**Transcript**

***Dr Donna Starks – Language and society***

Okay, I deal with language and society and right now I’m interested in nicknaming practices and I’ve been looking at nicknaming practices of Australian youth.

I’m interested in finding out what practices actually occur in multicultural urban societies. And, from the data that we’ve collected so far in schools in both Queensland and Victoria we’ve been able to show that nicknaming practices are essentially evaluated quite positively. And those nicknames that are based around surnames and given names are particularly evaluated positively. So, that’s some of the things we’ve been looking at.

Well, I’m trying to put a positive spin on naming practices because with all the media on bullying and name calling there’s just negativity about how people use names that are not given names or surnames. And we all use different names so what we really want to do is find out what’s happing. And generally what we’re finding is that name, nicknaming is positively evaluated. It’s used for solidarity building and it’s used for building friendships and all that kerfuffle is basically needs to be put into a context.