Stakeholder Comments

In addition to the quantitative data that are collected and analysed to evaluate the effectiveness of the QuickSmart intervention programs, students, QuickSmart instructors, teachers, principals and parents are also given opportunities to provide feedback on their experiences and evaluations of QuickSmart.

A consistent theme expressed by students, parents and teachers during and immediately following the QuickSmart program is the increase in confidence that these students display in approaching academic tasks.

In a follow-up study in 2006, students from the New England area in Northern NSW who had been involved in QuickSmart between 2001 and 2005 were invited to be interviewed about their participation, and how QuickSmart had helped with their literacy or numeracy basic skills since they completed the program. Parents of these students were also given the opportunity to comment on the QuickSmart experience for their children. Up to five years later, students and parents reported positive attitudes towards learning, the ability to work independently, and maintenance of the confidence which had come with continued success in learning.

As John Bradbury (Numeracy Consultant, Curriculum Services Branch, Department of Employment, Education and Training, NT) explains, the qualitative data support findings of quantitative data analyses:

"Analysis of the changes in student success between cohorts revealed a significant positive difference in favour of the QuickSmart cohort (t = 2.51 crit. = 2.01, p = 0.016). That is, the QuickSmart cohort showed greater gains from the baseline test to the post-test than the comparison students. While this method of analysis does not address overall achievement, it does
confirm that students in the *QuickSmart* program are 'closing the gap' with their peers. This quantitative result corroborates the uniformly positive qualitative data obtained through feedback forms from participating students, their teachers and parents, which indicate that the *QuickSmart* program made a significant difference to student learning outcomes."