

RACISM. **no way.**

**A guide for
Australian
schools**

www.racismnoway.com.au

The *Racism. No way!* project aims to assist school communities and education systems to recognise and address racism in the learning environment. The project is an initiative of the Chief Executive Officers of education systems across Australia.

This project is managed and educational content has been developed by Government State and Territory education systems, the National Catholic Education Commission, the National Council of Independent Schools' Associations and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. Funding for the project was provided by Government State and Territory education systems, the NSW Catholic Education Commission and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, through the *Living in Harmony* initiative.

Living in Harmony is a Commonwealth Government initiative administered by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs which is aimed at promoting community harmony. It recognises that, whatever our backgrounds and beliefs, we are united as Australians and want to live in a country that is free of racial intolerance.

The work of the project was supported by the expertise of teachers, parents and curriculum officers throughout Australia.

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Foreword



Racism is cruel and unjust. It cuts deep and lingers long in individual and community memories. And it is not a thing of the past – it persists throughout the world and even in our own country. There are Australians young and old, from many different cultural, religious and language backgrounds, including communities whose members have lived in Australia from earliest times and those who frequently have recently arrived, who experience racism. We all have a duty to do what we can to turn this around.

Knowledge of the history and impact of racism is essential for understanding and change. It can be the spark that ignites action against racism by individuals and local communities. And education is the key to that process.

Schools play a critical role in developing young minds, building relationships between people of different backgrounds and creating a socially just civil society. From today's generation of school students will come the community leaders of the future – leaders to tackle the complexity of racism in all its forms.

Racism. No way! is about change. It asks us to reflect on our attitudes, to overcome our own prejudices and to challenge discrimination and racism. By linking students and schools across Australia, the *Racism. No way!* project has the potential to stimulate a nation-wide, and indeed global, challenge to racism led by Australia's youth.

My hope is that *Racism. No way!* will give young people the knowledge, strength and conviction to fight racism wherever it occurs and to aspire to a world free of it.

I congratulate the governments and education systems of Australia for their vision in initiating this project and the national anti-racism in education taskforce for making it a reality. I commend *Racism. No way!* to teachers and students, in the belief that the project will result in greater understanding and commitment to ending the evil of racism in our land.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'William Deane'.

Sir William Deane
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia



Project overview

The *Racism. No way!* project aims to assist school communities and education systems to recognise and address racism in the learning environment.

This document, *Racism. No way! A guide for Australian schools* is the key component of the project and brings together understandings of the nature of racism with practical strategies for countering racism in schools. Other project resources include a special edition newsletter for schools and a website, www.racismnoway.com.au

Racism. No way! www.racismnoway.com.au

Available in hard copy:



and on the web:

Racism. No way!
A guide for Australian schools

Racism. No way!
Special edition newsletter

Student games and activities

Teaching ideas and activities

Strategies for countering racism

Reference material includes:

- A timeline of key events in Australia's history
- Australian legislation and international law
- Facts and figures on Australia's cultural diversity
- International approaches to anti-racism education
- Programs and strategies in schools across Australia

...and many other useful resources.



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Goal and principles

Goal

Schools contribute to Australia's prosperity and social harmony by enabling all students to achieve their best educational outcomes in learning environments free of racism.



Principles

A just society

Schools impart the values of a just, democratic and harmonious Australian society with a shared commitment among all members of the school community to human rights and civic responsibilities.

A safe and secure environment

All members of the school community – staff, students and parents – have the right to a safe and productive teaching, learning and working environment free from racism.

Diversity and cultural identity

Cultural and linguistic diversity is acknowledged and valued so that all students, parents and employees are able to express their own cultural identity, relate in a positive way to others of diverse backgrounds and recognise the benefits of diversity for Australian society.

Culturally inclusive education

Curriculum, resources, assessment and teaching practices value and respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community and provide educational experiences that are inclusive of the diverse needs of all students.

Equitable access, participation and outcomes

Students of all cultural or linguistic backgrounds participate in quality teaching and learning programs that enable them to achieve their full potential.

The background of the slide is a solid black color. A horizontal band of bright red color runs across the middle of the slide. On the left side, there is a faint, white, stylized graphic of a city skyline or a cluster of buildings. The text "Understanding racism" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, positioned in the upper right quadrant of the slide, overlapping the black background and the red band.

Understanding racism

What is racism?

Irrespective of its sources, **racism is racism**. Ignorance is no excuse. Insecurity is not justification...racism in all its forms should be uncompromisingly condemned.

Michael Dodson,
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Social Justice
Commissioner, quoted in
Human Rights and Equal
Opportunity Commission,
Fourth Report, 1996.

Racism is destructive. It disempowers people by devaluing their identity. It destroys community cohesion and creates divisions in society. It is the opposite of the democratic principle of equality and the right of all people to be treated fairly.

An understanding of the nature of racism is essential in order to recognise and counter it successfully. Racism is a global phenomenon which is influenced by a range of historical, social, political and economic factors. It takes different forms in different contexts and as a result has been defined in many different ways. In Australia, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1998) defines it as:

Racism is an ideology that gives expression to myths about other racial and ethnic groups, that devalues and renders inferior those groups, that reflects and is perpetuated by deeply rooted historical, social, cultural and power inequalities in society.

Racism is the result of a complex interplay of individual attitudes, social values and institutional practices. It is expressed in the actions of individuals and institutions and is promoted in the ideology of popular culture. It changes its form in response to social change.

Racism has its roots in the belief that some people are superior because they belong to a particular race, ethnic or national group. The concept of race is a social construct, not a scientific one. (For a discussion of the meaning of the word 'race', refer to the glossary).

Racist attitudes and beliefs are misconceptions about people based on perceived racial lines and are often founded on the fear of difference, including differences in customs, values, religion, physical appearance and ways of living and viewing the world. This includes negative attitudes towards the use of different languages, foreign accents or the use of non-standard variations of a dominant community language.¹

Racist attitudes may be manifested in a number of ways including common expressions of racial prejudice towards and stereotyped assumptions about other cultures as well as more extreme forms of prejudice such as xenophobia. These beliefs are reinforced by prevailing social attitudes towards people who are seen as different and are often a reflection of the values which underpin social relations and institutional practices.

These attitudes and beliefs find expression in racist behaviours, both in the actions of individuals and in the policies and entrenched practices of institutions. Where these behaviours involve unequal power relationships between individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds, racist actions on the part of members of the dominant culture have the effect of marginalising those from minority groups.

Examples of racist behaviour include ridicule, racist abuse, property damage, racial harassment, racist propaganda, racial vilification and physical assault. It also includes practices that exploit or exclude members of particular groups from aspects of society. Extreme examples of racist behaviour include ethnic cleansing and genocide.

Racist behaviour may be direct (overt) or indirect (covert) in nature. Direct racial discrimination is the unfair or unequal treatment of a person or a group on racial grounds. An example would be an employer who won't hire someone on the basis of their cultural or linguistic background. This type of discrimination is typically deliberate. Indirect racial discrimination is seemingly equitable on the surface, but in

Note: Words in bold are defined in the glossary

practice disadvantages people from particular groups. For example, a rule that says that all students must not wear anything on their heads could result in discrimination against students whose religion requires the wearing of headwear. Indirect racial discrimination can occur even when there is no intention to discriminate.

Institutional racism (or systemic racism) describes forms of racism which are structured into political and social institutions. It occurs when organisations, institutions or governments discriminate, either deliberately or indirectly, against certain groups of people to limit their rights.

This form of racism reflects the cultural assumptions of the dominant group, so that the practices of that group are seen as the norm to which other cultural practices should conform. It regularly and systematically advantages some ethnic and cultural groups and disadvantages and marginalises others.

Institutional racism is often the most difficult to recognise and counter, particularly when it is perpetrated by institutions and governments who do not view themselves as racist. When present in a range of social contexts, this form of racism reinforces the disadvantage already experienced by some members of the community. For example, racism experienced by students at school may result in early school dropout and lower educational outcomes. Together with discrimination in employment, this may lead to fewer employment opportunities and higher levels of unemployment for these students when they leave school. In turn, lower income levels combined with discrimination in the provision of goods and services restrict access to housing, health care and life opportunities generally. In this way, institutional racism may be particularly damaging for minority groups and further restrict their access to services and participation in society.

Racism in Australia

In Australia, racism is inextricably linked to the history of colonisation and migration.


The original inhabitants, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, were dispossessed of their land and were discriminated against by the first British and European settlers. For some Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, the process of colonisation has been perceived as invasion. Racial discrimination has continued to influence the lives of Indigenous Australians in the two centuries following white settlement.

The migration of peoples from all parts of the world led to the increased cultural and linguistic diversity of the Australian population. Prejudice and discrimination have been directed towards many groups who arrived in Australia, in particular towards groups from language backgrounds other than English, despite the fact that many government migration schemes invited people to settle in Australia.

Until recent years, racist policies and practices were also embedded within Australian laws and institutions. The most telling examples of these were the removal of Aboriginal children from their families and the denial of full citizenship rights to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. Similarly, the White Australia policy aimed to restrict immigration by people from non-European backgrounds. Historically, rises in unemployment have often led to calls for immigration restrictions and in some cases led to the scapegoating of people who were seen to be different to members of the dominant culture. While legislation now exists to protect the rights of

For more information about the history and causes of racism in Australia, refer to www.racismnoway.com.au/library/keydates/





Racism is a destructive and persistent evil that brings only harm. Sadly it is often a misinformed response to economic hardship. Rather than solving economic problems, however, racism fuels the fire of suffering by intimidating its victims and corrupting its perpetrators. Racial prejudice is a corrosive influence attacking the most fundamental values of Australian society – our commitment to justice, egalitarianism and a ‘fair go’ for all.

Hon. Justice Marcus Einfeld
1997

all citizens, there is a continuing legacy today from the effects of these racist practices.

As Australian society has become more diverse with continuing immigration, expressions of racism in Australian popular culture have changed over time. Racist language and attitudes that were common at the end of the nineteenth century are no longer acceptable one hundred years later. However, racism continues to find expression in new ways, reinforced through the popular media.

Contemporary expressions of racism which have emerged in recent years relate to notions of nationhood which are seen as incompatible with diversity. These racist beliefs may be expressed in various stereotyped views of who the ‘real’ Australians are. This form of racism is based on an ideology of national culture in which minority cultures are regarded as alien and a threat to social cohesion. It consists of pervasive cultural assumptions where the customs and beliefs of the dominant group in society are presented as the norm. As a result, the status and behaviour of minority groups, particularly those who are more visibly different, are defined and judged with respect to the dominant group of largely British and Celtic backgrounds.

