



MORE HELP FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS

The Brumby Government is strengthening its support for students from newly arrived refugee communities to help them settle into school and remain engaged with education.

These students have often experienced extreme personal hardship and severely disrupted schooling before arriving in Australia. Over 1600 refugee students enrolled in Victorian government schools in 2007.

Two new initiatives for refugee students will increase the capacity of schools across Victoria to improve their educational opportunities and ensure they feel supported and welcome at their new schools.

\$6.5 million over Four years to Support Refugee Students Includes:

Homework Programs

In Victoria there are more than 80 homework programs run by volunteers at schools, libraries and community locations.

For the first time, the Victorian Government is providing funding to coordinate this vital program which benefits thousands of students across the state who are adjusting to life in a Victorian school. This funding is in addition to a pilot homework program being run this year in five locations in Melbourne's west.

School Support for Refugees

This initiative will continue the support for refugee students provided since 2004 by the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc. Funding for this work by a private philanthropic trust ends in June 2008.

This initiative will support students from refugee backgrounds by:

- Providing professional development for teachers;
- Providing counselling support in schools for students;
- Assisting schools to access a range of specialist agencies and resources; and
- Encouraging educational partnerships and collaboration between schools, agencies, families and communities.

This additional support for Victoria's newly arrived refugee students in this year's State Budget adds to the existing range of resources available, including a resource for schools called *Strengthening Outcomes – Refugee Students in Government Schools*.