



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



**Australian Afghan
Hassanian Youth Association**

AAHYA recognises the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which AAHYA works.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the unique position of Darug People as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work.

We acknowledge that principles of community care and support have been integral to their culture for thousands of years.

We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

OUR VALUES

MISSION

Our mission is to empower communities so that people feel safe, valued and welcome, irrespective of their circumstances.

VISION

Our vision is for a multicultural Australia, where people from all backgrounds live vibrant and full lives.

GOALS

Our aim is to assist newly arrived communities and CALD groups – to provide them with a safe space that is culturally familiar and appropriate, and to act as a bridge that facilitates their access to mainstream service providers and programs.



ABOUT US

The Australian Afghan Hassanian Youth Association (AAHYA) is a not-for-profit welfare organisation established in 2006 to assist and support Afghan children, young people, women and new arrivals with their settlement in Australia.

We aim to empower community members so that they are equipped with the skills, resources and information needed to live meaningfully and as a part of broader society.

While AAHYA was initially founded by Afghan refugees, and focused on that community in its service delivery, we have grown and work with all different types of people and vulnerable groups, despite our focus on newly arrived youth.

AAHYA is an Incorporated Association and has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status.

Another major priority at AAHYA is raising awareness of the issues faced by the Afghan community that impact their settlement in Australia, as well as advocating for the rights of all refugees and people seeking asylum. AAHYA has partnered with TAFE, Government agencies and other NGOs to provide access to educational programs, referrals and information to assist in the settlement process for new arrivals.

Along with the rest of the world, this year has challenged us to adapt and respond creatively to emerging and growing needs in the community. With increased demand for services and minimal in-person support, we have had to work together and in good-faith more than ever before.

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



2200

**FOOD/CARE
PACKAGES**

Have been distributed



**BILL
ASSISTANCE**

650

People have been
supported with their
bills



**WORK AND
DEVELOPMENT
ORDERS**

110

People have been provided
with WDOs



CASEWORK

was provided to

160 people with varying levels of needs

20 **INFORMATION
SESSIONS AND
WORKSHOPS**

Have been delivered to the community



100
**COMMUNITY AND
CULTURAL EVENTS**

Have been held




CEO'S STATEMENT

The Australian Afghan Hassanian Youth Association Inc. has been working together with the community for the past fifteen years, trying to adapt and learn how to best work with both newly arrived communities and other diverse groups.

This year saw the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, with cases and restrictions fluctuating back and forth and leaving many people in vulnerable and uncertain circumstances.

We have continued to provide our targeted response to people who were particularly impacted by the pandemic through the provision of food and care packages, including first aid items and supplies such as masks and gloves. This was targeted particularly towards temporary visa holders who were unable to access other supports, those who lost their jobs and newly arrived migrants and refugees.

Furthermore, I would like to give a very warm welcome to the Afghan evacuees who have arrived from August 2021 and many who are still arriving. This country is a country of freedom and opportunity. AAHYA is a safe home for you to be able to be assisted in all areas of life whether it be education, employment, housing and many more.



I would also like to acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the continued work of all our partners and the organisations who have made our programs and services possible.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) for their valuable support from the inception of AAHYA. STARTTS have always stood by AAHYA to provide mentoring and training particularly in the areas of organisational Governance; project planning and implementation; funding submission writing and human resources. We appreciate that STARTTS staff helped us grow and own our projects and successes.

We hope to continue this mutually respectful relationship for many years to come.

Finally, I wanted to thank all the young people who have been involved with us over the past year for making AAHYA what it is today, we look forward to growing together as a community.



AWARDS & RECOGNITION



**2021 Cumberland Council
Australia Day Awards**



**2021 NSW Adult Volunteer of
the Year Award presented to
Mr Karimi**

SETTLEMENT SERVICES




Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

As of 01/01/2019, AAHYA received funding for the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program, funded by the Department of Home Affairs. As a settlement service, the program aims to empower and assist humanitarian entrants and eligible migrants.

The SETS services include one-on-one casework, of both low to medium intensity, and other community and group-based activities as well as community consultations. The SETS program at AAHYA has continued to develop and grow over the past 4 years, being able to provide support for those who are newly arrived in Australia with their settlement - ranging from employment, education, immigration and language support.





One of AAHYA's core beliefs is that work is best done together, and we believe in having strong relationships within the community - to community members and the people that service them.

AAHYA would like to acknowledge all of our partners within the community and all the different Departments and services that have worked with us, and helped us in supporting our members.



