

Embargoed Tuesday June 20, 12pm

New children's book helps refugees get legal help: Refugee Week



An inspirational children's book about a refugee child migrating to Australia with their family is helping disadvantaged refugees including domestic violence victim-survivors access legal help.

'The Ribbon' was commissioned by Legal Aid NSW's Refugee Service to educate refugee communities about the free legal assistance available in NSW through Legal Aid NSW.

The book, created by Lost in Books Fairfield, was officially launched this week to mark Refugee Week 2023.

Legal Aid NSW's Refugee Service Community Engagement Officer Nohara Odicho commissioned the book after noticing that many refugee women were not attending information sessions to ask questions about issues like separation and family and domestic violence

"Many refugee women – particularly domestic violence victim-survivors - want to access legal help but are too scared of being found out to take resources at outreach sessions or public events," she said.

"This book is about empowering refugees with the legal resources they need to get help while also educating them and their children about the support available."

The bilingual tale (available in Arabic, Dari, Burmese and Swahili) uses the analogy of a tight ribbon to help children understand the emotions associated with moving to a new country. It is a story of hope with one powerful message:

*We are not alone. For the heavy
knots we feel, there are special
hands that can try to untie them.*

Ms Odicho said feedback on the book has been positive, with many families taking the book and later calling Legal Aid NSW's Refugee Service with legal questions.

"The Refugee Service helps with problems like immigration, housing, discrimination, harassment, problems with Family and Community Services and domestic and family violence," she said.

The book was written by Assyrian-Australian writer Monikka Eliah and illustrations were designed by refugee and illustrator Hussein Nabeel.

Legal Aid NSW CEO Monique Hitter said legal education resources – particularly in different languages - are essential to ensure access to justice for people in the most disadvantaged of circumstances.

“We are committed to doing everything we can to provide educational resources to disadvantaged communities about the legal support that is available in NSW,” she said.

Over the past two and a half years, the service has provided almost 4,500 legal services to newly arrived refugees.

A digital copy of the book can be accessed below:



[The Ribbon – English and Arabic by Legal Aid NSW - Flipsnack](#)

Nohara Odicho is available for interview about the book.

Media contact | Georgia Clark, Legal Aid NSW | 0438 606 092 or media@legalaid.nsw.gov.au