

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Young People

Australia is an increasingly culturally diverse country, with many young people between the ages of 12 and 25 being born overseas. Individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds contribute to sustaining the social and economic aspects of Tasmania. While cultural diversity is celebrated in Australia, there are barriers for culturally and linguistically diverse young people. Barriers such as language, social isolation, discrimination, cultural misunderstandings and limited access to services or interpreters can cause multiple disadvantages for young people from CALD backgrounds.

In addition, young people often face the additional pressure of being the only member in their family to speak, or are learning to speak, English, resulting in them acting as the bridge of communication between their parents and the wider community. Young refugees and asylum seekers are often alienated from the wider community and require additional assistance to successfully transition into the community. Young refugees and asylum seekers often have traumatic life experiences that can be an additional barrier to settling into a new community. Services in Tasmania need to be supportive and accommodate the unique needs of young culturally and linguistically diverse people who are dealing with past, or are still experiencing, trauma.

Experiences of racism and discrimination have significant negative impacts on member from CALD communities. The number of CALD young people calling the Kids Helpline about bullying is 30% higher than other cohorts of young people. Stereotypes have a negative impact on young people and can act as a barrier to interacting with other young people, the wider community, gaining employment or dealing with the police.

YNOT is committed to:

- Promoting cultural diversity and a sense of wellbeing in a culturally diverse Tasmania community.
- Promoting cultural awareness between young people with CALD backgrounds and the wider community through awareness and information programs.
- Promoting a society free of racism and discrimination.

ynot is the peak body representing the voice of Tasmanian youth



- Encouraging youth workers to undertake cross cultural training to promote understanding between young people with CALD backgrounds and the youth sector.
- Advocating for cultural awareness programs in schools.
- Promoting an understanding of linguistic and spiritual diversity in the wider community.
- Advocating for increased participation in recreational activities for young people from a CALD background, and providing assistance to enable them to do so.
- Advocating for increased assistance for young people settling in Tasmania as a refugee or asylum seeker.

Future Vision

A Tasmania where all CALD young people are accepted as individuals into the community, embraced for their diversity and given the opportunity to be active members of the Tasmanian community.

References

Kids Help Line 2004, Kids helpline newsletter, November 2004, p.5

Queensland Government (2013), *Barriers to engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities*, <http://www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/cald-communities/introduction/barriers.html>.