

Settled & Safe

TRAINING PACKAGE



PRODUCED BY VICTORIA LEGAL AID

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Training Package

INTRODUCTION

In February 2012 Victoria Legal Aid received funding from the Legal Services Board grants program to develop and deliver the project: “A collaborative change to prevent family violence in newly emerging culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities – Settled & Safe.”

ABOUT SETTLED & SAFE

Settled & Safe is designed to increase awareness of family law and family violence in newly emerging communities by:

- increasing settlement service providers’ knowledge of family violence, Victorian legal responses to family violence, and VLA services
- collaborating with settlement service providers to deliver legal information sharing programs to newly emerging communities
- increasing VLA’s organisational responsiveness to newly emerging communities, with a particular focus on the prevention of family violence.

VLA has vast experience in helping Victorians with their legal problems. We know that people from newly emerging communities can find it difficult to understand the Australian legal system and they do not generally access legal services. Many people starting new lives in Victoria arrive from countries with very different laws and systems governing family relationships and family violence. While adjusting to the challenges of a new life in Australia, family relationships can come under pressure. This pressure can be heightened where families have experienced trauma and dislocation.

Settled & Safe aims to help people from emerging communities become more confident about their legal rights and responsibilities around family relationships. It includes information about Commonwealth family law, Victorian Laws regarding child protection and

Family Violence Intervention Orders. VLA wanted to learn more about the settlement experience and the legal needs of newly emerging communities in order to help these communities get legal help early.

Using Legal Services Board grants program funding, VLA employed four community liaison educators (CLEs) who were located in VLA offices at Ringwood and Dandenong, Shepparton, Melbourne, and Morwell. Over a 12-month period the CLEs developed partnerships with local settlement service providers and delivered the Settled & Safe training program. By working in partnership with settlement service providers, VLA ensured that the program was delivered in a way that was culturally relevant and that met the communities’ specific needs.

Settled & Safe recognises the importance of different cultural contexts. The law is cultural. Legal cultures can be examined by contrasting different legal systems and comparing the system in Australia to the system in the country of origin of people doing the training.

Family violence does not discriminate. It is experienced by victims regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity, culture, age, education level, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status. When designing Settled & Safe, VLA recognised that family violence is an issue for everyone.

Through Settled & Safe, VLA gained valuable information about the barriers faced by members of newly emerging communities when accessing legal information or legal assistance.

This training package has been developed for use by legal service providers and organisations engaging with newly emerging communities in order to deliver legal information. It contains the training materials and session plans that were developed by VLA for the delivery of Settled & Safe.

TERMINOLOGY

Community liaison educator - CLE is the term used in this package to describe an employee of a legal service provider who will be delivering the Settled & Safe training program.

Host settlement worker – any person who works with a newly emerging community and helps to deliver the Settled & Safe information sharing program. The host settlement worker will be the main point of contact in the settlement organisation.

Legal service provider – a community legal centre or VLA service.

Newly emerging community – communities that are recently settled in Victoria. They differ from other migrant or CALD populations in that the majority of the community are first generation settlers.

Settled & Safe information sharing – a legal education program comprising four 90-minute sessions designed to meet the needs of people from Australia's newly emerging communities.

Settled & Safe settlement worker training – a two-day legal education program targeted to the information needs and learning preferences of people who are employed in settlement organisations.

Settlement organisation – a community organisation that provides support and assistance to newly emerging communities. They may deliver programs that receive specific settlement funding.