These attitudes are widely discussed in the media where they are presented as reasonable and commonsense and reflected through media images that do not accurately portray Australia’s cultural diversity. In this way, racist ideologies are expressed and reinforced through a process of group interaction and thereby absorbed into popular culture.

Racist beliefs are also at the core of the resentment expressed by some people at measures taken by governments to address the disadvantages of particular groups of people. Affirmative measures and positive discrimination are frequently seen as the preferential treatment of one group at the expense of another rather than the means of redressing the disadvantage inherent in society. Examples include opposition to Aboriginal land rights, calls for the removal of special benefits for particular groups and resentment towards the provision of English language support to migrants. These beliefs are compounded by the notion that treating all people in the same way equates to equity and social justice when in fact not everyone begins life with the same opportunities.

This resentment often finds expression in the belief that ‘reverse racism’ is occurring. The notion of reverse racism is that people from the dominant culture are being discriminated against or not receiving the same benefits as people from minority groups. It needs to be understood that there is no such thing as reverse racism. At an individual level, all ethnic or cultural groups are capable of both discriminating against other groups and of being discriminated against, although minority groups are more likely to suffer from institutional racism.

Racism affects everyone. It damages communities by limiting the contributions of its members and disrupts peaceful co-existence and co-operation between groups. It damages individuals by destroying self-confidence and preventing them from achieving their potential. It is particularly damaging for children as it hampers social development and limits educational opportunities. The consequences of racism - social injustice, a less productive economy and a divided community - are clearly detrimental, not only for its victims but to society as a whole.

Racism and the law

Australian laws make it illegal for people to engage in racist activity or to encourage, incite or permit racist acts to occur and are aimed at protecting individuals who make complaints about racism.

It is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of race, colour, nationality, descent, ethnic or ethno-religious background. Discrimination against a person on the grounds that the person has a relative or associate who is of a particular race is also unlawful under Australian legislation.

Commonwealth and State laws relating to racial discrimination generally cover discrimination in employment, the provision of goods and services, education and accommodation although there is variation between different acts. Sanctions exist against both direct and indirect racial discrimination. There are a number of criminal laws that apply to physically violent racist behaviour.

The *Racial Discrimination Act* (1975) and its 1995 amendment the *Racial Hatred Act* are the Commonwealth laws relating to racial discrimination. In addition, all Australian states and territories have anti-discrimination laws that cover racial discrimination. Australia is also a party to a number of international conventions and declarations which impose obligations in regard to racism and racial discrimination when ratified in Australian law. The Commonwealth *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act* (1986) gives effect to several international conventions and declarations such as the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990) and the *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities* (1992).

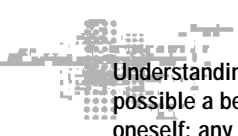
Some people mistakenly believe that the public expression of racist attitudes is a legal and acceptable form of free speech. In Australia, as internationally, the right to freedom of speech carries with it certain responsibilities and restrictions which protect the rights of others against open hostility and discrimination. Australian law expressly prohibits incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence on the basis of race.

Australian legislation relating to racial discrimination covers many aspects of racist behaviour but not all forms of racism. While legislation makes racism unlawful in several contexts, legislation cannot address the underlying social issues. Education together with effective legislation provide the best hope for developing a society free from racism.

For more information on anti-racism legislation, refer to www.racismnoway.com.au/library/legislation/




The importance of culture, language and identity



Understanding others makes possible a better knowledge of oneself: any form of identity is complex, for individuals are defined in relation to other people – both individually and collectively – and the various groups to which they owe allegiance, in a constantly shifting pattern.

UNESCO, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, 1996



Language is fundamental to cultural identity. This is so for people everywhere. For Bininj, their unique world is expressed in their language. For this reason, it is important that people keep their own language alive.

Kakadu National Park,
Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural
Centre, NT.

Understanding and valuing cultural diversity are the keys to countering racism. All individuals must feel free to explore the uniqueness of their culture and identity while developing understandings of the cultural diversity that exists in the world around them. Denying cultural expression means limiting the expression of unique perspectives on life and the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation.

Culture and language

Culture is a defining feature of every person's identity, contributing to how they see themselves and the groups with which they identify. Culture may be broadly defined as the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, which is transmitted from one generation to another. Every community, cultural group or ethnic group has its own values, beliefs and ways of living.

The observable aspects of culture such as food, clothing, celebrations, religion and language are only part of a person's cultural heritage. The shared values, customs and histories characteristic of culture shape the way a person thinks, behaves and views the world. A shared cultural heritage bonds the members of the group together and creates a sense of belonging through community acceptance.

Language is intrinsic to the expression of culture. As a means of communicating values, beliefs and customs, it has an important social function and fosters feelings of group identity and solidarity. It is the means by which culture and its traditions and shared values may be conveyed and preserved.

Cultural and linguistic diversity is a feature of most nations today as people from different groups live together as a consequence of historical events and human migrations. Within multilingual societies, the maintenance of the languages of the various ethnic and cultural groups is critical for the preservation of cultural heritage and identity. The loss of language means the loss of culture and identity. In many societies throughout history, the suppression of the languages of minority groups has been used as a deliberate policy in order to suppress those minority cultures. As a result a large number of the world's languages have been lost with the processes of colonisation and migration.²

Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity

Australia is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse nations in the world. This diversity has always been embedded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies and has been broadened over the last two hundred years with the arrival of people from over one hundred and fifty distinct cultures from around the world.

While English is the dominant language, many people speak a language other than English as their first language within their families and communities. Over two hundred languages other than English are spoken in Australia today. The acquisition of proficiency in Standard Australian English, together with the maintenance of community languages is therefore a significant issue in Australia.

Proficiency in English is critical for successful participation in Australian society and for exchanging information about the values and perspectives

of different cultures. Similarly, proficiency in first language skills is essential for self-enrichment and expression of identity.

In large parts of Australia, the loss of a great number of Aboriginal languages³ means that for many Aboriginal people, Aboriginal English is their first language and is a particular marker of identity. Aboriginal English developed as a means of communication for Aboriginal people between people of different language groups and with non-Aboriginal people. Torres Strait Creole is similarly an important marker of identity for Torres Strait Islander people and is used as a common language among speakers of different Torres Strait languages. Both Aboriginal English and Torres Strait Creole are spoken as a first or second language by many Indigenous Australians.

The maintenance of a community's first language is also a significant issue for many people who belong to diverse ethnic communities whose members, or their ancestors, have migrated to Australia. The use of community languages is important both for individual and group identity and for communication across generations. In an increasingly globalised world, linguistic skills strengthen international ties and foster cultural exchange. Linguistic diversity makes Australia more competitive in trade and strengthens its international standing.

Identity and community

An individual's sense of identity is grounded in their cultural identity. A person's understanding of their own and others' cultural identity develops from birth and is shaped by the values and attitudes prevalent at home and in the surrounding community. This identity becomes more complex and fluid over time as people develop allegiances to different groups within the broader society. At the same time, cultures themselves are not static but develop and change as the belief systems and ways of life of different groups adapt under other cultural influences including mass media and popular culture to create new identities. In a culturally diverse society like Australia, individuals may have multiple identities through identification with several different sub-cultures. These identities may include identity based on cultural heritage, family or birthplace; religious or social identity; and identity as members of Australian society.

The realisation that there are many Australian identities reinforces the need for mutual understanding for achieving a racism-free community. Reconciliation, which aims to encourage co-operation and improve relations between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and the wider community, is critical in this process. The understanding of how history has shaped our relationship with each other and respect for each other's cultures are key components of the Reconciliation process.

The policy of multiculturalism is equally vital in achieving a cohesive Australian nation. It recognises and values Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity and accepts and respects the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage within an overriding commitment to Australia.

The mistrust and fear of difference which often stem from isolation from other cultures can be overcome by fostering cultural understanding and by highlighting the common interests that all Australians share. Working together, Australians can achieve a more equal and fairer society that respects and values its diversity.

As languages disappear, cultures die. The world becomes inherently a less interesting place, but we also sacrifice raw knowledge and the intellectual achievements of millennia.

Ken Hale,
Massachusetts Institute of
Technology, quoted in Davis,
W. 1999.


I have... come to the conclusion that my identity does not have to be static. Sometimes, I feel Spanish and I like to identify with the Spanish culture while at other times I choose to reinforce my German, Irish-Anglo background. In many ways the two identities have become interwoven. A part of me is expressed through speaking Spanish and singing Spanish songs which is not expressed through speaking English or playing classical music... each language I speak and each music tradition I engage in carries with it a different world of meanings.

Student respondent,
quoted in Smolicz, et. al., 1998.

For more information about the cultures and languages of Australia, refer to www.racismnoway.com.au/library/cultural/



The extent of racism in Australian schools



There are no words to describe how racism feels. Everyone deals with it differently. Some people lash out verbally, others withdraw into themselves. Some people can talk openly about how it feels, others hide it deep within... How many of our children are trying to learn in racist classrooms? How does a child reach their full potential and exercise their rights as citizens of this country when they are given messages every day that they are worthless human beings? What if it was your son or daughter? What would you do?

Mark Williams, 1999.

Racism is present in Australian schools. Direct racism can be seen in incidents of racist abuse, harassment and discrimination. Racism is also manifested indirectly, in the form of prejudiced attitudes, lack of recognition of cultural diversity and culturally biased practices.

An experience commonly reported is that racism in schools is often not acknowledged or addressed by teachers or others in authority who have the ability to do something about it. It seems that those who do not themselves experience racism either do not recognise it or dismiss it as trivial and do not see its potential for damage. The danger is that when racist attitudes and behaviours are permitted to go unchecked in a school, a climate develops which sees these actions as normal and so allows racism to become entrenched.

If parents feel they or their children have been discriminated against they may bring a complaint of racism against the school, individual teachers or the education system. However, complaints received under Commonwealth and State Acts relating to racial discrimination provide only one indication of the extent of racism in Australian schools. While few complaints are received in the area of education each year, this should not be equated with a low incidence of racist activity. Limited knowledge of legislation, fear or unwillingness on the part of children to report racist incidents or reluctance by parents to pursue legal redress are factors that may prevent the bringing of formal complaints. In addition, formal remedies for complaints of racial discrimination are not always appropriate, with mediation often being sought as a preferable alternative.

