

**Kiwi Friends? The Expectations and Experiences of International Students at a Secondary School in Auckland, New Zealand of Social Relationships with Local Domestic Students and of 'Buddies' or 'Peer Pairing'**

*Tracy Evans, Homestay Administrator, Macleans College, Macleans Road, Manukau 2014  
New Zealand*

A presentation on a research project conducted in 2010 at a state secondary school in Auckland, New Zealand. The participants were 69 International fee paying students age 16-18. The research explored the experiences and attitudes of international students towards friendships and social relationships with local students and the usefulness of peer-pairing support organised by the school. The research findings indicate the relative importance of different aspects of friendship support, as reported by the participants. The project's findings suggest ways the school could help students initiate and develop social relationships and friendships, in the school and in the wider community.

Conference delegates have the opportunity to hear first-hand about the trials and tribulations of conducting a small scale independent research project as a postgraduate student in a context where little other recent research appears to have been done. The presentation also highlights some of the ethical issues and restrictions arising from attempting to conduct research with international students who are under 18.

The presenter has recently joined ISANA NZ as School's Representative and has worked for several years providing pastoral care support and accommodation services to international students under 18 years of age, as part of a team managing the largest international student population at secondary education level in New Zealand.