

February 2022 Impact report

Your regular gift to the Asylum Seekers Centre provides ongoing and reliable support for our family support, community engagement and university access programs. These programs shine all year round, but never as much as at back-to-school time.

A new school year can bring many changes and much excitement. But for families seeking asylum it can also bring stress.

Because they are not yet permanent residents, people seeking asylum are required to pay fees at public schools and universities of between five and seven thousand dollars a year per student.

"That's a lot of money for people who aren't working," says family engagement coordinator Antoinette Uwera, who helps families apply for low-income fee exemptions for students, while the ASC covers the application fees.

Uwera also helps families with enrolling in schools and get the uniforms and stationery. "When the child doesn't have a proper uniform, they're very embarrassed to look different to their classmates," says Uwera.

Backpacks and stationery, kindly donated by a community group, have been distributed and refurbished laptops, tablets and iPads provided to support older students with their learning.

**98 FAMILIES ASSISTED
WITH SCHOOL
ENROLMENT AND
PARTICIPATION**
**50 CHILDREN IN EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**
**181 children
provided with school
readiness packs**

"I was extremely happy (to win the scholarship). It gave me the opportunity to go to uni and pursue my passion, otherwise I wouldn't have gone, I couldn't afford it." Edon*

Help to access university

People seeking asylum are shut out from Australia's universities, as they're required to pay unaffordable international fees and can't get HECS-HELP loans.

The Asylum Seekers Centre helps people to apply for the limited number of humanitarian scholarships available at NSW universities. This year two people won scholarships, with the support of volunteers Jude Stoddart and Margaret Tung.

One will study computer science as the first-ever University of New South Wales humanitarian scholarship recipient; the other was offered a full scholarship to study marketing at University of Technology Sydney.