**Anna Rolandsen, Senior Manager,
Migration Council with our president
Mr Karimi and Settlement Supports Worker
Hamzeh Moosawi**

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Last year when the pandemic first hit, AAHYA President Sayeed Karimi initiated a unique care package program to help migrants, refugees, individuals who had lost their job and the elderly. It has been one of the most effective initiatives, supporting hundreds of migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum, and more than 270 other vulnerable Australians who were deeply affected by the global pandemic.

The program also includes the delivery of food and care packages, inclusive of masks, sanitiser, gloves and groceries. There is special thanks to the generosity of the volunteers in organising, preparing and providing the care packages, and also to Sayeed Karimi's commitment to charity and compassion.

AAHYA has also resumed a mix of digital, telephone and in-person services, responding to the restrictions and health risks for the community. AAHYA remains committed to providing flexible and responsive care that is also sensitive to people's needs and capacity.



COVID19 Food and Care Packages

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

WORK AND DEVELOPMENT ORDERS

In 2015, AAHYA became a sponsor of Work Development Orders (WDO). WDOs allow people to pay off their fines through either volunteering at the centre or attending different classes and workshops. The program has helped support over 110 people throughout the year, allowing them to gain quality work experience while also minimising their financial stress. It provides assistance to people who are struggling and unable to pay their fines, and it provides people with a sense of control and agency over their financial situation.



Revenue

BILLING ASSISTANCE

Since 2006, AAHYA has been providing financial relief for many members of the local community through billing assistance. AAHYA is an Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) Scheme provider which helps people to pay their electricity and gas bills, as well as providing the Telstra Bill Assistance Program to help with Telstra related bills.



FOOD PACKAGES

In collaboration with services such as OzHarvest and FoodBank, AAHYA has been distributing food packages to anyone in need for the past 10 years. The food packages are a great way of providing some immediate and material relief to families.





This year, AAHYA also partnered with Good360, providing packages to the community filled with thousands of household items and cleaning products. These packages were provided free of charge to people, offering them essential items such as hand sanitisers but also toys for children and families.



COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SCHOOL

The Community Language School was established with the purpose of helping migrant and refugee youth to understand and maintain their language, culture and traditions.

With qualified teachers, it is a good way for the students to reflect upon their history and ensure they keep connection with their cultural background. Approximately 150-160 children and young people attend the Community Language School.

Maintenance of culture, language and tradition help to build and develop Australia's multicultural society, and to ensure that the children have a strong sense of their background and cultural identity.



VOLLEYBALL

AAHYA launched a class to teach children how to play volleyball during their breaks at language school, held weekly at Auburn Public School.



SCHOOL HOLIDAY SWIMMING

LEARN TO SWIM PROGRAM

Swimming is a great way to stay active and keep cool in the Australian heat. Recognising swimming as an important skill to have in this country, AAHYA has been running swimming programs for the past 10 years to encourage newly arrived communities to not only stay physically active but safe as well.

One of the main purposes of this program is to encourage community members, especially children and youth, to get in the water, develop swimming skills and learn about water safety. The secondary purposes are for the participants to enjoy the social aspects of the sport as well as being engaged in physical exercise. Swimming is a quintessential Australian sport and being able to swim helps new arrivals better integrate in society.



SPORT OPPORTUNITIES

MARTIAL ARTS

AAHYA began Kung Fu classes in 2011 and, as of last year, changed this to Dai Fu classes instead. The 40 children have thoroughly enjoyed the classes, through which they have learnt a lot of techniques.



Guided by a professional trainer, AAHYA's Girls' Karate resumed this year! The group of 25 girls have been able to meet and enjoy the social as well as physical and mental benefits that come with a group sport activity.



CRICKET

During the arrival of Afghan evacuees into Australia, AAHYA organised a Cricket team for newly arrived migrants to socialise and feel a sense of belonging and connection.



2022 INTERNATIONAL AID RELIEF

TAGAB MALE HIGH SCHOOL IN AFGHANISTAN

AAHYA has released an International Aid Relief to Maktab Zukur-e-Taghab Ulusawali Miramur in the poorest district of Afghanistan, Ulayat-e-Daykundi. AAHYA is building a water well for this school.

This school has over 450 students that attend it. These students have been battling to survive since it's been one year that their water well has dried up due to continuous drought.



AAHYA'S DRIVER KNOWLEDGE TEST CLASS

AAHYA holds a Driver's Knowledge Test Class every week at three different locations due to increase of students in the class.

