# Video: Jinni Bathiudeen’s podcast

## Transcript

## Jinni Bathiudeen, Receptionist of Gentown Community and Business Hub speaking

**The power of welcoming, inclusive and respectful language.**

Hello I am Jinni Bathidueen, the Receptionist here at GCBH.

I love my job.

Every day I see so many different people come through our front door.

I have got to know so many of our regulars. We chat and I learn about their lives. They ask about my little boy who is four. And they also ask about the new baby that is coming!

Of course, they also ask about my hijab and I’m happy to tell them why I wear it and what it means to me.

Mostly people are very respectful and just curious, because they don’t often get to talk to a woman who wears a hijab.

But outside work, sometimes people aren’t so nice.

Wearing a hijab in Australia can sometimes attract unwanted and negative attention. It has made me very aware of the wrong and hurtful assumptions people make about women who choose to wear a hijab.

Sometimes when I am out in the community with my family non-Muslim people assume I can’t speak for myself, so they talk to my husband rather than to me. That makes me so angry!

I’m really careful to not make those same pre-judgements about the people who come through our front door.

I think the best way to greet people is to offer them a friendly, smiling face, say hello, and ask how I can help them. It’s a really simple way to help people feel welcome.

For example, I call people by their names rather than use a title like, ‘husband’, or ‘mother’. I also try to avoid using pronouns like, ‘him’ or ‘her’.

If I don’t know people’s names and I have to point them out to someone, I try to find a neutral way of describing them, like describing the colour of their top.

Most of the time you just need to meet people in the eye and speak to them kindly.

Everyone should be treated with equal respect. In the end, that’s the best way to actually understand people and to get to know them.

**Links for credits:**

Victorian Government LGBTIQ Inclusive Language Guide: <https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide>

Australian Network on Disability, Tips for welcoming customers with disability: <https://www.and.org.au/pages/tips-for-welcoming-customers-with-disability.html>

VicSport, Welcoming people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds: <https://vicsport.com.au/blog/2910/welcoming-people-from-culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-cald-communities->