COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Meet New People
- Learn New Things
- Make New Friends

STUDENT HANDBOOK
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PROGRAM BACKGROUND

• Community Connections Program was initiated by the Family Action Centre & the International Office. It is based on the HOMESTART program model.
• HOMESTART offers support to families with children under 5 years old. It operates in more than 60 countries and is therefore a model that is easily applied to different cultures.
• This program began in 1997 and has been running for 15 years.
• Since its beginning the program has recruited and supported more than 900 volunteers.
• This program was initially named the International Student Care Program (ISCP) – as it was anticipated that the support would be more or less one way – volunteers to students.
• The name was changed to the Community Connections Program in 2006 to reflect the progress of the program and the reciprocal benefits for students and volunteers.
• The purpose of the program is to assist students to make meaningful connections with people from the local community – it is not intended to be a hi/goodbye relationship.
• There are 4 key elements to the program – friendship, sharing cultures, support and information.
• The program model that was developed in Newcastle has been replicated by Universities across Australia and in 2010 it won a National Best Practice award for excellence. It is now funded solely by the International Office.

AIM OF THE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

• To offer friendship and practical support to international students. Friendship and practical support is most important when international students feel most vulnerable or in times of need or trouble.
• To assist international students adjust to life in Australia through language, cultural and social experience. This will help the student to have a sense of belonging to the Australian community.
• Both the student and volunteer’s life can be enriched through the sharing of their culture, food and language.
ROLE AND COMMITMENT OF COMMUNITY PROGRAMS OFFICER

• Keep in regular contact with the volunteers and with the international students through e-mails and/or phone conversations.
• Provide you any necessary ongoing training and information on social events and activities.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING

• Friendship; building a relationship
• Support; emotional, loneliness, home-sickness
• Knowledge; experiences, local information
• Sharing; culture, ideas, food
• Network; developing support network, relevant contacts
• Practice; conversation English

THE PROGRAM

• International students are recruited and provided with an information session to prepare them for their role in the program.
• The program coordinator is responsible for accepting referrals of international students and linking them to the most suitable volunteer – it can sometimes take time to find the right match.
• Once an international student and volunteer are matched they decide how frequently they will have contact,
also how this contact will be made (email, phone, face to face). We suggest students and volunteers meet face to face at least once per fortnight.
• Links cease when international students complete their studies in Australia and return home or when a volunteer or student requests to leave the program.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Through participating in this program it is anticipated that international students will:
• Make Australian friends.
• Feel welcomed by, and have a sense of belonging to the Australian community.
• Receive support when they feel most vulnerable or in times of trouble.
• Increase their network of friends and knowledge of Australian culture.

Through participating in this program it is anticipated that volunteers will:
• Gain knowledge of other cultures and have the experience of ‘travelling the world, without leaving Newcastle.’
• Be enriched by the experience of sharing foods, language, culture and points of view.
• Gain understanding and appreciation of studying in a foreign country.
• Hopefully make a lifelong friend.
GREETINGS
Most Australians call each other by their given names. Even if their friends are older, they still use given names. Generally titles like Mr and Mrs are not used. For more details on meeting and greeting please see page 14. If you are unsure, just ask, most people will be happy to talk with you about this.

When people meet in Australia they usually shake hands. Women and men shake hands as a greeting. If this is not your custom, please tell the person you are meeting.

Australians often have nicknames. These are names that usually describe them or shorten their given name. For example, a person called Gary may have the nickname of Gaz. Nicknames are a sign of friendship in Australia; people are not offended if their friends give them a nickname.

MAKING CONVERSATIONS
Good topics for conversation include: movies, music, sports, food, hobbies, television programs, customs from your home country and your culture.

Topics that are best avoided include:
• Age
• Money
• Legal or financial situations
• Religion
• Politics

These topics are viewed to be personal and are generally not freely discussed in Australia.
TIPS FOR BEING A GOOD FRIEND

• Always reply to invitations – telephone or email to accept or decline an invitation.

• Invite your Australian friend to join in your social activities. Doing this will show that you like them. Don’t always wait for them to send an invitation.

• Email or telephone your friend every week.

• Make time to meet your friend, even when you are busy. Remember they are busy too and they make time for you. Try to meet your friend every two weeks.

• Remember that Christmas and birthday celebrations in Australia are very important occasions. If you are invited to your friend’s house for either of these occasions, treat this as a very special invitation.

• Having an Australian friend is a commitment. Making the friendship work will depend on both you and your friend. Make sure you can fulfil your commitment to your friend before deciding to join the Community Connections program. By joining the program you will be an ambassador for your country - what you say and do is very important.

• Friends cannot provide advice about university enrolment or immigration issues. You should contact the University of Newcastle Staff for Enrolment and program questions; and contact the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) for questions about your visa.
SHOES
Some Australians remove their shoes before entering the house; others do not. If you have an Australian visitor to your home, you may need to ask them to remove their shoes before entering your house if this is your custom.

SMOKING
Smoking is not allowed in public buildings in Australia. Most Australians do not smoke at home, so if you smoke it is a good idea to either smoke outside or ask if you may smoke inside.

SHARING FOOD
A popular way of sharing food in Australia is through having a barb-e-que (BBQ). A barb-e-que is generally cooked and eaten outside. If you are invited to a barb-e-que, you should dress casually – like you do to come to class.

On other occasions Australians eat inside. Food may be presented for all to share or individual serves may be made. If your host asks to you ‘help yourself’ it means to eat as much as you like. If individual serves are provided it is acceptable to leave some food if the serve has been too large. If you have some foods you do not like or you cannot eat, it is advisable to tell your host in advance so they can make alternative arrangements.
Volunteers see their role as offering:

• Emotional support in times of trouble
• Friendship
• Time
• Information and advice
• English practise and support

When students were asked what they thought they contributed to the relationship with their volunteer, they had these things to say:

• Words of thanks
• Cooking traditional food for my ‘friend’ and invitations to dinner
• Helping my ‘friend’ where I can
• Sharing of problems and the joy of knowing Australians
• Having my ‘friend’ help me by correcting my mistakes when I speak English
• Teaching my friend words in my language

Volunteers

• are not tutors or academic advisors and should not assist students with their university work
• may correct an international student’s spoken English to assist in improving conversational English
• are not to act as babysitters for international student’s children under any circumstances
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

Some activities that you might like to consider are outlined on the following page. The activities on this list have been gathered through the most recent evaluation of international students’ experiences in the program, in which they were asked what activities they valued most when spending time with their volunteers.

It is important that you both discuss the cost of activities and how much each person will be expected to pay. Many international students have limited funds to commit to social activities and within some cultures it is customary that host treat their guests to activities.
Have breakfast, lunch or dinner together or have a cuppa/tea – cafés

Talking and chatting - particularly exchanging information about their home culture and Australian culture

Watch movies - Glendale, Charlestown, King Street or drive in movies – Heddon Greta Drive In ph: 4936 2800

Cook together - including BBQ

Go shopping - Charlestown Square, Kotara, Morisset Megamarkets/Tuggerah Factory Outlets etc.

Free concerts - at Conservatorium as well as “Jazz in the Park”, Toronto Foreshore on Sundays,

Sharing knowledge - talk through problems and their needs in Australia

Visit family members - Birthday, christening, weddings and other celebrations

Picnics - Blackbutt, Foreshore, Jesmond park or parks in general

Chat - Sending/receiving emails, text messaging or phone each other

Visit museums, theatre, galleries etc. some of them are free entrance

Play cards or games - Scrabble, Pictionary, Monopoly, etc.