Research and anecdotal evidence from a variety of sources including education reports and independent studies as well as the personal accounts of individuals provide information on the nature and extent of racism in Australian schools. The evidence demonstrates that for many students and teachers, racism is part of daily life.

Racist abuse and harassment

The sorts of racist incidents that are most commonly reported at school are name-calling, teasing, exclusion, verbal abuse and bullying.

In a major national report on racism in Australia, the *Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia* (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1991), many students and parents from ethnic communities reported racial harassment and verbal abuse within schools, colleges and universities. The harassment directed at students was mainly carried out by other students but it was also reported that sometimes teachers either failed to intervene appropriately in situations of racist harassment, or instigated the harassment by inappropriately dealing with classroom discussions.

In a study of racism and its impact on education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Brennan 1998), parents were asked about their perceptions of schooling for their children. It was found that all the parents in the study said that their children suffered from overt forms of racism. These included name calling, teasing, bullying and being provoked into fighting by other students. Every family had at least one child who had been called racist names. The parents believed that

teachers discriminated against their children, blaming them for things they hadn't done and punishing them more than non-Indigenous students.

The national *Kids Help Line* telephone counselling service compiled data on calls related to bullying experienced by young people made to it over a five year period (Kids Help Line Newsletter 1999). The information revealed that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from language backgrounds other than English were much more likely to experience bullying at school than other students. Some examples of calls to the Kids Help Line follow:

Male caller (12) is being teased and has had threats of violence from kids at school because of his Asian background. He said the teasing also occurs outside of school by adults as well as kids.

Female caller (14) says she is often harassed by her peers for having dark skin. She has no friends and often feels bad about herself when others put her down.

Male caller (13) is constantly bullied about his Aboriginal background. His brother is also harassed. The students involved have been asked to stop, have been suspended and their parents consulted. However, the parents also harass Aboriginal people.

Further evidence is provided in the report, *Immigration and Schooling in the 1990s*, (Cahill 1996). It describes the nature of the racism experienced by students from language backgrounds other than English in schools:

Examples of racist behaviour mentioned by teachers included name-calling and bullying, culturally biased nicknames, resentment towards support given to non-English speaking background (NESB) students, ostracism of NESB students by other students, constant 'sending up' of NESB students in class, NESB students being told to return to their homeland, NESB students being taken advantage of because of their lack of English, off-hand racist comments made and thought to be funny, occasional fights triggered by racist views or taunts and students refusing to work with racially different students (p 124).⁴

These reports and a number of others⁵ support the view that racist teasing, bullying and harassment are common in schools and that the students and parents who experience it often feel helpless to do anything about it.

Evidence also indicates that teachers and other school staff, particularly those who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or from language backgrounds other than English, experience racism in schools. This may take the form of harassment, abuse or the promotion of racist stereotypes by both students and colleagues.

In a study of secondary teachers' perspectives on multiculturalism and multicultural education in a Victorian rural town (O'Shannessy 1996), one teacher described the difficulties experienced teaching in a racist environment:

When I first started teaching here six years ago, I used to go home in tears nearly every night because of the kids' racist taunts. Now I only go home in tears sometimes. I can't maintain my cultural heritage and teach in this school. I have to try and adapt. My own culture of which I am very proud is now non-existent. If I retain it, I'm considered less than a human being here. I've learnt to be tough, and at least try not to be hurt by what they (the students) say. In the interests of good classroom management, I can't afford to let them see how their racist remarks hurt me. (p 222).

The teacher felt that racist behaviour within the school made it difficult for her to implement and maintain effective classroom management. She also described the failure of the school executive to appropriately deal with racist incidents:

They call me names and won't let me join their group. They steal my things, put smoke(s) in my bag and make trouble for me with parents and teachers, abuse me for something I didn't do and also quarrel with me over silly things. I know it's racist because they told me I should go back home and that they don't need black strangers in their country.

School student, quoted in Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission *Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia*, 1991.

While he (the student) was standing outside, the Principal happened to come along. He stopped, so I went outside the classroom to explain why the student was out of my class. I repeated quite calmly and logically without any hint of emotion exactly what the student had said to me in front of thirty other students. He (the Principal) simply turned to the boy and said, 'You didn't say that did you? You need to be educated'. That was all he said. This isn't an uncommon incident. (p 223).

Teachers have also reported that they perceive discrimination in employment and promotional opportunities due to prejudiced attitudes regarding their English language competence, teaching skills or qualifications gained from overseas.

The Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission in response to concerns about increasing numbers of incidents of apparently race-related harassment and abuse within schools in 1998 initiated a project to document effective strategies for addressing racism. The project focuses on how schools and their communities respond to racist behaviour.

Racism and violence

Violence associated with racism occurs in Australian schools, either as part of the racist harassment or in retaliation to it. This violence can take different forms, ranging from pushing and shoving, property damage and fights between individual students to serious physical assaults and even concerted attacks by racist gangs.

As schools generally regard violence as more serious than bullying or name-calling, automatic sanctions, such as suspension, may be applied against students who use violence in response to racism. If schools do not investigate the cause of the violent behaviour, the result may be that the students who were being harassed in the first place can end up being more severely punished than the racist bullies. This has the effect of reinforcing the racist behaviour by apparently rewarding the bullies and punishing the victims.

The *Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia* found that racist violence was an endemic problem for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The report of the Inquiry argues that:

The fact that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are faced with racial discrimination in almost every aspect of their daily lives is the underlying reason for the high levels of racist violence reported to this Inquiry (p 121).

This is supported by another national report, *Sticks and Stones, Report on Violence in Australian Schools* (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Violence in Schools 1994), which found that racism, as a contributor to violence, was present in schools, as it was in the community. In the report, the South Australian Aboriginal Education Unit advised that Aboriginal students in schools in South Australia were involved in violence at a number of levels. Much of the violence committed towards, and by, Aboriginal students was the outcome of wider racist community attitudes.

Another example provided in the *Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia* describes a case in which a fourteen-year-old girl and a seventeen-year-old boy attending a Sydney high school were both subjected to verbal abuse and physical assault. It was claimed that the principal failed to take any action to protect the students although he admitted that many children in his school were the victims of racist abuse and assault.

Evidence indicates that violence associated with racism is more likely to occur in secondary schools than in primary schools. Cahill's study found that in primary schools, incidents were quickly manageable whereas

It happened more than once. Several Australian students have tried to corner me during recess. They said Asian students were never wanted at their school and that I would invite trouble if I hang around any Australian girls.

School student, quoted in Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission *Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia*, 1991.

secondary schools were more likely to be affected by external gangs and the students were more likely to be influenced by home discussions and racial hatred than younger students.

Many accounts show that violence often occurs in retaliation to racist taunts, when the victims fight back against their tormentors. This issue is of critical importance for Aboriginal students, who report that getting involved in fights as a result of racist insults is the most common cause for them being suspended.

The findings of a national report *Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Adolescents* (Groome and Hamilton 1995), demonstrate that almost inevitably, where Aboriginal students were involved in violent behaviour, the roots of violence lay in racism experienced by the Aboriginal student. The authors argue:

If the child feels that the school is not recognising his or her needs or rights in a situation of racial harassment, they can resort to violence as a way of handling the situation (p 54).⁶

If violent incidents in schools are associated with racist behaviour, the school executive need to consider carefully the appropriate punishment for all concerned. Incidents of racist violence that are inappropriately dealt with will only confirm the perceptions of some students and their parents that schools are racist institutions.

Attitudes of students

Schools play a major role in influencing the formation of students' attitudes and world views. Teachers need to assist students to develop an understanding of and respect for cultural differences if they are to be successful in countering racism within the school community and in preparing students to participate in the wider society.

The attitudes of school students towards the cultural diversity of their classrooms and communities vary widely. Among some students there is a commitment to multiculturalism and an understanding of cultural diversity. Other students fear differences and feel resentment towards people of different cultural backgrounds.

In a study of factors that influence the development of racist attitudes in children (Black-Gutman and Hickson 1996), it was found that older children showed greater tolerance to Asian-Australians than younger children. However, the same increase in tolerance with age was not demonstrated in attitudes towards Aboriginal children. Older children tended to have stronger negative attitudes towards Aboriginal children than younger ones. The authors attribute this to the influence of prevailing social attitudes on the development of racist attitudes in children.

The way children in Australia construct their ideas of racial difference and how these ideas are socially organised through the practices of pedagogy and curriculum was investigated in research undertaken in two primary and two secondary schools in Victoria (Rizvi 1992). The study found that while children develop their ideas on racial difference from the variety of messages they receive from their peers, parents and the wider community, they are not simply passive recipients of this information.

Children growing up in Australia are exposed to contradictory images of 'race' relations. On the one hand, they are taught to celebrate the fact that Australia is a multicultural society that values the principles of cultural tolerance and intercultural harmony. On the other hand, they are exposed to images of Aboriginal Australians and other minority groups that portray those groups as objects of paternalistic concern or as aliens whose presence threatens the cultural identity and economic well being of the majority community.

If I could make a difference
I'd put a stop to racial
discrimination. The world is
filled with different colours
and shades, but underneath
the frail cloak of colour is a
person, a person like you and
me, someone who feels and
loves and cares.

Student response, quoted in
Victorian Multicultural
Commission *Postcard
Campaign, Teacher's
Information Kit*, 1997.

The development of beliefs and attitudes is a complex process. Students' attitudes are strongly influenced by their families and peers as well as by the values and ideas of popular culture promoted through the media. The role of the school is also critical, through both the formal setting of the classroom and interactions within the wider school community.

The attitudes of students were also looked at in the *Whole School Anti-Racism Project* (NSW Department of School Education 1995), which examined accounts of racism in a number of schools and explored ways in which school communities could address racism. In a survey of one hundred and thirty secondary students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, it was found that many students expressed prejudiced attitudes.

The study showed that:

- ❑ racist comments were more likely to be expressed by senior students than by junior students
- ❑ a marked difference existed between the sexes on how to overcome racism. The girls' approach to addressing racist problems was to seek non-violent solutions, whereas most boys recommended that racist problems be solved through physical force and aggressive actions.
- ❑ Aboriginal students were less likely to display negative attitudes towards others than non-Aboriginal students
- ❑ many responses from Aboriginal students revealed a sense of powerlessness to change an unresponsive system, no matter what they said or did.

