



CONFERENCE SPOTLIGHT: CHILD REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

**RESEARCHERS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS (RAS)
INTERDISCIPLINARY POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE
2016**

THURSDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2016, 9AM – 5.30 PM

**GRYPHON GALLERY
1888 BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**

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<http://www.ras.unimelb.edu.au/>

RAS CONFERENCE CONVENORS

KAREN BLOCK

ANGELINE FERDINAND

Lunch will be provided, comprising vegetarian and vegan 'finger foods' from Asylum Seeker Resource Centre Catering, as well as light refreshments for morning and afternoon tea.

PROGRAM

9:15 – 11:00	<p>Welcome – Nick Haslam</p> <p>Session 1 – Mental health and wellbeing – Chair: Karen Block</p> <p>9.20 KEYNOTE ADDRESS: PROFESSOR LOUISE NEWMAN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SEEKING ASYLUM IN AUSTRALIA - DILEMMAS</p> <p>-----</p> <p>10.00 Pilar Rioseco – Family context of refugee children: Findings from the “Building a New Life in Australia” (BNLA) study</p> <p>10.20 Sara Shishehgar – Living with insecurity: A phenomenological study on asylum seeker women</p> <p>10.40 Steven Roche – Experiences of resettlement: Exploring the non-service supports for children and young people from a refugee background</p>
11:00 – 11:30	Morning Tea
11:30 – 1:00	<p>Session 2 – Children in Detention and Education – Chair: Rhys Stephens</p> <p>11.30 Kristy Mannell – Educating asylum seekers living in Australia’s detention centres</p> <p>11.50 June Factor – Befriend a child in detention</p> <p>12.10 Seham Shwayli – The experiences of Iraqi refugee children’s education in Australia: Mother’s perspectives</p> <p>12.30 Amanda Hiorth – From barriers to bridges: Supporting refugee-background students in their transition(s) to mainstream Australian schooling</p> <p>12.50 Oliver Maboreke – Child refugees and asylum seekers: Accessing higher education</p>
1:00 - 1:40	Lunch

1:40 – 2:40	<p>Panel Discussion - Children seeking refuge: Australian histories 1930s to the present – Chair Joy Damousi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mary Tomsic</i> - Displaying children’s creations: Examining the cultural work of displaced children’s drawings - <i>Anh Nguyen</i> – Resilience and historical memory of Vietnamese refugees in Australia - <i>Sarah Green</i> - “My story is a little bit different because we had connections”: Bosnian child refugees and their families in Australia - <i>Niro Kandasamy</i> – Ethnicity in child refugee settlement
2:40 – 3:20	<p>Session 3 – Collaborative and Participatory methodologies - Chair: Charlene Edwards</p> <p>2.40 <i>Anita Lumbus</i> – Sharing stories and connecting through photos: A participatory project with refugee women</p> <p>3.00 <i>Eva Alisic</i> – The refugee crisis through young eyes</p> <p>3.20 <i>Sharon Wright</i> – Youth pathways program: Migrant Resource Centre in Launceston</p>
3:30 – 3:50	<p>Afternoon Tea</p>
3:50 – 4.50	<p>Session 4 – Attitudes and approaches Chair: Angeline Ferdinand</p> <p>3.50 <i>Karen Dunwoodie, Mervi Kaukko, Elisha Riggs</i> – Refugee research: Who is it for?</p> <p>4.10 <i>Ravini Abeywickrama and Simon Laham</i> – Examining differences in prejudice towards various migrant groups</p> <p>4.30 <i>Rhys Stephens and John Kelly</i> – From powerless to positive: Changing the narrative around people seeking asylum</p> <p>4.50 <i>Leonie Crowe</i> – Healthy Mum healthy baby: A collaborative project to address postnatal depression in CALD communities</p> <p>5.10 <i>Jasmine Dawson</i> – Processing LGBTI refugees in Australia: How do we compare?</p> <p>5.20 <i>James Mayen</i> – Hearts: A service model based on risk and protective factors</p>
5.30	<p>Conference Close</p>

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

SEEKING ASYLUM IN AUSTRALIA - DILEMMAS

LOUISE NEWMAN

Australia's response to asylum seekers and particularly to the needs of children and unaccompanied minors over the past 25 -30 years has been the object of intense discussion, scrutiny and divisive debate. The Australian response to asylum seekers and particularly as we see it now in the current policy of off-shore processing is one that is being challenged continuously by various external agencies and also from a legal perspective. For the mental health and health professions there are fundamental issues here about our duty to provide appropriate levels of care and support and health treatment for all persons regardless of their visa status. Our professions have had a significant role in the discussion around how best we should respond to vulnerable populations. The history of Australia's response to the asylum seeker question is one of confusion, contradiction and unresolved historical issues. In some sections of the Australian community there are deep seated anxieties about immigration and about specific groups. On other occasions Australia has a very fine record of welcoming peoples in need and responding to them very appropriately with adequate community support services. This is not the current situation and around the developed world similar dilemmas are facing governments in the face of the 60 million also displaced persons.

