



Geoff Lee

Acting Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans
Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education

Sarah Mitchell

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT EXTENDS SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES

Newly arrived migrants and refugees will benefit from over \$4 million in NSW Government funding, announced today on World Refugee Day.

The funding will support key programs which aim to reduce social isolation and help schools to provide specialised care for refugee students.

Acting Minister for Multiculturalism Geoff Lee said it is vital newly arrived migrants and refugees have the support they need to settle into NSW.

“The theme for Refugee Week is ‘Celebrating the Year of Welcome’ and we are determined to help refugees start their new lives in NSW with a strong foundation,” Mr Lee said.

“We know refugees have experienced unimaginable hardship and we want to give them every chance of succeeding in NSW and help them gain independence.”

NSW Minister for Education Sarah Mitchell said the new *STARTTS Schools Liaison Program* will help ease the transition into NSW for refugee students and their families.

“We all know education is an important social and economic equaliser and ensuring new migrants are able to access and enjoy a quality education is paramount,” said Ms Mitchell.

“These key programs go a long way to ensuring refugees have the same opportunities as every other student in NSW.”

CEO of STARRTS Jorge Aroche said the NSW Government funding will boost investment in two of their most successful programs.

“The *STARTTS Schools Liaison Program* and the *Families in Cultural Transitions Program* ensure refugee families and their children are able to overcome traumatic events and succeed in their new life in NSW,” Mr Aroche said.

CEO of Community Hubs Australia Dr Sonja Hood says the funding will also provide a big boost to her organisation.

“Our hubs aim to connect with migrant families particularly women and pre-school

children and reduce isolation between new and established communities,” Dr Hood said.

“Thanks to the support of the NSW Government we have been able to provide early childhood services as well as English language and skills training at NSW State and Catholic primary schools.”

The NSW Government has also re-appointed Professor Peter Shergold AC, as the NSW Coordinator General for Settlement.

“I am delighted to be re-appointed to this role and to seeing our incredibly important work continue,” Professor Shergold said.

“This funding will support initiatives to continue to make a positive change in the lives of some of our most vulnerable people. We must ensure barriers to settlement continue to be overcome and a holistic approach to refugee resettlement is sustained.”

“Professor Shergold’s reappointment as the NSW Coordinator General, no longer only for Refugee Re-settlement but now for Settlement, reflects NSW’s serious commitment to migrant communities including refugees,” Mr Lee said.

Today’s announcement of over \$4.14 million in funding is in addition to the \$20 million temporary crisis accommodation for stranded international students and the \$6 million for migrant and temporary visa holders, which the NSW Government has already committed.

For more information about Community Hubs visit: www.communityhubs.org.au/

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