

Resources for Working with Families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

INTRODUCTION

This resource list has been developed to provide Child and Family Services practitioners with practical information to support them in their work with families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The first part of this document provides information relating to the most represented groups of people in Barwon Alliance data, as well as the main cohorts of people who have arrived as refugees in Australia in recent years.

The second part of this document provides more general information on working with families who are culturally and linguistically diverse, and links to resources in multiple languages.

As highlighted in each source, the information provided is based on general cultural practices and norms. However, people's individual experience within a culture will vary depending on factors such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, degree of religious observance, length of time living in Australia and how frequently people have visited their place of birth since migrating. Every family is unique, and cultural practices will vary by household and by generation.

1. CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPECIFIC CULTURAL GROUPS

Families from Afghanistan

A series of webinars delivered by Farid Saydee, Ph.D., MBA – President, Language Mentors International and Consultant, in USA in 2022. The curriculum offers a foundational body of knowledge of Afghan culture, provide contextualised information about working with Afghans while navigating different cultural topics, and describe key social and cultural aspects that distinguish this population from other refugee groups.

Module 1: Afghan History

Module 2: Language & Working with Interpreters

Module 3: Ethnicity and Consideration for Mitigating Interethnic Tension

Module 4: Cultural and Religious Considerations

Module 5: Gender & Gender Sensitive Services

<https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/cultural-practical-considerations-for-working-with-afghan-clients/>

Families from Myanmar

This cultural backgrounder, developed by Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services and the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness in USA in 2018, provides general cultural information. Several community leaders were interviewed for this document. The last page contains many links to other helpful information and resources.

<https://brycs.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/burmese-cultural-backgrounder.pdf>

Families from Palestine

The following information is from the Anera website. Anera is an organisation with no political or religious affiliation which works on the ground with partners in Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), Lebanon and Jordan to mobilise resources for immediate emergency relief and for sustainable, long-term health, education, and economic development.

<https://www.anera.org/blog/palestinian-culture/>

Families from Sudan

The South Sudanese Community Association in Victoria made a written submission to the Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes in 2017. The submission contains very helpful information on parenting styles and general challenges and concerns for South Sudanese Australian families.

https://www.dca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/south_sudanese_community_association_submission_30_jan_2017.pdf

The Victorian Government established the South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group ('Expert Working Group') in May 2022. As part of its broad-ranging consultations, the Expert Working Group wanted to hear directly from young people from the South Sudanese Australian community to understand what their day-to-day life was like, including their experiences of school, work and home life.

To support the Expert Working Group, the Commission for Children and Young People convened a number of youth forums in partnership with various African youth-led organisations. This report captures the key themes and insights that emerged from three of these forums, which were held in Dandenong, Melton and Richmond in 2023.

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/Submissions/South-Sudanese-Australian-Youth-Justice-Expert-Working-Group/2023-24-Youth-Forum-Report-1.pdf>

Families from Sri Lanka (of Tamil ethnicity)

The Tamil Community Consultation Report was written and published by the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) in consultation with a variety of Sri Lankan Tamil community groups in Sydney, in order to enhance service delivery and promote community relationships.

This report was published in 2016, but has a lot of relevant information on Sri Lankan Tamil culture and the trauma experienced by Sri Lankan Tamil refugees and asylum seekers.

<https://www.startts.org.au/media/Tamil-Consultations-Report-2016-FINALa-Web.pdf>

Families from Syria

This resource was developed in 2016 to assist sponsorship groups supporting newly arrived Syrian refugees in Canada. It contains general information on general parenting practices and family function.

<https://bhasinconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/bci-Syrian-Cultural-Practices-Guide.pdf>

This resource was developed by Metro South Health in Queensland in 2016. While there is a lot of information on food practices, it also contains helpful general cultural information.

https://www.metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0022/242248/community_profile_syria.pdf

Families from Ukraine

This 75-minute webinar, developed in USA in 2023, aims to provide service providers with greater cultural context and skills necessary to work effectively with Ukrainian clients. In partnership with the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE) and a panel of experts, this session will help participants cultivate increased cultural awareness to better support Ukrainians in their communities.

<https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/cultural-and-practical-considerations-for-working-with-ukrainian-clients/>

Families from Other Cultural Backgrounds

Information relating to families from other cultural backgrounds can be found in these resources:

Cultural Atlas

The Cultural Atlas is a collaborative project between SBS, International Education Services (IES), and Multicultural NSW. Created in 2016, it aims to inform and educate the public in cross-cultural attitudes, practices, norms, behaviours and communications. The goal is to enhance social cohesion in Australia and improve outcomes for individuals and organisations operating in an increasingly culturally diverse society.

