

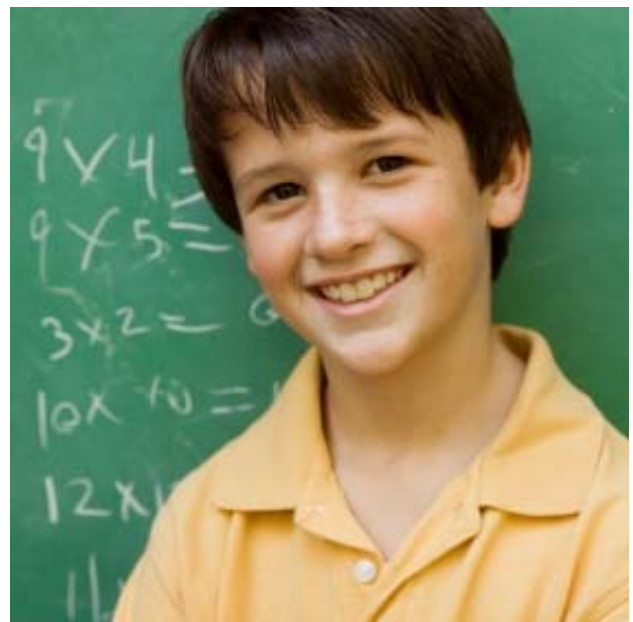
RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

It's All Adding Up in 2008

Associate Professor Allan White from the Centre for Educational Research has investigated the extent to which the Counting On 2008 numeracy skills program, operating under the Quality Teaching in the Middle Years program has been successfully implemented in NSW schools. This research was funded by the NSW Department of Education and Training.

'Lack of numeracy skills for a number of Middle Years' students has been a real problem in schools', Associate Professor White. 'By the time children get to high school some may already be far behind their peers in mathematical skills. Many mistakes in written mathematics problems occur before the actual mathematics is done. Sometimes students are using inefficient or inappropriate strategies which put them at a disadvantage to their peers. The Counting On numeracy skills program was first implemented in 1999 and became a mandated State initiative for improving numeracy in schools for Middle Years' students. It has expanded and evolved to a program implemented in 99 primary and high schools across the state. The program also focuses on the professional development of teachers in identifying and addressing the student's learning needs and builds on the success of the program.'

Extensive data was collected from the schools involved in the program including student assessments, phone interviews, email surveys and program facilitator evaluations. Case studies explored the change in teacher knowledge involving teachers using surveys and interviews, and data was also examined from the teacher evaluations of the Australian Government Quality Teaching Programme. The effectiveness of changes made to the Counting On program was assessed including the recent introduction of school cluster groups or "learning communities".



School students have shown significant improvement in numeracy skills as a result of the Counting On programs, with the most recent continuing this success. The development of school cluster groups have shown promise for improved communications between primary and high school teachers as students make the transition from primary to high school mathematics studies.

Project Title: Counting on 2008
Funding has been set at: \$7,188
Contact Details: al.white@uws.edu.au
<http://www.uws.edu.au/cer>
August 2009