

The NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) helps refugees recover from their experiences and build a new life in Australia. STARTTS also works with other organizations and individuals to help them work more effectively with refugees.

Opened in 1988, STARTTS is one of Australia's leading organizations for the treatment of torture and trauma survivors.

Our services include counseling, group therapy, group activities and outings, camps for children and young people, English classes and physiotherapy.

STARTTS services are based on a systemic and holistic approach to the rehabilitation and treatment of torture and trauma survivors. As such STARTTS combines clinical and community development / psychosocial approaches in its work with individuals, families and refugee communities.

Why Does STARTTS Exist?

Each year Australia accepts 13,000 refugees from all over the world. More than one third of these refugees will settle in NSW.

Between 70 and 90 percent of refugees coming to Australia will have experienced torture and/or trauma. Most will have experienced multiple traumatic events including war, the death and/or disappearance of loved ones and/or torture.

The physical consequences of torture and trauma are broad ranging from chronic pain to heart problems.

But the psychological and social effects are often the most distressing and difficult to deal with. They can range from depression and anxiety to family conflict and breakdown.

This comes on top of the demands associated with leaving behind a familiar environment and coming to a country with a different language, culture and systems.

In addition, refugees are coping with the normal ups and downs that all human beings face.

Despite the amazing resilience of refugees and the many contributions they make to Australian society, they will often need specialised assistance to overcome the effects of their experiences. With some help, torture and trauma survivors are more likely to live fruitful and fulfilling lives.

Please visit www.startts.org.au for more information about our service and activities.