Play/watch sports - NRL, fishing, swimming, bowling, golfing, bushwalking etc.

Ice-skating - Warners Bay; 10pin bowling - Bennetts Green, Mayfield or Warners Bay

The Beach - swim, surf, sand castles
Australian culture can only be defined by its diversity, and not by one or two unique characteristics. Its rich history and complex heritage has led to a continent of many languages, customs, colours, religions and values. These have amalgamated over the centuries to ensure a nation that is quite exceptional.

Cultural influences come from the the Aboriginal People as the ancestors of the country, United Kingdom as the homeland of its monarch, the United States for its global proliferation via the media and Asia as its closest neighbour. This somewhat eclectic jumble has created a fun and particularly vibrant culture.

Aboriginal people and their culture have had a strong influence on Australia’s arts, crafts, literature and dance often boasting an ethnic appeal that can only be conveyed by first establishing an insight into Australia’s heritage. Paintings, sketches and sculptures frequently convey elements of the continent’s landscape, which is distinctive in its juxtapositions of fertile vs. arid, abundance vs. stark emptiness. This inspiration from the land has continued from ancient civilisations right up to modern artists, influencing literature, dance and music. Music and dance is used to express creativity, reflecting influences from all over the world, but particularly from Asian and Aboriginal roots.
THE PEOPLE

Australia is home to nearly five million immigrants from 160 countries and is rich in cultural diversity. Australians, or “Aussies” enjoy an easy-going lifestyle and are generally friendly and relaxed.

Australians are refreshingly free of class prejudice. Here people take you for what you are, and are not concerned with how you speak, what job you do, where you went to school, whom you are related to etc.

The Australian people are known the world over for their fun-loving, light-hearted approach to life. They are thought of as an adventurous nation, one that embraces challenges and welcomes change. Their sense of humour is complemented by their outgoing nature and hospitable ways. This patriotic nation has been influenced by the many nations that have played key roles in its establishment and development. This diversity has created a land of tolerance and variety, while holding fast to its own culture and heritage with a fierce pride.

Australian rules of social etiquette are a little different from most countries around the world. The rules do not relate to how a fork should be held, or who should be served first at a dinner table. Instead, most of Australia’s rules relate to expressing equality. Basically, as long as you appreciate that Australians want to be treated as equal irrespective of their social, racial or financial background, most things are acceptable.

Overt displays of wealth may be seen as signs of superiority and frowned upon accordingly. Likewise, the acceptance of generosity may be seen as a sign of bludging or inferiority.
THEIR VALUES

Australians are difficult to offend, so they are sometimes not sensitive to causing offence in others. To outsiders, Australians often appear very blunt and rude.

Furthermore, because Australians see people as equal, they frequently offend international visitors who feel a more respectful attitude is warranted. Australians may refer to some foreigners as “mate” instead of using more respectful titles such as your Honour, Sir, Madam, Mrs, Mr, Ms, Lord, and your Highness.

When applying for selected visas, applicants aged 18 years and over are required to sign an Australian Values Statement confirming they will respect Australian values and obey the laws of Australia.

Australian values include:

- Respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual
- Equality of men and women
- Freedom of religion
- Commitment to the rule of law
- Parliamentary democracy
- A spirit of egalitarianism that embraces mutual respect, tolerance, fair play, compassion for those in need and pursuit of the public good
- Equality of opportunity for individuals, regardless of their race, religion or ethnic background

These values may be expressed in different ways by different people while still maintaining the same meaning. They are not unique to Australia, but have broad community agreement and underpin Australian society and culture.
THEIR CULTURE

Australians tend to share houses only with members of their nuclear family. Extended family members may live close by but rarely share accommodation. As people become older many will choose to live in an aged care facility rather than live with their children.

Some of the more popular activities for Australian families include visiting the beach, camping and outdoor activities generally. The favourable climate encourages outdoor activities and many people engage in these throughout the year. Australians tend to entertain at home in an informal manner; often involving a BBQ in the back yard. A popular Australian dessert is pavlova which consists of a meringue (beaten egg whites & sugar) base, covered with fruit and cream.

Given that many Australian homes have large backyards, some families will choose to entertain at home rather than go to a restaurant or shopping mall.

Because many Australian women choose to work outside the home, husbands and fathers often take an active role in managing household duties and caring for children. If you visit an Australian home, it is likely that the male members of the family will either do some of the cooking, cleaning or washing up.
PETS
Most Australian families will own a pet. Usually this will be a dog or cat, although birds, rabbits and fish are also found in many homes. Pets are considered members of the family in Australia. They are generally dearly loved and well cared for. Some will spend considerable amounts of time inside the house. If you are fearful or wish to avoid pets when visiting an Australian home, you can ask your host to take the pet outside, but remember, it is important not to insult your host by making negative comments about their pet.

DRESS
You will notice that Australians tend to dress casually most of the time and because the weather can be very hot, both men and women wear less clothing than you may be used to in your home countries. At the beach or swimming pool you can expect men and women to be wearing swimwear and swimming in the same place and interacting quite freely. Swimming is a very popular sport in Australia with most children learning to swim before they commence school.
INVITATIONS
If you get an invitation to lunch, dinner, barbeque, party, wedding, birthday, or any type of event it is expected that you will respond.

Invitations can be written or spoken. Written ones usually ask for RSVP, (which is repondez s’il vous plait in French) and means “please reply”. You should always reply whether you intend to go or not. The invitation will tell you how to reply and when the reply is expected. Your host may be specific about how many people are invited. If your host invites the whole family, you should tell your host how many people would go. Usually a family is the parents and their children. Please note: The midday meal is called lunch, and the evening meal is usually called dinner and sometimes tea.

WHAT IF I WANT TO ACCEPT AN INVITATION?
When you accept an invitation to a meal, it is also usual to tell the host what you cannot eat. It is perfectly okay to say that you are a vegetarian and do not eat meat or specifically do not eat pork. It is not polite to arrive late and you should make a telephone call to your host to explain if you are going to be late.

WHAT IF I CANNOT ACCEPT AN INVITATION?
You may not always be able to accept an invitation. The best way to refuse is to say, ‘thank you, unfortunately I/we have other plans at that time’. To say that you are too busy may seem extremely rude, even if it is true. Once you accept an invitation, you should only cancel if something arises where you cannot go. You should also explain the reason to your host. To cancel because you got a better invitation from somewhere else can seem very rude, and can affect new friendships.

GIFT GIVING ETIQUETTE
Small gifts are commonly exchanged with family members, close friends, and neighbours on birthdays and Christmas. If invited to someone’s home for dinner, it is polite to bring a box of chocolates or flowers to the hostess. A good quality bottle of wine is always appreciated. Gifts are opened when received.
MEETING & GREETING
IN AUSTRALIA

GREETING
You can address a new acquaintance using their title and family name. You may use their first name when they ask you to or use it in the introduction. In the workplace and among friends, most Australians tend to be informal and call each other by their first names.

• Use titles, Mr., Mrs., Ms., and Miss when first introduced.
• Australians generally move to a first-name basis quickly. Still, wait to use first names until invited to do so.
• Academic or job-related titles are often downplayed.
• When meeting someone for the first time, it is usual to shake the person’s right hand with your right hand.
• People who do not know each other generally do not kiss or hug when meeting.
• When you first meet someone, it is polite not to talk about personal matters.
• Shake hands with everyone present upon meeting and before leaving.

• Allow women to offer their hands first.

