

SUPPORTING SENIOR STUDENTS OF REFUGEE BACKGROUNDS



Foundation
House

The Victorian Foundation
for Survivors of Torture Inc.

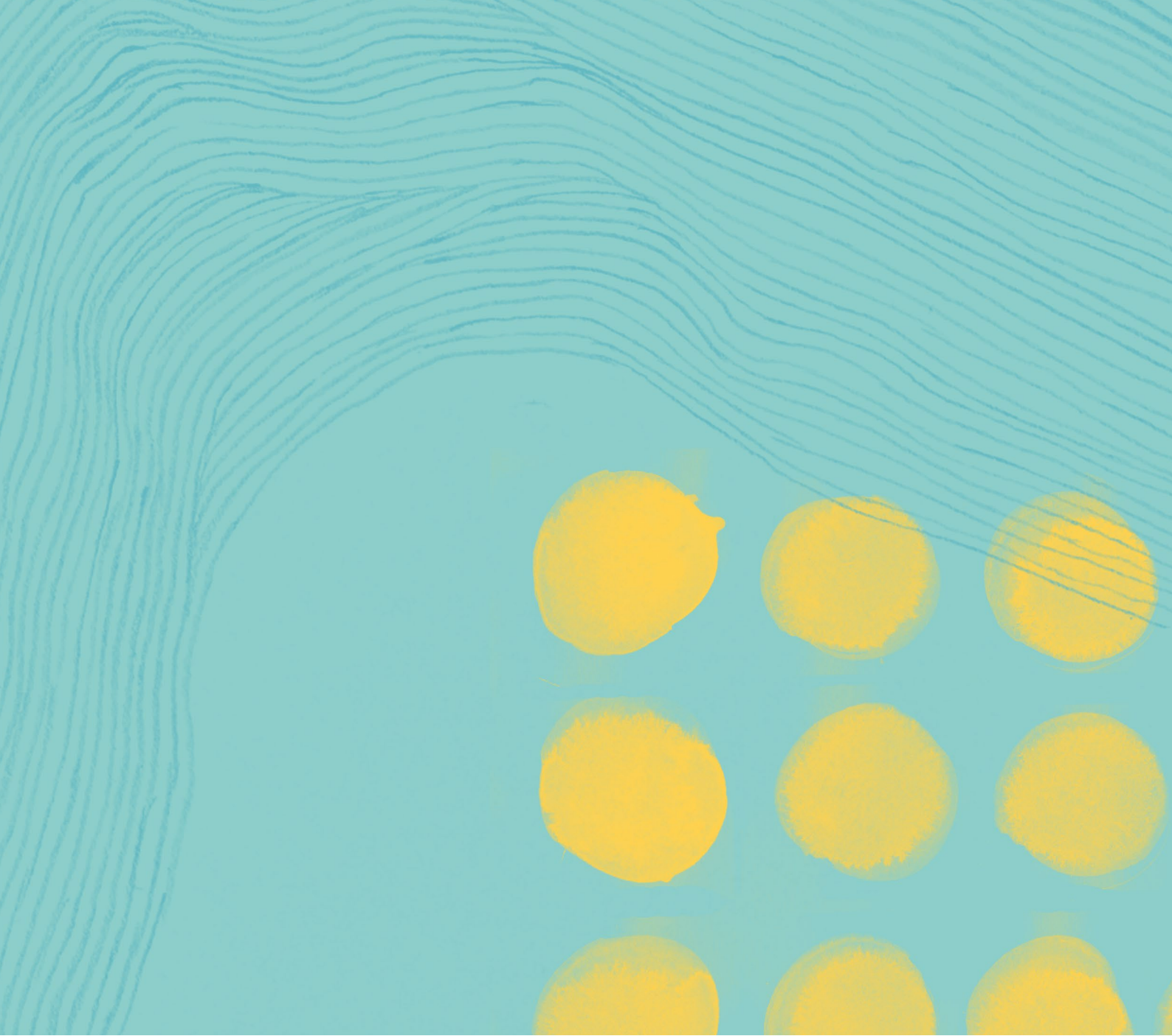
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Due to their age and circumstances, you can anticipate that your senior students (years 10–12) of refugee backgrounds will require specialised supports. The following practices have been collated from a variety of schools. Use these to consider what you are currently doing to support senior students and to identify opportunities to enhance your practices.

