



Transformers: Early Intervention Program

# Annual Forum Report

## March 2015

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## Overview

The Tasmanian Transcultural Mental Health Network (TTMHN) Project is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, and administered by the Phoenix Centre. The TTMHN holds a forum every year. In 2015 the Phoenix Centre determined to combine the TTMHN Annual Forum with the Phoenix Centre's Transformers: Early Intervention Program (EIP). The theme therefore was *Working with Youth: Innovative Programs and Practices*.

The forum was recommended for people who wanted to enhance engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) clients and communities, gain knowledge regarding the current issues for CALD youth in Tasmania, learn about innovative programs, discover new resources that could be utilised, and meet and network with relevant stakeholders.

## Background and Forum Planning

An annual survey of TTMHN members (conducted in November 2014) identified that members wanted: knowledge on how to access individuals and keep them engaged in services; help understanding CALD communities current circumstances living in Tasmania; help to identify CALD communities understanding of mental health and mental illness, and better education on how to work with CALD individuals.

The TTMHN Advisory Group Committee and the EIP Steering Committee supported the aims to address these identified needs and determined to have a theme on youth, to align with the EIP Funding Agreement and the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) Tasmania community consultation project.



Funding for the Annual Forum was received by the Crown through the Department of Health and Human Services. Additional funding was also received from the Mental Health Council of Tasmania.

The Forum Working Group, employees within the Phoenix Centre and the Project Officer for the TTMHN and EIP, planned and organised the Annual Forum.

## Setting

The Annual Forum was held at the Tasmanian Hockey Centre, New Town, on Friday 27 March 2015 between 9.30am – 3.30pm.

The Annual Forum was opened by The Hon Michael Ferguson MP, Member for Bass; Minister for Health; Minister for Information Technology and Innovation; Leader of Government Business in House of Assembly.



## Attendance

106 people attended the Annual Forum. Attendees were from a variety of organisations including: TasTAFE, Anglicare, University of Tasmania, LINC Tasmania, Colony 47, Partners in Recovery, Mission Australia, Department of Health and Human Services, Carers Tasmania, Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, Phoenix Centre, Migrant Resource Centre, MI Fellowship Aspire Services, Centacare, Family Planning Tasmania, Lifeline, Red Cross, Anglicare Victoria, Anglicare Tasmania, Australian Competition & Consumer Commission, Relationships Australia, Department of Social Services, Brighton Counselling Service, Mental Health Council of Tasmania, Mental Health Services, Clarence City Council, Kingborough Council, Pulse Youth Health, and Rose Bay High School.

## ***Multicultural Youth Tasmania: Position Paper***

***Dr Gillian Long, Director Phoenix Centre***

***Nadine Liddy, MYAN National Coordinator***

The [Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network](#) (MYAN) is the nationally recognised policy and advocacy body on multicultural youth issues. It is Australia's only voice on multicultural youth issues. In 2014 MYAN TAS completed a series of consultations with more than 200 young people from multicultural backgrounds across Tasmania. Those involved identified current issues of concern and potential solutions, including health, education, employment, confronting racism and processing of claims for asylum.

The launch presentation included a power point presentation of the key findings of the Multicultural Youth Tasmania Report and table group work to identify priorities within the identified recommendations.



“It was more than I expected”

“Great to have this information”

“It’s great that the launch was so public”

“Really necessary to have more research/input about this cohort”

## ***“You’re Not Alone”: Diverse Tasmanians speak about experiencing thoughts of suicide and maintaining mental health***

***Beth Lord, Community Connections Project Officer, Phoenix Centre, Hobart***

The [CALD Community Connections - Suicide Prevention Project](#) developed a DVD and accompanying resources. The DVD involves diverse Tasmanians speaking about their experiences of suicidal thoughts, seeking help and maintaining their mental health.

The DVD launch included a presentation on how the project developed, the rationale and research behind the process, how the individuals became involved, and how the DVD can be used in practice with young people from a CALD background. The panel opened for questions and included Kondok, Faisal, and Kajan from the DVD; and Craig Dow Sainter who produced the DVD.

“Very brave and impactful having those involved present”

“Fantastic personal stories and very brave speakers”

“Profound to have people present – please thank them”

“Very engaging and a huge benefit to have DVD subjects on panel”

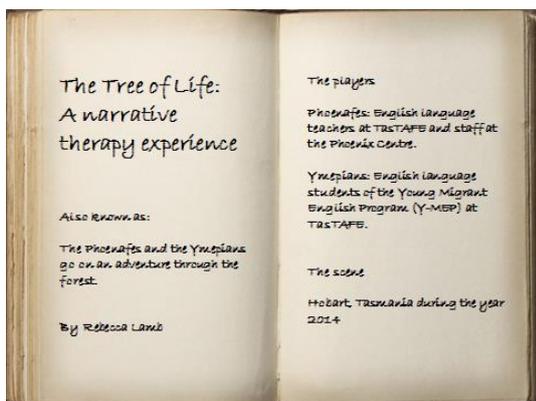


## ***Tree of Life: A narrative therapy experience***

### ***Rebecca Lamb, Transformers: Early Intervention Program, Project Officer, Phoenix Centre***

Narrative therapy is a therapeutic practice that is informed by the idea that people know themselves through stories. Narrative therapy seeks to discover and richly describe preferred, alternative stories. Staff from the Phoenix Centre in collaboration with English Language teachers from TasTAFE South conducted a narrative therapy session with 40 Y-MEP students, in November 2014. The narrative therapy session used the Tree of Life theme for students and staff to tell stories of their past, present and hopes for the future.

