

# INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH BULLETIN

ISSUE 2  
June 2013



Keeping Our 12 Partner Schools Up To Date

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY TWO

31 July Deakin Prime

### INDIVIDUAL STUDENT INTERVIEWS BY PHD STUDENTS IN SOME SCHOOLS

Starting July

### TEACHER FOCUS GROUPS

5-9 August

### STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

19-23 August

### SECOND STUDENT QUIZ

14-25 October

### SCHOOL SHOWCASE OF ICU ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2013

29 November DEECD



## OFF TO A FLYING START

### Intercultural Understanding in Primary and Secondary Schools

June already!

It is impossible to overstate how impressed we have been with the level of commitment from school leadership and participating teachers in our twelve intercultural understanding project schools. Already we have gathered data to begin the research journey.

Students and staff in each school have completed the ICU survey/quiz. The analysis has been returned to schools. This provides base-line ICU data to inform school action plans. Teachers are completing the *Difference Differently* online professional learning modules and using the *Difference Differently* modules for students in their classes.

### The Four Key Research Questions

**It is always a good time to be reminded of what we are researching**

1. What facilitates/impedes Intercultural Understanding in children and adolescents?
2. What facilitates/impedes Intercultural Understanding in schools?
3. How can this be addressed?
4. How can we know what makes a difference?

### ARC Investigators

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Dr Sarah Ohi (DU)  
Dr Jo O'Mara (DU)  
Dr Naomi Priest (Melbourne)  
Dr Nida Denson (UWS)

### Industry Partners

Together for Humanity  
Victorian DEECD  
Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority (VCAA)  
Pukunui Technology (Moodle)

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Two websites you should have at your fingertips

<http://interculturalunderstanding.org>

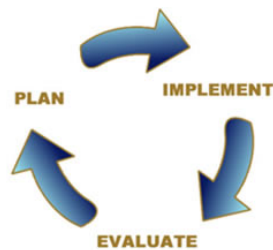
<http://differencedifferently.edu.au>



## PLANNING TO TAKE ACTION ON INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

The single most important task for all of our Intercultural Understanding schools is to work on your school Action Plans. Our project has a very broad range of schools – and that means we have schools with very different needs, challenges and opportunities for developing intercultural understanding.

No two schools in this project face the same issues and so no two schools can have the same Action Plans.



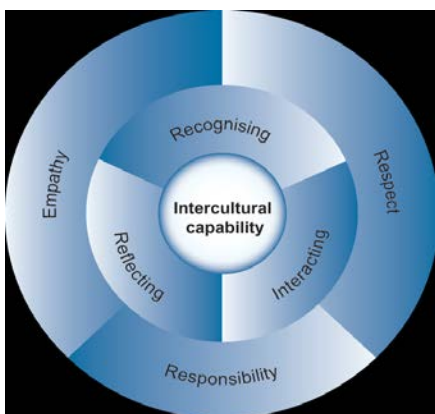
Now is the best time for you to work with your mentors to:

- Craft what your school will focus on
- Understand how it will make a difference
- Decide how you will implement your plan, and
- Consider how you will know you have made a difference.

There is no single or simple thing called Intercultural Understanding. This project is seeking to help schools to identify what will make a difference to their school community.

## PLANNING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Each school has its own challenges and each will have its own action plan directed at meeting those challenges. However, there are common features that every school should consider in their action plans.



### ***How are you addressing intercultural understanding across your school community?***

Intercultural understanding represents a cultural change and therefore needs to be a consistent part of a whole school strategy

directed at making the school welcoming and nurturing. How is your action plan going to make a difference across your entire school community?

### ***How will your plan help all subject areas address intercultural understanding?***

All subjects have a role in acknowledging difference, in showing that difference is not something to be smoothed over, but rather to be used to improve student participation, engagement and learning. By becoming sensitive to intercultural understanding, teachers have the opportunity to find ways to avoid what might otherwise be barriers to active student involvement in their lessons.

### ***How will intercultural understanding change classroom practice?***

If we want changed outcomes we need changed our practices. What assistance will be given to teachers to help them integrate intercultural understanding into their everyday teaching practices?

## GIVING YOU A VOICE

An essential aspect of this project is that it combines multiple data sources to get a full picture of how intercultural understanding is developing in various school sites.

One of these methods is a longitudinal series of interviews with students and teachers to track their perspective of intercultural understanding over the life of the project.

Hearing how teachers and students have been affected by this project is the best way to see how we can use what we learn in your schools can make a difference in other schools across Victoria and across Australia.

This work will be conducted through the focus groups with students and teachers in August and individualised interviews with students by two of the PhD Students working on the project, Brandi Fox and Caroline Mahoney.

# TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAYS

## Professional Development in Intercultural Understanding

A clear aim of the ICU project is to build the capacity of schools to address the issues raised in having intercultural understanding as a cross-curricula general capability in the Australian Curriculum.

Part of the work we are doing with our project schools to develop this capacity is by engaging teachers in Professional Learning Days.

The first of these was held in May and proved highly successful. Another is planned for Wednesday 31 July.

We only have room for three teachers per school on this day. We are highly recommending these teachers be the school's ICU Coordinator and two other teachers who did not attend previously and are able to bring their learning back to their school community. The day will begin with workshop presentations, this time focused on history, languages other than English and



Donna Jacobs Sife presenting the *Difference Differently* website



### HEADS UP

The major part of the July 31<sup>st</sup> Professional Learning day will involve schools giving five-minute presentations on how they are implementing their ICU project in their school. This will prove to be highly informative, offering a great opportunity for schools to learn more about the range of activities taking place across our twelve schools.

### Tips for your presentation

- Time limit – 5 mins per school
- Communicate your message with clarity
- PPT is but one medium, but if you use it please use no more than 5 slides.
- How will you **SHOW** you've making a difference?



## THE RESOURCES YOU NEED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

An important outcome of this project will be the resources developed to provide teachers with quality learning materials to bring into their classrooms. These materials are structured to demonstrate pedagogical practices designed to help students develop intercultural understanding across the curriculum.

We have begun by including the presentations from our first Teacher Professional Learning Day on our website.

<http://interculturalunderstanding.org/resources.html>

As the project progresses we will be adding more resources to our site. Watch this space.

