

## PHOTO OPPORTUNITY



# Media Release

Friday 20 June 2008

## MACEDONIAN YOUTH TEACH MACEDONIAN ELDERLY INTERNET, BOOKS & FRAMING TIPS

Students will have their day on **Monday 23 June**, as part an innovative project to foster the sharing and continuation of traditions between generations of the Macedonian community, resulting from a partnership between Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (SMRC)'s Macedonian Planned Activity Group and Lalor North Primary School (LNPS). Following on from the initial launch last month, when students visited the elderly at their Day Care Centre, this next step will see the young students do their part in the inter-generational exchange of stories and culturally specific activities between school children and elderly members.

Students of Macedonian descent make up 25% of LNPS' student population so were an ideal choice as partner for SMRC. Many of the SMRC's Macedonian Planned Activity Group (PAG) have a wealth of knowledge and experiences that they wanted to pass onto the younger generations. The project arose as some of the school children's grandparents are living in their home country, so the traditional methods of passing on that knowledge has not been possible due to their parents migration to Australia. Often, settlement in a new country also leads to changes to the traditional family life dynamics, and the extended family is replaced by the nuclear family.

"The project is a great way for the young people to rediscover the wealth of knowledge of a different time and place. But it's an important mutual opportunity for each to bring each other in touch with each other's wisdom – it might be crafts and culture from the elders and tips on the internet and Ipods from the school kids! We aim to bring their two worlds together and bridge the generation gap," said **Ms Jagoda Koteska**, Co-ordinator of the Macedonian PAG.

LNPS welcomed the approach from Spectrum MRC, "We were really pleased to be approached about this fantastic project from Spectrum – we see it as a great opportunity. The school kids really enjoyed the weaving lessons, cooking and dancing demonstrations last month. The students are excited about their turn to teach the elderly about computers, read them books and make picture frames together. Post a pilot phase, it will hopefully continue and we hope it will spark a life-long interest for them and perhaps they will adopt each other!", said **Ms Mirjana Andovska**, LNPS' Macedonian Language Teacher.

SMRC sees it as a great way to ensure there is greater value attached to the wisdom of elderly members of our community. "The pressures of settling in a new country also add to the elderly not being involved actively with the younger generation. The 'generation gap' also contributes to many elderly people not being able to pass on their values and traditions to the younger generations, and the community model back home, of 'listening to the wisdom of the elders' is lost through this migration process. In the process of adopting the 'new culture', many young people seem to under value the role of grandparents. The project is a great pathway for the young people to bridge the generation gap. If it works, we will consider expanding both this program, as well as look at doing this with other migrant groups", said **Ms Nirmala Abraham**, SMRC Aged & Disability Services Manager.

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**EVENT:** Macedonian Inter-generational Program

**DATE & TIME:** Monday 23 June May 2008, 10am-1pm

**VENUE:** Lalor North Primary School

### RUNNING ORDER

10.00 am	Welcoming the visitors to Lalor North PS
10.05 am	Working on computers – ICT Room
11.30 am	Students pair up with elderly citizens and read them a book, Elderly to tell a story to the students
12.10 pm	Art & craft activity – Making a picture frame
1.00 -1.10pm	Farewell

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