For children the issues are acute and children represent the most vulnerable group of asylum seekers. Children are most likely to be direct victims in times of war and conflict. Many children are displaced and separated from family and children are particularly vulnerable in terms of the impact of trauma on neurodevelopment. I will review some of the research that has been undertaken on the Australian asylum seeker children population describing extremely concerning high rates of mental health problems.

The issue of how we could better respond to the needs of asylum seekers is particularly complex, whereas a need to develop humane approaches that are economically much more favourable than current arrangements but which fundamentally represent a thought through strategy which will enable Australia and our neighbours in our region to respond to this ongoing problem.

Professor Louise Newman AM, BA(Hons) MBBS(Hons) PhD FRANZCP Cert. Child Psych. RANZCP is the Director of the Centre for Women's Mental Health at the Royal Women's Hospital and Professor of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne

She was the founding Chair of Perinatal and Infant Psychiatry at the University of Newcastle and the previous Director of the New South Wales Institute of Psychiatry. In January 2011 she was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia for work in child protection.

She is a practising infant psychiatrist with expertise in the area of disorders of early parenting and attachment difficulties in infants. She has undertaken research into the issues confronting parents with histories of early trauma and neglect. Her current research focusses on the evaluation of infant-parent interventions in high-risk populations, the concept of parental reflective functioning in mothers with borderline personality disorder and the neurobiology of parenting disturbance.

She was recently awarded grants for intervention studies in Domestic Violence, and she has published in the areas of infant mental health, attachment disorders trauma, and prevention of child abuse.

She is the Convenor of the Asylum Seeker Advocacy Group and Vice-President of Doctors for Refugees. She has been a Government advisor on asylum seeker and refugee mental health and contributed to the development of policy for mental health screening and response to torture survivors. She has been involved in research into the impact of immigration detention on child asylum seekers.

SESSION 1: MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

FAMILY CONTEXT OF REFUGEE CHILDREN: FINDINGS FROM THE “BUILDING A NEW LIFE IN AUSTRALIA” (BNLA) STUDY

PILAR RIOSECO

Australia’s humanitarian program settles 13,750 people each year, and an additional 12,000 from Syria and Iraq will be included in the 2015-16 program. According to the UN Refugee Agency, more than half of the world’s forcibly displaced people are children. Families with children who have experienced trauma and prosecution may have specific needs regarding their health, education, housing and social integration, but little is known about the characteristics of this particular population and the additional challenges that humanitarian migrant families with children face in their settlement journey in Australia.

Using data from the first wave of the BNLA study, this paper describes the characteristics of the families of refugee children under the age of 18 (n=631). Socio-demographic characteristics, parents’ health, education and employment, financial stress, neighbourhood characteristics and adjustment to life in Australia are examined. Findings reveal that refugee families with children face multiple challenges in their settlement journey. For example, these families face significant financial disadvantage in their first year of settlement. In addition, a large proportion of parents experience post-traumatic stress and psychological distress, and more than half of these families had experienced three or more traumatic events before arriving in Australia. However, some positive stories also emerged: refugee children are adjusting well to life in Australia, are able to make friends and many of these families have received support from the community. Policies and service provision for refugee families and their children need to take into account the particular challenges faced by this vulnerable population.

Pilar Rioseco is a Senior Research Officer at the Australian Institute of Family Studies and recently completed her PhD in the School of Demography at ANU. Her current research is focused on understanding the settlement journey of recently arrived humanitarian migrants using the “Building a New Life in Australia” study.

LIVING WITH INSECURITY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON ASYLUM SEEKER WOMEN

SARA SHISHEHGAR

LEILA GHOLIZADEH

MICHELLE DIGIACOMO

PATRICIA MARY DAVIDSON

Background: Australia has been recognised as a target country for people who seek freedom and better life. However, most people who reach Australia by boat are detained while their refuge application is processed. Those few ones who are granted a bridging visa can live within the community. However a bridging visa benefits individuals with living in a free environment and extending friendships and social communications, it imposes restrictions on them. In this study the restrictions and their health-threatening impacts are investigated.