PERSONAL SPACE AND TOUCHING
• Roughly an arm’s length of personal space is generally acceptable during conversations. With friends or family it may be less.
• With business colleagues an arm’s length would be a minimum requirement, any closer could be deemed inappropriate, especially between colleagues of the opposite sex.
• Touching is generally kept to a minimum during conversations. Between friends and family, light touching to emphasize a point or show closeness is more common. As a general rule, shoulders, upper-arms and elbows are considered safe non sexual touching zones.
COMMUNICATION STYLE

- Australians are known to be very direct and to the point. Honesty is appreciated and expected.
- Humour plays a big role in communication. In general, people like teasing and joking during conversation.
- Arrogance is frowned upon. It’s best to stay humble and modest.

EYE CONTACT

- Direct eye contact is acceptable and expected.
- Avoiding someone’s eyes during conversations is usually viewed as disrespectful and rude.

MANNERS

‘Please’ and ‘thank you’ are words that are very helpful when dealing with other people, and buying goods or services. When asked if you would like something, like a cup of tea, it is polite to say, ‘Yes please’, if you would like it, or ‘no, thank you’ if you do not. When you receive something, it is polite to thank the person by saying ‘thank you’. Australians tend to think that people who do not say ‘please’ or ‘thank you’ are being rude. Using these words will help in building good relationships.

Sometimes a sensitive issue may come up in conversation. Not to talk may seem rude. It is more polite to say ‘sorry, it is too hard to explain’ than to ignore a question. Australians say, ‘Excuse me’ to get a person’s attention and ‘sorry’ if we bump into them.
There are a number of events that Australians celebrate each year. Some of these events will be linked to the Christian calendar, for example, Christmas and Easter. Other important events include the celebration of birthdays, the birth of a baby, retirement, moving house or changing jobs.

If you are invited to join any one of these festivities, it will be appreciated if you bring a small gift. Flowers or chocolates are always acceptable and appreciated.

CHRISTMAS
Christmas celebrations are very important and special for most Australians. Christmas is a Christian celebration. Usually Australians celebrate Christmas with their closest family members and friends, so if you are invited to join them, it is a sign that you are considered a close friend. How Christmas is celebrated varies widely and to some extent is determined by the weather. If the weather is warm and sunny, but not excessively hot, celebrations will often be held outside in a casual and informal setting. However, for some families the tradition of Christmas is marked by a more formal luncheon or dinner comprising hot foods in European style. Popular foods for Christmas celebrations are ham or pork, so it is important to notify your host that you do not eat these meats. Hosts will usually be able to prepare alternative foods providing they are given sufficient time. Australians celebrate Christmas on 25th December – Christmas Day not Christmas Eve as is popular in some parts of Europe. For children, Santa Claus comes to deliver gifts during the night of Christmas Eve.
EASTER
Easter celebrations are quieter and more family oriented, with many Christians choosing to go to church at least once during the Easter break. Chocolate is the traditional Easter gift and children receive chocolate eggs from the Easter bunny. The egg is the symbol of new life; the message of Easter. Hot cross buns are also sold at bakeries and supermarkets. These are also considered special Easter foods.

BIRTHDAYS
The celebration of a birthday is a significant annual event for most Australians. When children are young, it is common for family members and close friends to be invited to a party to celebrate with the family. Children play games, while adults spend time talking and eating specially prepared foods. Some children’s parties are limited only to children, so if your child receives an invitation that does not mention parents, the expectation will be that as parents you will take your child to the party and return later to collect them. A small gift, such as a toy, is usually given to the child celebrating their birthday.

For young adults the most significant birthdays are eighteen and twenty-one years as these occasions mark a significant step into adulthood. After that time, birthdays that mark the beginning of a new decade (40, 50 etc) are also considered significant milestones.

THE BIRTH OF A BABY
The customs around acknowledging the birth of a child are quite different in Australia to some other countries. Firstly, it is usual for friends and family to visit the mother and child while still in the hospital or to visit the family very soon after the baby is born. There are no time restrictions in place which prohibit visitors from greeting the baby soon after birth. It is also acceptable to make positive comments on the health or appearance of the baby. It is usual practice to bring a small gift to welcome the baby; a toy or items of clothing are popular gifts.

AUSTRALIA DAY
Australia Day occurs on 26th January each year and marks the arrival of white settlement in Australia. There are community events held to acknowledge this occasion to which everyone is invited.

ANZAC DAY
ANZAC is the name given to the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps soldiers. April 25 is the date that these soldiers landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey in 915 during the First World War (1914-1918). The whole of Australia marks this date in solemn ceremonies of remembrance, gratitude and national pride for all who have participated in and been affected by war. There are marches through the streets of the city and suburbs. All members of the community are welcome to attend ANZAC Day commemorations.
RETIREMENT, MOVING HOUSE AND CHANGING JOBS

These events are considered important milestones in someone’s life and hence are occasions to be celebrated. Usually the celebrations for these events are informal, sometimes in the workplace and involve either morning tea or drinks after work. Should you be invited to ‘drinks’ you are likely to encounter alcohol, but it is acceptable to explain that you prefer soft drink. There are many Australians who do not drink alcohol so refusing an alcoholic drink will be easily accommodated. It is considered polite, when refusing an alcoholic drink, to simply say, ‘I do not drink alcohol. Would it be possible to have a soft drink or water?’
Communication involves sending and receiving a message. Effective communication is a shared responsibility. Communication channels are varied.

Non-verbal, verbal, audible, visual and other senses are involved. The process of communication involves the sender, the receiver, the message, the process, the effect or outcome. Overriding this process is interference, which can be both physical and emotional.

Communication is a combination of human factors, interpretations, meanings, content and experience. Communication is a difficult concept as we probably know from our ongoing communication with others.

BODY LANGUAGE
Body language can have different meaning from different culture. Give an example...

The language of the Face – Facial expression
Regardless of culture there are six basic emotions facial expression are happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, anger and disgust.

The language of the eyes – Gazes, looks and stares
We can learn a great deal about other people’s feelings from their eye contact.

The language of movement – gestures, movement and touching
People often reveal much about their feelings and emotions by the position, posture and movement of their bodies. It carries a specific meaning. i.e., tapping our fingers – impatience, lift an eyebrows – disbelief, the way the person shakes their head in disagreement, looks away etc… Touching is a powerful non-verbal communication.
1. **Say “I”:** when you are expressing something that you think or feel or have done. Own your communication. Avoid using words like “you”, “they”, “people”. Try saying, “I am uncomfortable with that comment” rather than “you are angry”.

2. **Don’t Rescue:** This is doing something for someone that she/he will not do for themselves. This is done by speaking for someone else or making excuses for someone else. Acting as if another cannot act on their own behalf, is disempowering and discounting of that person.

3. **Avoid Interpretation:** An interpretation is when you tell another what motivates them, why they feel angry or think or feel the way they do i.e., “You are a very angry person”. The main response to this will be the other person’s defensiveness.

4. **Note the differences between feelings and thoughts:** We often confuse the two in language i.e., “I feel you are wrong about this” is actually a thought not a feeling. Only use “I feel” when expressing feelings (anger, sadness, fear, happiness…) and “I think” with a thought.

5. **Clarification:** Remember to always clarify if you don’t understood what has been said or asked.

6. **Take responsibility:** for how YOU feel, think and behave. Don’t say “YOU make me angry”, because that makes someone else responsible for your feelings/behaviours. State clearly your feelings and your response to the issue. “I feel angry when ‘x’ happens because ….”

