



MEDIA RELEASE

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New HIV/AIDS CD-ROM a valuable multicultural teaching resource

A new interactive CD-ROM, "About AIDS", commissioned by Family Planning NSW to support ACL and other English language teaching services was launched today by the Federal Member for Reid, Mr. Laurie Ferguson MP, Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Urban Development & Consumer Affairs at Auburn Town Hall

Family Planning NSW, with the support of the Multicultural HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C Service, invited ACL to participate in developing a resource to incorporate HIV/AIDS education into the teaching of English for newly arrived migrants and refugees as well as inform them of the HIV/AIDS support services available in Australia.

ACL is the largest provider of high quality English language education in Australia and has been working since 1998 to educate and settle newly arrived migrants and refugees as part of the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP).

Family Planning NSW CEO Ann Brassil said the project provided an ideal opportunity to showcase the benefits that can be gained from various organisations working together to achieve a common goal.

"The aim of the project was to develop appropriate curriculum, provide professional education strategies, develop education and teaching resource material, and build capacity and knowledge about HIV/ AIDS for English language teachers and their students," Ms Brassil said.

"Health service providers, teachers and students have all contributed to the project to ensure the information is both correct, relevant and presented in a manner likely to have the best impact."

ACL Group Managing Director Helen Zimmerman said the "About AIDS" CD-ROM provides basic HIV/AIDS information to students in an interactive format that is relevant to everyday life in the community.

"Community leaders, students and teachers were involved and consulted throughout the development of this project to ensure that any material produced was culturally appropriate and relevant to each community," Ms Zimmerman said

"The CD-ROM allows English language teachers to introduce and discuss HIV/AIDS in the classroom and to increase the teacher's capacity to teach issues about HIV to their students," she said.

“With the support of an English language teacher the ‘About AIDS’ CD-ROM allows students to work at their own pace in a computer-based lesson.

“It gives students the opportunity to learn about HIV/AIDS and have their questions answered in a safe non-threatening learning environment.”

“The ‘About AIDS’ CD-ROM is a great asset to ACL teachers and will be used in ACL colleges across the Sydney suburban region.”

Ms Brassil said AIDS is a disease caused by a virus known as HIV and that HIV/AIDS affects all countries and cultures across the world.

“There is currently no cure or vaccine available for HIV/AIDS. However, there are treatments, which can dramatically slow the damage HIV causes to the body,” she said.

“The only way to know if you have HIV is to have a simple blood test available at your local sexual health clinic or from your doctor.

“It is important we continue to educate all people in our community in an appropriate way about the risks that they face and ways that individuals can protect themselves and their families, as well as others in the community.”

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NOTE: The contents of the “About AIDS” CD-ROM can be viewed at the Family Planning NSW website http://www.fpnsw.org.au/about_aids/

WEBSITES:

Family Planning NSW <http://www.fpnsw.org.au>

ACL <http://www.acl.edu.au>

Multicultural HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C Service <http://www.multiculturalhivhepc.net.au>