Method: 17 Iranian asylum seeker women who are living in the community in Sydney have been interviewed. Semi-structured in-depth interviews allowed the participants to detail their lived experiences during 2-3 years of resettlement in Sydney. All interviews were transcribed in Persian language and then were translated into English. Transcripts were analysed one by one using an interpretive phenomenological analysis approach.

Results: All participants have been granted bridging visas however they were not certain about their refuge application success. Living with insecurity about their residency status resulted in psychosocial outcomes such as limitations in employment and education, fear of deportation, relationship breakdown, inability to re-unit family, hopelessness, social exclusion, lack of dignity, and health problems.

Conclusion: Living with insecure residency may contribute into mental and physical health issues. The insecure residency status may thwart treatments in particular psychological treatments. To have a healthy and productive society, policy makers should pay attention to this vulnerable population's demands and smooth their resettlement process via enacting policies for asylum seekers to increase their certainty about their living condition and future in Australia.

I am **Sara Shishehgar**. I was born in 1980 in Iran. I completed my Bachelor in Midwifery and Masters in Reproductive Health in Iran. I have experience of activities to improve women's mental wellbeing during pregnancy.

I have moved to Australia in 2013. I've started my PhD in the faculty of health in University of Technology Sydney. My interest of research is women's health, refugee and asylum seeker women, women's psychological issues, and resilience.

EXPERIENCES OF RESETTLEMENT: EXPLORING THE NON-SERVICE SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM A REFUGEE BACKGROUND

STEVEN ROCHE

This presentation explores refugee families' experiences of resettlement in Australia, focusing on the ways in which informal supports and social networks are used to assist resettlement. It presents the details of a project that conducted semi-structured interviews with 25 parents and 25 children and young people from a refugee background who provided in-depth and contextualised data about their experiences of resettlement in the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia. This presentation focusses on the experiences and perspectives of the children and young people interviewed. It explores how these children and young people perceive supports for them and their family, and how they use informal supports such as community networks, relationships and spirituality in order to support their ongoing resettlement. It seeks to elevate the contributions of children and young people and discuss how this evidence can be used to improve resettlement outcomes for families. This research adds to the developing evidence base of the supports that families, children and young people from a refugee background draw on during resettlement.

Steven Roche is a Research Associate at the Institute of Child Protection Studies at the Australian Catholic University. He has several publications in *Australian Social Work*, and has worked on projects investigating children's safety in institutional contexts, agency among biological children of foster carers, the child participation practices of child protection practitioners, and the service use experiences of adults experiencing homelessness. He is currently undertaking a Master of Social Policy at the University of Melbourne.

SESSION 2: CHILDREN IN DETENTION AND EDUCATION

EDUCATING ASYLUM SEEKERS LIVING IN AUSTRALIA'S DETENTION CENTRES

KRISTY MANNELL

Asylum seekers can spend up to ten years in Australian detention centres awaiting determination of their refugee status. In these facilities, education programs are offered to give detainees the English language and literacy skills that they will need upon release. Sadly, a combination of irrelevant curricula, on---the---fly pedagogies, and limited resources result in shallow and basic learning opportunities. This is particularly true for the two offshore centres on Nauru and Manus Island. Research is urgently needed to develop programs, policies, strategies, and resources that meet the humanitarian and educational requirements of these students. This project aims to examine the nature of the learning experiences of detention centre residents throughout Australia so as to develop a framework for the creation of relevant English language and literacy curricula and resources. At the moment, there are no curricula or resources designed for the refugee learner at all, let alone someone in a detention centre environment. This results in the use of textbooks that can be offensive and insensitive, and which were written for individuals who are already literate in other Western languages and who understand how to decode an ESL textbook. Gaining independence and empowerment through learning is absolutely critical to individuals who have lost their freedom and experienced trauma, humiliation, and repeated violations of their human rights. It is vital that these students have access to quality educational opportunities through the development of appropriate curricula and resources.

Kristy Mannell is a language and literature teacher who worked for twelve months on Nauru for Save the Children Australia. She has a Masters of Education (Literacy) from the Queensland University of Technology. On Nauru, Kristy taught English to adult asylum seekers in the Australian government's offshore processing centre. The poor learning outcomes for asylum seekers on Nauru have driven her to begin work on a PhD proposal focusing on the education of refugees living in detention.

