

Refugee impact at Matthew Flinders College

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In late July three refugees who have been participants in the Learn English Holiday program – Ahmad from Afghanistan, Axel from Burundi and Farha from Syria - visited Matthew Flinders Anglican College to share their stories of their refugee journeys with ninety Year 6 students.



These students were involved in a 10-week i-Impact unit of study “Think Globally, Act Locally’, where students take on the role of a humanitarian, focussing on equity, fairness and doing good on a global scale. They researched topics relating to factors that lead people to seek refuge, such as conflict and war, famine, poverty, political and religious persecution, and natural disasters.

Students’ eyes widened as Axel, Ahmad and Farha told their extraordinary, brave stories, and their questions displayed an increasing empathy and understanding of issues faced by refugees relocating to Australia.

Subsequent visits to Matthew Flinders by Buddies Refugee Support Group members (Lesley Willcoxson and Margaret Norris) gave students the chance to ask more questions and finally, to demonstrate the impact of their learning. This was encapsulated in a spectacular showcase, where the students shared prototypes of the products they had developed to assist refugees around their own age – ranging from care packs for young refugee women to bilingual dictionaries and educational websites building Australian cultural, social, financial and transportation awareness.

The creative thinking on display during the showcase gave an insight into the issues faced by refugees and also the students’ thoughtful, innovative and empathic approaches. The third and final Year 6 i-Impact unit term will build on the fantastic community connections made during Term 3, but will focus on students’ entrepreneurial and business skills in order to raise money for the Buddies Refugee Support Group. Truly a learning partnership!