



MEDIA RELEASE

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A new playground for the African Australian Community Centre

A \$55,000 Australian Government grant will provide a new playground and outdoor barbecue area at the Brotherhood of St Laurence-aided African Australian Community Centre in Footscray.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship's 'Building Multicultural Communities Program' grant will help create an exciting new space on the grounds of the Anglican Parish of Footscray as part of a joint venture with the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The Federal Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Senator Kate Lundy, visited the site this week to formally announce the funding.

Run by and for the African community, the AACC is a joint partnership between the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the Anglican Parish of Footscray. Its vision is to assist with successful and positive settlement outcomes for the African Australian community in Melbourne's west, through developing activities based on community needs and views, increased individual and community capacity, leadership capacity of the parish and the community.

Centre Coordinator, Abraham Mamer, said that while the centre currently has large hall spaces for group and community activities, the creation of a dedicated and safe child and family space will provide for children's physical, social, imaginative, creative and cognitive development.

"It will ensure that all children and families have access to a safe and supported learning environment, and hands-on experience of nature," Mr Mamer said.

The Brotherhood's Senior Manager - Refugees, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Hutch Hussein, said the new space will allow family members of both refugee and wider communities to access Brotherhood and parish programs and come together in a welcoming family setting.

"We know that greater cross-cultural interaction opportunities allow for increased networks, a breakdown in stereotypes and increased cultural harmony. We hope this will enhance the AACC as a truly positive community space," Ms Hussein said.

"This funding will allow the Anglican Parish of Footscray, together with the Brotherhood, to take a significant step forward in the ongoing development of a safe, community-centred space that fosters multicultural family engagement, activity, inclusion and support."

Visit www.bsl.org.au/AACC for more information on the centre.