



## Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc

Welcome to the Seventeenth Edition of the  
Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Newsletter

### News and Views from the Director – Steve Bowman

On the weekend of the 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> October 2010, families, staff and youth leaders travelled to Camp Kelly near Dwellingup and joined with representatives from the wider Edmund Rice Network for the second of our Harmony Weekend Camps. Approximately 120 adults and children attended the weekend which provided a wonderful opportunity to get to know and learn from each other. Once again the Indigenous presentation from George Walley and his extended family was a major highlight together with the sharing of personal, cultural and faith stories. Personally the weekend was reminder to me of the benefits of taking the time to share my own story and listen to the life and faith story of others in order to appreciate the richness of the community in which we live. Although the weekend was an opportunity to celebrate our different journeys and cultures we also came to realise how much we share in common!

Special thanks to Jill (ERN Coordinator) and Michael Parker and the steering committee for their part in organising the weekend and to Joyce and Hafis, two ERCM senior leaders, who with a team of youth leaders ran activities for the children over the weekend. The weekend was made possible with the support of funding from Lotterywest.

### Profile of a Volunteer



Samia Mustafa is a Sudanese lady who arrived in Australia with her family on 28 July 1998. After finishing her secondary schooling in Sudan, she attended University to study Psychology completing her first year before she met and married Ahmed Fadlalla, a big, handsome military officer. They now have six children aged 13 to 26, all born in Sudan. When war broke out in Sudan, Ahmed spoke out against the government of the time, and was jailed as a political prisoner for five years, during which time Samia and their children stayed in Sudan with her mother for the first two years, and then moved to Egypt for the other three years. After Ahmed's release they fled from Sudan and arrived in Australia as a family

of eight. For the first six months, Samia worked as a cleaner at the Parmelia Hilton, then subsequently, she gradually took up crèche work and interpreting for Women's Groups over the next couple of years. Through her interpreting work with the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre, she came in contact with the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka. Since then, over the past 12 years, she has worked as an interpreter for both organisations. At the ERCM, Samia does valuable work in the *Lifeskills for Living in Australia Program* where she shares her gifts for interpreting and thus eases the way for the newly arrived humanitarian entrants. Her serene and gracious presence is always very welcome at all the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka functions. Thank you, Samia, for your sharing of your many gifts! It needs to be said that Ahmed, Samia's husband, also assists the Centre in many ways, particularly in the *Settlement Grants Program* area. Thank you too, Ahmed!

Volume 3, Issue 17  
Aug/Sept 2010

#### Inside this issue:

- CBERS Redress Service
- Computer Studies Program
- Driver Education Program
- Language for Living in Australia Program
- Lifeskills for Living in Australia Program
- Mooridj Kalangka Indigenous Children's Program
- Multicultural Sport & Recreation Program
- Settlement Grants Program
- "Women Together" Program
- Youth Leadership Development Program

The Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Youth Leadership Group is launching the Multicultural Youth Creative Music Program. This program aims to teach young people how to record and produce music on their home computers for very little cost. We aim to teach people how to build and maintain their computers using parts that other people will often throw away.

#### Special Point of Interest

- ⇒ Staff & Volunteer Training Afternoon Thursday 12 August 2010.

# News Briefs from our Program Coordinators

## Moorditj Koolangka Indigenous Children's Program

A highlight of the month was the visit from the Wadumbah Dance Group. James Webb and Trevor took the children through the dance steps associated with a kangaroo, shared their story through photographs stressing that it was hard work and showed them a large



map of Australia depicting all the Aboriginal tribes. Finally, the boys did some didgeridoo playing. It is hoped that they can come back next term.

Our **MOORDITJ KOOLANGKA FAMILY FUNDAY BBQ** was held at Whiteman Park on Sunday 19 September 2010 from 10.30 am to 3.30 pm. On the day, there were lots of fun, games and prizes for the



children, and a healthy BBQ for everyone.

