

# CASE STUDY: Parents Café



Parents Café provides a safe and welcoming space for CALD parents to come together to discuss settlement experiences and learn new skills.

## AT A GLANCE



### Target Participants

CALD parents



### Aim

To provide a safe space for CALD parents to connect, feel a sense of belonging and learn various skills



### Organisations Involved

Parents Café Fairfield Inc. & Fairfield High School



### Location

Fairfield, Western Sydney



### Funding

Fairfield High School

### In 2008 the Intensive English Centre at Fairfield High School

found that 30% of students were not eating breakfast, causing alarm and some creative thinking. A 'breakfast club' was established via grants which aimed to feed and nourish the children before school, as well as educating parents about nutrition and local services designed to support new arrivals.

Owing to the success of these sessions, permanent information sessions for parents were established at the high school. The project eventually developed into a regular 'Parents' Café', offering a space for parents to come together and discuss settlement issues and solutions. Coming together over a plate of food helps to connect new arrivals with other parents from the Fairfield High School who share similar experiences from their refugee background and rich cultural heritage. The service has grown to include information sessions on various types of occupational training, information and introduction to local services as well as a place to make friends.

It was identified that parents were facing other settlement issues that needed attention. As a result, the program expanded its services and established a settlement program that targeted parents and designed programs that included social inclusion and belonging, exploring Australian lifestyles and systems, for example health, education, the Australian law, connecting with other services and developing new skills such as English conversational classes, computer classes and trades and skills accredited TAFE courses.

### Length of Program:

The program continues to run at the Fairfield High School and in addition, a number of other schools have adopted the model.

### Successful Outcomes and Learnings:

The Parents Café assists in the settlement and integration of new arrivals, providing an opportunity to make connections with the local community and bond over shared settlement successes and challenges. A total of 12 other schools now run a similar program, adjusting the contents to suit the needs of families settling in that area.

### For More Information Visit:

<http://www.fairfield-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/special-programs/national-partnerships/initiatives>  
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