Befriend a Child in Detention is a community project committed to seeing an end to the detention of child asylum seekers. We aim to inspire and support compassionate Australians to make a positive connection with the children and families living in detention: to ameliorate their experience, to raise awareness of their circumstances, and to advocate for positive change.

After some months of planning, the project began in 2014 as a response to what a small group of friends and colleagues regarded as both an illegal and a profoundly immoral policy towards people seeking refuge in this country. We decided to focus on the children detained and dehumanised because they are the most vulnerable: they need friends, they need to be befriended. As well, we recognised that the imprisonment of children is the government's weakest link.

The project has included contact with every detention centre where children have been/are held, with gifts of beautiful books (all donated) and letters of greeting and friendship. More and more schools have become involved with the letter-writing, and with a program we've developed for schools called Links Not Chains. We reach many people through our website, Facebook page and Instagram. Avant Cards produced (pro bono) a special card for us that was distributed nation-wide, and other cards have followed, addressed to politicians. We are reaching asylum seeker and refugee children in Melbourne schools. We keep planning...

What have we achieved? How can we tell? Do we make a difference? How can we do better?

June Factor is a writer, editor, folklorist and social historian. She is an Honorary Senior Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne.

THE EXPERIENCES OF IRAQI REFUGEE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA: MOTHERS' PERSPECTIVES

SEHAM SHWAYLI

Education is a resource that can assist individuals and families to cope with adversity. It is particularly important for relatively recent refugee families because of the need to re-establish their social life and relationships after leaving schools behind in the homeland. Participants in my doctoral study are seven Muslim women who came with their families from Iraq to Australia as refugees for permanent settlement in 2008 and I am one of these participants. As mothers these women place great emphasis on their children, their care and their education. However, they confront many challenges in relation to the education of their children in Australian public schools. This paper discusses some of my PhD research findings on the challenges of everyday lived experiences of Iraqi mothers, their feelings, and reactions to their children's educational experiences in everyday life Australian Multicultural public schools. It also addresses the ways in which Iraqi women express their new roles as "mothers in Australia" and gives a new insight on the issue of 'being a Muslim student in a non-Muslim Australian school'. In Particular, I suggest rethinking ways of social inclusions to Muslim women and their families to serve better future to them and Australia.

Seham Shwayli has recently finished her PhD at Monash University in October 2015. She received her Master of Education in TESOL and Linguistics from Monash in 2010 and her Bachelor in Arts from Basra University, Iraq in 1996. Her PhD titled: "What Kind of Inclusion: Iraqi Muslim Women's Experiences in Australia" focuses on social inclusion and challenges facing Muslim women and their families in Multicultural Australia. Seham worked in language education for twelve years in Iraq. She works ESL teacher, women's advocate and multicultural youth worker to support social cohesion for new refugees and migrants in Australia. Her main research interests are migration and refugee studies, Muslim family issues and social life in diaspora, women and gender in Middle East, impacts of war, sanction, and occupation on Iraqi women, Iraq.

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FROM BARRIERS TO BRIDGES: SUPPORTING REFUGEE-BACKGROUND STUDENTS IN THEIR TRANSITION(S) TO MAINSTREAM AUSTRALIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLING

AMANDA HIORTH

This research investigated the experiences of Karen refugee-background learners transitioning into mainstream secondary schooling from an intensive English Language School in Victoria. As numbers of refugee-background students in schools continue to increase, the landscape of the Australian classroom also continues to change in dynamic, new ways. This research is of a timely manner, as educators attempt to traverse such changes and support newly-arrived students transitioning into Australian classrooms. With social justice in the Australian education system at the heart of its purpose, the primary aim of this project was to develop new understandings of students' lived experiences of Australian schooling, with particular focus on the social, institutional and academic domains of education. A secondary aim was to explore factors facilitating and inhibiting students' transition, and ways in which barriers in education can be overcome, and bridges might be better utilised. It is the hope of this research that such insights will enable educators and policy makers to improve the quality of education and outcomes for refugee-background students and other similar vulnerable learners in Australian schools.

Amanda Hiorth is a secondary languages teacher with extensive experience teaching English to students across Asia and Australia. Her time spent teaching in a Victorian English language school compelled her into research. Amanda's research focuses on highlighting issues of social equity, and improving educational experiences and outcomes for refugee-background students in the Australian mainstream education system.

There is now significant evidence that demonstrate that Australia’s policy in immigration detention have severe impacts on the psychological wellbeing, interpersonal relationships and quality of life for individuals particularly children and young people. There has been ongoing developmental harm for children and young people especially in their aspiration to access higher education.