In contrast to these findings, a postcard campaign conducted with students in Years 10 and 11 (Victorian Multicultural Commission 1997) found positive attitudes to diversity among young people. Of the nearly seven thousand responses received from the students, nearly half mentioned values relating to cultural diversity and many also used critical concepts such as racism, prejudice, stereotypes, ignorance, war and the 'race debate' and referred to multiculturalism, citizenship and rights. Negative responses to diversity represented less than half of one percent of the whole sample. The researchers concluded that:

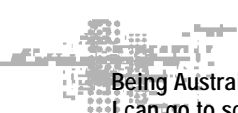
For the generation of young people who responded on the postcards, diversity is the mainstream and difference is deep in their consciousness of themselves and their relationships with others.

These findings are supported by a study conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (Ainley et al 1998) for the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*.⁷ More than half of both primary and secondary teachers surveyed reported that they placed a major emphasis in their teaching on non-sexist, non-racist understandings. In the student questionnaire, seventy-one percent of Year 5 students and sixty-five percent of Year 10 students indicated that making sure that people of all races are treated equally was extremely important to them.

The role of the school is crucial in developing students' values and understandings of their world. Attitudes learnt from home or the wider society are tested and challenged both in the formal setting of the classroom and informally among peers.

Teacher attitudes and the classroom

Teachers' knowledge of the cultural diversity within their classrooms and within the broader Australian community varies. Teachers may have little knowledge or understanding of the home lives and culture of students whose cultures and backgrounds differ from theirs. As a result, some teachers carry with them stereotyped views of what



Being Australian means that I can go to school with a very big mixture of different cultures around me. And that I can make friends with lots of different people and talk about my background. To me Australia means that I can be down to earth about who I am.

Student response, quoted in Victorian Multicultural Commission *Postcard Campaign, Teacher's Information Kit*, 1997.

students can achieve or how they are likely to behave according to their culture or ethnicity. These expectations can influence the teachers' behaviours and teaching styles.

Brennan, in the study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents' experiences of education argues that:

...schooling, for most Indigenous children and their parents, remains culturally alien. Most non-Indigenous teachers and students have little knowledge or understanding of Indigenous children's home lives and culture and this lack of understanding is reflected in their interactions with them. (p 159).

The lack of cultural understanding on the part of teachers was further demonstrated in a study comparing the learning experiences and classroom interactions of urban Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children who were beginning school (Malin 1990). The study revealed a wide gulf in expectations between Aboriginal culture and the school.

The study showed that the non-Aboriginal children were used to having decisions made for them and were trained to obey adults and heed verbal instructions. Aboriginal families, on the other hand, expected their children to be able to make their own decisions and did not require the same level of obedience or attendance to verbal instructions from adults. Aboriginal children were also expected to be aware of others' needs and not to make a fuss about minor injuries or upsets. Another significant difference was that the Aboriginal children were reluctant to be seen to make a mistake – they liked to practise a task before being asked to speak or act publicly.

As a result, the Aboriginal students tended to be more independent in the classroom and less attentive to the teacher than non-Aboriginal students. They were more likely to help other students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, took longer to complete work and were shy to speak up in class in case they made a mistake. The teacher was unaware of these differences in expectations and interpreted the Aboriginal students' behaviour as being disobedient or uncooperative or lacking in ability. It appeared that the Aboriginal students got into trouble from the teacher more often and received less positive feedback than other students.

These findings are supported by another study of classroom interactions between teachers and Aboriginal students (Hatton, Munns and Nicklin Dent 1996). The study found:

- ❑ Aboriginal students were identified more often as troublemakers and the discipline applied was more severe than for other students
- ❑ teachers spent less time with them in class and the time spent was used more for management and caring for the children than for instruction
- ❑ the differences which students brought to the classroom – knowledge, language, values and skills – were ignored by teachers who believed that all students came with equivalent competencies and should be treated the same
- ❑ the curriculum focused on the knowledge of the dominant group in society and alternative knowledge was largely ignored.

Evidence shows that in addition to this lack of cross-cultural understanding, some teachers are also perpetrators of direct racism. Partington, in an overview of research into ethnicity and education in Australia (Partington 1998b), argues that:

Teachers can be the foundation of racism, particularly at a time when there appears to be more public acceptance of negativity towards ethnic minority group members. In their day-to-day teaching, the way they interact with students can be quite hurtful.

Not once during my twelve years of formal schooling did any of my teachers or anyone else in the school system affirm my Aboriginality. Instead I grew up feeling ashamed of my Aboriginal heritage and I felt pressured to stress that I was only part Aboriginal.

Terry Ngarritjan-Kessaris, 1995.

At high school the other kids identify me as a 'bloody Turk', 'Gaddafi', or 'Arab, crazy Arab'. The teacher showed me as an example of ethnic families having many children in front of the class, but my family is a very small one.

Boy of Turkish background, quoted in Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission *Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia*, 1991.

Examples of teachers' racist behaviour reported in the study included:

- ❑ telling jokes that devalue particular cultural or ethnic groups
- ❑ labelling students of particular ethnic or cultural groups so that they are perceived according to stereotypes rather than as individuals
- ❑ giving less help and attention to students of particular cultural groups than to others
- ❑ making demeaning comments about particular cultural or ethnic groups
- ❑ refusing to make allowances for English language support needs for students from non-English speaking backgrounds
- ❑ encouraging students from particular groups to leave school because teachers believe they have little hope of success in schooling, based on a stereotyped view of that group.

Further instances of racist behaviour on the part of teachers are provided in Groome and Hamilton's report (1995). Aboriginal students in the study experienced racism both from fellow students and from teachers, but whereas they generally knew how to deal with racism from their peers, they were often distressed and not sure of what to do when the racism came from teachers. The kinds of racism they experienced from teachers included:

- ❑ racial abuse and vilification
- ❑ negative comments about their families and their behaviours on the basis of race
- ❑ prejudicial treatment
- ❑ being made to feel personally guilty for getting extra money and special benefits.

In a study of Asian girls' experiences in high school (Matthews 1996), one girl described an incident where a teacher allowed racist assumptions to be openly discussed and promoted by students in the classroom:

And then she started saying stuff about how Asians were taking over Australia and we took all their jobs, and every...all the other girls started saying how we were all bad and everything like that. One of the girls made the point that there was this Asian family that lived near them, and when they first moved in they were poor and after a while they were rich, she was saying how everybody was taking their jobs and it is not fair that we get everything better than they do, and that we are a lot richer, and they don't think...understand. But the thing is that the teacher did not stop them. It was just like constant abuse and after that, every single day it was like...pick on Asians.

In the same study another student described being treated differently by a teacher because she was Asian:

...she did not really talk directly to us, she only talked directly to the Australians and that made us really angry and we felt left out. She did not ask us any questions...but she mainly asked Australians. And when she is using names in the classrooms she did not use us at all.

When the student confronted the teacher later about the situation, the teacher explained that she thought that the students didn't need any help because they were bright and always quiet in class. The author's conclusion is that the cultural assumptions regarding Asians held by the teacher led her to neglect the students.

Teachers have a responsibility to ensure that their own behaviour is not racist, they must also ensure that teaching resources and classroom

discussions do not perpetuate racist myths and cultural stereotypes that may be promoted in the media. Teachers must also have high expectations of all students regardless of their cultural or linguistic background.

Cultural diversity and the school climate

Developing a school culture which values cultural diversity is important for ensuring healthy relationships and an environment conducive to learning. Education programs that are based on the assumption that the cultural practices of the dominant group in society are the best and only way to operate have the effect of marginalising students from minority groups and of diminishing their participation in and outcomes from schooling.

Issues of identity are critical for students. They need to be able to affirm their own cultural and group identities and explore their identity as members of Australian society. Curriculum and resources need to reflect the diversity of the school and of Australian society in order to ensure that all students can feel they belong. Teachers need to be able to build on the cultural skills that students bring to the classroom.

The importance of culture and identity for a sense of belonging is illustrated in one woman's recollections (Ngarritjan-Kessarar 1995) of her growing up as an Aboriginal child at school:

School processes and attitudes of teachers and students that purvey middle class western values as 'right' in all contexts, are explicitly and implicitly disparaging of Aboriginal people. The school curriculum provided a hidden curriculum in terms of my Aboriginal identity. Much of the norms and values portrayed in what I read and heard from 'White' teachers bore little relation to what I experienced at home...in learning to read and write I learnt of the disrespect with which Aborigines were held by 'White' society. Schooling constantly forced upon me a choice between education and my identity as an Aboriginal.

Further examples of the importance of culture for young people are provided in a Victorian study on education for girls from language backgrounds other than English (Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multicultural and Migrant Education 1986). The girls interviewed for the study believed that the maintenance of their culture and language was very important although the study also showed that the girls saw some of their traditions and values changing as their cultures evolved in response to a new place and a new time.

For many Aboriginal students, the differences between the culture and expectations of the home and the school, combined with experiences of racism, can result in a cycle of resistance and school failure being established. Several studies support the view that many Aboriginal students feel that schooling is not relevant, that they are constantly subjected to racist treatment and their response is truancy and withdrawal.

The role of the school in supporting these students in developing a sense of identity is very important. In their study of Aboriginal adolescents, Groome and Hamilton argue:

For many Aboriginal young people, the school becomes the critical factor in their search for identity. If they feel accepted and affirmed in their schools, they will have a much stronger chance of developing a strong cultural identity. If the school is just another area of pressure and stress, it is often dismissed as irrelevant and not worth continuing with (p 33).⁸

A South Australian study (Sloniec and del Vecchio 1992) investigated cross-cultural tensions in eight schools with diverse populations. The

study found that if students from language backgrounds other than English felt alienated from the school climate and policies, they tended to form a 'counter culture', reinforced by the formation of strong friendship groups based on ethnicity. It was also found that students who identified strongly with their cultural background perceived hostility coming from teachers and Anglo-Australian students.

While it is important that teachers take account of the cultural diversity within their classrooms and do not assume that all students come to school with identical values and understandings, it is equally important that teachers avoid making cultural assumptions based on stereotypes of particular groups.

In Brennan's study, the Western Australian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group reported that there was a popular misconception amongst non-Aboriginal people that Aboriginal people were either completely assimilated into non-Aboriginal culture or had maintained a traditional lifestyle and forfeited their right to participate in mainstream society. This view does not take account of the diversity in lifestyles and cultures among Aboriginal people and can lead to teachers making generalisations about the abilities and interests of Aboriginal children.

