



# News from Multicultural Health Communication

making health communication easier

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## Drug Awareness Information Session for Arabic speaking parents

More than 150 Arabic speaking parents attended the Drug Awareness Dinner organised by Muslim Women's Welfare of Australia (MWWA) and presented in English and Arabic at the Stars Palace in Fairfield in June.

As a follow up to the successful drug and alcohol workshop in Arabic and English, held last year by MWWA, and supported by NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service, the information session discussed the risks of drug abuse, the specific drugs used by some young people, as well as tips for parents to help them talk to children about alcohol and drug use.

The speakers included representatives from Muslim Women's Welfare, the Ted Noffs Foundation and the NSW Police. Following the session, funded by the Community Relations Commission (CRC) and MHCS, the parents had the opportunity to ask the panel about ways to protect their families from drugs and alcohol.

*Family Matters: How to Approach Drug Issues with your Family* is a booklet available for parents designed to help answer questions when talking about drugs with their children. The booklet is available in 15 community languages – Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Croatian, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Macedonian, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese.

## Dementia Beliefs and Knowledge Project

The first stage in the ongoing Dementia Beliefs and Knowledge Project - , a joint project of MHCS and the Dementia Collaborative Research Project of the University of New South Wales - has been completed.

With the help of the Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS), the Italian Association of Assistance (Co.As.It) and the Greek Welfare Centre, four focus groups were held in Cantonese, Mandarin, Italian and Greek. These focus groups collected information about beliefs regarding dementia from the four language groups to help refine the questions for a nationwide telephone health survey that will run from September through December.

The survey will ask first, second and third generation members of the three CALD groups, Chinese, Italian and Greek, about their understanding of the recognition of dementia, different methods of help-seeking, knowledge of the causes of dementia and the acceptance of aged care services.

A letter of introduction will be sent to householders from those CALD community groups shortly before the surveys begin. There will be a toll-free 1800 service for people to opt-out or leave a message.

For further information, contact Chris Gollan, Project Officer at MHCS on 9816 0545

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## A Celebration of Cultures at the African Women's Dance



Jean Marie Uwamahoro from MHCS together with Sia Miatta Mansarai and Luba Mae Ansumana from Sierra Leone

An amazing range of colours, music and dance filled the Cabravale Diggers' Club in Cabramatta on Saturday, June 21 when around 300 people attended the annual African Women's Dinner Dance in Sydney.

Women representing 20 African nations, as well as other countries, danced the night away. They celebrated their cultures through dance, songs and fashion through upbeat performances from a range of entertainers including the Sene-Gambia Drummers, DJ Prince 2000, the all female group Pambazuka, young dancers from the Sierra Unite Cultural Group and the Fula Bantu Group. One of the main highlights of the evening was a fashion parade of spectacular and colourful costumes worn by the women.

The NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS) proudly supported the dinner dance organised by the African Women's Group of NSW.

## What can we learn from a 10 year study on men?

Some of Australia's leading health experts gathered in Melbourne in June to discuss a landmark proposal by Andrology Australia, the Australian centre for male reproductive health, to conduct a longitudinal study of 10,000 Australian men, aged 18 and over, from a cross section of Australia.

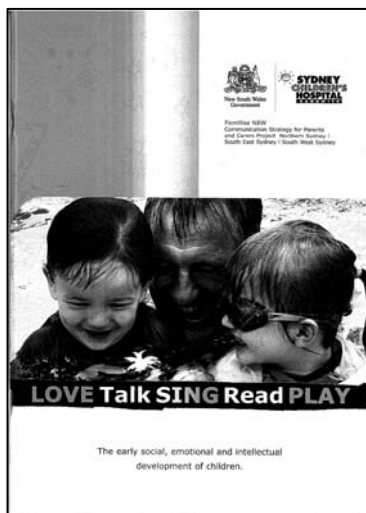
The proposed 10 year study is a world-first and will have a particular focus on disadvantaged groups such as men in regional and remote areas, migrant groups and indigenous men.

As a stakeholder at the national forum, Michael Camit, Manager of Social Marketing and Communication at MHCS, presented a paper on key issues with potential benefits for working with CALD populations, such as research on acculturation and health as well as the impact of social marketing and health communication campaigns over time with men from CALD backgrounds.

For more information on the longitudinal study and Andrology Australia visit [www.andrologyaustralia.org](http://www.andrologyaustralia.org)

## Families NSW Communication Strategy for Parents and Carers

The Families NSW Communication Strategy for Parents and Carers, targeting the Northern Sydney, South East Sydney and South West Sydney areas, is promoting ways to enhance the social, emotional and intellectual development of children with their new parenting resource *Love Talk Sing Read Play* for Parents and Carers in the Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese communities.



Families NSW and Multicultural Health Communication are working together to reach these communities to enhance parenting skills for parents and carers of young children.

As part of Stage 1 of this project's media strategy, a convenient sample of 50 Arabic, 50 Chinese and 50 Vietnamese-speaking parents or carers of children 0-5 years old, contacted through ante-natal clinics, ethno-specific early childhood workers and CALD community networks were asked to take part in a parenting survey.

Participants were given questionnaires that tested their levels of awareness of the key messages of *Love Talk Sing Read Play*, such as how children best learn, as well as their confidence in parenting.

A preliminary analysis is being prepared and will be evaluated for the next stage of the campaign.

There is an abundance of parenting and child development resources available. . A search by MHCS found a number of websites on this subject, especially for children aged 0 – 5, with other sites including the teenage years. These websites provide information on understanding children’s behaviour and stages of development, as well as discipline, play, health, safety, daily care, nutrition, fitness and sleep. By the end of June 2008, these websites will be linked to MHCS’s website: [www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au) and can be accessed under ‘Campaigns’.

