the opportunity to climb, explore, jump and slide in an environment that's both challenging and fun. The day trip allowed kids to develop social skills through team building activities, and enhance their balance, co-ordination and physical strength.

The Funtopia playground, featuring famous Australian landmarks, provided the children with an interactive, fun, educational experience. Participants had the opportunity to drive a Melbourne tram, climb the scenic Sydney Harbour Bridge, visit Uluru and discover the Great Barrier Reef.



Children climbing interactive walls.

The young participants also participated in a cooking workshop with a qualified chef, learning all about food, where it comes from and preparation techniques. The budding chefs even had the opportunity to create their own pizzas.



The Inspired Muslimah Book Club
Commencing in early January 2019, Preston Mosque is running regular book club meetings for women. The sessions take place each Tuesday between 6.30pm to 8pm. Each week participants will read and explore chapters from selected books. The title of the first book being read and discussed is "You Can Be the Happiest Woman in the World", by Dr A'id al-Qarni.