

Taking the Pulse of South West Sydney CALD communities

Conflicting norms of 'family' and 'household groups' are placing immense strain on immigrant and refugee communities with large multigenerational extended families. Responsibilities of care and connection are bounded by policy prescriptions that consider only those living within a physical house as family:

At 53%, more than half of the responses stated they could not cope with such restrictions causing stress, anxiety, depression and sadness. The sudden shift to online learning and having all family members in the home at the same time exacerbated stress for CALD families with limited digital access and literacy.

Respondents articulated 5 categories of stress i) Family Disconnection Stress ii) Isolation stress iii) Lockdown stress iv) Online Teaching Stress v) Balancing Work/Life Stress

5 service areas



Mental Health & Wellbeing



Families



Employment



Aged Care



Social Cohesion

RECOMMENDATIONS

Families



Strategy

Sustainable funding models for multicultural family-based programs and projects delivered by trusted community-based organisations

Practical Initiatives

1. Fund bilingual casework dedicated to COVID-19 messaging and support (e.g. booking vaccinations, running forums/information sessions, delivering emergency relief).
2. Develop and expand programs that train CALD communities in digital literacy particularly focusing on parents with young children.
3. Build partnerships (schools, local councils, universities, community-based organisations) to support families with online learning via access to digital devices, data plans, online homework support.
4. Fund service delivery roles such as digital inclusion officers to support refugee and migrant families.
5. Recognise and nurture family parenting and care through intergenerational parenting programs and multicultural family play groups offered in hybrid formats (online and face2face).

The full pulse survey report is available on our website:
wsmrc.org.au/covid-19-pulse-report

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