

Working Effectively with Muslim Communities in the West

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Abstract : This paper explores the complexity of working with Muslim communities in Australia. It will draw upon the notions of belonging, social inclusion and effective community programming to engage Muslim communities in Western environments given the current global political climate. Factors taken into consideration for effective engagement include: family engagement, considering key practices such as Ramadan, fasting and prayer and food requirements, gender relations, core values around faith and spirituality, considering attitudes towards self disclosure in a counseling setting and the notion of Us and Them in the media and systems and its effect on minority communities. It will explore recent research in the field from Australian researchers as well as recommendations from United Nations in working with Muslim communities. It will also explore current practice models applied in Australia in engaging effectively with diverse communities and addressing racism and discrimination in innovative ways.

Keywords : Muslim, cultural diversity, social inclusion, racism

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