



This week's stories from the media

- Autism teachers will arrive in SA schools from Term 1
- Schools to close on Thursday September 22
- Children being taught to gauge babies' consent to hug
- New data prompts calls to abolish ancient smacking laws
- Pandemic blamed for spike in SA kids with eating disorders
- Whyalla Secondary introduces new truancy policy

Schools Close On Thursday 22/9

Thursday 22 September has been declared an official public holiday to mark the National Day of Mourning for Her Majesty The Queen.

Schools will close, with all extra-curricular activities and school events to be cancelled.

Childcare centres will shut.

Normal public holiday provisions apply to claiming Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for children who would usually attend.

"As a parent, I acknowledge that this doesn't come without its inconvenience," the Premier said.

"I think every parent around the state will now be busily trying to work out their arrangements, particularly those people that have to continue to work."

[Read Story](#)

Autism Teachers Will Arrive In SA Schools From Term 1

South Australian state primary schools will see the addition of specialist autism teachers as part of the State Government's plan to support the inclusion of students on the spectrum.

The program is set to roll out from Term 1 next year, and is part of an initiative to better help, understand and include autistic children at school.

"We know that there is a huge benefit for students, families, the community and South Australia more broadly by improving the support we put around autistic students," Education Minister Blair Boyer said.

Public primary schools, including reception to year 12 as well as special and area schools, will shortly receive guidelines to choose their autism inclusion teacher and will have until November to fill the position.

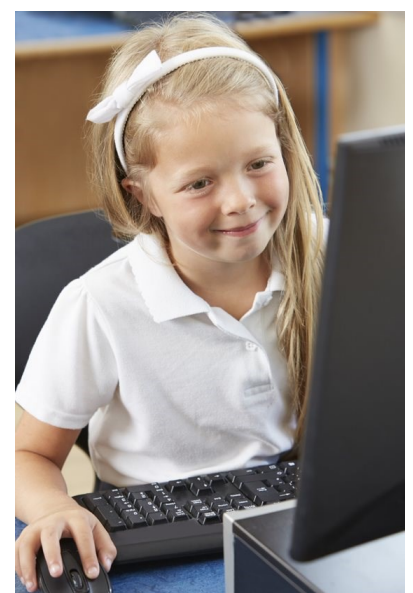
Once selected, each specialist will undergo training and tailor their knowledge to the specific school.

The announcement follows the appointment of Australia's first Autism Assistant Minister Emily Bourke, who will implement autism policies in schools and workplaces across SA.

Bureau of Statistics estimates one in a 100 people live with autism, with in 2018 more than 205,200 had been diagnosed.

Students with autism can find the classroom challenging, and it can have a negative impact on their academic results, social skills and cognitive ability.

[More](#)



“...estimates one in a 100 people live with autism....”

Children Taught to Gauge Babies' Consent Before Hugging

Children are being taught to check whether a baby agrees with being hugged in consent and respectful relationships classes.

Primary school children are being advised to check a baby agrees with being hugged in consent and respectful relationships classes.

Many experts see consent education as needing to start at birth and children are even asked to negotiate what kind of greeting to use with each other in one book.

One popular book by Jayneen Sanders called Let's Talk about Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect, states: "even though a baby can't speak, you can tell if a baby wants to be hugged ... if they don't want a hug, they might cry or have a sad face or try to push you away".

Sexuality educator Debbie Ollis, an associate professor at Monash University, said it was appropriate to start body safety skills with babies.

[More](#)

New Data Calls To Abolish Ancient Smacking Law

National Children's Commissioner Anne Hollonds has called for smacking to be made illegal as data shows children who have seen and experienced physical abuse are more than nine times more likely to use violence in the home.

Her comments came in response to new research that showed children who are smacked are more likely to use violence against their family, mainly their siblings and mothers, in adolescence.

Other recent research has shown smacked children face increased risk of mental health conditions or self-harm.

One in five of 5021 young people (aged 16 to 20) surveyed by the national women's safety research body, ANROWS, said they had used violence against a family member.

Of those, 89% had experienced abuse, including smacking.

[More](#)

Spike In SA Kids Eating Disorders

The number of children and young people hospitalised in South Australia for eating disorders has jumped by 43% in a year, InDaily has revealed.

There has also been a 21% increase in young patients accessing eating disorder services in the public system.

Clinicians are blaming the "perfect storm" of the pandemic, saying eating disorders "thrive in isolation", with people feeling "out of control" and increased social media use placing emphasis on preventing weight gain during lockdowns.

SA Health data shows 837 children and young people were hospitalised at the Women's and Children's Hospital and Flinders Medical Centre last year for treatment of eating disorders.

[Full Story](#)

School Post

Term 3's School Post is out now!



Whyalla's New Truancy Policy

Teachers at a new \$100m super school – already dealing with schoolyard violence – are texting individual families over problem students.

Whyalla Secondary School has introduced a new policy to combat truancy, sending text messages to parents if pupils are absent for more than 20 minutes.

The years 7-12 school opened this year, with students from three former high schools frequently clashing with each other.

Private security guards were deployed to the school in June after calls from some parents for action against violence between students.

[Read more](#)