

# MEDIA STATEMENT



## Disadvantaged young refugees explore Kooyoora

Young disadvantaged people from refugee backgrounds are getting their first taste of the Australian bush through a three-day trekking expedition in the Goldfields and Kooyoora State Park in central Victoria, near Bendigo.

The Journey program, run by Doxa – a Victorian not-for-profit operating out of Malmsbury - aims to build teamwork skills and personal skills such as confidence, a sense of belonging and connectedness which they take with them back into the community.

Mohammed, a young man attending Doxa's Journey Program said it "gave us a good opportunity and support to learn new things about the animals, the hills, the mountains. Because we are refugees and come from countries like Africa we don't know about things like that."

Doxa run programs for disadvantaged young people from across rural, regional and metropolitan Victoria.

Stephen Silk, Doxa Chief Executive Officer, Doxa says: "It is wonderful to be able to show newly arrived young people, particularly those with such traumatic backgrounds, the local environment. It's so special to witness them sharing stories round the campfire at Melville Caves or spotting their first kangaroo out in Kooyoora."

The young people attending the Journey Program will come from newly arrived or refugee backgrounds. Participants will have experienced trauma, displacement, financial hardship and missed out on crucial years of education. English will be an additional language for them. They will have never visited rural central Victoria.

The aim of the Journey Program is to give these young people some fun, encourage social cohesion, teach them about the local environment and Indigenous culture. It's also designed to encourage social cohesion, confidence and connectedness between different cultures.

Ends.

## About Doxa

Doxa is a for-purpose organisation. We provide programs for young people so that everyone can access positive life experiences, education opportunities and employment pathways. We've been around since 1972 and our programs support over 5,300 young Victorians – typically aged eight – 22 years each year. Every young person we interact with has a different set of life circumstances. Our aim is to ensure that all young people enjoy enriching experiences and educational opportunity and advancement.

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## MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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