Pathways to accessing higher education are affected by several things which include:

- Refugee trauma experience
- Culture shock particularly in relation to education system/ Difference in education system from home country/ Refugee camp education experience
- Limited access to income support
- Enrolment into secondary school for older young people
- Financial, social and other supports
- Access to English Language classes and or language barriers
- Competing priorities e.g. income for family, debt payment etc.
- Lack of information about scholarships and or difficulty in application process (Equity criteria)
- Attitude, assumptions and racism

Providing sustainable access to higher education opportunities for Asylum Seekers and Refugees will help develop their skills, secure sustainable employment and establish meaningful career pathways which will help them be able to successfully settle in Australia.

Oliver Zvinaiye Maboreke is currently a Project Officer – (Refugee, New and Emerging Communities) in the Western Sydney Office of Widening Participation. He is an International and community development practitioner with experience in community capacity building, Refugee Stakeholder liaison and engagement, Community Education and Training, Sector development and HIV Gender mainstreaming. Originally from Zimbabwe, Oliver has worked in different capacities with Asylum Seekers, refugees and humanitarian arrivals in the international settlement services sector. One of the highlights of his community work has been a part of the pioneering African Think Tank team to initiate the first African - Australian leadership Training and mentoring program, which has been running since 2009.

PANEL DISCUSSION

CHILDREN SEEKING REFUGE: AUSTRALIAN HISTORIES 1930s TO THE PRESENT

CHAIR: JOY DAMOUSI

This panel will explore the cultural, social and political history of child refugees in Australia. It provides a series of historical and contemporary frameworks for understanding current discussions on child refugees. In doing so, it produces new understandings of how histories of child refugees have been constructed.

Joy Damousi, Professor of History at the University of Melbourne, will chair the discussion. The presenters are researchers from the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne and their topics include:

- DISPLAYING CHILDREN'S CREATIONS: EXAMINING THE CULTURAL WORK OF DISPLACED CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS- MARY TOMSIC
- RESILIENCE & HISTORICAL MEMORY OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN AUSTRALIA - ANH NGUYEN
- "MY STORY IS A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT BECAUSE WE HAD CONNECTIONS": BOSNIAN CHILD REFUGEES AND THEIR FAMILIES IN AUSTRALIA - SARAH GREEN
- ETHNICITY IN CHILD REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT - NIRO KANDASAMY

Dr Mary Tomsic is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at The University of Melbourne working on a project titled 'Picturing Child Refugees' as part of the ARC Laureate Research Project 'Child Refugees and Australian Internationalism from 1920 to the present'. She co-edited *Diversity in Leadership: Australian Women, Past and Present* (with Joy Damousi and Kim Rubenstein, ANU Press, 2014).

Anh Nguyen is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies. Her research explores the experiences of Vietnamese child refugees in Australia. She currently volunteers as a Research Associate with Melbourne Museum and works at Native Title Services Victoria.

Sarah Green is a PhD candidate in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne. Her research interests include histories of childhood, migration and welfare. Her PhD examines the experiences of Bosnian child refugees who came to Australia in the 1990s.

Niro Kandasamy is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies. Her dissertation explores the long term resettlement experiences of Sri Lankan Tamil child refugees arriving to Australia from 1970-2000.

SESSION 3: COLLABORATIVE AND PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGIES

SHARING STORIES AND CONNECTING THROUGH PHOTOS: A PARTICIPATORY PROJECT WITH REFUGEE WOMEN

ANITA LUMBUS

Refugee women resettling in Australia experience multiple stressors and health disadvantages. Social and multidisciplinary research on refugee women's health and wellbeing is valuable in identifying issues, including barriers to their successful settlement and solutions to problems as defined by women themselves. The main objective of this study is to explore refugee women's perspectives of settlement in Western Australia using the participatory method of photovoice. The researchers worked in partnership with a multicultural women's health centre in Perth's northern suburbs. 43 women took part in six photovoice sessions. The workshops included an orientation to the project, camera use and choosing aspects of their everyday lives to photograph. Images and stories were shared by the women in group discussions. In-depth interviews with 11 participants explored their reflections on photovoice and their settlement experiences.

Women reported gaining practical photography skills and benefits to their wellbeing from participating. Based on preliminary analysis and supported in the literature, language difficulties, gender-related issues and social isolation are challenges faced by many women. The importance of programs which support social connectedness was highlighted.