7. **Ask questions:** that give you information to assist in what you need to know. Often questions are used as an indirect way of making a statement or a way of shifting responsibility to another person.
8. **Avoid Exaggerations:** or exaggerated words in a generalised context such as “always”, “never”, “incredible”, “the most”, “all people”. This is a way of justifying your ineffectiveness, avoiding a problem, or avoiding responsibility for your behaviour.

9. **Avoid discounting:** which is acting as if what you think or feel is more important than what the other person thinks or feels, or denigrating yourself and acting as if the other person is more important than you are. Examples of Discounting:
   - Interrupting – discounting the person who is speaking
   - Withdrawal – not speaking for fear of being thought of or sounding stupid. This is self-discounting
   - Disregarding – not taking the other’s opinions into account
   - Saying – saying things that put you or others down

10. **Avoid Qualifying statements:** or phrases such as “perhaps”, “maybe”, unless you are really unsure. Such words are often a way of avoiding responsibility for what you say. “Try” is often used as a way of actually saying “I won’t” or “I can’t”. Trying is different from doing.

11. **I can’t, I have to:** are best avoided unless physically or emotionally it is really the case. It is rare that we are actually incapable of doing something. What is true that we choose to act the way we do, and in most cases, due to a fear of discomfort or a concern that it may cause unpleasant consequences?

12. **Take time to clarify and think about your position:** Ask yourself what is it I want to achieve? Is this just my issue? What is the “real” issue? Can I separate the two?

13. **Making vague requests:** can almost always pre-empt a negative communication issue. People work from their own bias and relevant information structure. When you want something, ask specifically for it.

14. **Appreciate the fact that all people are different:** and that everyone views the world differently.

15. **Changes never come from hit and run tactics:** Changes occur slowly especially in close relationships. Be persistent and fair. Stay on track with an issue; don’t be into communication just to “get the last word in”.
Reassuring, sympathising, consoling
Telling the person not to feel what they are feeling:
• “You’ll be fine”
• “Don’t worry”
• “It’s not so bad”

Diagnosing, interpreting, analysing
Being an amateur analyst:
• “What the problem with you is ...”
• “You have a motivation problem”
• “What you need is ...”

Diagnosis, a form of labelling, has plagued mankind through the centuries but has been even more prevalent since the time of Freud. Some people, instead of listening to the substance of what a person is saying, play emotional detective, probing for hidden motives and psychological complexes.

Moralising, preaching, obliging
Using should and ought to’s to gain compliance:
• “You should be more responsible”
• “You ought to be more considerate of them”

“Inappropriate” questioning, probing, interrogating
Digging for information believing it will solve something:
• “Why are you ...”
• “When …”, “where…”, “why...”

Advising, giving suggestions/solutions
Untimely advice suggests the other person is stupid for not seeing the obvious answer:
• “If I were you...”
• “What you should do is ...”
• “What would be best for you is...”
Diverting, withdrawing, distracting, humouring
Changing the subject because of discomfort with the speaker or topic:
• “That reminds me of …”
• “Let me tell you about …”
• “Speaking of problems …”

Persuading with logic, arguing, lecturing
Pointing out the speaker is lacking in logic deduction:
• “Do you realise …”
• “Yes, but ….”
• “If you thought about this logically…”

Criticising, judging, blaming
Putting the other person down:
• “You’re always complaining”
• “You never get it right”
• “You’re not thinking straight”

One of the judgemental roadblocks is criticism. Many of us feel we ought to be critical – other people will never improve. Objectives we are trying to accomplish with criticism can be achieved more effectively by other means.

Ordering, directing, commanding
Using power over another:
• “You have to …”
• “You must …”
• “You shouldn’t

Name-calling, ridiculing, shaming
Labelling the other person:
• “That was a stupid thing to do”
• “How could you”
• “Gee, you’re dumb”

Name-calling and labelling usually have negative overtones to both sender and receiver. “Wog”, “bitch”, “fools”, “bludger” – these all attach a stigma to the other. Some other labels however, provide haloes: “bright”, “hardworking”, “dedicated”. Labelling prevents us from getting to know ourselves and other individuals; there is no longer a person before us – only a type.

Threatening, warning, admonishing
Using fear for compliance:
• “Do it or else”
• “It is your duty”
• “You had better…”

Praising, approving, and evaluating positively
To manipulate:
• “You’re doing a great job”
• “You’re absolutely right”

Be honest and authentic in your praising. Do not praise as a gimmick to try to get another to change their behaviour. When someone with ulterior purposes offers praise, there is often resentment of the effort to control, and the feeling of being manipulated - (Skilful in influencing or controlling others to your own advantage).
TOPICS FOR CONVERSATION

• Bargaining and tipping
• Driving cars – licences, insurance, driving laws, buying cars
• Making appointments
• Schools and the Education system in NSW
• Health – accessing hospitals and doctors
• The Law – drink driving, speeding, traffic offences, motor vehicle accidents
• Police – their role, how they can assist
• Licences and permits – fishing, working
• Renting houses – leases, contracts, rights, responsibilities
• Getting a job
BANDICOOTS are native to Australia, New Guinea, Papua, and Tasmania. They are marsupials. The bandicoot ranges from about 10 to 20 inches long. Bandicoots fight with their hind legs and only bite if they have to. Bandicoots are very territorial and will attack other bandicoots that intrude on their territory. They use their clawed hind legs for hopping. Many species of bandicoot are either rare or extinct. This marsupial is usually nocturnal and hides in hollow logs, nests or crevices. They eat insects, small animals, and plants.

ANTEATER (also known as Numbat or alpurti) are small marsupials, which feed almost solely on termites. Because of this, they are also known as the Banded Anteater. When fully grown, they reach about 40 cms from nose to tail. They inhabit woodlands in Western Australia, this is the only state in which they are found in the wild.

BLACK-BACKED MAGPIE There are three other variations in plumage of this species. They are a very useful bird in keeping the insect population in check and have a beautiful song. They are disliked by many as they have a habit of diving on people to protect their nesting sites. They are long-lived birds and have good memories. Nesting takes place in winter and spring is the season when the babies are looked after. By late summer the babies either make their own clan or separate from their parents whilst staying in the same clan.

The AUSTRALIAN PELICAN is a large bird and found commonly almost all over Australia. The birds make home to any land with a suitable piece of water, freshwater or saltwater.
The **BILBY** has achieved a lot of publicity in Australia in recent years. It has become a symbol of Easter instead of the rabbit which is a serious pest in Australia. The rabbit was introduced to Australia near Geelong in 18xx and has caused untold damage to the whole continent as it cleared away the native grasses, shrubs and trees, robbing the native animals and birds of shelter and food.

The **BLACK SWAN** are common across all of coastal Australia, and nest in swamps or river estuaries. They are not common in the North West. They make their nests out of coarse reed stems on a dry bit of a small island, or on a river bank. They lay a clutch of about five eggs which are greenish white in colour, usually in autumn (March-April) or in winter. They can travel in enormous flocks and move from one feeding ground to another. They will feed in the shallows, or eat grass on the banks. They are not popular with farmers. Swans are a protected species in Australia.

The **TREE FROG** is a beautifully coloured frog found from the coast of New South Wales to the Blue Mountains. With a base colour of medium brown it has a dark line from its nose to its groin with a lighter line above it. They also have bright green spots on their head and limbs as well as orange and red marks on their arms and legs. They are wonderful jumpers and even great swimmers although they do not have webbed feet like other frogs. Numbers are decreasing because of the loss of their habitat.

