

# Police stay in touch

POLICE from St George and Hurstville local area commands met with Muslim teenagers recently in a bid to break down cultural barriers.

St George Youth Services team leader, John Dangas, organised a touch football game at Rockdale PFC between the groups last week.

“It’s about building harmony between the Muslim community and police,” Mr Dangas said.

“We played Oztag against the police. After that, we had a barbecue.”

He said the officers spoke with the youths for more than an hour.

“Police are putting in an effort. We’re starting to see they are more involved, they are more visible,” Mr Dangas said.

“We’re all people from the local community. It was very positive.”

Hurstville police Superintendent Peter Barrie agreed the day was a positive step.

“It provides a balance to the dealings the young people might have with police,” Mr Barrie said.

“This provides an avenue where we can form relationships in a different place and gives police an opportunity to understand and consider the actions of young people.”

Mr Barrie said it also provided a reality check for teenage boys.

“It gives young people an opportunity to consider their responsibilities. It’s a good balance,” he said.



Community presence: Police gained new perspective after a football game with Muslim youth.

Picture: Lisa McMahon

Fairfax Community Newspapers

**Involved:**

Muslim youth hooked up with St George police to promote social cohesion. (Left to right): St George Youth Services officer John Dangas, Constable Amy Brewis with Hassan, Nada and Housien.

Picture: Jane Dyson



## “The Leader” - 5 November 2008

News

### PROGRAM AIMS AT CREATING IMPROVED SOCIAL RELATIONS

# Muslim youth plan

By Marianna Papadakis

ST George Youth Services and NSW police community youth clubs have joined forces to build positive relationships and trust with young Muslim men.

Funded by an \$8000 grant from the Australian Multicultural Foundation and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission, the program aims to promote cohesion and harmony with Muslim youth.

The mentoring initiative includes outdoor adventure activities, sports including basket-

ball, surfing, swimming, Oztag and personal development workshops in anger management, violence prevention, crime prevention and relationship problems.

St George Youth Services manager Valentina Angelovska said the program would also provide cultural diversity training to police about Muslim youth.

“There are Muslim male mentors to support the relationships between young people and police,” Ms Angelovska said.

Young Muslims will also learn of their rights, responsibilities, and avenues of complaint.

## **“The Leader”- Muslim Youth Program -8 June 2010**



**Skills in action:** Students from several schools in St George played a game of Otago with police from Hurstville and Kogarah last week. It is one of the many activities aimed at developing trust between Muslim communities, police and support services. St George Youth Services at Rockdale brought the innovative program to life this month, with the help of Rockdale PCYC, St George Migrant Resource Centre, and Al-Zahra Muslim Women's Association. The program sets out to strengthen social cohesion through personal development workshops focused on how to deal with conflict, negative stereotypes, crime prevention and cultural awareness. It is connected to an anti-racism forum funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, which is on later this year.

**Picture: Chris Lane**