*Br Phil O'Loghlen, Coordinator*

## Multicultural Sport & Recreation Program

"The Edmund Rice Centre Lions played their final match of the season against the Eastern Hills Hawks on Subiaco Oval as a curtain raiser for the Eagles vs Kangaroos match. After a hectic morning, the Lions finally made their run onto the "hallowed turf" of WA football. The Lions got off to a shaky start, managing only two points up to half time. They were almost able to match the Hawks score in the second half, eventually losing 68 points to 30. All players settled in to watch the Eagles game afterwards, and this was a great way to end the footy season". Extract adapted from "Edmund Rice Centre Lions Update" 9/09/10 *Joe Moniodis, Coordinator*



## Edgework Conference 2010

From the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August, Chris Ward, Joe Moniodis and Senior Youth Leaders, Hafiz Mamoun, Atot Amoly and Kamil Ismael attended the biennial Edgework Conference "Heart and Head - A conference for the Soul" at Amberley Retreat Centre in Melbourne.

**EdgeWork** is an Edmund Rice group consisting of a network of people inspired by the Gospel values as exemplified in the life and work of Edmund Rice and who work in ministries developed to support and empower those who advocate for and journey with the most vulnerable in their communities, by providing opportunities to gather, reflect and share their work. The conference provided the opportunity to share resources and ideas with others who have an understanding of the nature of the work we do.

There were several sessions presented by Edmund Rice Network leaders and other professionals. Our ERCM Youth Leaders' presentation - a leadership theory session on honesty, was received with great enthusiasm. Our leaders were a credit to themselves and to the Centre. Their session was relevant, well planned and well executed and the leaders handled the question-and-answer session like professionals.

Meeting such a large group of "like-minded" people was an inspiration and we all came away both challenged and rejuvenated.

*Christina Ward, Assistant to the Director*

## Driver Education Program

There are currently 34 participants who speak ten different languages receiving lessons in their first language and English from five driving instructors. The majority are learning for the first time and the others either have licences from overseas (not recognized in Australia) or have had many lessons in the past but have not been able to pass the Driving Assessment.

*Chris Ward, Coordinator*

*On Thursday evening, 23 September 2010, ERCM Staff and Volunteers celebrated a "Welcome to Spring" with a social evening gathering commencing with a prayerful reflection followed by a short film depicting the Edmund Rice LIONS Story, followed by a delicious multicultural, multi-varied and multi-shared Dinner.*



Youth Leaders and Sports Program participants with

# News Briefs from our Program Coordinators

## Lifeskills for Living in Australia Program



### *An excursion to the KINGS PARK wildflowers on September 15.*

The excursion to Kings Park at the end of term 3 was very enjoyable. We saw Perth in its magnificent best spring weather and the women appreciated the opportunity to visit and learn a little about Western Australia wildflowers. The Kids in the Kitchen session on Wed 6 Oct, went really well. The students from Koondoola Intensive English Centre prepared fruit kebabs for morning tea, then designed and decorated their own pizza as well as little chocolate cup cakes. During the morning tea break the students played games and had art activities. The session concluded after lunch with a health activity helping the students learn more about the health pyramid and healthy nutrition.

*Ros Freestrail, Coordinator*

## Multicultural Youth Sports & Recreation Program

Joyce Laboke has had to temporarily leave her youth worker's role due to TAFE commitments; she has done a great job and will be sorely missed. Joyce continues to do valuable work for the Centre through the Youth Leadership Program. Alicia Snyders, who is also doing a communications project at the Centre examining the overcharging of Refugee/Migrant by telecommunications companies, has taken over her role, and is performing very well.

*Joe Moniodis, Coordinator*

## Koondoola Integrated Services

August has seen many clients struggling with increased living costs, and many are not receiving the Synergy rebate that they are entitled to. Other issues have included

helping families with name changes and family reunion.

The 'Bend Like A River' program has been running weekly and the sessions have included other service providers – Jadranka, from MSC who spoke about financial assistance, Rebecca from Parenting WA who has given sessions on general parenting, health and safety.

