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Conversions and Transformations:
Missiological Approaches to Religious Change**

**The Impact of Multicultural Models on the Transformation
of Children and Youth**

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Australian churches are grappling with new mission opportunities flowing from the culturally and linguistically diverse people groups settling in Australia. The Baptist Union of Victoria (BUV) has 70 Languages Other Than English-speaking (LOTE) congregations and many other churches becoming intentionally multicultural. LOTE churches initially develop for first generation arrivals as part of them coping with a new culture. These churches face tensions of language and identity, as the Australian dominant Anglo culture impacts on children and youth. This paper describes frameworks that are helpful in transforming LOTE churches' ministry for children and youth and fostering their conversion in multicultural contexts. Recent research into the BUV has highlighted four models of being multicultural church – Monocultural, Friendship, Partnership and Integrated. Central to these different models is the way power structures, decision-making and hospitality are practiced. Younger and older members have different expectations of each other in these areas. The paper outlines the strengths and weaknesses of each model and how the models engage with first, 1.5 and second generation immigrants. The presentation includes steps that can be profitably taken in the development and support of LOTE churches and their ministry to their children and youth. The way forwards for the transformation of LOTE churches must include mutual learning; intercultural communication; education in the meaning of multicultural worship and sharing of resources; addressing power imbalances; listening to the voices of diverse cultures and generations; and developing multicultural and next generation leadership.

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