The **BRUSHED TAILED POSSUM** is one of seven species and is about the size of a cat. It has a pointy snout and a pink nose. Its whiskers are long. They can grow to as big as 550mm long plus a tail which is another 250-400mm long. The tail is prehensile and assists the sharp claws in climbing trees. These pos-sums live in gum trees, their nests are usually hidden away in the forks of branches. They become quite used to suburban life and those Australians with corrugated iron roofs near gum trees will hear them thumping across the roof usually soon after dark and just before dawn.
The **SALTWATER CROCODILE** is the world’s largest reptile. These amazing creatures are found on the northern coast of Australia and inland for up to 100 kms or more. The Saltwater Crocodile has been reported to grow to lengths of 7 metres, but the average size of a Saltwater Crocodile is 4 metres long. They reproduce in the wet season, with the female crocodile laying up to 60 eggs at a time. When the crocodiles are born, only a very small number of these survive in the wild and grow to be adult crocodiles.

The **FRESHWATER CROCODILE** is the more timid relation of the much larger and aggressive Estuarine (Saltwater) Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*). Unlike the Estuarine Crocodile, there have been no reports of serious unprovoked attacks by Freshwater Crocodiles. The Freshwater Crocodile is native to Australia, inhabiting rivers, creeks, permanent streams and billabongs from the Kimberley to Cape York Peninsula. The Freshwater Crocodile is an ambush predator, lying in wait for prey to come within range, when, in a flash, it catches its prey. The long, narrow snout and sharp teeth are adaptations for catching aquatic prey, including fish, frogs, lizards and turtles but it also eats crayfish, insects and spiders.

The **DINGO** is Australia’s wild dog. It is found in Australia, in all states but Tasmania. They are found throughout the mainland of Australia, close to a source of water. The Dingo is a medium sized dog, with a bushy tail, and red to yellow coat. Dingos do not bark, but they do howl. They are meat eaters, and try to feed mainly on this. If unavailable, dingos have been known to eat reptiles, and any food source it can find. When food is scarce, dingos group together to feed on larger animals such as kangaroos.

This widely populated Australian **GALAH** is part of the cock-atoos family and can be found practically everywhere in Australia. They are beautiful birds of about 35 cm, (14 inches), in length and weigh between 300 and 400 grams, (10.5 to 14 ounces). Their plumage is grey and they have pink feathers covering their heads as well as a crest of a lighter pink and sometimes white feathers. Both male and female Galahs look the same and can only be differentiated by the colour of their irises.
The **PLATYPUS** is found in eastern Australia. They live aside fresh-water rivers or lakes, and create burrows for shelter and protection. Mainly active at night, they keep their eyes shut when swimming. They can stay underwater for up to 10 minutes, and due to their natural buoyancy, they need to be underneath another object to do this. The Platypus has a woolly furred coat that has 3 layers. The first layer keeps the animal warm, by trapping air, the second layer which provides an insulating coat for the animal, and last-ly the third layer of long flat hairs to detect objects close by. They range from 30cm to 45cms in length and the tail about 10 to 15 cms and weigh on average lifespan of 12 years. Platypuses feed on insect larvae, worms or other freshwater insects. They do so mainly at night, by the use of their bill. They turn up mud on the bottom of the lake or river, and with the help of their electroreceptors located on the bill, find many insects and freshwater insects. They store their findings in special pouches behind their bill, and are consumed upon returning to the surface.

The **FRILL NECKED LIZARD** is an Australian icon. They are between 70 to 90 cms long, and have a 'frill' around their head. When the lizard gets frightened, it opens its mouth and the frill is folded out. This is to make the lizard appear larger and is one of its defensive strategies against predators. They can also run very fast, and it runs on its two hind legs. They live in hot tropical climates, so are found all over the northern part of Australia.

The **GOANNA LIZARD** they may look fierce but they are generally are quite shy and timid. They have few natural enemies. Goannas are excellent tree climbers. They generally run away from any human and scuttle at a run up the nearest gum tree. However people have been bitten by them, and because goannas feast on things like other dead animals, their mouths and teeth can infect any wound. A nasty bite! They also eat birds, and small mammals as well as other reptiles.
The common **WOMBAT** lives in burrows in the forest and bushland areas. It has very strong claws and muscular thick legs to help in its digging. There are three main varieties, the common wombat, the Southern Hairy nosed wombat and the Northern hairy nosed wombat. The latter is very nearly extinct. Their diet is herbivorous and consists of roots, shoots and leaves.

The **HASTINGS RIVER MOUSE** that can be found in New South Wales, Eastern Australia and Queensland in altitudes reaching 1200m. This rodent is endangered. Until recently there has been little information on the Hastings river mouse due to its rarity and shyness, there is still limited information on the habits of this animal. Hastings river mice prefer damp habitats, along drainage lines if necessary. Creek beds with dense vegetation are also utilized in addition to drier climates if necessary. Nests can be found in tree hollows close to the ground, most likely in the eucalypt forests and are made of an array of plant materials.

The **HUMPBACK WHALE** weighs an average of 30 tonnes, ranging from 12 to 16 metres. The humpback has a distinctive body shape, with unusually long pectoral fins and a knobbly head. The female Humpback Whale is normally one or two metres longer than the male Humpback Whale. They have two blowholes and range in colour from almost white through to grey and black. An acrobatic animal known for breaching and slapping the water with its tail and pectorals, it is popular with whale watchers off Australia, New Zealand, South. Found in oceans and seas around the world, humpback whales typically migrate up to 25,000 kilometres (16,000 mi) each year. Humpbacks feed only in summer, in polar waters, and migrate to tropical or subtropical waters to breed and give birth in the winter. During the winter, humpbacks fast and live off their fat reserves. Their diet consists mostly of krill and small fish. Humpbacks have a diverse repertoire of feeding methods, including the bubble net feeding technique.

The **GREEN SEA TURTLE** is found in Australian waters. In fact, there are only seven species of marine turtles in the world, and six of these are found in Australian waters. Unfortunately their population is on the decline (due to factors such as pollution and illegal fishing or tangled in fishing nets).
The **RED KANGAROO** is the giant of the Australian kangaroos. It is widespread over the mainland. It lives on grasses, and often lives in quite big mobs. It can leap up to five metres long in a jump and so is quite fast over short distances to escape danger. When adult males are breeding they will often fight each other, face to face, boxing with their front paws and then giving gigantic double kicks with their back legs. Because of the climate extremes in Australia, the kangaroos have adapted to the break or bust cycles. In droughts many kangaroos will die because there is no feed at all. But in a good season the female can have three young one with her: one as an embryo just starting off and not yet born, one in the pouch who draws a special milk supply from the mother, and another just out who gets milk from a different nipple.

The **KOALA** is one of Australia's best known animals. It is an icon represented when promoting Australia to the tourist industry, and in general people adore these cuddly creatures. There are two species, the Southern Koalas and the Northern Koalas. Koalas are often referred to as a Koala bear. However they are not a bear. The name Koala comes from an Aboriginal word. It means “no drink”, as Koalas get enough fluids through the eucalyptus leaves they feed on. Koalas are found all over east Australia, mainly in the south east. They are very placid animals, and do not move around much, they are only active for about 2 hours of the day.

