

HAPPY & SAFE

A settlement guide written by newly arrived young people for newly arrived young people in eastern Melbourne



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Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd.

Happy & Safe 2019

May 2019

Design and Publication by the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd.

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ISBN 1 876735 85 6

For further information, contact the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)
Town Hall Hub, Suite 2, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill VIC 3128

Telephone: (03) 9285 4888 Fax: (03) 9285 4882 Email: mic@miceastmelb.com.au

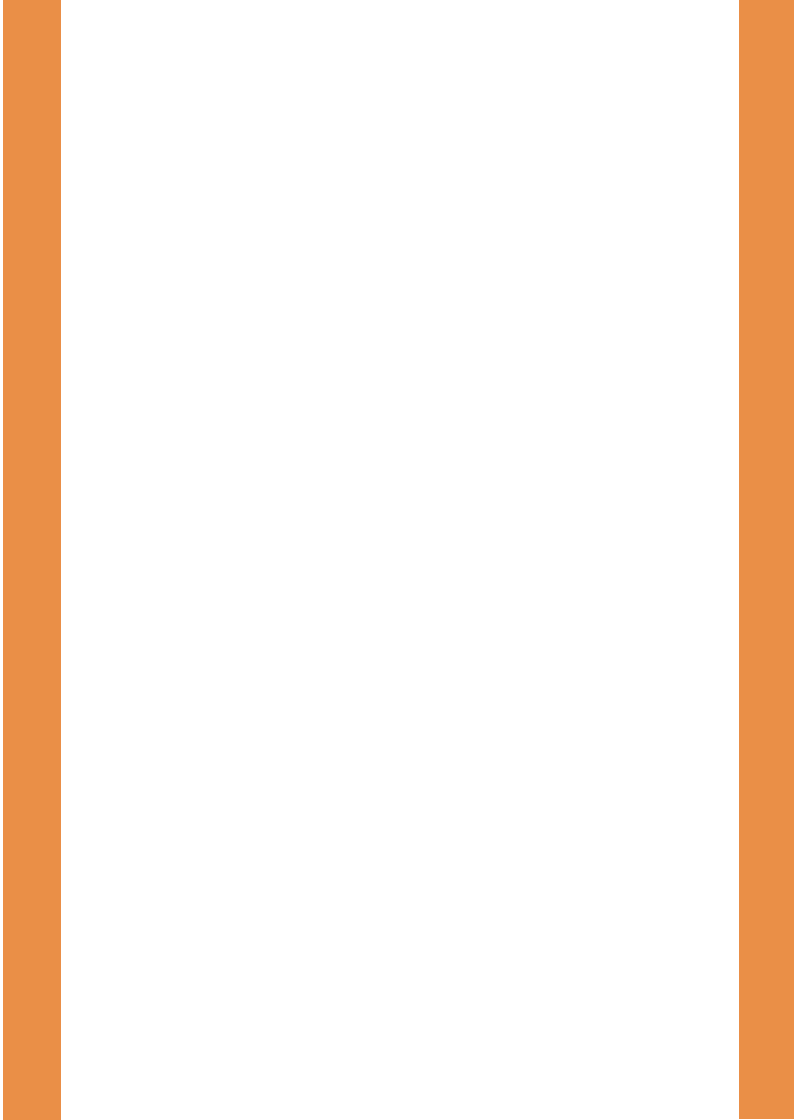
Website: www.miceastmelb.com.au

Generously supported by



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Written and designed by the MIC Youth Leadership Commission (MYLC)
2018



The MIC Youth Leadership Commission (MYLC) is a group of young leaders who participated in leadership training developed and facilitated by Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) in 2018, then went on to form MYLC. All Commissioners are from newly arrived refugee or migrant backgrounds and MYLC was created to assist other newly arrived young people to settle into life Australia.

MYLC members wrote and designed this booklet to educate newly arrived young people on topics they believe are most important for them to know, including information on how to access local services.

The program was generously funded by Maroondah City Council and supported by Blackburn English Language School, Eastern Access Community Health, Headspace, Eastern Community Legal Centre, Youth Support and Advocacy Service, Foundation House and AMES Youth Services.

