

Media Release

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New Research points to Police Profiling on Race

New research has found that young men of African descent experienced more difficulty with police than other youth and were less likely to have their rights respected.

A 12 month study, entitled *Race or Reason? Police Encounters with Young People in the Flemington Region and Surrounding Areas* was commissioned by the Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre in 2010 and publically released today.

The research examined the role that demographic factors, such as country of birth and gender, play in shaping young people's experiences with and attitudes toward the police also found that African young people were more likely than other youth to feel that they experienced some form of inappropriate treatment by police and reported feeling racially targeted by the police.

"We commissioned this study due to the growing concern about young people being treated unfairly by the police in the Flemington and Kensington community," said solicitor, Tamar Hopkins.

The research involved 151 young people from various ethnic backgrounds, aged 15-24 living in Flemington and the surrounding areas, who completed an anonymous survey about their experiences with, and attitudes toward, the police. This quantitative approach complemented previous qualitative data on young people's experiences of policing in Melbourne (see Duff, 2006; Reside & Smith, 2010).

This research is the first of its kind conducted in Australia will contribute to both police and community understanding of racial profiling, over-policing and differential treatment experienced by African youth in Victoria.

The report aims to promote human rights protection for young people, and improve the experiences young people have when they interact with police. The report recommends limiting police interaction with youth and minority groups to times when police have a clear statutory or common law right to question a young person.

The report provides specific recommendations to the Victorian Government, Police and other bodies.

The report will be publically released today at the Lionel Murphy Centre, 360 Queen St, Melbourne at 4pm.

Advance PDF copies for media are available at http://www.communitylaw.org.au/flemingtonkensington/cb_pages/racialprofiling.php or by emailing ceo@fkclc.org.au

For media comment or to arrange an interview contact:
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