

SETS Community of Practice

Communique: Youth Subgroup Meeting

Videoconference – 26 July 2022

On 26 July, SETSCoP the next Youth subgroup meeting. This group exists to share best practice in supporting young people settling in Australia and discuss and develop resources to support providers in this work. The focus of this meeting was on barriers to successful settlement outcomes for young people arriving as migrants and refugees.

Settlement Provider Presentation

Toowoomba Refugee and Migrant Support service (TRAMS), a program of CatholicCare Toowoomba shared information regarding their 'Bridge to Work' program. This program supports young people who are SETS clients and is supported through separate state-based funding. It is designed for 18+ year-olds from a CALD background with conversational level of English who are seeking training and employment.

Participants study a Certificate I or II in Skills for Vocational Pathways twice a week through a local registered training organisation. The TRAMS 'Bridge to Work' Program Coordinator also attends these training sessions and in addition, one day a week supports participants with wrap around support, resume writing, cover letter writing, mock interviews, finding volunteering opportunities and locating and facilitating work site visits. The majority of the participants have lower levels of written and spoken English. Many have engaged with the local AMEP provider and do not have other qualifications or Australian work experience.

The key learnings gained from delivering this program have included the need to allow time for participants to build trust and relationships and the importance of education around the employment process in Australia. Some of the barriers to progress have been limited English skills, the lack of understanding of systems and processes to follow in Australia and low levels of confidence.

The TRAMS Bridge to Work co-ordinator particularly supports employers or HR managers with onboarding of these clients and finding suitable candidates for employment opportunities on offer. There has also been support with the interview process provided. Advocating for clients by sharing their willingness to work regularly and be committed has brought successful outcomes. This program has seen successful placements in farms, fruit and vegetable warehouses, local restaurants and a local social enterprise laundry.

Issues identified

In some areas there are intensive English education settings where wrap around supports are also provided, such as onsite support with Services Australia and counselling. This has been seen to be highly effective in supporting young people to link in with the broader community. These settings support transitioning into vocational education pathways or university pathways. However, this is found in limited locations across Australia. It is challenging for young mothers who find it difficult to access AMEP consistently.

Some young people find it difficult to understand and follow the steps they need to take to achieve their dreams. The process of language learning takes time and is often a key step to move people towards achieving their goals.

At times there can be intergenerational conflict within the family as there may be expectations of a young person to move into a job such as a lawyer or doctor, which may be a long and difficult journey, which means that SETS staff need to discuss the reality and ways to progress. There is a need to discuss alternative options for working within the broader sector, e.g. other health worker positions. Parental support at home is of high importance for young people. Some young people disengage with training pathways as they grow.

Shared Resources

Webinar: “What do successful settlement outcomes look like for an LGBTIQ+ refugee?”

24 August – 12pm

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/what-do-successful-settlement-outcomes-look-for-an-lgbtq-refugee-tickets-392939401327>