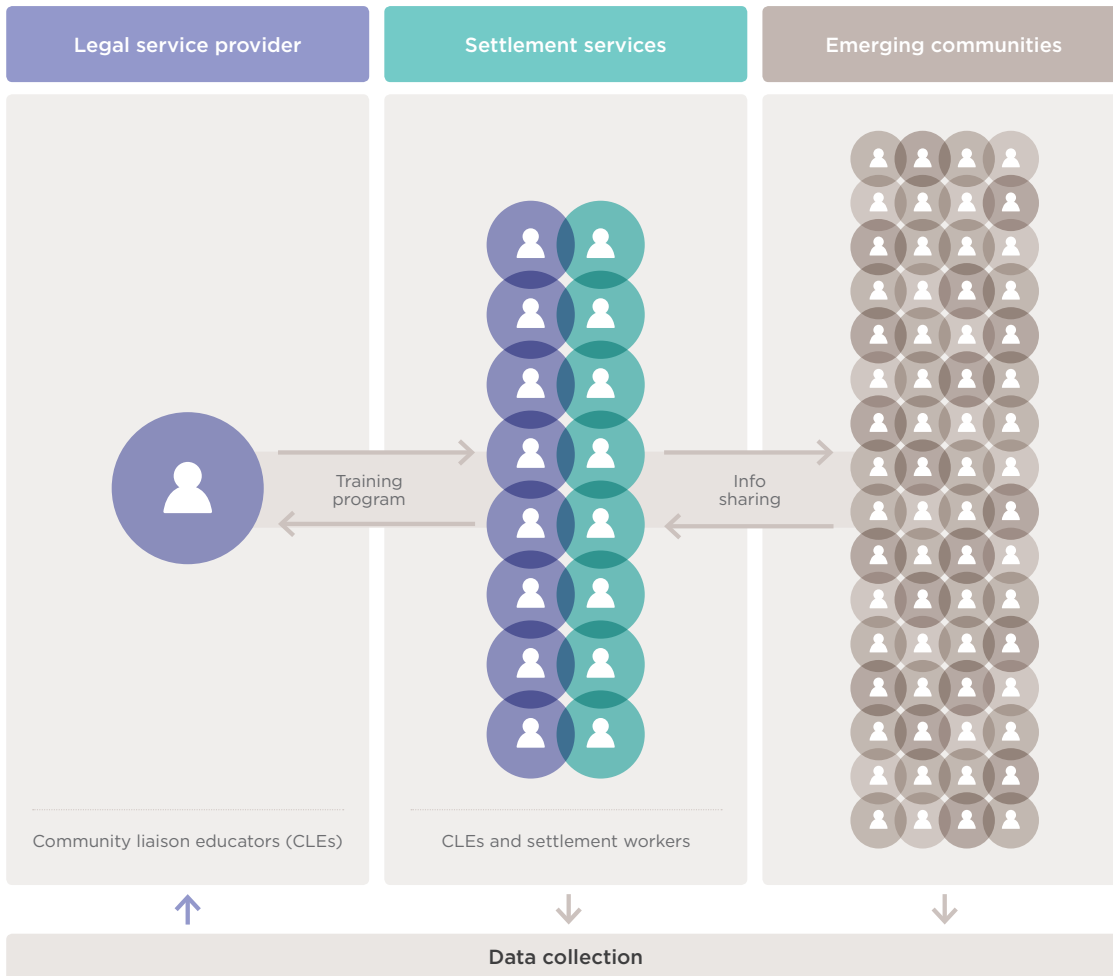
Settlement worker – any person who works with a newly emerging community. They may be delivering a program that receives specific settlement funding.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Overview

Settled & Safe is made up of two training programs:

- settlement worker training
- information sharing program



Settlement worker training

Settlement worker training aims to improve settlement workers' understanding of the laws and legal processes for resolving family matters, and how members of newly emerging communities can access legal help and services. The training is delivered over two days.

This training program must be undertaken by settlement workers before the delivery of the information sharing program.

Information sharing program

The information sharing program aims to improve people from emerging communities' knowledge about Victorian and Australian laws concerning family violence, family law and child protection. The program also builds connections between newly emerging communities and local support and legal services.

The program comprises individual sessions that are delivered in partnership with settlement service providers. The sessions:

- engage members of a newly emerging community about laws in Australia through the use of community stories
- create a participatory learning environment where the cultural expertise and experience

of newly emerging community members is used as a basis for learning about the application of law in Australia.