The class includes the teacher translating all DKT test questions to students in Farsi followed by a 15-minute tea break where the women can communicate with one another and socialise.

This program is on every week at the following venues:

Guildford Community Centre

– every Wednesday from 10am-12pm.

Auburn Community Centre

- every Monday and Friday from 10am-12pm.

AAHYA Centre in Regents Park

- Every Friday from 10am-12pm.



YOUNG DRIVERS' SAFETY PROGRAM

Youthsafe is a not-for-profit organisation that provides training and support to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people.

In partnership with AAHYA, Youthsafe have been providing a Young Drivers Learner and Driver Safety program aimed at newly arrived Afghan youth who were either on their Leaners licence or no licence at all. The aim of the program has been to equip young learners, and their families, with road safety knowledge and education about Australian road rules and systems, so that they would not only be able to achieve independence with their provisional licence but also be safe drivers on the road.

The program featured consultations, workshops such as Steering Young Drivers and the provision of services such as free driving lessons (with Dari speaking drivers). The program also helped cover the cost of different test payments such as the Driver Knowledge Test and the Provisional P1 examination. The program provided support to 36 participants and their families. Providing road safety education and support for not only the drivers but their supervisors as well.



EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

HOLIDAY GIVEAWAY

In collaboration with Good360 and their donors, our centre has been able to distribute free hand sanitiser and wipes to the local community.

The pandemic and its restrictions have hit us hard, but this is especially true for migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum. It's been difficult for the community to get hold of these essential items, and we were able to gift Empower packs to families in need over the holiday season. The packs included nappies, multi-purpose cloths and surface cleaners, toothpaste, fabric softener and even drink bottles and toys for the children.

These care packs were a great way of providing some material relief to people over the holiday period and easing some of the financial stress that they've endured.



ANNUAL 'CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY' EVENT



SURF LIFESAVING INFORMATION SESSION

AAHYA held an information session with Surf Life Saving, highlighting the importance of swim safety and awareness.

The session was translated in Farsi for the Afghan evacuees, and they were able to understand the purpose of the flags at the beach and also what to do in an emergency.



The Australian Afghan Hassanian Youth Association (AAHYA) is pleased to announce that we will be arranging an extremely important information session alongside RACS (Refugee advice & Casework service). This information is particularly for the newly arrived migrants on subclass visa 449, who will eventually be needed to re-apply for their visas. The information session will cover how you can re-apply for your visa and what documents are needed for this procedure.

AAHYA recommends the newly arrived migrants attend this helpful information session which will benefit them when re-applying for their visas.

23RD NIGHT OF LAYLATUL QADR

Indeed a night of sorrow and sadness with the tragic passing of Ameer Al- Momineen Imam Ali (as). The night compiled of Maghreb prayers, Iftar dinner, recitation of 1 chapter of the Holy Quran and the Aamal of Laylatul Qadr. May Allah (swt) accept and reward you all for your prayers and Dua during this holy month of Ramadan.

Most of the participants during this month come from backgrounds of Bridging and student visas and at AAHYA it means a lot to be serving and helping them throughout this month.



THE BIRTH OF IMAM HASSAN (AS) PROGRAM

We would like to thank our sincere brother Dr. Basim Alansari for his presence and giving us a memorable evening with his knowledge and speech. Indeed a wonderful evening and a program that was attended by all the youth of AAHYA.

The night was honoured for Imam Hassan (as) and the occasion of his birthday. 5th of Ramadan marks the special day in which Imam Hassan Al-Mujtaba (as) was born in and a day in which through this holy month there must an occasion to honour his birth.

We at AAHYA would like to congratulate the Muslim Ummah on the auspicious occasion of the birth of the first beloved grandson of the Prophet Imam Hassan (as).



2021 NSW HASSANIAN COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SCHOOL PRESENTATION DAY

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LEARN TO SWIM PROGRAM CEREMONY

Our president, Sayeed G Karimi, alongside our vice principal for Hassanian Community Language school, Hoda Milani and Zeinab Youssef, handed out awards to the students in our program who have made the most improvement, achievements and efforts.

A big thank you to Tony Micallef, the Swim Centres Operations Manager, from Cumberland City Council for collaborating with us in holding this beneficial program for all.

RAMADAN PROGRAM

AAHYA's annual Ramadan program runs throughout the Holy month - with every night beginning with Maghreb prayers, then Iftar dinner and Quran recitation.