There have been weekly sessions with the TWA community at ERCM. Anjali from Mercy Care has come to talk about their programs; I have spoken at length about sugar in the diet and Vitamin D; Peter Tulip from DCP returned to address specific concerns for the group; Davina from Department of Housing and Veronica Bannon have come from DIAC to hear the concerns of the community re housing, language and employment. We also took the group for an outing to Sorrento. Where some of them saw the ocean for the first time.

*Mandy Whitton, Coordinator*

## Settlement Grants Program

We have been extremely busy with clients who presented various settlement issues related to Centrelink, accommodation, ATO and DIAC, especially those who recently arrived on visa subclass 300 and 309 who cannot access the AMEP 510 hours English classes, or help with the Utility bills from Synergy, Alinta Gas and the Water Corporation. We have increased numbers of clients who have difficulties managing their finances due to high rental for private accommodation and rising utility costs. One of our roles is to ensure that clients who are on low income receive maximum benefit using their Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card for eligible rebates from Synergy and the Water Corporation. We have come across increased numbers of Synergy Consumers who are not receiving the rebates they are entitled to due to the ongoing

problems with the Synergy's Billing Department. We are very frustrated and also disappointed that Synergy has not fixed the problem although they are very much aware as this problem has been going on for nearly two years. We drew this to the attention of the Minister for Energy, Hon. Peter Collier at the *Let's Talk Forum* in Stirling.

There has been also an increased number of clients with excessive bills from various Telecommunication Providers such as Telstra and Optus. It is an ongoing concern that these providers use Sales People to target consumers who are vulnerable and most of whom have ended up with a two-year contract without being aware of it. We are glad to report that we have succeeded in getting the unjust contracts rescinded and all the fees, charges and the outstanding amounts waived. We are now working with two Uni Students who are working towards getting this unethical practice stopped.

*Dolly Holzinger & Marika Kestevska, S&P*

## Language for Living in Australia

Teachers and participants continue to maintain the good work. Programs are shared and discussed and a feeling of professionalism prevails throughout. The participants are progressing well. The need for relief teachers is an ongoing problem. We had 319 English Language participants walking through our doors in September.

*Angela Broderick, Coordinator*

## CBERS Redress Service

An increased level of client activity continued at CBERS Redress Service during August and September, and a number of contractors are now providing support and counselling to redress applicants under new funding provided by the Department for Communities.

*Dr Philippa White, Coordinator*

**Edmund Rice Centre  
Mirrabooka Inc**

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*Australia gets its first Saint*

**Pope Benedict XVI proclaimed the canonisation  
of Mary MacKillop on Sunday 17 October 2010.**

*Mary MacKillop founded the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, an order that built dozens of schools for impoverished children across the Australian Outback in the 1800s, as well as orphanages and clinics for the needy.*

**Holy God, source of all goodness,  
You show us in Mary MacKillop, a woman of faith  
who lived by the power of the cross.  
Teach us to embrace what she pioneered:  
new ways of living the gospel  
that respect and defend  
the human dignity of all in our land.  
We pray this prayer through Christ, Our Lord,  
Amen**

*Volunteers Needed*

*Are there any retired teachers out there who have a spare hour or two? We badly need more teachers of English to cover our ever-expanding classes of humanitarian entrants. Please apply to Angela or Chris on 9440 0625 or [ercmwa@westnet.com.au](mailto:ercmwa@westnet.com.au) ASAP!*

**Forthcoming Events of Interest**

⇒ ERCM is offering a "Job Readiness Course" aimed to assist those wishing to apply for positions in the Australian workforce. Participants will require a sound understanding of the English language - both written and spoken. **Mon 11.30 am -1.30 pm**

If you would like to support the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc, your donation will be most gratefully accepted. Your donation will enable people from Refugee and Indigenous backgrounds, including youth, to continue to gain benefits from our educational programs.

I enclose a donation to assist the work of the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc:

\$20                       \$50                       \$100                       \$500                       Other

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Donations can be made by cheque or by direct deposit.

Please make cheques payable to "Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc" or deposit directly into "Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc", Account BSB 066 183, Account No: 1009 1408.

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