



**February 21, 2018**

**VoRTCS program needs more volunteers**

Vinnies Queensland's volunteer refugee tutoring service, VoRTCS, needs more volunteers to continue its vital work making a difference in the lives of refugee families.

The Volunteer Refugee Tutoring & Community Support Program or VoRTCS (pronounced vortex) assists refugee families in making the most of the educational, vocational and social opportunities that exist in Australian society.

The program has been such a success that the need for volunteers has greatly increased with more than 60 families currently on a waiting list to receive assistance.

VoRTCS volunteers visit refugee families to provide community support and English language skills to help refugees enjoy everything Australia can offer and settle into the community.

VoRTCS committee president Peter Ayscough said the volunteers in the program are united in a belief that their work helps create a better, more inclusive community.

"We believe that refugees have a lot to contribute to Australian society and should be assisted and encouraged to reach their full potential," he said.

Mr Ayscough said volunteering with the program was one of the best decisions he had ever made, adding that he found the experience incredibly rewarding.

"It is one of the best things I've ever done," he said.

"It's really fulfilling, getting out into the community and bridging the gap.

"It is really heart-warming to watch the people that we help grow in confidence with their language skills each week and embrace their new life here in Australia."

Mr Ayscough said volunteer teams visit and teach in the families own homes in a relaxed environment, for an hour to an hour and half each week.

"You talk about what's relevant and what is happening for the family that week and also try and help them with any problems they might have and that is a great way for them to learn English."

Since its inception in 2006 VoRTCS has helped more than 700 families and Mr Ayscough said it's a great feeling seeing clients of the program succeed.

"We have had plenty of great success with students going on to graduate high school and attend university and also gain employment in the community," he said.

For more information on the VoRTCS program visit <http://refugeetutoring.org/> or call (07) 3010 1069.



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