This booklet is written and designed by MYLC 2018

Samantha Fowler

Maedeh Maghsoodi

Kim Pi Skaw

Matti Thaer Shaaya

Htin Lin Htet

San Nu Buan Sing

Vung Sian Man Naulak

Luan Lam Dim Zahlang

Zenhuaikim Kawngte

Cin Sian Hung Zahlang

Caleb Sang

Biak Tha Sung

Rakili

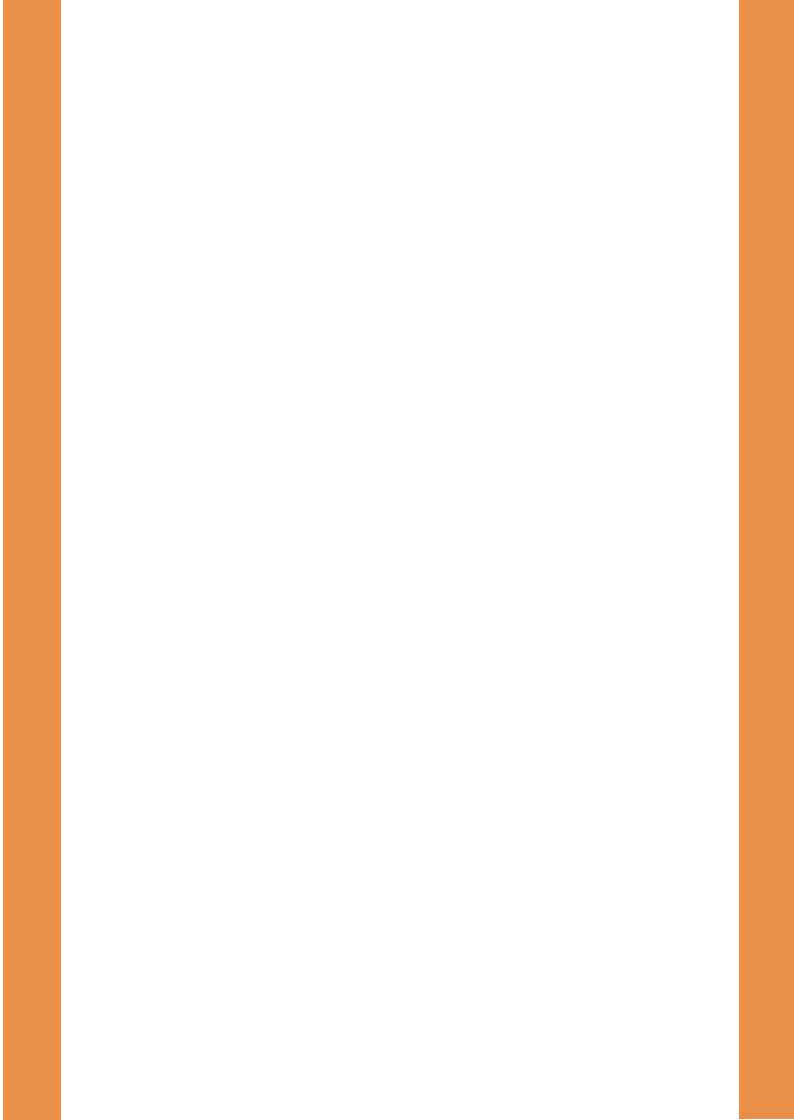
Cin Muan Kim Naulak

Hau Za Cin Kipgen

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Looking After Your Body and Mind

Personal well-being is all about looking after your body and mind.

Looking after your body is very important. If you look after your body, it will look after you.

Here are a few things you can do to stay physically healthy:



- ⇒ Be involved in sports such as soccer, badminton, swimming or any other sports you may enjoy. You can play with your friends, for a club or even join MIC sports programs. There are many sports and recreational centres in the local area (for example, Aquahub Croydon). These are places where you can go to use the swimming pool, join an exercise class or access exercise equipment, but you need to pay to use these things. You can also go for a walk or a jog around your local area or park – it's free and you can do it anytime. Please check the last page of this booklet for more details on recreational centres.
- ⇒ Make sure you sleep at least 8 hours every night
- ⇒ Drink a lot of water throughout the day
- ⇒ Eat a balanced diet of vegetables and fruit, whole grains, dairy, nuts and seeds
- ⇒ Stay away from fast food or Junk Food. Yes, fast food is delicious, but it is not good for your body.