Our program is welcome for all to attend, with a warm welcome especially for those on temporary protection visas and bridging visas.



EID AL-FITR

On the grand occasion of Eid Al-Fitr, AAHYA held a community breakfast, prayers and poem recital.



WELCOME CELEBRATION FOR AFGHAN EVACUEES

AAHYA hosted a welcoming celebration for the Afghan arrivals, complete with a Barbecue, clothes, shoes and other amenities. It was a great initiative where Afghan newcomers were communicating with one another and sharing their stories to form a lifelong relationship.

Because they've abandoned their family and have no one here, many of these newcomers have felt alone since arriving. This initiative was able to somewhat overcome that fear of having no one by their side. Many of these clients now come to the centre to receive support together.



ANNUAL 15TH SHABAN BIRTH CELEBRATION OF THE IMAM OF OUR TIME IMAM MAHDI (ATFS)

AAHYA held an event for the annual 15th Shaban Birth Celebration of the Imam of our time Imam Mahdi (atfs). It was a wonderful evening holding the program of the birth celebration of one of the most important days in the Islamic calendar, the birth of Imam Mahdi (atfs) who is revered as the saviour of mankind and surely we await and pray for his reappearance.

The night was filled with beautiful recitations of the Holy Quran, poetry and a lecture of wisdom by Hujjatul Islam Sheikh Abdul Aziz Akbari who honoured us with his extensive knowledge.

We pray to Allah for the reappearance of the beloved saviour of Ale Muhammad (saw). A huge thank you to all those participants and those people who delighted us with the recitation of the Quran and the lovely meaningful poetry.



RAMADAN FOOD RELIEF

Another proud donation of our organisation to the poor families residing in Mazar Sharif in Afghanistan. All praise be to Allah (swt) for allowing us and giving us the opportunity to help these poor families in the holy month of Ramadan.

The food packages were distributed to the poorer region of Afghanistan and we would like to thank his excellence Ayatollah Waezzadah Behsoodi and his son Mustafa Waezzadah and their team of volunteers for working hard to organise this in an extremely dangerous and tough environment. Most of the families are from disadvantaged background who have no source of income and nil employment as the economy is extremely poor.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER

AAHYA would not be possible without the tireless work of our volunteers. It is through their effort, dedication and generosity of time, that AAHYA has been able to provide support for many people within the community.

A dinner and awards night was held to thank them for their continued efforts, and give them an opportunity to reflect on their own contributions.



AAHYA ARTS AND CRAFT CLASSES

AAHYA has organised an ARTS & Craft class including painting, drawing, and crafting activities. Students gather every Tuesday after school to explore their skills and discover their potential.



AAHYA EID HAMPER DISTRIBUTION FOR NEWLY ARRIVED MIGRANTS

AAHYA has distributed Eid Hamper for newly arrived migrants this Eid!

These hampers contained many useful food items such as oil, vegetables, honey and many more! More than 50 newly arrived migrants received assistance from AAHYA with Food Hampers during Eid.



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING

AAHYA can proudly say they have had another great outcome to one of their training programs.

Kayenat Mosleh arrived in Australia from Afghanistan in March of 2022, she attended our public speaking training, and in the span of two weeks she is now able to speak confidently in front of a group people. Just at the start of the training she was barely able to speak in front of the group and now she does it with confidence.

AAHYA's passion is to support more young people and new arrivals like Kayenat, to adapt to a new society where skills like public speaking are needed.



AAHYA'S WHITE CARD COURSE TRAINING

AAHYA organised a White Card Course Training for newly arrived migrants to uplift their skills and receive a nationally recognised qualification to enhance their career opportunity.

This Education and skills program is a huge step for these refugees, to step into the workforce and develop skills and employment opportunity.



JOB OPPORTUNITY WORKSHOP WITH MAZHH PTY LTD.

AAHYA organised a Job Opportunity workshop along with MAZHH Homes PTY LTD.

AAHYA has previously worked together with MAZHH Homes, by referring a few clients to them. This time round they employed 10 Newly arrived migrants in jobs such as painting, Water proofing and Corrosion Protection.

Participants who were interested in the job exchange contact details with the Manager of MAZHH Homes.





AUSTRALIAN AFGHAN HASSANIAN YOUTH ASSOCIATION

ABN: 45 181 289 987



**0421 567 397
(02) 9738 7460**



karimi.aahya@gmail.com



**1 Bellona Avenue
Regents Park NSW 2143**



www.aahyas.org.au