**KING PARROT**s are colourful birds that inhabit mainly forested areas, but will often live close to suburban areas as a source of food. The parrots are usually around 40 to 45 cms in length (which includes a 20cm tail). The male king parrot sports a brilliant red breast and head, black tail and dark green body. The female has a dullish green head and body with a dullish red underbelly. They are found along the coastal areas of Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. A King Parrot will feed on fruits, seeds or small insects. Birds close to suburban areas may feed on food crumbs and scraps. It is important not to feed King Parrots any leftovers, as their diet is much different to that of humans. King Parrots living close to suburbia have become quite domesticated, and whilst being cautious, are not afraid of human contact. King Parrots will often perch on an out-stretched arm to feed on bird seed from an open palm.
**SUGAR GLIDERS** are native to Australia and have taken their name from their ability to glide through the air and their love of sweet things such as sugar. They are found along eastern and northern Australia and are small creatures with a shiny grey-silver coat. They are around 40 cm’s long from nose to tail, and weigh just 150 grams. They feed at night, mainly on insects found in trees, but also the sap from trees such as the eucalyptus. They can move about very efficiently from tree to tree, and glide through the air.

The **BRUSH-TAILED ROCK WALLABY** are nocturnal animals but they appear to enjoy the sunshine when the weather is cool. Its population is dangerously close to becoming extinct. They enjoy dwelling in areas where there are plenty of rocks and caves. Although the main population of this marsupial is located on the continent of Australia, there are populations in Hawaii that have been introduced there in a conservation effort. Brush-tailed rock wallabies are very sensitive about their environment and do not like to be disturbed by humans, in the wild they are not friendly. The average head and body length of this animal is 550mm with an average tail measurement of 600mm. Compared to the body sizes of other wallabies, the brush-tailed wallaby is in the middle. Thick fur covers the brush-tailed rock wallaby, there is also a “brush” at the end of its tail. Feeding generally occurs during the night and early morning hours. Brush-tailed rock wallabies enjoy eating various native grasses in addition to roots and bark.

The **WALLAROO** got his name by putting together the words WALLaby and kangAROO since it is between these two animals in size. The Eastern Wallaroo has a coat of grey fur and the Euro has reddish fur. They all have a bare black nose and big ears. The males usually measure between 1 to 1.4 meters, (39 to 55 inches), in height and weigh 22 to 45 kilograms, (50 to 100 pounds). The female is quite a bit smaller with a height of 0.75 to 1 meters, (2.5 to 3.3 feet), and a weight of 18 to 22.5 kilograms, (40 to 50 pounds). Wallaroos usually live in rocky areas where they will hide and rest during the day and come out to eat grass and small shrubs at night.
ANIMAL FIRST AID
FOR LOCAL WILDLIFE

The common **TIGER SNAKE** is found in southern and eastern Australia. They are usually around a metre long, and have a striped marking. This is not always the case however, as the markings can change due to the seasons and the age of the snake. They can grow up to 1.5 metres in length. These are venomous snakes, and will attack if they are disturbed or threatened. Otherwise, they can live quietly. They are also often territorial, and will live in the same area for years. They are also found in suburban areas, even in the newer suburbs. These snakes feed on all types of creatures, they happily feed on frogs, fish, small birds and other small mammals.

The **BROWN SNAKE** is approximately 1.5 metres long, and is one of Australia’s more deadly creatures. They have venom which can cause death to humans relatively quickly if left untreated. Brown snakes up to 2.3 metres have been recorded in Australia. They feed on small creatures, such as mice and rats, small birds, lizards or even other snakes.

The **RED BELLIED BLACK SNAKE** is a dangerous snake species found in Australia. It is a red bellied snake, and black on top, hence the name. It inhabits mainly the east coast of Australia, close to a source of water. They can grow up to 1.5 metres in length. This snake usually gives birth to about 20 live snakes at one time. The bite of a Red Bellied Black Snake is very dangerous and requires immediate medical attention.
FIRST AID TREATMENT

- Call medical help (phone 000) immediately if possible.
- Remain calm, remember most snake bites are not fatal.
- Minimise movement if possible. If you are hiking alone you may have to hike out for help.
- If you are bitten on the arm or finger remove any rings, bracelets or watches. Loosen any tight clothing in case swelling occurs.
- Apply a pressure bandage to the bitten limb. If the bite is to the trunk, head or neck, apply firm pressure to the bitten area. Do not restrict chest movement as breathing will be affected by this.
- Splint or use a sling on the bitten limb to restrict movement.
- If there is no bandage or equivalent to apply a pressure bandage make note of any inflammation by tracing the edge of the swelling with a pen or the like near/around the bite and mark the time clearly next to it. If it progresses make a new tracing noting the time of each new mark beside that new tracing. This will give valuable information to medical help as to the development of the swelling.
- If possible, lie down and keep the bitten extremity at body level. Raising it can cause venom to travel through the body quicker. Holding it down can increase swelling.
- When possible arrange for transport to the nearest hospital emergency room, where anti-venom for snakes common to the area will often be available and given if required.
The FUNNEL WEB SPIDER is one of the three most dangerous spiders in the world and is regarded by some to be the most dangerous. Funnel-web spiders, the most notorious members of our spider fauna, are found in eastern Australia. Funnel-web spiders live in the moist forest regions of the east coast and highlands of Australia from Tasmania to north Queensland. They are also found in the drier open forests of the Western Slopes of the Great Dividing Range and South Australia’s Gulf ranges. The Sydney Funnel-web Spider is found from Newcastle to Nowra and west as far as Lithgow in New South Wales. Funnel web spiders are medium-to-large in size, with body lengths ranging from 1 cm to 5 cm (0.4” to 2”). They are darkly coloured, ranging from black to blue-black to plum to brown, with a glossy, hairless carapace covering the front part of the body.

FIRST AID TREATMENT

- Stay still and apply a pressure bandage to the area then go to the closest emergency hospital for anti-venom.
- If safe to do so, take the spider to the hospital for identification
- Usually it is safer to take a photo.
- DO NOT apply a tourniquet. This cuts blood flow completely and may result in loss of the affected limb
REDBACK SPIDERS are found throughout Australia, in drier habitats and built-up areas. They are common in dry places around buildings, outdoor furniture, machinery and stacked materials. Mature female redbacks are jet black spiders with a variable red stripe on the back of their spherical abdomen. Immature females are smaller, usually brown with whitish markings. Redback spiders are not aggressive, and rarely leave the web. However caution is advised as their bite is very poisonous and potentially fatal for children or the elderly. Anyone bitten by a Redback spider should seek medical attention.

FIRST AID TREATMENT

• The bitten person needs to stay still and apply ice.
• Many hospitals and ambulance vehicles carry the Red Back anti-venom so either call an ambulance or get to the closest emergency hospital for anti-venom.
• If safe to do so, take the spider to the hospital for identification.
• Usually it is safer to take a photo if at all possible.
• DO NOT apply a tourniquet. This cuts blood flow completely and may result in loss of the affected limb.
**MOSQUITOS** are blood sucking insects that are responsible for the transmission of many diseases throughout the human and animal populations of the world. Within Australia there are more than 300 different species of mosquito but only a small number are of major concern. Several important human diseases are transmitted throughout Australia by these insects including Dengue fever (QLD only), Australian encephalitis, Ross River virus disease and Barmah Forest virus disease; malaria has been transmitted locally in Australia only rarely in recent decades. In addition to being disease vectors, mosquitoes can cause major disruptions, through their persistent biting, to occupational, recreational and social activities.

**IMMEDIATE CARE**

- Wash the bitten area with soap and water
- Keep the area clean
- Do not scratch the bite
- Scratching continuously can increase the discomfort.
- Mix baking soda and water to a thick paste and apply to the bite
- This paste can be applied on the mosquito bite area.
- Soap can be rubbed directly on the site.
JELLYFISH are found in all the marine waters of the world and waters that surround Australia are no different. There are many species of jellyfish that inhabit the Australian waters and are transparent in the water and therefore difficult to see. Most stings occur in the summer months in shallow water near the beach.

