

Meg enjoying a cup of tea and conversation with Nabila and other Conversation Café participants.



## LEARNING HOW TO CONVERSE OVER A CUPPA



**As any newcomer to Australia knows, having even the most basic of English skills can make settling into a new adopted home that much easier.**

For more than two years, Darebin Libraries' Conversation Café has been offering people of culturally diverse backgrounds the chance to learn English in a welcoming and relaxed setting.

The program offers facilitated one-hour sessions where participants practice their English conversation skills over a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit or two.

Colouring-in activities are provided for children while their parents discuss themes such as meetings and greetings, likes and dislikes, asking for and giving directions and basic conversation starters.

For Nabila Haque, who arrived in Australia from Bangladesh just over a year ago, the Conversation Café has been invaluable.

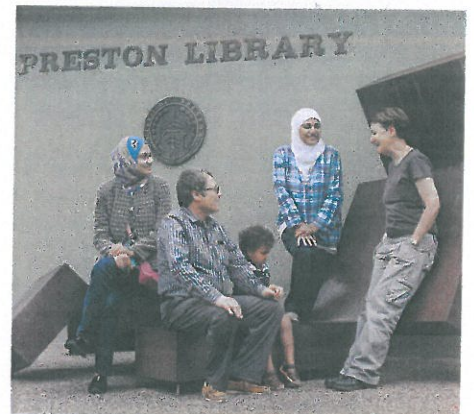
"To learn and speak English is most important here - to study, to learn how to get around, to find work," she said.

"I am enjoying this very much because there are people from all sorts of cultures and we share stories from our cultures and we are all speaking English - it is very good."

English-speaking volunteers like Meg Rosse join the group each week, contributing their local insights and knowledge to the range of conversation topics. "It's been great, really enjoyable," Meg said.

"It's very enriching getting to know people from different countries and cultures and understanding some of the experiences and challenges they face coming into a new country.

"Everyone is at the early stage of their language skills so as a group, there is a nice supportive atmosphere where everyone values the other."



Preston Library's Conversation Café has been so successful that additional sessions will be starting at Reservoir Community and Learning Centre this month.

If you want to enhance your English language skills through conversation or know someone who does, or if you would like to help others with conversation practice, call **1300 655 355**.

For further information visit [darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au](http://darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au)