Trainer guide for non-verbal communication survey

This survey is designed to replace the usual instruction on non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is different in many cultures, yet most information on non-verbal communication is written from a British/American perspective. By using the survey you can create a set of definitions that suit the cultural make up of your school.

How do you conduct the survey?

Students should be given at least three different photos from the supplied pack and at least three photocopies of the survey. Demonstrate to students how to fill out the survey form with another trainer or student and then demonstrate how to ask someone to fill out the survey.

Send students out in pairs to ask people to fill out the surveys. Students should be looking for a combination of other students, teachers, trainers and other school staff.

Interpreting the results:

Once students have returned with their completed surveys you will need to collate the results. This means collecting all of the responses to a photo and summarizing them under each photo. This is something you can ask students to do, if you show them how to do it.

Once responses have been collated, you will need to look for patterns in the results. Did everyone respond to the photos in the same way? If not did their gender, age or cultural background influence their response? Did people of the same age, gender or cultural background respond in similar ways to the different photos.

Getting an understanding of the different ways people perceive non-verbal communication:

People of the same age, culture and gender will perceive non-verbal communication differently. Pointing this out to students and that it can be difficult for people to clearly understand what the other person is expressing without talking to them is helpful.

Using different photos:

You don’t have to use the photos supplied or you could supplement them with ones taken of your students. Students or local who use traditional Aboriginal hand signs or other non-verbal communication could be incorporated. Talking to your assistant teacher or liaison officer (if there is one) could be a way to integrate this. This is a great video looking at the hand signs used in the Kimberley: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLwf2b4kWKo>, this is a great dictionary of sign languages for central Australia http://iltyemiltyem.com/sign/ and this one looks at gestures used on Elcho Island/Galiwinku <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uuybxPWGis>. Remember, these videos may represent gestures only used by this community or parts of this community.