**FIRST AID TREATMENT**

- Keep the patient quiet and still
- Remove the stingers. If possible wear gloves so you will not get stung as well
- Use a towel to wipe off tentacles and stingers
- Wash the area with salt water OR vinegar can be even more effective as the acid helps neutralise the jellyfish sting.
- If instructed by a health professional soak the wound in hot water. As hot as the patient can tolerate for 30-90 minutes
- You may be instructed to neutralise certain types of stings with vinegar or a meat tenderiser mixed in a water solution
- DO NOT attempt to remove the stingers without protecting your hands
- DO NOT raise the affected body part higher than the heart
The **BLUE BOTTLE** or the “Portuguese Man o War” tentacles will cause a sharp, painful sting if they are touched, which is aggravated by rubbing the area. Intense pain may be felt from a few minutes to many hours and develops into a dull ache which then spreads to surrounding joints. The tentacles are like a long string of barbed hooks. If a tentacle attaches itself to a human, it releases a poison and if you continue to rub the skin after the tentacle has been removed more poison or venom will be released.

**FIRST AID TREATMENT**

- A major sting to the face or neck area should be treated urgently, especially if there is swelling to the site. In these cases dial Triple Zero (000) immediately and ask for Ambulance.
- Remove any tentacles that are stuck to the skin with tweezers or a gloved hand.
- Wash the site of the sting with lots of seawater.
- Immerse the victim’s site of the sting in tolerably hot water.
- If hot water is not available apply ice packs, avoiding direct contact with the skin by wrapping the ice pack in a towel.
- Do not apply vinegar.
- Do not rub sand on the area.
Newcastle has a reputation for having some of the best beach locations in Australia. Located on the East Coast of Australia, our beaches are ideal for surfing, body boarding, swimming and other beach activities.

Understanding the ocean is very important. The more that you know about how waves, wind and tides affect conditions in the water, the better able you are to keep yourself safe.

**Always Swim Between the Flags**
Red and yellow patrol flags on a beach mark the safest area to swim when an active lifesaving patrol is on the beach. You should always swim between the red and yellow flags, and at a beach patrolled by lifesavers. Never swim at unpatrolled beaches.

**What is a patrolled beach?**
Patrolled beaches are identified by red and yellow flags with many Newcastle beaches having lifesaving patrols during the summer months. An easy way to identify an unpatrolled beach is if there are no flags. You should not swim at a beach that is not patrolled.
What is a Rip?
A rip is a strong current running out to sea. Rips are the cause of most rescues performed at beaches. A rip usually occurs when a channel forms between the shore and a sandbar, and large waves have built up water which then returns to sea, causing a drag effect. Rips are dangerous as they can carry a weak or tired swimmer out into deep water.

Common signs of a rip are:
- murky brown water caused by sand and seaweed being stirred up off the sea bed
- foam on the surface extending beyond the break
- waves breaking on both sides of the rip but not inside the rip (the rip may seem calm and inviting)
- water that appears dark, indicating deeper water
- debris floating out to sea.
SURVIVING THE RIP

You can survive rip currents by knowing your options:

• For assistance stay calm, float and attract attention by raising an arm.
• To escape a rip, swim parallel to the beach until you reach the breaking wave zone, then swim back to shore or signal for help.
• Always conserve your energy. Waves can assist you back to the beach.

MOST IMPORTANTLY

• Avoid a rip - always swim between the red and yellow flags
• Don’t swim alone
• Stay calm, stay afloat and signal for help by raising an arm

INFORMATION SOURCED FROM

• Water safety NSW

• Victorian Water Safety Guide Summer 2011-13
Australia has the highest range of skin cancer in the world, so protect yourself from the dangerous ultra-violet (uv) rays this summer by following these very important steps.

**PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILDREN FROM THE SUN**

Parents need to encourage their children to:

- Seek shade between peak UV times (10am to 3pm during daylight savings)
- Wear sun protective clothing that covers as much skin as possible, especially shoulders, arms and legs
- Wear a broad-brimmed hat to protect the face, ears and neck
- Apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outside or swimming, and re-apply every two hours
- Wear sunglasses that fit well and wrap around the face

Australian culture involves a great deal of recreational activity, so parents really need to consider ways to reduce sun exposure to their children when playing outside. Plan to be outdoors before 11am or after 3pm in daylight saving time. Between 11 in the morning and 3 in the afternoon, the sun is at its strongest and the risk of skin damage is at its highest. In conjunction with other sun protection measures - such as clothing, hats and sunscreen - shade is your best option for keeping your skin safe. Avoiding direct sunlight and opting for shade, such as trees or shelters, is one of the most effective ways of reducing sun exposure.

It is also important to remember that you can never be too young to wear a pair of UV protection sunglasses. Damage to the eye caused by ultra-violet radiation can cause vision impairment and, in some cases, blindness. Cancer can also develop on the surface of the eye and surrounding tissue. Try to choose a pair of sunglasses that block out 100% of UV for the best protection.
Cancer Council NSW recommends that when the UV Index is 3 or above, you should protect your skin in five ways:

- **Slip** on clothing that covers your arms and legs
- **Slop** on 30+, broad-spectrum sunscreen
- **Slap** on a broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat
- **Seek** shade
- **Slide** on wrap-around sunglasses

For more information on skin cancer prevention and sun protection, visit the website [www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart)
IMPACT OF NEW ENVIRONMENT

CHANGES IN...

SENSORY
Smells, sounds, tastes, light, climate

PHYSICAL
Homes, food, clothing, people, schools. Support people. Education, work. Language – verbal and non-verbal.

CULTURAL
Beliefs, values, attitudes, thinking, behaviour.

STRESS

INTERNAL MANIFESTATION
Sadness, anger, fear, frustration, loneliness, regret, confusion.

EXTERNAL MANIFESTATION
Withdrawal, acting out, somatization, fatigue, dependence, over-activity.

SETTLEMENT PROCESS RESPONSES

Alienation from old culture
Euphoric involvement with new world.

Alienation from new culture
Complete rejection of new world.

Bi-Culturalism
A positive ability to live comfortably within and between two (or more) cultures.
CULTURE SHOCK

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is the anxiety which arises when one no longer knows or can control the various aspects of the environment in order to gain feedback and reinforcement.

DEFINITION
We can define culture shock as a condition of tension created within the mind of a person who is continually exposed to a range of unfamiliar situations, namely a foreign culture. The shock is caused by the absence of a familiar cultural environment. The person encounters totally different stimuli, such as different smells. Sounds, sights, personal relationships, methods of transportation, eating and purchasing.

SYMPTOMS
The more obvious signs that students are perhaps experiencing culture shock include tiredness, lack of responsiveness in the teaching situation, withdrawal into themselves and a general lack of participation in study activities – particularly activities such as discussion. Some students may become a little aggressive or short tempered others may withdraw to the extent that they are seen as being aloof or arrogant.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK
At home, students do not experience culture shock because they are in their own cultural environment. However, as soon as they board the plane for Australia, they may experience some degree of culture shock. The staff on the plane speak a different sort of “English”, they treat the students in a way which is probably different from what they have previously experienced and the food provided may look unusual. The level of culture shock being experienced by the students will continue to rise after their arrival in Australia as they are bombarded by an increasing number of stimuli with which they are unfamiliar. The culture shock will eventually reach a maximum level, at which time the students will feel most vulnerable and may seem quite lacking in their ability to cope with their new environment.
REMINDER
Always remember that whatever their cultural background, each International student has his own individual personality and experiences. Some students will be shy, others extrovert, some will be self-centred, others gregarious; some will be widely travelled, others will have never been outside their country before. Try not to make judgements on matters until you feel you have a good understanding of all factors involved.

