



All the Latest from Northern Community Legal Centre

July/August 2022

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From the Team at NCLC

The new financial year is a time for reflecting and measuring the impact of our programs as we consolidate our learnings to inform our service delivery for the year ahead.

A recent survey of our stakeholders allowed us to gain deeper insight into the strength of our partner relationships and opportunities for enhanced engagement.

Our partners identified NCLC strengths as providing comprehensive services delivered sensitively by our staff. Responses also highlighted the impact of our family violence projects and our targeted approach to supporting the most vulnerable members of the community. Recommendations included the need for streamlined referral pathways, additional resourcing to enable a greater presence in court, and a quicker intake process.

Many responses encouraged our continued investment in health justice partnerships, ongoing holistic support for refugees and newly arrived clients, and continued advocacy in the family violence space. Many also acknowledged the current resourcing challenges felt across the sector.

NCLC is grateful to all survey respondents for their time and helpful feedback – which we are considering carefully – and to our wonderful staff for their amazing hard work.

NCLC Staff Planning Day 2022



Addressing Young People's Experiences of Trauma



The 'Where Safety Begins' pilot program aims to enhance resilience, safety and wellbeing among young people aged 10 – 14 who've experienced family trauma. NCLC's Youth Community Development Worker Audrey Dalton-Power is coordinating the project.

Audrey: I have been a youth worker for the past eight years in case management and program coordination throughout Melbourne. My background is in homelessness, trauma-informed practice, and education-based support. I have a

great passion for supporting young people who are struggling with their independence and understanding who they are.

The 'Where Safety Begins' pilot project responds directly to research into the experiences and needs of young people exposed to family traumas such as homelessness and family violence. Utilising best practice resources we have created five modules for young people aged 10-14: 'Identity and Belonging', 'Mapping Emotions', 'Understanding the Body', 'My Voice' and 'Support Circles'. These modules can be delivered in schools or other youth settings and are flexible to the needs of the young people in the groups.

The project aims to support young people by helping them identify their own needs, understand what is going on in their minds and bodies, and proactively engage in the right support. It is a gentle program that intends to help young people become more comfortable expressing emotions and using their voices to self-advocate.

NCLC is looking for partners to collaborate in the delivery of this program. If you work in a school or youth program and would like further information, please contact NCLC Partnerships & Community Development Manager Tania McKenna at tmckenna@northernclc.org.au.

Upholding Rights when Enrolling in Training and Education

NCLC has recently advocated for numerous clients where education and training providers have failed to deliver on promises. Common factors include that the recruiters spoke the same language and pressured people into signing contracts after promising to organise placements during the course and jobs at the end of the course. Courses were often delayed or moved online. Some students did not have the required level of English proficiency to complete the course.



An agreement to study with an education and training provider is a contract covered by Consumer Law. As such, people have the right to be provided with a course that is delivered with appropriate skill, provides the required qualification, and is delivered on time. If these conditions are not met, the person may be entitled to a remedy such as cancelling enrolment or receiving a refund of course fees.

For further information on contracts with educational providers, please see the [**factsheet**](#) on our website, or [**make an appointment**](#) with an NCLC Lawyer for legal advice.

Join Our Take the First Step Project

Are you a woman looking for a leadership opportunity? Would you like to support other women and help prevent family violence in your community?

NCLC is looking for women from diverse cultural backgrounds living in the City of Hume or Mitchell Shire to join our Take the First Step project.

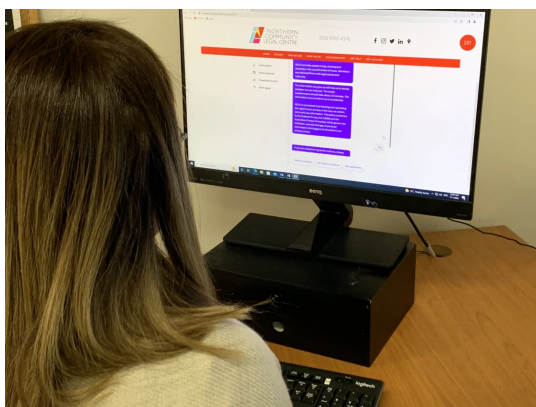


Project participants will meet for two hours every month to learn about the risks, signs, and effects of family violence and where people can go to get help. Drawing on their training – and working together as a group – participants will then reach out to vulnerable women in their own communities and offer their ongoing support.

Peer education is an effective way to reduce family violence. Many women feel safer and more empowered when they can talk to someone from their own community.

To register your interest in the project, please email Sarah Hussein at shussein@northernclc.org.au.

Legal Connector Updated



Following a piloting phase, NCLC has formally launched the updated Legal Connector, an online tool for streamlining access to legal advice. The tool can be accessed via the [homepage](#) of our website and is now available in both [English](#) and [Arabic](#).

NCLC's Legal Connector tool asks a short series of questions about any legal and non-legal issues you may have. This self-driven triage tool assesses users for eligibility of NCLC's services and provides referrals to those who fall outside of NCLC's catchment area, areas of legal practice or priority cohorts.

The questionnaire takes less than ten minutes to complete, and NCLC's Admin team will respond to inquiries within three business days. All information provided is confidential and governed by NCLC's [Privacy Policy](#).

Please share the above information with your networks. If you have any questions regarding the Legal Connector tool, don't hesitate to get in touch via admin@northernclc.org.au.

Census 2021: Our Community Demographics

The recent release of the 2021 Census data has painted a picture of a rapidly growing and diversifying population within NCLC's catchment of Hume, Moreland and Mitchell Shire.

Population Growth

Between 2016 and 2021, the population within NCLC's catchment grew by 16%, a growth rate 10% higher than the state-wide increase. This rapid population growth is seen mostly in Hume (which grew by almost 25%) and Mitchell Shire (which grew by 20%); both are in the top ten fastest growing LGAs in the state.

Demographics

NCLC's catchment has a higher percentage of first- and second-generation Australians (35% and 62% respectively) than the rest of Victoria (30% and 52%), with this figure increasing since 2016. Of those born outside of Australia, almost 60,000 people (over one third) arrived in Australia in the past ten years. 40% of our catchment's population speak a language other than English at home – markedly higher than the rest of Victoria at 28% – with Hume ranking in the top five LGAs in Victoria. Arabic remains the most spoken language other than English.

Almost 150,000 people, or just under a third of our catchment's population are under the age of 25. Despite improving rates of educational attainment, completion of Year 12 remains below the state average in both Hume and Mitchell Shire. Almost 10% of people between the ages of 15-24 report having long-term mental health concerns.

In Hume and Mitchell Shire, the average median personal and family income is below state average.

Our Legal Service

As the census data reflects, NCLC's rapidly growing community is more diverse and disadvantaged, and thus has more complex legal needs. While NCLC is working hard to meet these growing demands, funding restraints significantly limit our resources and we lack the capacity to support everyone through our legal service. As such, **we are prioritising clients who face the most systemic barriers to justice** – including those who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, refugees or newly arrived, victims/survivors family violence, under the age of 25, homeless, LGBTQI+ or have mental health issues or a disability – **and are referring those we cannot see onto partner organisations.**

Northern Community Legal Centre acknowledges and respects the traditional custodians whose lands we are fortunate to live and work on, and we pay our respects to all Elders past, present, and future.

Northern Community Legal Centre

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