This presentation included a power point presentation of the Tree of Life Day, and the drawings of the trees of CALD students from Y-MEP TasTAFE South.



“I loved the way Rebecca presented the Tree of Life as a fictional novel on the power point”

“Really engaging and innovative”

“Liked this very much”

“Really entertaining and valuable”

## ***‘Our Voices’: Stories of carers from refugee and migrant backgrounds***

### ***Silvana Izzo, Statewide Education and Training Coordinator, Victorian Transcultural Mental Health, Melbourne***

The presentation included a brief power point on how the project developed, and progressed to show three video narratives of carers telling their stories. Arefa, a carer originally from Afghanistan accompanied Silvana and spoke about her experience as a carer of her father, and their adaptation to the Australian Mental Health system and way of thinking about mental illness.

These deeply insightful, courageous and poignant stories of carers from Migrant and Refugee backgrounds have uniquely been captured via the collaboration and support of many leading mental health, carer and multi-cultural organisations. [‘Our Voices’](#) is a series of five short films offering rare and profound insight into the lives of carers, caring for family with mental illness. The films explore the lives of five carers from Afghani, Egyptian, Somali, Turkish and Vietnamese communities. Each narrative is told in the carer's original language, and has been subtitled in English.

Hard copies of the DVD series (complete with an information kit offering insights into the making of the films, recommended use and practice insights in using digital storytelling platforms with carers in the area of mental health and wellbeing), can be requested. To register your interests in obtaining a hard copy go to the [‘Our Voices’ website](#).

“Great to get the carer perspective, engaging and interesting”

“Lovely to have clients there in person”

“Exceptional presentation”

“Some really good stories, I’ll share with colleagues”

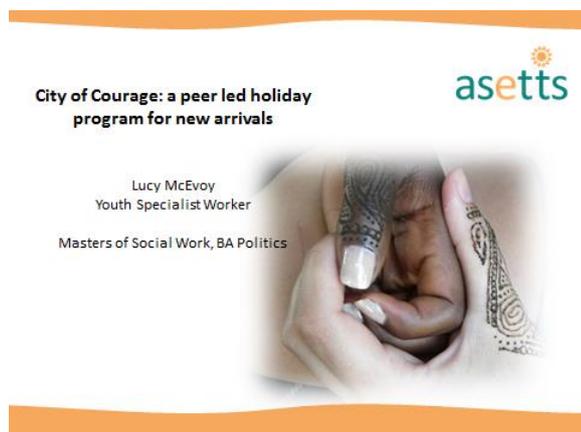


## ***‘City of Courage’: A peer led holiday program for new arrivals***

***Lucy McEvoy, Youth Specialist Worker, ASeTTs, Perth, Western Australia***

The power point presentation included information on [ASeTTs](#) Youth Specialist Program, the impact of trauma on young people, the three pillars of trauma informed care and the Circle of Courage model. Lucy then talked about the Camps of Courage – the history, and outline of the camp structure.

Lucy finished with video interviews of Youth Support Workers sharing the value and impact of the program.



“Empowerment, engagement of youth in project very telling – would like to see more of this in Tasmania”

“Extra good. Completely relevant and inspirational for my adventure program”

“Great speaker and interesting and informative”

“Inspiring to see a program that empowers youth”

## **Forum Package**

Each attendee was provided a forum package. The package contained resources useful for a professional working with CALD youth. Access to electronic form of the resources is available below, or click on the link to access the original sources. The package included:

- [Child development and trauma specialist practice resource](#), Human Services Victoria
- Fact Sheet: Use Interpreters in Tasmania
- [NAATI](#) Tasmania developed resource: Working Effectively with Interpreters
- Foundation House [Project:TYRES](#) Talking with Young Refugees about Experiences of Services
- Professional Development opportunity through the [Australian Childhood Foundation](#)

## **Resources**

All the power point presentations and presenters resources are accessible at the [Tasmanian Transcultural Mental Health Network \(TTMHN\) website](#). This site provides links to the original sources or downloadable PDF formats.

## **Evaluation**

Feedback was provided by attendees through a written survey completed at the end of the forum. The positive and critical feedback will inform the next annual forum.

## **Acknowledgements**

Overall this forum was successful because of the hard work and generosity of many, our thanks in particular to: Dr Gillian Long, Rebecca Loring, Emily Burles, Beth Lord (and the inspirational men who attended the forum to present with her), the speakers who travelled from interstate, Hon Michael Ferguson and our sponsors.

The Phoenix Centre gratefully acknowledges funding for the Forum by the Crown through the Department of Health and Human Services.