

Working with Young Parents
and Families from Refugee
Backgrounds

Tamara Stewart-Jones, CEO

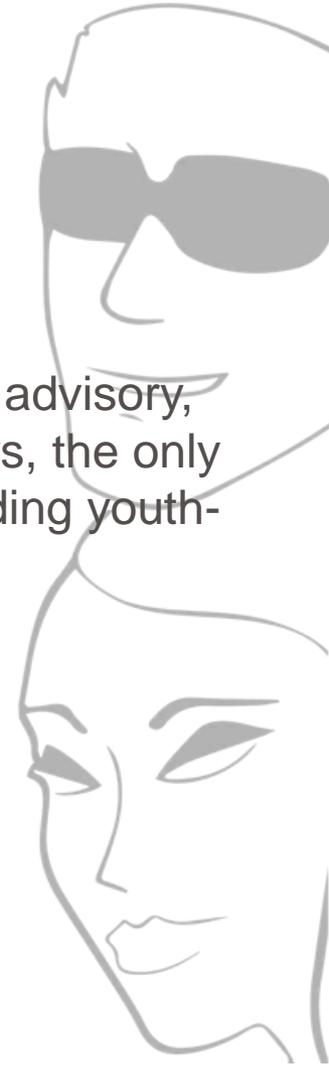
MYSA Overview

- Multicultural Youth South Australia Inc (MYSA), the state representative advisory, advocacy and service delivery body for young people aged 10 to 30 years, the only youth-specific multicultural agency in South Australia and one of two leading youth-specific organisations in the country.

- MYSA is the Peak body in South Australia for Refugee Youth.

- **MYSA has 4 key foci:**

1. Research
2. Sector development and training
3. Community Development
4. Service Delivery



New arrival statistics

Total number of arrivals from January 2018- March 2019				
	Humanitarian visa	Family visa	Skilled visa	Total
Australia	17,421	110,718	197,741	325,880
South Australia	1,039	5,624	11,642	18,304

Most humanitarian arrivals in 2019 are coming from:

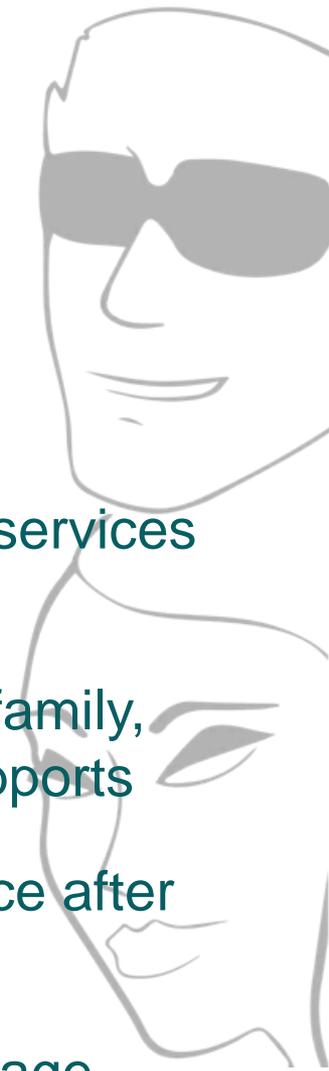
- Congo
- Afghanistan
- Syria
- Iraq
- Bhutan
- Myanmar (Burma)

Young people aged 12-25 made up 25% of all migrants (humanitarian, skilled and family) who arrived in Australia between January 2018 and March 2019.



Young parents from refugee backgrounds often experience a number of challenges. These include (but are not limited to):

- Migration stress
- Acculturative stress
- Displaced sense of belonging and cultural identity
- Perceived or experienced sense of racism and discrimination
- Intergenerational conflict
- Low English proficiency
- Insufficient awareness of institutional systems and services available
- Loss or lack of extended family, social and community supports
- Poor settlement experience after arriving in new country
- Socioeconomic disadvantage



Child Protection Issues in Refugee Families

- Previous parenting strategies practiced in home country at odds with Australian parenting values and laws
- Lack of awareness of the Department for Child Protection and their statutory power
- Fear of authority because of past experiences with Child Protection or authority bodies in their home country
- Fear of authority because of shame on family
- Lack of awareness of local community services
- Lack of culturally appropriate community services (e.g. Lack of interpreters)



Child Protection Issues in Refugee Families

- **Typical family norms, traditions, beliefs, and/or practices that influence the way children are raised:**
- Collectivism and religion are two main factors that influence how CALD families typically raise their children. Broadly, individualist cultures view the individual to be the primary unit of society, whereas collectivist cultures view the family to be the primary unit.
- **Typical ways family issues are addressed:**
- Collectivist cultures value family privacy because it protects the family's name and standing in the community



Most common reasons underpinning entry of young people from refugee families into child protection:

- Physical abuse
- Inadequate supervision
- Traditional cultural practices (e.g. forced marriage, FGM)
- Cultural differences in 'child-centred' family functioning. The 'child centred' frameworks used in individualistic cultures like Australia can clash with the collectivist culture of CALD families



Most common reasons underpinning entry of young people from refugee families into child protection:

- Cultural differences in what is 'acceptable' discipline and how this differs from abuse
- Gender
- Academic pressure (reason for disengagement from family at young age)
- Exposure to trauma
- Lack of extended family support



MYSA's Service Response



- Intensive Case Management
 - Playgroup
- Parenting Facebook Page
 - Circle of Security
 - Steering Committee
 - Afterhours Outreach