The program is delivered in partnership with settlement workers after they have participated in the two-day worker training program.

Fundamental to Settled & Safe is the use of community stories to convey legal information. Community stories are written and developed with members of newly emerging communities to ensure they are culturally relevant and recognisable.

DELIVERING LEGAL EDUCATION

Settled & Safe requires CLEs to convey legal information in a way that can be easily understood by a broad audience in various settings. It is desirable if the CLE also understands group facilitation, adult learning principles and strength-based practice.

There are a number of short courses in facilitation available through TAFEs and other learning providers. The skills and knowledge obtained in training and assessment qualifications would be very useful in delivering Settled & Safe.

Developing legal knowledge

CLEs delivering the program need a general understanding of Commonwealth family law, and relevant state family violence and children's law (child protection). The CLE should be able to confidently explain these areas using simple and easy to understand terms and apply their knowledge to practical examples and community stories.

The following learning activities are suggested for CLEs to improve their legal knowledge.

- Attend professional legal education sessions.
- Observe Family Court, Federal Circuit Court, Children's Court and Magistrates' Courts' hearings, including duty lists and final hearings.
- Read legislation, including the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic), Family Law Act 1975 (Cth) and the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic).
- Read VLA publications and factsheets (see the VLA website at www.vla.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/free-publications-and-resources).

- Discuss the community stories and case studies in this training package with legal practitioners.
- Observe client interviews or advice sessions with legal practitioners.

Family violence

CLEs must be able to facilitate discussion and deliver information about family violence as a social issue competently and in a way that promotes the safety of women, children and their families.

The AVERT family violence training package provides a sound and practical understanding of family violence, its impact, and appropriate ways to respond to family violence that promote safety (see: www.avertfamilyviolence.com.au). In addition, a number of family violence introductory courses are offered by the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (see: www.dvrcv.org.au).

Migration and settlement processes

Successful delivery of Settled & Safe requires a good understanding of the settlement journey, before and after arrival in Australia. The CLE should complete the recommended reading and familiarise themselves with the relevant profile of the community they will be working with. Community profiles can be found on the websites of local settlement services and on the Victorian Multicultural Commission website.

TRAINING TERMINOLOGY

Throughout the training material reference is made to several modes of training activity. The following describes each activity.

Large group discussion – a presenter puts a question to a whole training group and facilitates their responses.

Presentation – the presenter delivers information in a lecture style using PowerPoint materials with little input from the training group.

Presenter facilitation – where the presenter is facilitating an interaction without providing information, for example, training group introductions or ice breaker warm up activities.

Small group discussion – generally under seven people; enables people to discuss an issue or apply their learning intensively.

RECOMMENDED READING

Family violence background

AVERT Family Violence: Collaborative Responses in the Family Law System, 2010, Dimensions, Dynamics and Impact of Family Violence, Australian Attorney-General's Department (www.avertfamilyviolence.com.au).

Meyering B, 2012, 'Staying/Leaving: Barriers to Ending Violent Relationships', Fact Sheet 7, Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearing House (www.adfvc.unsw.edu.au).

Family violence in refugee communities

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Doney G, 2011, Hear Our Calls for Action: Dialogues with Women from Refugee Backgrounds in Australia, Australian National Committee on Refugee Women.

Fraser K, 2011, Prevention is Better than Cure: Can education prevent refugees' legal problems?, CLC Fellowship Report, Footscray Community Legal Centre (www.footscrayclc.org.au).

Family law and refugees

Kaur J, 2012, Cultural Diversity and Child Protection: A review of the Australian research on the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and refugee children and families, JK Diversity Consultants (www.jkdiversityconsultants.com.au).

Family Law Council, 2012, Improving the Family Law System for Clients from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds, Australian Attorney-General's Department (www.ag.gov.au).

Instructional design

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