

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Wednesday 30 September 2015

Water safety for newly arrived communities



www.activelaunceston.com.au

Active Launceston's successful program Active Swim is once again preparing to help newly arrived members of the community develop their water safety skills.

Active Swim, in partnership with the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC), aims to support those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to develop basic swimming and water safety, as well as provide a connection to the community.

The partnership, in its second year, was formed following a request to deliver the program to MRC clients.

Over the past six years this program has helped 84 women and 20 men participate in 534 hours of swimming lessons.

Humanitarian Settlement Services Support Worker David Say said "the men appreciate this opportunity. It allows them to use their new skills to teach their families how to be safe on our beaches and waterways."

Following the success of the program, the organisations are currently working together to deliver the program to MRC's Women's Group members.

"MRC is pleased to be working alongside Active Launceston to teach the skills of water safety, the joy of swimming and also assist newly arrived communities to feel a part of Australian culture."

"Active Launceston does a wonderful job with a wide variety of programs, and as more people from other countries settle in Tasmania, more programs such as this will be needed," he said.

Active Launceston Information Officer Hayden Fox said "When putting together a program such as Active Swim it is important to liaise directly with those in the community to understand what they need from us and how we can make this happen for them."

“Being water safe is a skill that we often take for granted in this Australia. The need for this program is highlighted by the Royal Surf Lifesaving Society report (National Drowning Report 2015). This report highlighted that Tasmania had the highest number of drownings in the country per capita last financial year and all of these drownings were men.”

“Active Launceston have also liaised with the Launceston Aquatic Centre who have been understanding and accommodating to the needs of this program and we hope that this relationship can continue well into the future.” he said.

Other Active Launceston initiatives currently in operation include: Active GOLD whilst Active Bike, Active Parks, Active Kids and Active Sports will also be starting at some stage in the next couple of months.

Active Launceston is a community-driven partnership with the vision of improving the health and wellbeing of the Launceston community through physical Activity. Active Launceston is managed by the University of Tasmania in partnership with City of Launceston. For more information please visit the website www.activelaunceston.com.au or phone 6324 4027.

Media opportunity

Who: Migrant Resource Centre - Integration Unit Project Officer David Say, Active Launceston Information Officer Hayden Fox, 20 program participants, Facility Bookings Officer, Launceston Aquatic Amanda Mayes and Swimming Instructor Adam Fergusson.

Where: Launceston Leisure and Aquatic Centre, High St, Launceston.

When: Wednesday 30 September, 2pm

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