INSTITUTIONAL SHOCK
Whenever people move from a familiar environment into a different working or studying environment, even within the same country, they experience a period of uncertainty while they adjust to the new situation. This period of unease or uncertainty is termed institutional shock. The shock can be manifested in several ways, but usually people exhibit some form of shyness, hesitation or withdrawal.
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

To help minimise institutional shock, students need to know in general how our educational system works. Particularly, they need information on the differences between the educational system they have previously experienced and the system in operation in Australia. In addition to the differences in the attitudes towards teaching and learning and the use of the heuristic approach in Australia, students need to understand that because there is not likely to be much self-reliant in their work. Because Australian staff expect their students to be mature and to make decisions for themselves, International students may find us to be less supportive than teachers with whom they have studies back at home. It would be a good idea to explain to the students that although our approach might appear to be unsupportive, we do care about the student’s welfare and their study problems and that we will be happy to provide help if they ask for it.

The experienced traveller will feel less of a culture shock than a person who has never travelled internationally before. Not only will the experienced travellers be more prepared for the differences between cultures, they will also have developed some strategies for dealing with unfamiliar situations. Given that we can do very little to reduce the level of culture shock our students experience before they arrive at our institutions, we should take every measure possible from that point in time to lower the culture shock which they feel.

By providing a relaxed, friendly environment in which students can operate, and by providing clear explanations as to ways Australian culture differs from their home cultures, we can reduce some of the stress experienced by students. In this way, we can lessen the impact of culture shock, enabling students to fit in more quickly with their new environment. The effect of providing appropriate help to students is illustrated in the diagram below.

While students are experiencing culture shock, their performance is lowered. Students who suffer from high level of culture shock are sometimes incapable of concentrating on all their studies. We know of many instances where students have initially withdrawn in to their own world; they have slept very little, eaten very little and have not interacted with other students or staff. However once the students’ level of culture shock falls, they have more energy to devote to their work and hence their performance improves. It is important to reduce culture shock as quickly as practicable so that students can concentrate on their studies.
AUSTRALIAN SLANG
G’DAY MATE! LEARN THESE PHRASES

Ace!: Excellent! Very good!
Ambo: ambulance, ambulance driver
Arvo: afternoon
Aussie (pron. Ozzie): Australian

Baked dinner: A favourite Australia meal, baked lamb and vegetables
Banger: A sausage. Pronounced “bang-a” E.g. “Dija’ wunna put a few bangas on the barbie?”
Barbie: barbecue (noun)
Bathers: swimming costume
Bottle-o: liquor shop (originally a man with hessian bags going around picking up beer bottles in the 50’s and 60’s)
Brekkie: breakfast
Bring a plate: bring a plate of food to share
BYO: unlicensed restaurant where you have to Bring Your Own grog, also similar party or barbecue

Chewie: chewing gum
Chook: a chicken
Chrissie: Christmas
Cozzie: swimming costume

Dag: a funny person, nerd, goof
Digger: a soldier
Down Under: Australia and New Zealand
Dunny: lavatory

Esky: large insulated food/drink container for picnics, barbecues etc.

Fair dinkum: true, genuine
Fair go: a chance (“give a bloke a fair go”) an appeal for fair treatment, just
Flat (noun): a small single apartment
Flat mate: a room mate
Footy: Australian Rules football

G’Day mate: hello!
Garbo: municipal garbage collector
Gear: clothes. See also laughing gear
Greenie: environmentalist
Grog: liquor, beer (“bring your own grog”)

Hard yakker: extremely hard work. Pronounced “Yakka”
Have a good one: have a good day
Hoo-roo: goodbye
Hotel: often just a pub

Icy pole, ice block: popsicle, lollypop
Idiot box: Television

Jack of all trades, master of none: a person that will try anything
Joey: baby kangaroo
Jug: electric kettle

Keep in touch: keep in contact
Kelpie: Australian sheepdog originally bred from Scottish collie
Kindie: kindergarten

Lollies: sweets, candy
**Mate:** buddy, friend

**Milk bar:** corner shop that sells takeaway food

**Milko:** milkman

**My pleasure:** you’re welcome

**Nipper:** young surf lifesaver

**No drama:** same as ‘no worries’

**No-hoper:** somebody who’ll never do well

**No problem:** fine; everything’s OK

**No worries!:** Expression of forgiveness or reassurance (No problem; forget about it; I can do it; Yes, I’ll do it)

**O.S.:** overseas

**Okey-dokey:** good, OK, yes

**Op shop:** opportunity shop, thrift store, place where second hand goods are sold.

**Oz:** Australia!

**Pav:** Pavlova - a rich, famous, creamy Australian dessert

**Pint:** large glass of beer (esp. in South Australia)

**Postie:** postman, mailman

**Queue:** a line or column of people. To wait in a queue!

**Rage:** party

**Reckon!:** you bet! Absolutely!

**Runners:** sneakers, tennis shoes, sandshoes

**Salvos, the:** Salvation Army, bless them

**Sanger:** a sandwich

**Schooner:** large beer glass in Queensland; medium beer glass in South Australia

**Scorcher:** a very hot day

**See ya later:** farewell, goodbye

**See-ya:** goodbye

**Sloppy joe:** A sweatshirt, top or pullover

**Smoko:** smoke or coffee break

**Snag:** a sausage

**Spag bol:** spaghetti bolognese

**Sunnies:** sunglasses

**Ta!:** Thank you

**Ta-dah:** Goodbye. See also “Hoo-roo”

**Take-away:** Food to go

**Tea:** Dinner or evening meal

**Telly:** Television or telescope

**Thongs:** cheap rubber backless sandals

**Togs:** swim suit

**Tomato sauce:** Ketchup

**Truckie:** truck driver

**Twist top:** A bottle of beer with a screw top

**Uni:** university

**Unit:** flat, apartment

**Unreal:** Fantastic or wonderful. E.g. “The job I got is bloody unreal!”

**Veggies:** vegetables

**Vinnie’s:** St. Vincent De Paul’s (charity thrift stores and hostels)

**Walkabout:** a walk in the Outback by Aborigines that lasts for an indefinite amount of time

**Week-ender:** A small cottage or home in the country or by the sea

**Wrap-up:** conclude, finish

**XXXX:** pronounced Four X, brand of beer made in Queensland

**Yak:** chat, talk

**You’re not wrong:** you are right; in total agreement

**Zilch:** zero, worth nothing

**Zonked:** tired out; really drunk; over worked and underpaid
KEY SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY

• **International Student Support** – provides practical assistance, information and referral

• **University Counselling Service** – provides confidential service to assist students with personal problems, including stress and anxiety, motivational issues etc.

• **Learning Support Unit** – provides assistance with academic issues, including essay writing, referencing etc.

• **University Medical Service** – comprehensive health service, through which students may use Overseas Student Health Cover cards without incurring additional costs.

• **University Dental Service** – comprehensive dental service located on campus.

• **NUSA and NUPSA** – Undergraduate and postgraduate student associations provides advocacy, support and services

• **International Associations** - provides social contact & activities for numerous country groups

• **Chaplaincy** – Multi-faith centre located on campus. In addition there is a Muslim Prayer facility

• **Accommodation Office** – provides assistance to locate suitable accommodation

• **Loans and Welfare** – provides interest free loans to students under certain conditions