

## Uniting through Football

The weekend of June 29 – July 1, 2007, the Sydney Academy of Sport was the venue for an exciting football camp for refugee young people.

An unprecedented partnership initiative, the winter football camp will bring together 60 boys from diverse refugee backgrounds for a weekend of football fun and other activities. The camp will be staffed by more than 15 volunteers from diverse avenues : football professionals and coaches, community members and support groups, university students and staff, police representatives.

This camp is another activity among those that the organising partners have been holding that to assist young refugees in their immigration and integration to Australia by providing a supporting and enjoyable environment through football.

This inspirational partnership includes free provision of venue and support staff through NSW Department of Sport and Recreation's Social Justice program. Organising partners include UNSW's Football United, the Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre and STARTTS (the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors). Financial assistance has been provided by Liverpool Council, the Mary McKillop Foundation, with Football New South Wales providing in-kind support.

Sport is increasingly being considered as an effective way of bringing people together," said Anne Bunde-Birouste, from the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at UNSW. "Because it's a global game and played by both sexes, football has the power to change lives" she continued.

"This particular camp is really important because of the diversity of groups who have come together to make it happen. Contrary to what people might think, it's not easy to get significant support for these programs so this joining together is really significant."