Partington, in the study on ethnicity and education in Australia (1998b), argues that teachers, in their desire to be inclusive of the backgrounds of all students, can unwittingly reinforce entrenched views of ethnic minority groups:

Multicultural displays and assignments are particularly fraught with the potential to produce such perceptions. Rather than researching the great diversity which exists in any society, individual members of different ethnic groups are represented in grass skirts, grass huts, teepees, igloos, with spears, bows and arrows, and so on (p 185).

An example of the dangers of ethnic stereotyping is provided in a study of a strategy adopted by a high school in order to address the supposed needs of its ethnically diverse population (Perera and Pugliese 1998). The school produced a series of 'ESL Student Information Sheets' which offered ethno-cultural profiles of various groups of students from language backgrounds other than English based on cultural assumptions that reproduced racist stereotypes.

Acceptance of cultural diversity is critical for building a climate of respect and cooperation among students. Where racial tensions are present in schools, students may mix only with others of the same ethnic or cultural background. Antagonism and fights between groups of students of different backgrounds may be the result.

School community relations

School community relations will be damaged if a school is perceived to be racist or to exclude the participation of groups from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Parents and members from those communities may be unwilling to support school activities and unlikely to have confidence in the schooling system. The level of involvement of parents and caregivers from diverse cultural backgrounds in school activities is also often affected by the availability and willingness of staff to support their needs. Typically, those schools offering greater levels of support have the most success in attracting parent and community involvement.

A report *Truancy and Exclusion*, (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training 1996) found evidence to suggest that when partnerships with parents do not exist or break down, then the student most at risk of deviating from the accepted pattern of school responsibilities will do so. The Committee further found

in its inquiry into school violence that schools which involved parents had the greatest success in managing student behaviour.

All members of a school community have an interest in eliminating racism from the learning environment and in developing a climate which facilitates educational success. Schools which fail to do so, fail their communities and particularly those students most in need of support.

The effects of racism in schools

Racism in schools has damaging effects both on individuals and the learning and working environment. Racism generates tensions within school communities which distort cultural understanding and narrow the educational experience of all students.

Students who experience racism talk of having reduced levels of self-confidence and feelings of insecurity or failure. Students who feel that their culture and identity are not valued may also experience reduced levels of self-esteem and self-worth and feel that they have no place in the schooling system. These feelings may lead to a rejection of their own culture, language and values and a subsequent loss of identity.

Racist abuse and harassment can cause students to be fearful of school and withdraw from other students and school activities. If the school does not address discriminatory attitudes and actions, both students and teachers will feel frustrated and helpless and that they have no rights to fair treatment.

Students who have been subject to racism are frequently unable to concentrate in class and may be unwilling to participate or take risks in learning for fear of retribution or ridicule if they make a mistake. Evidence also suggests that students who are disaffected with school are less likely to attend school regularly and are likely to drop out of school earlier than other groups of students. Racism has been linked to diminished morale, lower productivity and an increase in the incidence of stress and absenteeism.

While all people are affected by racism, evidence shows that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and those from language backgrounds other than English most consistently experience racism within Australian schools.

Studies on the participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students show that they have lower participation rates compared to other groups of students and indicate a clear link between disengagement with schooling and low rates of attendance. In 1994, data from the *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* showed that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students drop out of school in much greater proportion than other students. Furthermore, they continue to be the least likely group to complete Year 12.

Together, the lower participation rates, behavioural problems and feelings of alienation that result from the presence of racism in schools impact on educational outcomes. Education depends on the regular sustained attendance of each student and their ability to participate effectively in the classroom. In a racist learning environment, this balance is disrupted and educational outcomes are limited as a result. Educational outcomes for individual students and student groups who are subject to racism may include lower levels of educational achievement and lower rates of participation in post-school education and training.

INDICATORS

Refusal to co-operate with people from different groups

- refusing to work with people of particular cultural or linguistic backgrounds
- refusing to play with or sit next to students from diverse cultural and linguistic groups
- excluding colleagues from social groups based on their ethnicity
- excluding students from groups based on their ethnicity or language
- discriminating against someone on the basis of the cultural or linguistic background of their relatives, friends or other associates

Racist propaganda

- wearing badges, insignia or clothes with slogans against particular cultural or linguistic groups
- writing graffiti or slogans directed against particular cultural or linguistic groups
- promoting publications opposed to particular cultural or linguistic groups
- promoting racist attitudes and intolerance through the Internet and other electronic media

Racist comments, ridicule or abuse (verbal or written)

- making fun of clothes, food or physical appearance of people from diverse cultural and linguistic groups
- using derogatory language or terms directed against particular groups
- ridiculing or mimicking the accents or gestures of people from different cultural or linguistic groups
- making stereotyped statements about particular cultural or linguistic groups
- telling people to 'go back where they came from'
- telling jokes directed against particular cultural or linguistic groups

Recognising racism and

Educational outcomes

- lower school participation rates for students from some cultural and linguistic groups
- lower literacy and numeracy outcomes for students from some cultural and linguistic groups
- lower rates of attendance, participation and retention in education for students from some cultural and linguistic groups
- barriers to employment and further education pathways
- gifts and talents of students from some cultural and linguistic groups are not recognised and/or developed

Individual happiness and self-confidence

- lower self-esteem, feelings of failure
- withdrawing from others, fear of school in students who have been subject to racism
- teachers who are subject to racism losing confidence and enjoyment in teaching
- feeling anxious or depressed

School climate

- no friendship or co-operation between students from different cultural or linguistic groups
- frequent fights in playground between students from different cultural or linguistic groups
- students from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds form groups in self-defence
- antagonism between staff of different cultural or linguistic groups
- tension in learning and working environments

Judgements based on stereotypes

- making judgements about a person's language ability according to his or her accent
- making assumptions about people's abilities or preferences based on their language or cultural background
- making assumptions about values of people from particular cultural or linguistic groups
- allocating tasks (to teachers or students) according to their language or culture

and its effects in schools

EFFECTS

Cultural identity

- rejection of own culture and parental values
- students not speaking first language for fear of ridicule
- confusion about own identity

School/community relations

- lack of confidence by parents or community from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the school and education system
- parents from diverse cultural and linguistic groups unwilling to participate in school
- lack of empowerment for parents from diverse cultural and linguistic groups

Student behaviour

- silent, withdrawn, not engaging with learning
- unable to concentrate in class
- unable to take risks with learning
- poor school attendance
- aggressive or violent reactions by students who are victims of racism
- disruptive behaviour

Non-inclusive curriculum or teaching practices

- teaching programs that assume the perspectives of the dominant group as the norm
- using curriculum resources that do not reflect the perspectives of diverse cultural and linguistic groups
- using examples that reinforce stereotyped views of particular cultural or linguistic groups
- teachers having lower expectations of students from some cultural or linguistic groups
- not acknowledging the cultural and linguistic diversity among students
- inappropriate placement of students in low ability groups on the basis of their culture or language background
- not giving awards or recognition to students of particular cultural or linguistic groups
- not providing for the religious diversity of the school
- giving low priority to language and cultural programs in timetable

INDICATORS

Discriminatory policies and procedures

- ignoring or not responding to incidents or complaints of racism
- not informing students, parents and staff of their rights in relation to racism
- having parent and community organisations that are not representative of the diversity of the school community
- not providing access to interpreters or translations for parents
- discouraging the involvement of parents and community members from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in school activities or decision making processes
- not allowing students to speak their first language at school
- forcing students to take part in activities in conflict with their cultural or religious beliefs
- forcible anglicising of students' names
- applying more severe discipline measures for students from some cultural and linguistic backgrounds than others
- having significantly higher rates of suspension or exclusion for students of some cultural or linguistic groups than others
- condoning racist behaviour or practices or allowing them to go unchallenged

Physical assault and harassment

- students bullying others from different cultural and linguistic groups
- intimidating behaviour towards people from other cultural or linguistic groups e.g. stealing, threatening, stalking
- fights against or physical assaults on others from different cultural or linguistic groups



Countering racism

The role of school education

Education must answer the question as to what for and why we live together and give everyone, throughout life, the ability to play an active part in envisioning the future of society. The education system has therefore the explicit or implicit task of preparing everyone for this social role.

UNESCO, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, 1996, p. 61.

Schools play a vital role in preparing our children and young people for effective participation and responsible citizenship in Australian society. As such, they are uniquely placed to contribute towards the development of a society free from racism.

There are significant responsibilities for schools in relation to countering racism. They have a responsibility to provide an inclusive working and learning environment that affords all students and staff the opportunity to achieve their full potential. They must also respond to the specific needs of students, staff and community from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Finally, they are responsible for preparing students to contribute towards the development of a just and harmonious Australian society.

Providing an inclusive working and learning environment

There are legal and moral imperatives for ensuring that the learning and working environment is free of racist behaviour and that policies and practices neither directly nor indirectly discriminate on the basis of culture, language, ethnicity or religion. Specific policy measures for countering racism, such as anti-racism and anti-discrimination policies and complaint mechanisms, need to be implemented to ensure that a supportive environment is created. Members of the whole school community – students, staff, parents and caregivers – need to be aware of their own rights and responsibilities in relation to racial discrimination and be assisted to access complaint mechanisms.

Schools need to be positive about diversity and create an environment that makes it possible for everyone to contribute. The range of values, perceptions and ways of interacting with the world that all members of the school community bring must be both acknowledged and accepted. Only in an inclusive working and learning environment, will effective partnerships be built between students, staff and parents and will entrenched prejudiced attitudes be broken down.

Meeting the needs of students, staff and community from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Schools across Australia vary enormously in the degree of cultural diversity among their communities. Some schools are highly culturally and linguistically diverse while others ostensibly reflect only one or a few cultures. While these variations will affect the level of need for specific purpose programs for culturally and linguistically diverse groups, schools must ensure that they accurately profile and meet the needs of all members within their respective communities.

Particular barriers to participation in the learning and working environment exist for Aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islander people and people from language backgrounds other than English. Schools with students, staff and parents or caregivers from these groups must put strategies in place to both identify and address their particular needs. Curriculum, learning resources and assessment practices must be culturally inclusive to meet the needs of all students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Proficiency in Standard Australian English is essential to educational success in Australia. The provision of quality programs to develop this proficiency is a particular responsibility for education systems. Whilst recognising the primacy of Standard Australian English, schools must foster positive attitudes towards the diversity of home languages that many students bring to the classroom. Being able to speak one's home

language is essential to one's own identity and security. Research has shown that students who continue to speak and develop their first language are assisted in both their conceptual development and in the development of their second language skills.

Staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds bring a wide range of perspectives and skills to the working and learning environment. Recruitment practices, training and development and leadership programs must be inclusive of the needs of all staff as well as recognise and build on the particular skills that they possess.

Similarly, strategies must be put in place to ensure that parent and community involvement represents the diversity of the school. Parents and community members from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may require specific programs and initiatives to encourage and support their involvement in school activities. This may include the provision of translations and interpreters as well as information and support services to facilitate cultural understanding and knowledge of Australian education systems and practices.

Educating for a just and harmonious Australian society

One of education's essential tasks is to enable people to understand themselves and others through better understanding of the world. Students must be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively as members of Australian society and to contribute towards the development of shared values and a common Australian identity. As such, schools have a vital role to play in assisting students to understand their own cultural identity, whilst providing points of reference to recognise and value Australia's cultural diversity and the place of Australia within the world.

To do this, teachers must teach fairly and accurately about Australian society and history. They must assist students to critically examine the world around them and to reflect on their own beliefs and ways of responding. If racist beliefs are to be challenged in a significant way, students must be assisted to understand different perspectives and contemporary issues and to imagine how things might be different and better.

Stereotyped views about people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds must be challenged within education settings. Teachers must take account of the cultural diversity that exists in their classrooms and avoid making assumptions about the ability and behaviour of individuals or culturally and linguistically diverse groups of students. They must confront the negative ethnic stereotypes and attitudes that are conveyed through the media, in popular culture and some curriculum materials and explain the historical, cultural or religious background to the various views held in society.

Schools must be places that enable our children and young people to better understand themselves, others and the world around them by developing cross-cultural understanding and awareness of the attitudes that allow racism to flourish. Ultimately, they must be places that assist children and young people to develop informed opinions about contemporary Australian issues and prepare them for effective participation in Australian society and the world at large.

If one is to understand others, one must first know oneself. To give children and young people an accurate view of the world, education..., must first help them to discover who they are. Only then will they genuinely be able to put themselves in other people's shoes and understand their reactions. Developing such empathy at school, bears fruit in terms of social behaviour throughout life.

UNESCO, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, 1996, p. 61.

For information on international approaches to countering racism in education, refer to www.racismnoway.com.au/together/international/



Framework for countering racism in Australian schools

This framework for countering racism aims to assist Australian schools and education systems in developing or further implementing strategies to counter racism.

The framework recognises three pre-conditions for effective education to counter racism:

1. Action must occur at the system, school and individual level

The framework recognises the need for education systems, schools and their communities to work co-operatively in countering racism and outlines their responsibilities in this area. Education systems, schools and individual members of the school community all have a part to play in this process.

Responsibilities

The broad responsibilities of education systems, schools and individual members of the school community are outlined on the following pages.

Education systems

Individual education systems and educational bureaucracies are responsible for the development, review and evaluation of policies, strategies and curriculum initiatives to counter racism in their jurisdiction.

Schools

Schools implement system-wide policies, practices and programs to counter racism as well as develop specific initiatives to meet the particular needs of their school communities. Principals have a particular responsibility to ensure the implementation of whole school strategies for countering racism. They must provide strong leadership in creating a school climate which supports students and staff from all backgrounds, values cultural diversity and rejects racism in all its forms.

Individual members of the school community

A range of strategies can be employed by teachers and other school staff, students, parents and community members to counter racism in Australian schools.

2. A cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation is required

Schools and education systems must employ a cycle of continuous improvement involving planning, implementation and evaluation. The development and delivery of strategies to counter racism in response to government policy and the needs of school communities are one part of this process. Evaluation of the relevance and outcomes of the strategies implemented is also critical to determine their success and to inform future planning.







Planning and evaluation guide

A planning and evaluation guide has been developed to assist schools and systems to identify their needs in relation to planning strategies to counter racism and to evaluate their success.

3. Implementation must occur across the range of school activities

The framework is based on the premise that to bring about change in society, education to counter racism needs to be implemented across the full range of a school's activities. Six areas for action have been identified as a focus for activities at both the school and system level:

Areas for action

-  Policies and guidelines
-  Curriculum and pedagogy
-  Training and development
-  Student support and development
-  Parent and community involvement
-  Monitoring and reporting

For more information about programs, policies and practices in each of the education systems across Australia, refer to www.racismnoway.com.au/together/programs_and_strategies





Framework for countering racism




RESPONSIBILITIES

Education systems

Schools







-  Principals
-  School executive

Members of the school community

-  Teachers and other school staff
-  Students
-  Parents, caregivers and community

PLAN • IMPLEMENT • EVALUATE

AREAS FOR ACTION

-  Policies and guidelines
-  Curriculum and pedagogy
-  Training and development
-  Student support and development
-  Parent and community involvement
-  Monitoring and reporting

Responsibilities of education systems

AREAS FOR ACTION

Policies and guidelines

- Review institutional policies, procedures and practices to ensure they do not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against any individual or group on the basis of their race, ethnicity, culture, language or religion.
- Establish policies and guidelines which clearly articulate principles and procedures to counter racism including clear procedures for the resolution of complaints of racism.
- Review recruitment, selection and promotion procedures to ensure that they are culturally inclusive and encourage the employment of people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Establish policies that support the more equitable participation of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in schooling.

Curriculum and pedagogy

- Provide curriculum and resources which challenge racist attitudes and behaviours and increase students' understanding of racism.
- Provide curriculum and resources which recognise and value the unique place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, languages and societies.
- Provide programs to support students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Review curriculum, assessment practices and resources to ensure that they are inclusive of the educational needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Training and development

- Provide training programs in valuing diversity, cross-cultural understanding and strategies to counter racism.
- Provide support and training for teachers in culturally inclusive teaching practice and program design.
- Provide training for staff in supporting students who are involved in racist incidents.
- Enhance workplace productivity and service provision by fully utilising the skills, talents and varying perspectives of staff from diverse backgrounds.
- Provide leadership and management training to staff from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Student support and development

- Develop guidelines for student representative bodies to ensure they are inclusive and provide a balanced representation.
- Provide training for student representative bodies in cross-cultural understanding and strategies to counter racism.
- Provide opportunities for students to become involved in developing and evaluating system-wide initiatives to counter racism.
- Provide student support services that are appropriate for culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

Parent and community involvement

- Encourage representation of parent and community groups from diverse cultural and language backgrounds in the development and evaluation of policies, guidelines and procedures.
- Provide support to schools to ensure they are able to communicate effectively with their diverse communities, including the use of interpreters, translations and community support staff.
- Encourage schools and their communities to celebrate key community events.
- Establish community consultation and advisory mechanisms on racism in education and barriers to participation for identified student groups.

Monitoring and reporting

- Develop system-wide procedures for monitoring and reporting on initiatives to counter racism.
- Monitor the educational outcomes for identified groups of students compared to those of the population as a whole.
- Monitor the incidence and resolution of complaints of racism within systems and schools.
- Monitor the participation of staff in training programs designed to counter racism.

Education systems and schools

SCHOOLS

- ❑ Implement school policies, procedures and practices that do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against any individual or group on the basis of their race, ethnicity, culture, language or religion.
 - ❑ Implement initiatives to ensure that all members of the school community – staff, students, parents or caregivers - understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to racist behaviour and in contributing towards the development of schools which value diversity and are free of racism.
 - ❑ Ensure effective mechanisms are in place for reporting on and responding to incidents of racism and that all staff, students and parents are aware of the procedures and how to access them.
 - ❑ Involve students, parents and community members in policy development and review.
-
- ❑ Implement teaching and learning programs which challenge racist attitudes and behaviour and increase students' understanding of the effects of racism and discrimination.
 - ❑ Implement teaching and learning programs to increase students' understandings of Reconciliation, multiculturalism and cultural diversity.
 - ❑ Evaluate all teaching and learning materials and assessment practices to ensure they are not biased and are inclusive of the needs of all students.
 - ❑ Implement teaching and learning programs which address the specific cultural and linguistic needs of students.
-
- ❑ Incorporate whole school education programs to counter racism into school training and development plans.
 - ❑ Encourage all staff to participate in valuing diversity and cross-cultural awareness training and to examine their own behaviour for discrimination.
 - ❑ Promote good practice through supporting staff to share expertise in strategies to counter racism.
 - ❑ Encourage teachers to participate in inclusive curriculum training programs and to critically evaluate their own teaching practice for cultural inclusiveness.
-
- ❑ Encourage the participation of all students on student representative bodies so that they reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the school.
 - ❑ Encourage students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to participate in student leadership and development programs.
 - ❑ Provide opportunities for students from all backgrounds to discuss issues of racism, cultural diversity and Reconciliation.
 - ❑ Provide student support services that are appropriate for culturally and linguistically diverse groups and information on educational pathways that is free of cultural stereotyping.
 - ❑ Promote good examples of student involvement in developing successful initiatives to counter racism.
-
- ❑ Provide information to parents and community members on their rights and responsibilities in relation to racism and education to counter racism.
 - ❑ Draw on community resources and skills in the development of activities to counter racism, school planning and decision-making processes.
 - ❑ Use interpreters, translations and community support staff in partnership with teachers to provide information to parents in a language they understand.
 - ❑ Encourage the participation of parents and community members of all backgrounds in all school activities including activities to counter racism, school planning and decision-making processes and representation on parent and community bodies.
-
- ❑ Investigate and review whole school data and information relating to the progress of identified groups of students to inform development of teaching and learning programs.
 - ❑ Determine responsibilities for monitoring and reporting on racism and the incidence and resolution of complaints within the school.
 - ❑ Conduct periodic assessments of the effectiveness of parent and community consultation mechanisms.
 - ❑ Seek feedback on effectiveness of education initiatives to counter racism and report on outcomes.

AREAS FOR ACTION

Policies and guidelines

Curriculum and pedagogy

Training and development

Student support and development

Parent and community involvement

Monitoring and reporting

Responsibilities of members

TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL STAFF

Know your rights and responsibilities

- 1 Reflect on your own opinions and views on Australian identity.
- 2 Be aware of your own rights and responsibilities in relation to racial discrimination.

