

## MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 17 MARCH 2015

### CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK KICKS OFF WITH AFL CLINIC

Richmond Football Club player, Reece Conca will be sharing footy tips and techniques today with students from Richmond West Primary School, all in the name of cultural diversity.

The football clinic is being held as part of celebrations for Cultural Diversity Week 2015, the annual state wide celebration of Victoria's cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. Cultural Diversity Week is presented by the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) and has been taking place since 2003.

"I am proud of my Italian heritage and I appreciate the opportunity to play football with people from various cultural backgrounds – it gives me a chance to learn about cultures and traditions different to my own every day at work," said Mr Conca.

"We greatly value our partnership with the AFL – the teams, players and organisation work hard to strengthen our community through sport," said Mr Chin Tan, VMC Chairperson.

"Coming to a new country with a different culture and traditions can be difficult – we know that sport is an excellent way to help people with this transition.

"Sport provides people with a network and a sense of belonging, which are both vital elements for ensuring that culturally and linguistically diverse communities flourish and prosper," said Mr Tan.

Richmond West Primary School conducts classes in Mandarin and Vietnamese in addition to English, as a part of the Victorian Government's bilingual program.

"Our school population is testament to Victoria's cultural diversity, so the bilingual program is very important to us. We truly value the role of cultural diversity in our curriculum and the positive benefits it has on our students' wellbeing," said Mr Paul Ledwidge, Principal, Richmond West Primary School.

"Australian football has the extraordinary power to bring people together regardless of their background. The AFL is committed to celebrating diversity and ensuring our game is inclusive. Through the Australia Post AFL Multicultural program, we aim to attract more people from diverse communities to enjoy our game as fans, players or administrators in the future," said Jason Mifsud, Head of Diversity, AFL.

"Events like this football clinic are a great opportunity for all Victorians to promote harmony and to celebrate our diversity, by learning about cultures, faiths and beliefs that differ from our own," said Mr Tan.

**For more information about Cultural Diversity Week go to the VMC's website:**

[www.multicultural.vic.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au)

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