

# Muslims mark holy month's end

## COMMUNITY

MACARTHUR Muslims celebrated the end of Ramadan with a gathering in Koshigaya Park on Wednesday, July 13.

The annual event - organised by Macarthur Diversity Services - was held one week after the official end of Ramadan, also known as Eid.

Most years up to 150 people attend the event.

This year, due to strong winds and a combined chill factor, about 40 people attended.

Among those attendees were Noor Khaleel and Fatouma Dawood.

Mrs Dawood said it wasn't difficult to fast from sunrise to sunset for one month - which is required during the period of Ramadan.

"No it's not, especially here because the weather is not as hot," Ms Dawood, who was originally from Sudan, said.

Mrs Khaleel, of Iraqi descent, said children and teenagers were eased into fasting.

"When we were 12 we'd start with three days," she said.

"The first day we would fast until maybe 12pm or 2pm, the next day would be a bit longer and the third day until the end (sunset)."

She said the key was to eat a nutritional and hearty breakfast before the sun rose, then feast at the end of the day.

"At night we eat a big meal," Mrs Khaleel said. "Usually soup, then a main course of chicken, rice or grilled meat, and after that desert."

Macarthur Diversity Services generalist settlement worker, Sana Al-Ahmar, said Ramadan was a very important event on the Islamic calendar.

"Ramadan is a big, big thing - families and friends all come together when they break from fasting," she said.

"It's a celebration but there's also a lot of praying and a lot of time spent reading the Koran.

"But you don't stop what you're doing in everyday life.

"If you work, you continue to work, if you go to school, you continue to go to school."

- BEN CHENOWETH



**CELEBRATING:** Noor Khaleel and Fatouma Dawood celebrate the end of Ramadan at Koshigaya Park. **Picture: Chris Lane**



**FEAST:** Children help prepare food. **Picture: Chris Lane**



**GATHER:** Some of the members of Macarthur Muslim community who gathered at Koshigaya Park. **Picture: Chris Lane**