Parents and carers from the Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese communities will soon be able to access flipcharts in their languages, encouraging the key messages of *Love Talk Sing Read Play*. These flipcharts outline the development stages of the social, emotional and intellectual growth of children from 0 to 5 years old. For now, Families NSW *Love Talk Sing Read Play* kit in Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese are available on the MHCS website: [www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au)

Information sessions on promoting the *Love Talk Sing Read Play* messages and resources are being conducted by Karitane to support the project. If your service is within the South East, South West and Northern Sydney Areas and would like an information session delivered at your office, please contact Monica Hughes at the Karitane Education Dept. on (02) 9794 2300 or [monica.hughes@sswahs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:monica.hughes@sswahs.nsw.gov.au)

Multicultural Health Communication is also calling on Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese bilingual workers in the field of early childhood development to become involved in this project and help spread the Love Talk Sing Read Play message to parents and carers. If you can contribute to the media component of the campaign or want regular updates, please email: [jesusa.helaratne@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jesusa.helaratne@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au) or [germana.morassi@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:germana.morassi@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au) or call MHCS on (02) 9816 0347.

## **We’re looking for the tastiest (and healthiest) recipes from Filipino, Pacific Island and Sri Lankan cuisines**

From September 2008, Multicultural Communication will be host to a competition aiming to collect the tastiest and healthiest traditional recipes from Filipino, Pacific Island and Sri Lankan communities living in NSW.

The competition will support a national campaign by the Australian Better Health Initiative (ABHI) to increase awareness of national guidelines in physical activity and healthy eating amongst CALD communities - the three communities selected were among the highest rates of diabetes in NSW. The ABHI was launched by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in July 2006.

For more information on the competition or to be on a mailing list for updates, contact Jess Helaratne on 02 9816 0306 or email [Jess.helaratne@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Jess.helaratne@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

## **Local Government Awards**

The judging panel for the 2008 LGSA Multicultural Health Award met in July to select the winners.



The winner for the 2008 LGSA Multicultural Health Award is Parramatta City Council for their entry “*Community Health Promotion for the Chinese Community*”. Second place went to Kogarah Municipal Council for its Community Education Campaign – “*Emergency and Key Local Contact Information*”. Third place went to Ryde City Council for its production of “*Chinese and Korean Needs Papers 2007*”. There were also three Highly Commended Certificates awarded to: Bankstown City Council; Liverpool City Council and Wollongong City Council.

Presentation of the Awards was held at the Parramatta Park Event Centre on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> July.

Details of the winning entries will be available on the MHCS website in due course.

## Breast health advocates help combat cancer among Chinese-Australian women

A group of Chinese-speaking 'Breast Health Advocates' trained by the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Sydney, are now working with Sydney's Chinese community.

The project stems from a series of information days in Sydney's Chinatown called *Living with Healthy Breasts – Be a Breast Health Advocate*. "Its aim is to train breast health advocates to raise awareness of breast health, breast cancer screening and early detection in the Chinese community," explains Dr Cannas Kwok, a Cancer Institute NSW Research Fellow in the University's Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery and the project's coordinator. According to Dr Kwok, these advocates will help address many of the barriers that prevent Chinese-Australian women accessing breast screening and information about breast health. These include reluctance among Chinese women to talk about breasts and breast health, as well as the language barrier. "Breast health resources are mostly in English and the fact that illustrations feature Western women can strengthen Chinese women's perception that breast cancer is a disease confined to Caucasian women," Dr Kwok says.



Over 35 women attended the first information day which included four sessions - two dealt with breast health, breast screening and cultural misconceptions and myths, while the other two focussed on training potential advocates on how to communicate their message.

The advocates received an information kit with culturally sensitive materials and brochures about breast cancer, and a CD summarising the education sessions for them to use and circulate among their peers.

"We encouraged the trainee advocates to talk to friends, work colleagues and their families about what they learned," says Dr Kwok.

"We were delighted that more than half of the original participants attended," says Dr Fung Kuen Koo, one of the project's team members whose expertise is in Chinese preventive health behaviours.

While the team was pleased with the response from Chinese women, the feedback from the project shows a pressing need for more culturally sensitive education about breast cancer to be made available to the Chinese community, not only in Sydney, but in the whole of Australia.

The team, which also includes Professor Kate White and Natalie D'Abrew, now plans to extend the Breast Health Advocate program to more cities and regional centres in other parts of the country.

## Free book Give-away with PlayPower Parent Training Packages

The Benevolent Society's program *PlayPower* has launched a new parent training package and is giving away \$350 worth of infant and toddler books entitled "*Making the most of Everyday Moments*" with every training package purchased. The package is \$200 plus postage & handling, and GST and has everything needed by professionals to run their own parent workshop.

These workshops help parents of infants and toddlers to learn:

- why play is necessary for a child's healthy development
- how infants and toddlers grow and develop
- to make the most of everyday moments to build strong, loving relationships with their children

For more information please email [Susanw@bensoc.org.au](mailto:Susanw@bensoc.org.au) or go to their website [www.playpower.com.au](http://www.playpower.com.au) or phone 1300 727157.

**Deadline for next edition:  
27<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2008**

Polyglot is published by NSW Multicultural Health Communication. Articles for inclusion in the next issue can be sent to Cecilia George, NSWMHCS, Locked Mail Bag 5003, Gladesville, NSW. 2111, or email: [georgec@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:georgec@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au).