



This week's stories from the media

- Low Year 7 attendance - less likely to finish school
- Childcare workers strike
- Homework: parents seek guidance from schools
- Sexism needs to be challenged in schools
- Therapy dogs for schools
- Teachers slipping through cracks

Childcare Workers Strike

Hundreds of childcare centres across Australia closed Tuesday as workers walked off the job to protest against low wages.

The protest is the first since their union, United Voice, lost a five-year battle at the Fair Work Commission for a wage increase.

The workers want the Federal Government to subsidise a 30 per cent pay rise for the nation's 108,000 childcare workers.

- The national minimum wage is currently \$18.29 per hour
- The average full-time Australian wage is currently \$42.84 per hour
- Childcare workers with a certificate III are paid an hourly award rate of \$21.29
- A metal fitter, who also has a certificate III and trains for the same period of time, makes an average of \$39.47 per hour

[Read the story](#)

Low Year 7 Attendance Means You're Less Likely To Finish School

A study of more than 30,000 students has confirmed the link between improving school attendance rates in Year 7 and the likelihood of completing high school.

Conducted by the Smith Family, the research found around three-quarters of students from low-income families with higher attendance rates in the first year of high school completed Year 12.

This was compared to less than half of those with very low attendance in Year 7.

It also showed students with very low Year 7 attendance rates, who improved their attendance by Year 9, were much more likely to complete Year 12 than those whose rates remained low.

The fact a student's outcomes when young are predictive of their eventual achievement isn't surprising. But from a policy perspective, this confirms that a student's background matters, and that targeting students early is vital.

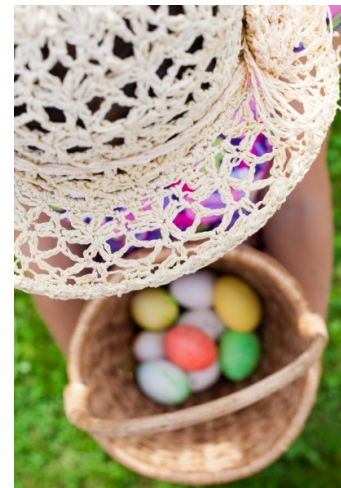
A key finding in this report is that changes in school attendance are associated with better school outcomes.

Other findings include:

- 88% of Year 9 students who achieved an A in English completed Year 12, compared to only 50% of those who achieved an E
- 82% of students who completed Year 12 were engaged in post-school work and/or study, compared to only 68% of those who only completed Year 10.

61% of students who improved their attendance between Year 7 and 9 completed Year 12, compared to only 35% of those whose attendance remained low.

[More](#)



“...Childcare workers with a certificate III are paid an hourly award rate of \$21.29....”

Homework: Parents Seek Guidance From Schools

Many Australian parents are out of their depth when it comes to their children’s homework, new research has revealed.

Commissioned by Firefly Learning, the new survey gathered data from more than 1,000 parents and 500 school aged children, to conclude that parents were struggling to understand school requirements and assist with homework.

The survey found that 30 per cent of parents weren’t able to assist with school work, and 11 and 12-year-olds were most likely to forget about their homework.

Teens reported they often were unable to finish homework because they had too much to complete, and also had struggled to balance competing demands and busy schedules.

“Parents want to feel confident in guiding their children and need the background and resources readily accessible to do this,” she said.

[More](#)

Sexism Needs To Be Challenged In Schools

Sexism still exists in workplaces and schools despite more than 40 years of formal and informal activities to eliminate it, and the Australian government’s acceptance that gender equality is linked to improved national productivity, innovation and economic growth.

Women have not achieved leadership roles in equal numbers with men in workplaces. They work in a highly segregated labour market, the gender pay gap continues, women have less superannuation and so on.

Today, girls are not choosing the new “boys” academic subjects, such as computing and software development. So, again, they’re missing out on future job opportunities.

But subject choices are not the only keys to equity. Boys are more likely than girls to become organisational leaders. We hear unconscious bias and sexism is a reason for women’s disadvantage in organisations, and there are guidelines for how it can be challenged.

[More](#)

Therapy Dogs For Schools

Given the impact therapy dogs can have on student well-being, schools and universities are increasingly adopting therapy dog programs as an inexpensive way of providing social and emotional support for students.

The role of therapy dogs is to react and respond to people and their environment, under the guidance and direction of their owner.

For example, an individual might be encouraged to gently pat or talk to a dog to teach sensitive touch and help them be calm.

Therapy dogs can also be used as part of animal assisted therapy. This aims to improve a person’s social, cognitive and emotional functioning.

[Full Story](#)

Happy Easter

SAASSO wishes you and your family a safe and happy Easter!



We’ll see you in term 2.

Teachers Slipping Through Cracks

Early career teachers in Australia in casual or temporary employment are more likely to miss out on receiving professional support, leading to lower work satisfaction and higher likelihood of leaving the profession.

In 2007, about one in six beginning teachers were unsupported.

This portion dropped to one in ten by 2010, suggesting some improvement. The portion of beginning teachers in insecure employment who received no support also dropped, from 23% in 2007 to 16% in 2010.

[Read more](#)