Looking after your mind is also very important. When your body and mind both are well, then you can shine like a star. If you feel sad all the time or you are upset about something all the time, maybe your mind is not well. Just like our bodies, our minds can also get unwell.

If your mind is unwell, you might experience:

- ⇒ Difficulty sleeping
- ⇒ Unable to concentrate on work and studies
- ⇒ Feeling distant from friends and family
- ⇒ You might not feel like getting up and doing things
- ⇒ Feeling restless or irritated for no obvious reason
- ⇒ Feeling like you are worthless or a failure
- ⇒ Feeling like you want to harm or kill yourself

Tips to stay mentally healthy:

- ⇒ Talk about how you feel with your friends, parents, teachers, youth workers or anyone that you are comfortable with.

- ⇒ Try to go to bed on time each night and try to get at least 8 hours of sleep every night. If you are experiencing trouble falling asleep, try the following steps to improve your sleep
 - Go to bed at the same time each night
 - One hour before bedtime: Put away phones, iPads and other electronic devices and engage in an activity that does not involve bright screens (for example, reading). Also, remove those electronic devices from your room. Do not keep them with you throughout the night.
 - Have a warm drink such as warm milk before you go to bed
 - Thirty minutes before bedtime: Take a hot bath or a shower
- ⇒ Socialise with friends and family. You might feel better if you can meet your friends face to face instead of chatting with them through social media.
- ⇒ Minimise the time you spend on social media or mobile games, especially at night time.

Before coming to Australia, sometimes young people go through scary and terrifying experiences. This could be losing a close family member, running away from war or witnessing tragic incidents. These experiences are called traumatic experiences.

If something similar happened to you, it can have negative effects on your mental health that can last a long time. If this is you, you should not suffer in silence. You can talk to a MIC youth worker about these experiences and MIC can connect you with a service like *Foundation House*.

If you are feeling sad or upset, many organisations can help you such as EACH and Headspace. You can always talk to MIC youth workers, teachers or your friends.

Education

Learning English is extremely important as it is the common language in Australia.



Here are a few tips on how to improve your English.

- ⇒ Have a dictionary nearby so you can look up words you do not know the meaning of when you are reading
- ⇒ Try to memorise new words and practice using these words in a sentence
- ⇒ When you do not know the meaning of a word, do not be afraid to ask your teachers or friends what those words mean

When you first arrive in Australia, if you are under 17 years old, you will be placed in an English Language School. This school is funded by the Australian government to help students who have come from countries where English is not the first language. In the Eastern suburbs, the school is called the Blackburn English Language School or *BELS*. At BELS, you can build up your basic English skills in writing, speaking, and reading. You will also learn about what schools are like in Australia.

Normally, you will be at BELS for one year. After completing your time at BELS, you can join mainstream schooling or vocational studies.



There are two different types of schools in Australia: primary schools and secondary schools. If your age is between five and twelve, then you will be attending Primary School. If your age is between twelve and eighteen, then you will be attending Secondary School.

There are thirteen year levels in Australian schools. Usually, students are placed in a year level with other students of the same age. There are seven year levels in Primary Schools – ‘Prep’ (this is for children aged 5/6 years, then grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. There are six year levels in Secondary Schools: these are Year 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

After Year 10, students must choose between two pathways. You can choose either the Victorian Certificate of Education pathway also known as VCE or, the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning pathway also known as VCAL.



If you choose VCAL, that means you are going to do more hands-on work. For example, if you want to work as a mechanic, then VCAL would be a better pathway as you will get to learn about cars and motor mechanics at your school. You get the opportunity to do this as a part of your VCAL program. VCAL is more focused on employment and practical skills needed to be employed in a particular field.

After finishing VCAL, you can enrol at a Technical and Further Education college, also known as *TAFE*. TAFEs also focus on hands-on work, and you can continue your 'VCAL' type of study further at a TAFE. This is also called *Vocational Education*. There are many vocational education

pathways in Australia. After finishing TAFE, you can do two things: you can look for work or you can study further by enrolling at a university.

If you choose VCE, the subjects and learning is more academic and less practical. For example, you might study subjects such as mathematics, science, history, art, IT and English or other languages. If you study VCE you might be able to then study at a University. However, this will depend on your results in year 11 and year 12.



