

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Young Users of Information Technology

**Dr Carol Reid from the Centre for Educational Research along with an international interdisciplinary research team is investigating the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by young people in Canada, Australia and South Africa. This research has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada via its International Opportunities Fund.**

'Many governments in the world have made school-based access to ICT a high priority and have invested heavily in this area, with Australia being no exception,' says Dr Reid. 'As yet, however, there is little known about how policies and funding priorities have affected young people's access to and use of ICT. For young people living in rural areas and young aboriginal people of both Canada and Australia equity of access to ICT may be an issue, further affected by factors such as culture and government policy. There are also unanswered questions about how young people use ICT for educational purposes and how this affects their actual educational performance. Our research will look at three countries, enabling an international comparative perspective on equity and ICT for young people.'

By using existing and new survey data, ICT access and use by young people will be examined according to subgroup factors such as their gender, socio-economic status, geographical location and cultural background. Data detailing ICT use in the developing context of South Africa will be compared with that of Australia and Canada along with an examination of how government policy may affect ICT patterns of use in different countries and locations.



An accurate picture of how young people use ICT and what barriers there are to accessing ICT is important for their educational development and their participation in ICT use in an increasingly knowledge-based society, both in Australia and globally.

**Project Title:** Bridging Borders: International Explorations of Youth Use of Information and Communication Technology.

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