Themes from the analysis of the photovoice sessions and interviews will be presented to service providers to obtain their complementary perspectives. Policy recommendations for supporting successful settlement will be proposed in a community report. The project will also result in a travelling photography exhibition with images selected and supplemented by narratives shared by the women.

Anita Lumbus is a PhD candidate in the International Health Programme at Curtin University. Her research interests include the impacts of forced migration, the human rights of asylum seekers and refugees and participatory research approaches.

In 2015, over one million refugees and migrants reached Europe via the Mediterranean. Almost a third of them were children, with Syrians being the largest group. The influx involved dire circumstances for many refugees, with disturbing images from formal and informal refugee camps, tensions between EU member states and neighbouring countries, and social turmoil within host communities. The refugee crisis has many facets and complexities, including health, social, economic, legal, cultural and logistical aspects. The key issues in the short term (such as shelter and unrest within local communities) are different from those in the long term (such as work opportunities and integration). The current presentation reports on two projects. The first is an interdisciplinary collaboration of young academics from around the world, who synthesized key policy issues regarding the influx of refugees in Europe. Combining insights from history through to engineering and public health, the conclusions of the collaboration highlight issues of solidarity in particular. Second, the presentation will report impressions from two refugee camps in Jordan (Zaatari and Azraq) with regard to educational and wellbeing support programs for Syrian youth.

Eva Alisic is a Senior Research Fellow at Monash University, Australia, where she leads the [Trauma Recovery Lab](#). She studies how children, young people, and families cope with traumatic experiences, and how professionals can support them.

YOUTH PATHWAY PROGRAM: MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE LAUNCESTON

SHARON WRIGHT

The Migrant Resource Centre in Launceston, Tasmania, facilitates a Youth Pathway Program for young people between the ages of 16 – 25 years from migrant/refugee backgrounds. Funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund, the 3 year program has been operating for 18 months. The program supports young people to identify and pursue their education, career, and/or social interests. Unlike the majority of humanitarian programs, the program can be accessed regardless of the number of years a young person has been living in Tasmania. The program builds confidence, independence and networks for young people. The program to date has supported young people across many areas, including assistance to find voluntary and paid employment; assistance with career choices and enrolments; support to individuals to access courses such as dance, theatre and modelling; and support to join youth groups. In addition, the program has supported individuals to access community and international grants and events. Through this support, one young person recently won a fellowship and attended an international forum in Canada focusing on innovation, inclusiveness and citizenship. Another young person was awarded a ‘follow your dream’ grant to allow her to attend a youth leadership conference in Melbourne. A further six young people have been accepted to participate in the 2016 Youth Leadership Challenge aboard the sailing ship, the Windeward Bound. Overall, the program has helped fill a gap in services that are both available and accessible to youth from migrant/refugee backgrounds.

Sharon Wright is the Youth Pathway Coordinator with the Migrant Resource Centre in Northern Tasmania. She has extensive experience working with young people from a diverse range of backgrounds in Australia and overseas. She has worked for over 20 years in the humanitarian aid sector, principally in education, supporting both community and government programs

SESSION 4: ATTITUDES AND APPROACHES

REFUGEE RESEARCH: WHO IS IT FOR?

KAREN DUNWOODIE

MERVI KAUKKO

ELISHA RIGGS

Working with refugee and asylum-seeking populations requires more than a good grasp of research methods and a careful way of following the procedural ethics. It requires 1) overall benefit to the community where the research questions are grounded in the needs of the community 2) community engagement and consultation using flexible and inclusive methods to allow the research to be driven by the community and 3) capacity building and exchange to develop capability through partnership and participation. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but highlights a pathway where shared values must underpin any research with refugee communities. However, the requirements of the academia push us in a range of research design and methods that do not always aim to maximise reciprocity with our participants. This presentation considers some of the dilemmas of ethical and responsible refugee research from both an academic perspectives and most importantly our experiences of working with people from a refugee background in both Australia and Finland.

Karen Dunwoodie is currently completing a full-time PhD at Monash University and teaching in the areas of cross-cultural communication, leadership and organisation behaviour. Prior to commencing at Monash, Karen spent 25 years working in learning and development both locally and internationally and for the past six years has been volunteering with a number of refugee agencies across Melbourne.

Mervi Kaukko is a post-doctoral researcher at Monash University. Her current research focuses on the educational experiences of refugee students. Mervi's PhD considered how the notion of children's participation is viewed in the liminal situation of children waiting for a refugee status. Other projects Mervi is involved, include exploring the translocal belonging of unaccompanied minors through art, and training teachers and educational leaders to work with refugee children.

