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Kate Reynolds is Professor of Social Psychology at the Australian National University. She has published widely in many of the leading journals in the field on a range of topics including intergroup conflict and co-operation, stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. Her expertise is in investigating the role of social identity (sense of self as a group member – "we", "us") and associated group norms in shaping people's attitudes, affect and behaviour. Recently she has developed and strengthened the connections between social psychology and public policy as team leader on two Australian Research Council Linkage Grants with Government including one with the Department of Social Services on diversity and social cohesion.

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Building Social Cohesion in Ethnically Diverse Communities:
What Works and Why?

With increasingly diverse communities governments are focused on the need to strengthen social cohesion. Recent "home-grown" terrorist events have re-energised debates about the consequences of discrimination, alienation and beliefs that the system is illegitimate (not working for "us" or "we" do not belong here). Social psychology has progressed our understanding of the dynamics of intergroup conflict and co-operation and its consequences for (il)legitimacy, prejudice, violence and social harmony. Drawing on these insights an ARC Linkage grant was developed in partnership with the Department of Social Services to investigate the impact of community-based interventions on social cohesion. Of interest are leadership, program (ingroup) norms, program identification and the emergence of a shared inclusive social identity. Evidence that these factors play a significant role in explaining tolerance and reducing alienation has wider implications for community and national-level efforts to build social cohesion. Implications of the findings for theory, research and policy processes will be outlined.