

Dare to lead

Dare to Lead is an Australian government funded national project with a focus on improving educational outcomes for Indigenous students. It is managed by Principals Australia and provides quality professional development activities and resources. Dare to Lead works as a network of support for school leaders. It encourages schools to work effectively with current programs and to initiate new models of activity. One of the goals of the project is to achieve sustainable change and improved outcomes for Indigenous students.

The project began in 2000 when 184 principals from around Australia attended a two-day forum where a commitment was made by the peak principal associations to work together to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In 2001 additional forums were held around the country.

Since 2001 the project has gone through three additional phases:

2003–2005: Taking it On. During this initial phase the tasks were to build awareness and enthusiasm for the project, establish networks of communication and build the coalition.

2005–2008: Making the Difference. This phase focused on strategic action at the local level with the goal of greater improvements in literacy performance in year 5 and greater completion rates of recognised year 12 courses.

2009–2012: Partnerships Build Success. In this phase, the project will draw on cooperative efforts to create sustained, systematic change and improved outcomes.

The Museum's Trish Albert and Deborah Frederick attended the Dare to Lead conference in Adelaide in June 2009. The one-day event featured keynote speakers, panel sessions, and workshops delivered by schools and institutions that demonstrate best practice. Dare to Lead has formed partnerships with educational bodies from all over Australia. Professional education associations and community organisations are an integral part of the project's work.

The most fundamental partnerships have been with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, leaders and community members. Ten high-profile Indigenous educators sit on the Dare to Lead National Steering Committee, while other eminent figures are ambassadors and patrons of the project. This year Duncan Smith from the Wiradjuri Echo dance troop of Canberra is one of those ambassadors.

Trish and Deb set up a stall to promote the **First Australians: Plenty Stories** series of 18 books, written by Trish Albert. **First Australians: Plenty Stories** is a collaboration between the National Museum of Australia and Pearson Australia to provide primary classrooms with a comprehensive resource to enable teachers to approach the teaching of Indigenous culture and issues with confidence.

Trish presented an audiovisual display to a large group of people from all around Australia. The presentation was very well received with great applause, and interest was demonstrated by the large number of conference participants who visited the Museum's education stall.

Deb's sales finesse, aplomb and cheekiness were informative and enjoyed by all teachers and principals when she got down to business. Not one person got past the Museum stall without handouts of great resources and information about the Museum, and what the Education Section can offer school students during a visit.

Deborah Frederick, *Education Officer*, and
Lyn Beasley, *Manager, School Visits, Education*

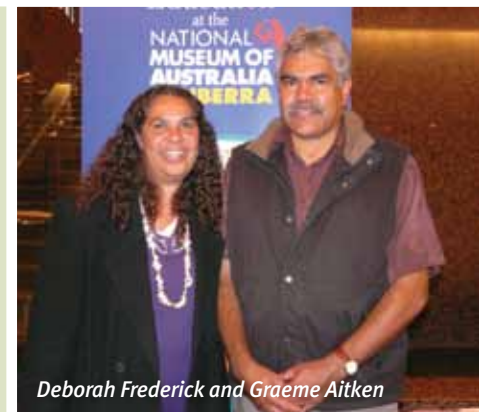


Photo: Deb Frederick

Anthony Williams and Duncan Smith



Trish Albert engaging teachers with the Plenty Stories books



Deborah Frederick and Graeme Aitken



Trish Albert engaging leaders with the Plenty Stories books project