SUGGESTED SCHOOL PRACTICES	WHAT I CAN DO IN MY ROLE OR WHAT OUR SCHOOL CAN DO
<p style="text-align: center;">TEACHING AND LEARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide EAL support across the curriculum, for example: scaffolding tasks to ensure that they are accessible to students with limited English proficiency, breaking tasks into manageable chunks, pre-loading vocabulary and using writing guides, sentence stems and modelled responses. • Provide specific and explicit instruction with modelled examples of how to maintain organised study notes and check-in regularly to ensure students don't get too far down the road with gaps in their study notes. Remember that students may have very different ideas about the expectations as their schooling experiences may be limited and varied. • Emphasise with students and their families the importance of an at-home study space or other appropriate space to support homework and study. Be mindful that some students may live in large, multigenerational households or have additional family responsibilities to balance while completing VCE or VCAL. • Develop a system of regular check-ins with a key teacher who can help to strategise and engage other supports as needed. • Get to know students and what may trigger particular behaviours. Collaborate with students and families around consistent strategies to minimise the impact of triggering events and restore a sense of safety and wellbeing. • Use Multicultural Education Aides (MEAs) and other bicultural workers to support students' learning by including them in lesson planning and highlighting content or activities you predict students will need assistance with. • Encourage students to access out-of-school-hours learning support by promoting opportunities and facilitating family support through information sessions and introduction to providers. 	

SUGGESTED SCHOOL PRACTICES	WHAT I CAN DO IN MY ROLE OR WHAT OUR SCHOOL CAN DO
<p style="text-align: center;">HEALTH AND WELLBEING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate students' successes and milestones (e.g. achievement, improvement, awards, birthdays, family reunions, citizenship). • Anticipate student-initiated conversations regarding sexuality, gender and sexual health, and be prepared to provide supportive information. • Educate students on human rights and women's rights (including reproductive rights). • Link students to services and agencies by providing opportunities for on-site visits and programs. • Facilitate students' access to GPs via Doctors in Secondary Schools program. • Provide opportunities for students to discuss and be supported with the stress of VCE and how to manage expectations/aspirations in balance with family responsibilities and financial hardship. • Recognise that students may be grappling with their identity and trying to balance their school persona with family expectations and responsibilities; and provide a non-judgmental space for discussing the cross-cultural complexities they may be facing. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">STUDENT VOICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide inclusive opportunities for students to participate in voice and leadership activities which set out clear paths for real actions and outcomes resulting from the work. • Promote student rights and respectful relationships so that a sense of meaning and justice is a clear aspect of school culture. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">ENGAGING FAMILIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower parents and carers to support their children's learning by ensuring that you engage them as partners through interpreted school information and sessions with interpreters in attendance. Use these to communicate expectations around the various aspects of senior-school life and build relationships so that they feel confident in knowing who to approach. • Use Multicultural Education Aides (MEAs) and other bicultural workers to liaise with families. 	

SUGGESTED SCHOOL PRACTICES	WHAT I CAN DO IN MY ROLE OR WHAT OUR SCHOOL CAN DO
<p style="text-align: center;">FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS AND TRANSITION SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage families in the subject selection and pathways process. • Encourage a sense of aspiration and goal setting. • Provide opportunities for families to hear from past students who have successfully taken alternative pathways to their chosen career. • Participate in, or arrange, bridging programs between English language school/center and mainstream school. • Offer three-year courses in VCAL/VCE/VET. • Present VCAL as a suitable pathway to further education that is equivalent, not inferior to, VCE. • Create opportunities for students to hear from positive role models and advocates of alternative pathways to universities. • Assist asylum-seeking students to apply for TAFE and university special access schemes. • Establish a team of professional career practitioners who understand the impact of refugee experiences. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">WORK EXPERIENCE AND PLACEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate work experience and placement opportunities which can help to broaden students' horizons beyond the often limited networks they have established. 	



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