Keep in mind, attending university is not the only important educational goal in Australia. In some countries, going to university is highly regarded and respected. But in Australia, it is just one choice among a range of education and employment options. There are hundreds of different jobs in Australia and all are important jobs.

At secondary schools, some teachers can give you advice about different pathways and future jobs options. These teachers are called *Careers Counsellors*. They are there to help you to make the best decision about your education and your career in the future. Make sure you talk to them before making decisions.

In Australia, age is not a barrier when it comes to education. If you are older and want to study something, there are several options available – it's never too late to study!



If you are over 17 when you arrive in Australia, the Australian government will provide you with English classes through a different program called the *Adult Migrant English*

Program also known as *AMEP*. AMEP in the Eastern Region is run at Swinburne TAFE and Box Hill Institute (TAFE). After finishing your AMEP classes, you can enrol at a TAFE for vocational studies or even at a university. However, what courses you can and cannot study may depend on many things such as your level of English, previous education in similar fields etc. Also, some TAFEs provide courses that teach both English and industry focused skills.

The majority of the people in Australia are provided with various opportunities to study what they like. Keep in mind, if you are interested in studying something new, contact your MIC Youth Worker, speak with a Careers Counsellor or contact a TAFE or University to discuss your options. It is never too late to study!

Positive Social Connections



In this chapter, we are going to give you some tips on how to keep a healthy social life.

Tip 1 - Healthy friendships

A good friend is open-minded, has an understanding of you and your situation and is loyal to you. A true friend is someone who values and respects you.

You will find new friends at school, church and other community events. You can maintain positive friendships by being respectful and empathic. Be honest with your friends and make sure you have a lot of fun with them!

Tip 2 - Sense of belonging

A sense of belonging is when you feel included, respected and protected by the community around you. Join different social groups to feel connected, protected and respected.

Some groups that you can join are:

- ⇒ Community groups such as church groups
- ⇒ School activity groups
- ⇒ Sports clubs
- ⇒ MIC or Council Youth Programs

Serving the community is also a great way to feel included. You can do this by volunteering within your community, council or other organisations such as MIC.

Tip 3 - Social Media

Social media is a variety of online platforms where you can interact with people (for example, Facebook, Snap Chat, WhatsApp etc.). Social media is great for you to connect with friends.



To use social media safely:

- ⇒ Do not share personal information online; such as your address, phone number or school.
- ⇒ Before you post pictures, ask yourself:

“Can I show this picture to my parents and teachers?”.

If the answer is “No” then maybe it’s not a good idea to post it.

- ⇒ Share positive messages that can positively influence your friends.
- ⇒ Do not spend too much time on social media (as a guide, it is recommended that you only spend only 1 hour per day).
- ⇒ Remember, information and pictures that you post on the internet stay there forever! Be mindful, your future boss, future wife/husband, teachers and parents might see them.

Finding Work

If you are in Victoria, you can start working when you turn 15 years old. Before you look for a job, you must do a few things.

First, you need a *resume*. A resume (sometimes called a Curriculum Vitae or CV) is a document that tells potential employers about your skills, education, contact details, availability and many other things. You need to give this to all potential employers, so you need to create a resume before you start looking for work.



Then, you need to apply for a *Tax File Number*. Everybody in Australia who is working must have a Tax File Number, as you cannot get paid without one. You also need to set up something called Superannuation (sometimes called 'Super'). This is like a savings account you can only access when you retire. Before you can get a job in Australia, you must have a superannuation account. Finally, you need to open a bank account, so you can get the money paid into that account.

There are a few ways to look for jobs. Asking your friends who are already working if there are more jobs available at their workplace is one of the most effective ways of looking for work. Make sure you talk to your community members and let them know you are looking for work. You can also walk into shops with your resume and ask if there are any jobs available. For some jobs, you will have to apply online by filling out an application and attaching your resume.

MIC youth workers can help you with all these tasks. So feel free to contact MIC (check the last page of this book to see contact details of many helpful organisations including MIC).

Finding work can be difficult. It is difficult for many young people in Australia. But don't give up and keep trying! You are a very special young person with a lot of skills and life experience.

Resources

This section includes a list of organisations you can contact. You might feel a little nervous to call an organisation you have never been to before. Do not worry, all of these services care about you and want to help you and protect your privacy.