Challenge racism whenever it occurs

- 1 Teach students what racist behaviour is and set clear expectations in terms of non-racist behaviour.
- 2 Challenge racist attitudes conveyed in the community, media and in popular culture.
- 3 When you see racist behaviour deal with it immediately wherever and whenever it occurs.
- 4 Teach students about their rights and responsibilities in relation to racial discrimination.
- 5 Encourage students to report racist behaviour.

Be a positive role model

- 1 Model inclusive, positive, non-racist behaviour in the classroom, playground and staff room.
- 2 Be consistent and fair in applying school policies and procedures.
- 3 Foster sensitivity to other people's practices and beliefs.
- 4 Share information about your own cultural background.

Assess your own attitudes, behaviour and training needs

- 1 Identify your own training needs in relation to education to counter racism, cultural understanding and inclusive teaching practice.
- 2 Be open to staff development opportunities which aim to increase cross-cultural understanding.
- 3 Obtain factual information about racism and its effects.
- 4 Consider debates on topical issues such as Reconciliation and immigration and form your own opinions based on the facts.
- 5 Evaluate your own teaching practice and

teaching and learning materials for bias and sensitivity.

Recognise and value cultural diversity

- 1 Establish classroom practices that reflect and value the perspectives of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- 2 Find out about the cultural and language backgrounds of the students in your school.
- 3 Treat students as individuals – don't make assumptions based on stereotypes of particular groups.
- 4 Learn to pronounce students' names correctly.
- 5 Encourage students to express their own cultural identity or identities and maintain their home language.
- 6 Allow students to use their first language.
- 7 Discuss the importance of Reconciliation and cultural diversity.

Create an inclusive learning environment

- 1 Seek out, use and share learning resources which include the perspectives of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- 2 Incorporate material which challenges racist attitudes and facilitates cultural understanding into teaching and learning activities where appropriate.
- 3 Make sure students from all backgrounds feel confident to participate in class.
- 4 Seek language support for students who need it.
- 5 Encourage positive interaction between students of different backgrounds.
- 6 Make sure assessment tasks do not discriminate against some groups of students.
- 7 Ensure verbal instructions are easily understood by all students.
- 8 Recognise Aboriginal English as an acceptable variation of Australian English.
- 9 Refer to all students and groups living in Australia as 'Australian'.

Encourage the involvement of parents and community members from all backgrounds

- 1 Encourage parents and caregivers from all communities to participate in school activities.
- 2 Make use of translations, interpreters and language support staff.
- 3 Seek feedback from parents and caregivers in relation to the effectiveness of classroom activities and their child's progress.

of the school community

STUDENTS

Know your rights and responsibilities

- Be aware of your own rights and responsibilities in relation to racial discrimination.
- Think about your own behaviour to make sure that you don't discriminate against others.

Take a firm stand against racism

- Don't accept racist opinions, challenge them.
- Refuse to participate in racist behaviour.
- If you hear other students telling a racist joke, point out to them that it might hurt other people's feelings.
- Tell teachers if you see students bullying others or calling them racist names.
- Report to teachers any racist material you find.

Learn about other cultures and share what you know

- Find out about other cultures and languages.
- Be proud of your own culture and home language.
- Learn about the cultures of others in your school and share information about your own culture.
- Try to include students from different backgrounds in classroom and playground activities.
- Share with your family and friends what you know about cultural diversity and racism.
- Join in activities that celebrate cultural diversity and Reconciliation.

Form your own opinions

- Think about what you read, see on television and hear on the radio about different groups of people – is it fair?
- Make up your own mind about issues such as Reconciliation and immigration and base your opinion on the facts.
- Challenge stereotypes about different groups of people.

PARENTS, CAREGIVERS AND COMMUNITY

Know your rights and responsibilities

- Reflect on your own attitudes and behaviour towards people from different backgrounds.
- Ask for information in a language you understand.
- Ensure you have information about school policies, curriculum and school activities.

Be a positive role model

- Take a firm stand against racism.
- Model inclusive, positive behaviour.
- Be open to other people's beliefs and practices.
- Try to include people from different backgrounds in your circle of friends.
- Ensure your child knows their rights and responsibilities in relation to non-racist behaviour.
- Encourage your child to challenge racist behaviour and attitudes.
- Encourage your child to be interested in other cultures and languages.
- Encourage your child to be proud of their own background and heritage and to value those of others.
- Encourage your child to use their first language.
- Encourage your child to practise speaking, reading and writing Standard Australian English.

Get involved in school activities

- Be willing to participate in school activities.
- Become involved in school meetings, planning and decision making processes.
- Join in activities designed to counter racism and celebrate cultural diversity.

Planning and evaluation guide

The planning and evaluation guide is a tool that school communities can use to evaluate how well their school is working towards achieving a racism free environment and to identify areas where strategies need to be developed to counter racism.

The guide describes the developing stages of a school working towards achieving an environment free from racism. It may be used by school communities, individuals or groups as well as by education systems.

Five levels of achievement within each of the areas for action are provided. Level 1 describes a school at

the beginning stages of developing programs to counter racism while Level 5 describes a school implementing successful counter racism initiatives. The levels are cumulative, with each level including statements made at previous levels, eg, a Level 3 description incorporates statements made at Levels 1 and 2 and so on.

Descriptions for each level of achievement and examples which show the scope of each of the areas for action are provided in the guide. A planning and evaluation proforma is also provided for use by schools.

AREAS FOR ACTION				
		Policies and guidelines	Curriculum and pedagogy	Training and development
LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT	5	All policies and guidelines are culturally inclusive, support a learning environment free of racism and are used to inform planning, implementation, reporting and evaluation processes.	Curriculum and teaching practice address the dynamics and dimensions of racism to achieve a learning environment free of racism. They enable students to achieve their best educational outcomes.	Training and development programs equip the school community with the knowledge and skills needed to sustain an inclusive learning and working environment free of racism.
	4	Responsibilities for implementing policies which aim to counter racism are clearly identified. Staff, students and parents are aware of these policies and associated complaint mechanisms and are supported in using them.	Curriculum and teaching practice incorporate strategies to counter racism and meet the particular learning needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Training and development programs that incorporate whole school approaches to countering racism are accessed by all staff. Programs that equip teachers with skills to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds are provided.
	3	Policies and guidelines are non-discriminatory and procedures to address racism are implemented within whole school community.	Curriculum includes programs to develop students' understanding of racism and of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community. Teachers use a range of media and teaching strategies to cater for the diversity of student learning needs.	Training and development programs which develop skills in dealing with racism are provided. Training and development programs on teaching strategies for students from diverse backgrounds are accessed by some teachers.
	2	Policies to counter racism and associated complaint mechanisms exist but are not used effectively to address racism.	Curriculum includes the perspectives of Australia's diverse cultural and linguistic communities. Teachers have some awareness of the diversity of student learning needs.	Training and development programs relating to understanding racism and cultural and linguistic diversity are available and accessed by some teaching and other staff.
	1	Policies that support Aboriginal education and education for a culturally diverse society exist but do not include understanding of racism. Incidents of racism are not recognised.	Curriculum materials which include information about the cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia are available. Some teachers use them in teaching and learning programs.	Training and development programs relating to Aboriginal education and education for a culturally diverse society are available and accessed by some teachers.
Examples		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal education policy Anti-racism policy Behaviour management policies Complaint mechanisms Cultural diversity policy Employment and personnel policies ESL education policy Language education policy Multicultural education policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal education programs ESL education programs Language education programs Multicultural education programs Resources Student assessment Syllabus and curriculum materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-service teacher training Induction programs Non-teaching staff training and development

How to use the planning and evaluation guide

1. Read carefully the description provided at each level for the six areas for action.
2. For each of the areas for action, determine which level of achievement best describes your school environment. e.g. Level 2 for policies and guidelines, Level 3 for curriculum and pedagogy and so on.
3. Plan and develop strategies to counter racism based on this assessment using the planning and evaluation proforma. Note that while schools will need to be working across all of the six areas for action, it is acknowledged that greater emphasis may be given to some areas for action than others at particular stages in the process.
4. After implementation, re-assess the school environment using the planning and evaluation guide.

AREAS FOR ACTION

Student support and development	Parent and community involvement	Monitoring and reporting
All students are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to contribute towards a racism free society and to participate effectively in a culturally and linguistically diverse society.	The participation of parents and community members from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds in all aspects of school life enhances student learning outcomes and sustains a learning and working environment free of racism.	Information on student performance and data on the incidence of racism are fully used to inform planning, delivery and the development of strategies to counter racism and maximise student learning outcomes.
Student support and development programs enable students to contribute to a school environment free from racism. Programs are developed with input from students and student representative groups.	Parents and community members from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are involved in the full range of school policy and program development and review.	Schools report on progress in developing and implementing strategies to counter racism, including resolution of complaints and implementation of strategies related to the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and multicultural education.
Student support programs assist students who have been subjected to racism and provide perpetrators with appropriate counselling. Student development programs equip students with the knowledge and skills to recognise and deal with incidents of racism.	Parents and community members from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are consulted on school policies and practices which contribute to countering racism.	Data on complaints of racism is collected and monitored. Data on the performance of students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds is collected.
Student support programs cater for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Student development programs aim to equip students with an understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity.	Parents and community members from some cultural and linguistic backgrounds are involved in school activities that recognise and celebrate Australia's diversity.	Data on the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and educational needs of students is collected and used in planning and programming.
Student support and development programs are available but do not take into account the specific needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Parent and community involvement is sought only in relation to individual student behaviour, learning outcomes or key community events.	Data is collected on the diverse backgrounds of students to inform the development of the school's community profile.
Student development programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student leadership training • Student representative councils • Youth forums Student support programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers advice • Counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community events • Community involvement • Parent participation programs • School councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability processes • Complaints resolution • Planning and reporting processes • Student learning outcomes

DESCRIPTIONS

Planning and evaluation proforma

AREAS FOR ACTION				
	Policies and guidelines	Curriculum and pedagogy	Training and development	
LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT	5			
	▲			
	4			
	▲			
	3			
▲				
2				
▲				
1				

AREAS FOR ACTION

	Student support and development	Parent and community involvement	Monitoring and reporting

