NOTRE DAME REFUGEE CENTRE NEWSLETTER

INFO CENTRE
NDRC
5 Leicester Place
London
WC2H 7BX
Tel 0207 440 2660/61
Fax 0207 437 3848
Drop-in@
notredamerc.org.uk

Opening times:
Monday and Thursday
11h00 to 16h00

Services

- A warm welcome in our drop-in centre
- Advice, advocacy and representation with regard to housing, benefits and social services
- Health advice
- English Courses
- Free clothing
- Vouchers Exchange
- Counselling information and referral service

WHO ARE WE?
The Newsletter is written by Notre Dame Refugee Centre's visitors coordinated by Severine and Jean L
Please give us feedback
ndrcnews@hotmail.fr

If you interested to join us in editing the Newsletter either if you live in London or somewhere else in UK please contact Severine or Jean L.

Patrick Ramazani's visit to the NDRC :
He told us about his experience in detention and how to be prepared and organised against it.

Patrick Ramazani was an asylum seeker, who arrived from RDC (Republic Democratic of Congo) in 2004. He always went to sign on regular basis. One time as he went to sign the Home Office decided to detain him. He spent ten mouths in detention during this time he was twice threatened with illegal removal. He was taken to Heathrow Airport for deportation. But this procedure was illegal because his case was still pending at the High Court of Justice. Patrick was saved because he was able to use one of the immigration officers' mobile phones to contact his solicitor and prevent his removal.
After his experience in detention he took part in an educational program to learn about immigration rights. Since than he goes to visit different centres and associations for asylum seekers and refugees to tell his story and inform the others about detention and how to be prepared and organised against this eventuality.
He told us we should always go to sign at the Home Office; always look for new evidence and keep our file up to date; we should inform ourselves about our rights and our rights during detention. He explained to us how we could be organised: have a circle of friends to contact if needed, learn the phone number, inform a trustworthy person where you keep your papers. Patrick also encouraged us to take part in community life, to be active in the centre and organisations that we visit.
Ricky

FASHION SHOW

There was a fashion show last June at Notre Dame Refugee Centre. This fashion show was organised by the Centre, under the coordination of Jean and in collaboration with all the refugees who attend the Centre. The women of the Sewing Workshop and Mrs Eleonore, dressmaker, presented their designs in front of a mixed public composed of the visitors of the Centre and different guests. The fashion show took place in the Leicester Theatre in part of the church. It was a very great show which coincided with the Refugee Week Festival. The products presented by the dressmakers were dresses for ladies, shirts for men etc… To follow up this success there is a plan for a fashion show in December.
J.L

Legal Column: WORK PERMIT

There was a Court of Appeal decision taken on the 20 May 2009 under the EU Reception Condition directive which says that any Asylum Seeker who is awaiting a decision on an application for asylum for more than one year should be granted a work permit.
The Court decision also said that this directive should also include those who have made a fresh asylum application.
The Home Office have appealed the decision against the Court. While the Home Office is appealing the decision the right to work should still apply.
By not granting work permission the UK Border Agency are acting unlawfully. We are waiting for a judicial review to set a test case.
S.

The NDRC have now a blog:

Reminder:
Health Service at NDRC
Every Thursday
From 12 to 2pm
Westminster Primary Care Trust run a Health Service Surgery coordinated by Gilberte. You can receive advice, referrals, and help with finding an NHS GP, dentist as well as advice on how to access different available health services. If you have questions about health issues, do come along on Thursdays, especially when the PCT Team can give you expert advice.

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Through the Newsletter, visitors and volunteers at the NDRC would like to take the opportunity to thank the individuals and organisations who are supporting the actions of the Centre with their donations. Back in May 2009 the NDRC successfully took part in the 10K walk organised by London Legal Support Trust. We managed to raise over £7,000 for the Centre. Thank you to everyone who took part and to everyone who sponsored us, and see you all next year!

Many thanks

The Londoners

Last June 17th members of the Migrant and Refugee Media Action, at the Migrant Resource Center (MRC), launched the new edition of *The New Londoners*. This free yearly newspaper has been "planned , written and produced on a voluntary basis by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers" (New Londoners N. Ramaden editor-in-chief). It mainly reports about the life of asylum seekers and refugees in this city which is new for the majority of them. It especially encourages understanding between the various communities in the multicultural city that is London.

The New Londoners gives everybody the possibility to travel on an amazing journey with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, as they share their lives, pain, hopes and successes. It shows London's diversity, vibrancy and success.

During the launch, there was also a debate and an exchange of ideas between the participants (journalists, refugees and others) concerning the behaviour of these same minorities and also a discussion about the decisions of the government concerning refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

Mirende

SWINE FLU: SYMPTOMS

Tiredness, headache, runny nose and sneezing, sore throat, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhoea, aching muscles, limb and joint pain

You should call your GP straight away, or call 0800 1 513 513.

VOUCHER -EXCHANGE-SCHEME

How would you cope if you had no cash, if you could buy things only in one named supermarket, if the nearest branch was far and you didn't have the money for the bus fare?

This is the situation for most asylum seekers who receive support from the government. They receive £35 in vouchers per week with no choice of which supermarket chain. The result is that they often sell their vouchers for much less than their face value.

You can stop this with us.

At NDRC we exchange these vouchers for cash at face value, once a month to enable them to buy other things that they need. If you shop at ASDA or TESCO consider exchanging vouchers through NDRC and at the same time show solidarity with asylum seekers. The vouchers come as gift cards. These hold any unspent money on the card. TESCO vouchers can also be used at the petrol station.

Join our network of individuals and communities who are willing to regularly or occasionally buy the gift vouchers from the asylum seekers via our office.

Complete the form attached to this Newsletter, to sign-up form (on the right hand side) and send it back to

FAMILY PLAY DAY
ON FRIDAY 7th AUGUST

A DAY OF ADVENTURE, PLAY AND FUN FOR ADULT AND CHILDREN ALIKE.

WE WILL MEET AT NDRC AT 9AM ON THE DOT AND MAKE OUR WAY TOGETHER TO KENSINGTON GARDENS.

IT WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED IF YOU COULD BRING SOME FOOD FOR EVERYONE TO SHARE.

PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME DOWN ON THE LISTNEXT TIME YOU VISIT THE CENTRE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ASK AT THE DROP IN'S RECEPTION OR CALL JEAN :