When you call an organisation, you can say:



“Hi, can I talk to a youth worker please?”

If you are struggling with English then you could say:


“Hi, can you please call me back with [your language] interpreter?”

My number is [say your number in English]”

Service	Contact Details	What can they help with
<p>Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC)</p>  <p>MIGRANT INFORMATION CENTRE EASTERN MELBOURNE</p>	<p>Phone: (03) 9285 4888</p> <p>Website: http://miceastmelb.com.au</p>	<p>MIC is an organisation that supports diverse individuals, families and communities in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne. There are youth workers available at MIC to help you with a range of issues. MIC can link you to many other services and help you to access these services.</p>
<p>AMES Youth Services</p>  <p>AMES Australia</p>	<p>Phone: 13 2637</p> <p>Website: https://www.ames.net.au/find-a-course/youth-services</p>	<p>AMES Australia Youth Services works with young people from refugee, migrant and indigenous backgrounds to ensure they are equipped with everything they need to reach their potential and build a meaningful life in Australia.</p> <p>Through a combination of specialist support services, education programs, knowledge sharing, career counselling, advocacy and social participation initiatives, we are working to remove the barriers young people face as they establish their lives in Australia.</p>

<p>Eastern Access Community Health (EACH)</p> 	<p>Phone: 1300 00 3224</p> <p>Website: http://www.each.com.au</p>	<p>"EACH Youth and Family Counselling Team, in partnership with Headspace provides free counselling support to children, young people and their families who have connections with the City of Whitehorse, Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Counsellors can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Mental health concerns (e.g. anxiety and depression) · Managing relationships · Bullying · Grief and loss · Self-esteem · Parenting support <p>Our counsellors can provide support from a variety of settings including Nunawading ,Ringwood, Headspace Knox, Outreach on request EACH Youth and Family Counselling Team also runs a variety of social and therapeutic groups.</p>
<p>Headspace</p> 	<p>Phone: (03) 9801 6088</p> <p>Website: https://headspace.org.au</p>	<p>Headspace work with young people to provide support at a crucial time in their lives – to help get them back on track and strengthen their ability to manage their mental health in the future.</p> <p>At the heart of our services is ensuring we meet the evolving and unique needs of young people and those who support them. Therefore, young people are at the centre of everything we do and they play an active role in designing, developing and evaluating our programs.</p>
<p>Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC)</p> 	<p>Phone: (03) 9285 4822</p> <p>Website: https://www.eclc.org.au</p>	<p>ECLC provides free and accessible legal services that work with clients in Melbourne's east to meet their legal needs. The centre also works directly with the community through a community development framework to identify and address issues of inequality and injustice, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable members of our community."</p>

<p>Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS)</p> 	<p>Phone: (03) 9890 7855</p> <p>Website: http://www.ysas.org.au</p>	<p>YSAS is a not-for-profit agency that provides support services to young people aged 12-25 experiencing serious disadvantage in Victoria, with a particular focus on addressing alcohol, drug and mental health issues.</p>
<p>Victoria's Youth Drug and Alcohol Advice service (YoDAA)</p> 	<p>Phone: 1800 458 685</p> <p>Website: www.yodaa.org.au</p>	<p>YoDAA is Victoria's Youth Drug and Alcohol Advice service. Whether you are a young person, or someone concerned about a young person, YoDAA provides the simplest way to access the information and support that you need. www.yodaa.org.au</p>
<p>Foundation House</p>  <p>Foundation House</p> <p>The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc.</p>	<p>Phone: (03) 9389 8700</p> <p>Website: http://www.foundationhouse.org.au</p>	<p>Foundation House provides services to advance the health, wellbeing and human rights of people from refugee backgrounds in Victoria who have experienced torture or other traumatic events.</p> <p>Foundation House provides counselling and support to individuals and families, and also provides support to children and adolescents who have experienced difficulties because their parents' capacity to support and nurture them has been affected by pre-arrival experiences.</p>

<p>Maroondah Youth Services</p> 	<p>Phone: (03) 9294 5704</p> <p>Website: http://www.maroondahyouth.com.au/Home</p>	<p>Maroondah Youth Services is here for every young person aged 10-25 who lives, works, studies or plays in the City of Maroondah. Connect with us to make a difference, learn new skills, get support, build your wellbeing, and create the future you want!</p>
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