Appendices

Glossary

Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people	An Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander person is someone who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent 2. identifies as an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander person, 3. is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives or has lived.
Culture	<p>The sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, which is transmitted from one generation to another. (Macquarie Dictionary 1991)</p> <p>Refers to the system of beliefs, assumptions, sentiments and perspectives... which members of a group have in common and (their) embodiment in customs, routines, roles and rituals. (Education Queensland 1998)</p> <p>N.B. Researchers have cited over 160 definitions of culture. (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1998)</p>
Cultural and or linguistic group	A group of people, racially or historically related, having a common and distinctive culture, often including a common language (see also 'ethnic group').
Cultural (and linguistic) diversity	A description of a society composed of people from many different cultural and linguistic groups.
Cultural identity	A person's sense of self identity related to their notion of belonging to a particular cultural or ethnic group.
Direct (overt) racial discrimination	Occurs when one person or group of people receive less favourable treatment than another person or group in the same position would have received on the grounds of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1995)
Ethnicity	The identity of groups based on shared characteristics such as language, culture, history or geographic origin.
Ethnic community	In Australia, commonly applied to certain migrants (generally from language backgrounds other than English) and their Australian-born descendants who form a connected community.
Ethnic group	<p>A group of people, racially or historically related, having a common and distinctive culture.⁹ (Macquarie Dictionary 1991)</p> <p>In Australia, often used synonymously with 'ethnic community'. (see also 'cultural and linguistic group')</p>
Ethnic cleansing	The practice of forcibly removing (or even killing) a group of people from an area so that the people who remain all belong to the same group – so that, the area is 'ethnically pure'.
Ethnocentrism	The tendency to judge all other cultures by the norms and standards of one's own culture. (Racism. Stop it! Action 2000, Canada 1999)
Genocide	The planned extermination of a national or racial group. (Macquarie Dictionary 1991)
Indigenous	The term used by the United Nations in its recognition of the special or unique rights of 'first peoples' or 'first nations'.
Indigenous Australians	Indigenous Australians is the collective term used by the Commonwealth Government to refer to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people.

In this publication the term 'Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people' is generally used in preference to 'Indigenous', except where other texts, references or policy documents are quoted or referred to, in which case the language of the original text is retained.

Indirect (covert)
racial discrimination

Includes practices or policies that appear to be 'neutral' or 'fair' because they treat everyone in the same way but adversely affect a higher proportion of people of one racial, national or ethnic group. It can occur even when there is no intention to discriminate. (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1995)

Individual racism

The expression of racist attitudes or behaviours by individuals.

Institutional (or systemic)
racism

Occurs when institutions such as governments, legal, medical and education systems and businesses, discriminate against certain groups of people based on race, colour, ethnicity or national origin. Often unintentional, such racism occurs when the apparently non-discriminatory actions of the dominant culture have the effect of excluding or marginalising minority cultures. (McConnochie et. al. 1989)

Minority group

Used to describe any group of people which is disadvantaged, underprivileged, excluded, discriminated against or exploited. Sociologically, the concept does not refer to demographic numbers but to subordinate status in society. (Racism. Stop it! Action 2000, Canada 1999)

Multiculturalism

Australian multiculturalism is a term which recognises and celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It accepts and respects the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage within an overriding commitment to Australia and the basic structures and values of Australian democracy. It also refers to the strategies, policies and programs that are designed to:

- make our administrative, social and economic infrastructure more responsive to the rights, obligations and needs of our culturally diverse population;
- promote social harmony among the different cultural groups in our society;
- optimise the benefits of our cultural diversity for all Australians. (National Multicultural Advisory Council 1999)

People from English
speaking backgrounds

A number of terms are commonly used to describe people who speak English as their first language and come from English speaking communities. These include 'English speaking background', 'ESB', 'Anglo', 'Anglo-Celtic', 'Anglo-Australian' and 'British background'.

People from language
backgrounds other than English

A number of different terms are used to describe people who are migrants or the descendants of migrants to Australia and who speak a language other than English as their first language. In this publication, the term 'people from language backgrounds other than English' is preferred to 'non-English speaking background' or 'NESB', except where quoting from or referring to other texts, references or policy documents or where the acronym is used for brevity.

The terms 'migrant', 'overseas-born', 'ethnic communities', 'ethnic groups', 'diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds' or 'cultural (and linguistic) groups' are used where appropriate for the context. In other cases, reference to the specific cultural or linguistic group may be appropriate, such as Vietnamese, Chinese-Australian or Arabic speaking.

Prejudice

A body of unfounded opinions or attitudes relating to an individual or group that represent them in an unfavourable light. (Racism. Stop it! Action 2000, Canada 1999)

Race

The term 'race' is an artificial construct used to classify people on the basis of supposed physical and cultural similarities deriving from their

common descent. The Runnymede Trust (1993) provides a useful discussion of the word 'race':

The words 'race' and 'racial' are much used in modern society – in everyday conversation, as also in legislation and in the media. Phrases such as 'race relations', 'race row', 'racial equality', 'racial group', 'racial harmony' and so on are in frequent use. However, they are not at all satisfactory. They are remnants of a belief formed in previous centuries, now discredited, that human beings can be hierarchically categorised into distinct 'races' or 'racial groups' on the basis of physical appearance, and that each so-called race or group has distinctive cultural, personal and intellectual capabilities.

Modern science has shown that the biological category of race is meaningless when applied to the human species. Biologically, the human species shares a common gene pool, and there is much more genetic variation within each so-called racial group than between them (p 57).

Despite having no biological basis, the idea of distinct races still exists as a social construct. In many societies it is a basis of social action, a foundation of government policy and often a justification for distinctive treatment of one group by another. Divisions in society continue to be made along perceived racial lines and associated disadvantages exist for those groups who are assumed to be physically or culturally different from the dominant cultural group. Although there is no scientific evidence to support the existence of human races, human beings tend to assume racial categories and to take them seriously. They do so for social, not biological, reasons.¹⁰

Racism

1. the belief that human races have distinctive characteristics which determine their respective cultures, usually involving the idea that one's own race is superior and has the right to rule or dominate others
2. offensive or aggressive behaviour to members of another race stemming from such a belief
3. a policy or system of government and society based on it. (Macquarie Dictionary 1991)

An ideology that gives expression to myths about other racial and ethnic groups, that devalues and renders inferior those groups, that reflects and is perpetrated by deeply rooted historical, social, cultural and power inequalities in society. (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1998)

Racial harassment

Behaviour that offends, humiliates or intimidates and that targets a person or group because of their race.

Racial hatred (or vilification)

A public act based on the race, colour, national or ethnic origin of a person or group of people which is likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate. It can include racist graffiti, speeches, posters or abuse in public. (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1996)

Reconciliation

Is about building a new relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and the wider community, one that heals the pain of the past and ensures we all share fairly and equally in our national citizenship. (Commonwealth of Australia, *The Path to Reconciliation: Renewal of the Nation*, 1997)

Stereotyping

A generalised set of traits and characteristics attributed to a specific ethnic, national, cultural or racial group which gives rise to false expectations that individual members of the group will conform to these traits.

Xenophobia

Hatred or fear of foreigners or strangers or of their politics or culture. (Collins Dictionary of the English Language 1986)

National anti-racism in education taskforce

Project development

Racism. No way! was initiated by the Chief Executive Officers of education systems across Australia and developed by the national anti-racism in education taskforce.

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Members:

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Ms Mary Beattie Australian Capital Territory Department of Education and Community Services (1998)

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The project resources were written by Hanya Stefaniuk, Amanda Bourke and Eveline Mougialis.

Terms of reference

The specific terms of reference of the taskforce were:

1. to map and document the ways that school communities are developing and implementing anti-racism education
2. to develop a database holding information on policies, effective practice and resources relating to racism and racial discrimination which is readily and widely accessible, capable of operating as an information exchange, and readily updated with new data
3. to provide opportunities for information exchange between school communities.

Notes

- ¹ Racism on the grounds of language may be referred to as 'linguicism'. See for example:
 - T. Skutnabb-Kangas, 'Principles for Making all Children High Level Multilinguals through Education', *Juncture Points in Languages Education*, Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee, pp. 43-59, Adelaide, 1994.
 - J. Smolicz. 'Countering Racism: On a voyage of discovery towards human rights', conference paper presented at the *Tolerance or Respect? Countering Racism Seminar*, South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment, Adelaide, 1999.
- ² It has been estimated that approximately 10,000 spoken languages have existed. Today, only about 6,000 languages are still spoken and many of these are not being taught to children. More than half of these languages are unlikely to survive the next century. See W. Davis, 'Vanishing Cultures', *National Geographic*, vol. 196, no. 2, pp. 62-89, 1999.
- ³ See A. Schmidt, *The Loss of Australia's Indigenous Language Heritage*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 1990. Today, approximately ninety Aboriginal languages are spoken but only twenty are in a relatively healthy state, that is, they are being transmitted to and used by children.
- ⁴ D. Cahill, *Immigration and Schooling in the 1990s*, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Belconnen, ACT, 1990. Commonwealth of Australia copyright reproduced by permission.
- ⁵ See for example:
 - S. Zelinka, 'Racism and one response', *Ethnic Minority Youth in Australia*, eds C. Guerra & R. White, National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies, Hobart, 1995.
 - Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Tracking Your Rights*, HREOC, Sydney, 1997.
 - R. Pe-Pua, 'We're Just Like Other Kids': *Street-frequenting Youth of Non-English Speaking Background*, Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research, Canberra, 1994.
- ⁶ H. Groome and A. Hamilton, *Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Adolescents*. Commissioned Report No.35 for the National Board of Employment, Education and Training, AGPS, Canberra, 1995, Commonwealth of Australia copyright reproduced by permission.
- ⁷ A statement formulated at a meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers for Education in Hobart in 1989. The goals contained in the statement were replaced in April 1999 with *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, Ministerial Council on Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999.
- ⁸ H. Groome and A. Hamilton, *Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Adolescents*. Commissioned Report No.35 for the National Board of Employment, Education and Training, AGPS, Canberra, 1995, Commonwealth of Australia copyright reproduced by permission.
- ⁹ For a detailed discussion, refer to S. Cornell & D. Hartmann, *Ethnicity and Race: Making identities in a changing world*, Pine Forge Press, Thousand Oaks, California, 1998.
- ¹⁰ A more detailed discussion of the changing meanings of the word 'race' can be found in:
 - S. Cornell, & D. Hartmann, op.cit.
 - K. McConnochie, D. Hollinsworth & J. Pettman, *Race and Racism in Australia*, Social Science Press, Wentworth Falls, NSW, 1989.

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