

# Media Release

**The Hon Enver Erdogan MP**  
Minister for Corrections  
Minister for Youth Justice  
Minister for Victim Support



Thursday, 10 August 2023

## **BOOSTING SUPPORT FOR SOUTH SUDANESE YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to invest in Victoria's South Sudanese community, supporting young people and encouraging prevention and diversion away from the youth justice system.

Minister for Youth Justice Enver Erdogan today announced six grants worth \$500,000 for community programs and opened an additional round of community grants worth \$400,000.

The successful recipients include African Youth Initiative, Nas Reframe Community, NextGen Unite, Stand Out Basketball, Sudanese Mothers' Coalition and South Sudanese Minds.

These organisations provide mentor programs, after-school basketball and tailored substance use and mental health rehabilitation programs.

Applications for the new \$400,000 grant round will focus on programs that fund and support projects that strengthen South Sudanese Australian young peoples' connection to community and culture through sports, arts, education, training, and pathways to employment.

These grants support the ongoing work of the South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group and continue the Labor Government's commitment to work closely with Victoria's South Sudanese community on ideas that are locally led and informed by what the community needs.

The Expert Working Group will empower South Sudanese Australian leaders and community organisations to run programs, interventions, and support services for young people to help prevent contact with the youth justice system.

To bolster the working groups capabilities, the Government has appointed the South Sudanese Australian community and church leader Reverend Deacon George Piech Meat, as Chair of the South Sudanese Youth Justice Advisory Group.

For more information about the Grants and the South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group, visit [justice.vic.gov.au/SSAYJ](https://justice.vic.gov.au/SSAYJ).

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Youth Justice Enver Erdogan**

*"We know that young people are less likely to have contact with the criminal justice system if they have access to support systems like counselling, mental health services and social programs."*

*"The South Sudanese community are a vibrant and valued part of Victoria. We're proud to be supporting and working alongside South Sudanese leaders and community groups to ensure young people have safe places to go and healthy activities."*

*"Congratulations to Reverend Deacon Meat on his appointment as Chair of the Advisory Group – we welcome your expertise and service to your community."*