The Cultural Atlas provides a unique opportunity for users to gain a broad understanding of the norms and behaviour that would generally be familiar to people from the culture of description. The purpose of this information is to offer insight into the kind of cultural and social environment a first-generation migrant is likely to be familiar with, rather than to describe the individual. Cultural profiles should not be relied upon to form expectations or stereotypes of an individual's behaviour based on their place of origin.

The Cultural Atlas can be filtered by country of origin and religion.

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/>

Curious About Culture Community Profiles

While these community profiles are specific to the Melton City Council Local Government Area, they do contain some basic information on general cultural norms for people from various cultural communities:

<https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/Services/People/Inclusion-Diversity/Curious-about-culture>

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

Tips for Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

Tip sheet developed by the NSW Permanency Support Program, 2021

<https://psplearninghub.com.au/document/tips-for-working-with-culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-cald-communities/>

Children with Disability – Culture and Identity

Tip sheet developed by the NSW Permanency Support Program, 2024

<https://psplearninghub.com.au/document/children-with-disability-culture-and-identity/>

Mental Health and Culture

Tip sheet developed by the NSW Permanency Support Program, 2020

<https://psplearninghub.com.au/document/mental-health-and-culture/>

Working with Interpreters and Parents

Article developed by Raising Children Network

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/for-professionals/working-with-parents/cultural-diversity/working-with-interpreters>

Families with Diverse Cultural Backgrounds: Videos

Videos developed by Raising Children Network of parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds sharing their experiences of parenting in Australia.

[Parents from CALD backgrounds: videos | Raising Children Network](#)

RESOURCES IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES

Educational Videos on Various Topics

Cultura has a YouTube channel with short educational videos in various languages. Topics include (but are not limited to):

- Health information such exercise, infection control and healthy shopping
- Rights with police and protective services
- Sexual consent
- Talking to your child about vaping
- Finding and living in a rental property
- Connecting to legal help
- Education in Australia

<https://www.youtube.com/@CulturaGeelong/videos>

Headspace Flyers in Multiple Languages

<https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/mount-druitt/headspace-flyers-now-available-in-21-languages/>

Medicare, Centrelink, and Child Support

Information in various languages about Services Australia payments and services: [Translated information](#)

Information on [interpreter and translation services](#)

Help for visitors that have recently arrived, migrants, refugees, newly arrived residents and asylum seekers who are living in Australia: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/moving-to-australia>

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/information-your-language?context=64107>

Raising Children Network Resources in Multiple Languages

A collection of over 450 articles, videos and picture guides in 20 languages to support families in various aspects of parenting.

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/for-professionals/other-languages>

Early Years Engagement

Early Start Kinder

Early Start Kindergarten gives eligible children 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten a week for two years before starting school.

To be eligible, children must be three years old by 30 April in the year they start kindergarten, and:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or
- their family has had contact with Child Protection.

Children can also access free or low cost Four-Year-Old Kindergarten through the Early Start Kindergarten Extension Grant.

Early Start Kinder brochures are available in more than 30 languages here:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten#resources>

Kindergarten and Transition to School

Foundation House has translated videos providing information to families about kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) and transition to school. The videos are available in 7 community languages:

Arabic https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZGhH8I-xZXuw6rhidUoEo5z5GR_Zjw2t

Dari <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZGhH8I-xZXtnCz9GciJiV4VwNGtg4TXI>

Dinka <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZGhH8I-xZXsUIXRyw1Y1qrKQODCBcbRj>

Hakha Chin https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZGhH8I-xZXvUoHp-PENPaMe7pFq_d_7e

Hazargi <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZGhH8I-xZXsS40A5ZopgJgAddDC6RjHJ>

Karen <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZGhH8I-xZXsfLmAJc4nqDacaOSVMcTpx>

Pashto <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZGhH8I-xZXvqYVmxuPpnH9twkOWyKJJe>

Maternal and Child Health

The Maternal and Child Health app (MCH app) provides reliable information that families can use every day. Download the free MCH app for trusted information matched to the age of children. The app can also track children's growth, and provide reminders about upcoming MCH appointments or immunisations.

The MCH app is available in Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Dari, Khmer, Persian, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese.

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mchapp>