Elisha Riggs is a public health Research Fellow in the Healthy Mothers Healthy Families research group at Murdoch Children Research Institute. Her work focusses on building partnerships and capacity between health services and refugee communities to co-design strategies to address health and social inequalities. Her research is characterised by a passion to ensure high quality research is translated into improved services and outcomes for refugee families.

EXAMINING DIFFERENCES IN PREJUDICE TOWARDS VARIOUS MIGRANT GROUPS

RAVINI ABEYWICKRAMA

SIMON LAHAM

During the refugee crisis of 2014, an overwhelming 60 million refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people were recorded. Understanding attitudes towards these groups is essential to ensure that they are welcomed and integrated into host communities. These attitudes may vary based on migrant-group membership; for example, previous work has demonstrated more positive attitudes towards refugees, while greater hostility has been expressed towards asylum-seekers. In order to account for these differences, we propose that the motivational and emotional bases of prejudice will differ across three central migrant groups; economic migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. More specifically, we predicted that each of the three groups will vary in elicitation of threats, emotions, behavioural intentions and policy endorsement from host locals. To explore this possibility, undergraduate students ($N=114$, 89 female; $M=19.1$, $SD=3.2$) completed surveys assessing general negative attitudes, threat perceptions, emotions, behavioural intentions and policy support towards each group. Results demonstrated that perceived threat to material resources predicted fear, and thus avoidance of economic migrants. In contrast, perceived threat to in-group moral image predicted pity and guilt toward refugees and asylum-seekers respectively, subsequently eliciting greater support for acceptance-related policies (e.g. provision of subsidies). An implication of these results is that attitude and behaviour change interventions aimed at promoting acceptance and tolerance of migrants may need to be tuned to the specific migrant group under consideration.

Ravini Abeywickrama is a Psychology Honours student at the University of Melbourne, examining attitudes towards immigration. She hopes to extend her Honours work by pursuing a graduate research degree next year. In doing so, she aims to investigate how attitude change programmes may be best implemented to alleviate prejudice towards migrants.

FROM POWERLESS TO POSITIVE: CHANGING THE NARRATIVE AROUND PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

RHYS STEPHENS

JOHN KELLY

In 2015, the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) decided there was a need to find a better way to talk about people seeking asylum. The ASRC commissioned a multi-phase research project, **Words That Work**, by renowned communications and linguistics experts Anat Shenker-Osorio (ASO Communications), Troy Burton (Commonality) and John Armitage (QDOS) to uncover and test the ways advocates can put forward the most compelling case for a more humane approach to people seeking asylum in Australian government policy.

The research was conducted in four stages: **language analysis** - the language used when talking about people seeking asylum was analysed from nearly 1000 data points including communications material from sector organisations, social media, media coverage and 'opposition' material; **advocate interviews** - executives at major humanitarian organisations, activists and people with lived experience were asked deliberately broad and foundational questions to reveal the underlying values and reasoning driving their involvement in advocating for people seeking asylum; **focus groups** - focus groups were conducted to deepen the researchers' understanding of why people held different views about people seeking asylum in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Parramatta and Rockhampton; **dial testing** - 1500 members of the general public, as well as advocates and activists were called to testing a number of different messages to determine what language was the most persuasive.

The ASRC is now implementing the insights gained from this research to drive advocacy in a new direction under the **#RightTrack** campaign. This has involved testing new messaging and communication campaign delivery techniques, initially using the electorate of Higgins at the recent federal election as a prototype. The ASRC is now delivering **Words That Work** training in communities across Victoria, with further training and supportive communication campaign strategies being rolled out nationally.

Rhys Stephens is the Campaign Support Coordinator at the ASRC. His role is to provide support to the campaign and advocacy team using digital tools and research to change the conversation to ensure people seeking asylum are treated fairly and with respect. He is also a committee member of RAS and the editor of the Refugee Research Blog.

John Kelly is Campaigns Manager at the ASRC. In this role he oversees the rollout of the national **#RightTrack** campaign and the implementation of the messaging principles in broader communications of the organisation.

