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Young Habiba speaks out for the children

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Susanne Reilly | July 07, 2015, 12:00 AM | SOUTHERN GAZETTE



Habiba Asim (17) sits on the Youth Roundtable of the Save the Children organisation.

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SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD Habiba Asim moved to Australia from New Zealand four years ago to begin high school.

She might be young, but she knows she can do so much for Australia's youth, which is why she sits on the Youth Partnership Project (YPP) Youth Leadership Roundtable run by Save the Children.

It is an initiative that supports the South East Metropolitan's most vulnerable young people.

Born in Pakistan, Habiba grew up in New Zealand and said she was always aware of how lucky she and her siblings were to be in Australia.

"The current situation of my direct family such as aunties, uncles and even first cousins (living in a developing country) motivates me to do more, to give back more, to help more people because I have been given a chance and the opportunity to be a role model in my community," she said.

She joined the YPP after learning of it through the Gosnells Youth Advisory Council.

"At first, I was a little hesitant not knowing whether this project would be suitable for me. After talking to my father, I was reminded of my main goal in life, which seemed to perfectly fit," she said.

"Through this project I honestly just want to help the youth, to make the community I live in a better place and for the service providers and adults in charge to listen to the voices of Australia's future."

She said her favourite moment from the project was the day she facilitated a racism and discrimination workshop at the Speak Out for Change summit held earlier this year.

"That day I did not stand only as Habiba Asim, a young Muslim woman who had been discriminated against, racially profiled and made to feel like a foreigner," she said.

"I acted as a voice for the youth in that room and I was able to help empower the young people to speak out about their experiences, their thoughts on the increasing issue and the way in which change may be brought about."

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