HEALTHY MUM HEALTHY BABY – A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT TO ADDRESS POSTNATAL DEPRESSION (PND) IN CALD COMMUNITIES

LEONIE CROWE

The impact of parent's mental health on the healthy development of children is well documented. Research indicates that a lack of social supports, knowledge and stigma surrounding Postnatal Depression (PND) contributes to poorer maternal mental health outcomes for women at risk of PND, as well as informing us that people from CALD backgrounds face challenges accessing mainstream health services and thus poorer health outcomes. (Nahas, et al in Gwahirisa 2010)

Auburn is a diverse community in Western Sydney. Many residents are newly arrived from very different cultural backgrounds to the mainstream. Auburn is the highest birth rate area in Sydney (2010 Census). Thus maternal mental health of CALD communities is a major concern for local health authorities.

Since 2013 the annual The Post Natal Depression Awareness Day (Healthy Mum's Health Baby) has been a collaborative project involving mainstream health services, Non-Government Organisations and local communities in Auburn. It brings together families from Afghani, Chinese, Arabic and Turkish communities in a celebration of healthy parenting and human relationships. The day consists of sessions blending mainstream and community expertise. Ranging from psychology to music therapy and baby massage the aim is for families who might ordinarily find navigating mainstream health systems difficult to have access to information and support empowering them to be able to make healthier choices about their mental health. Evaluations of the day have consistently pointed to benefits for both the attendees and service providers with content and structure adapting to the needs of the community. This indicates potential for broader applications.

Leonie Crowe BSW– Social worker with strong clinical experience in Women's Health in the diverse community of Auburn and in particular refugee communities. Through her work she has developed strong links with cultural groups and organisations in the area as well as roles on advisory committees. She has a particular interest in refugee women's access to mainstream health services.

PROCESSING LGBTI REFUGEES IN AUSTRALIA: HOW DO WE COMPARE?

JASMINE DAWSON

While Australia led the way with processing refugee claims based on sexual orientation, it has emerged over the last few decades that Australian policy, practice, and decision making does not meet international best practice standards or the practice in comparable jurisdictions, such as the United Kingdom. This paper provides an overview LGBTI claims in Australia and how Australia compares in its processing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) claims and the potential sites for improvement. It is argued that serious attention needs to be focussed on credibility assessment, training for refugee and legal professionals, and the role policy plays in guiding refugee status determinations.

Jaz Dawson is undertaking a PhD at the University of Melbourne through the Melbourne social equity institute. Her research focusses on queer theory, international relations, norm implementation, and refugee law. Her thesis explores sexual orientation based refugee status determinations in Australia and the UK and seeks to understand whether particular domestic influences can explain divergent norm implementation or deviance from international best practice. In 2017 Jaz will be undertaking a research fellowship at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in the Migration and Diversity Centre. She was awarded the 2017 Endeavour Research Fellowship in order to take this position.

Background - Who we are and what we do

Drummond street services (ds) is an innovative, flexible family service provider with a collaborative applied social research centre, the Centre for Family Research and Evaluation (CFRE) who partners with Deakin University (School of Psychology). Ds provides support and programs to children and families with a focus on promoting mental health and wellbeing over the life-course and transitions of a family. We deliver targeted engagement and supportive programs for the diverse communities, particularly those who are at greater risk of health and wellbeing inequalities.

Aim - Strengthening our service through the HEARTS program

Through assertive community engagement, ds aims to prioritise Humanitarian Entrant communities and deliver programs and supports that are suited to their needs during this time of significant family and community transition with an emphasis on harnessing the skills and knowledge of these communities themselves. The design and the delivery of the HEARTS program is based on this assertive engagement, consultation and input by and for these communities to create or tailor the support – whether it is through programs, connections or therapeutic services that will support this transition for themselves and their children.

Target: Children 0-18 years of age and their families; Humanitarian entrant families within each of ds existing service footprint

Implementation Strategies

Key strategies that ds are undertaking to implement the HEARTS program.

- Prevention and early intervention supports that reduce risks and promote protective factors impacting on the mental health of children in humanitarian entrant families
- Increase ds and broader community's cultural competencies and safety
- Build capacity of emerging communities through leadership, employment and service sector development opportunities
- Embed research and evaluation methodologies, including participatory research methods to ensure the HEARTS project is evidence based, evaluated and ethically sound

Where we are now? Still early but we are on track: Needs analysis; Literature review; Implementation plan; Service cultural competency training; Recruitment of experienced staff; Community consultation; Partnerships and collaboration; Promotion

James Mayen is a Senior Child and Family Practitioner with drummond street HEARTS program. James draws upon his extensive experience in the sector along with his academic studies which includes Master of Politics and Policy and Diploma of Social Work and Diploma of Children Services and a Bachelor of Social and Community Services amongst.