



This week's stories from the media

- Reading initiative helps pre-service teachers literacy skills
- Positive impact of fee-free TAFE
- Injured, stressed teachers awarded \$169.1m in compensation
- How to help students create friendships
- Schools educate students on social media dangers
- Sweden swapping soft play for hard learning

Fee-Free Tafe

Almost 25,000 students chose to study at TAFE SA in the first three months of this year – a 14.2% rise from 2023 – showing the positive impact of Fee-Free TAFE.

The 14.2% rise equates to 3,105 more students studying at TAFE and is 12 percentage points above the national increase of 2.2%.

The rise coincides with the start of the SA and Federal Government's investment in the Fee-Free TAFE initiative.

The National Centre for Vocational Education & Training data released today shows there was a total of 46,295 SA government-funded VET students – an increase of 4.7% from last year.

The report also shows there are more program enrolments (up 6%), more subject enrolments (up 6.6%) and more hours of delivery (up 3.6%).

Over the next five years, it is predicted that nine out of ten jobs will require post-secondary education, with half requiring vocational training.

[Story](#)

Reading Initiative Helps Pre-Service Teachers Boost Literacy Skills

Latest NAPLAN results show one in three students fell short of the proficiency benchmark.

A report by Teacher Education Expert Panel noted that: "too many beginning teachers have reported that they felt they needed to be better equipped for the challenges they faced in the classroom on starting their teaching careers."

In SA, a new reading initiative is helping pre-service teachers gain valuable insights about how to build students' reading and literacy skills from experienced teachers on the job.

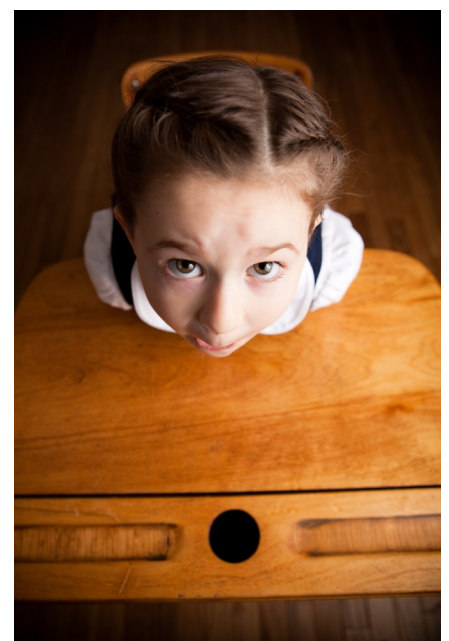
A suite of interactive videos – developed by UniSA in partnership with the education department for Education and teachers in SA schools, show exactly how a working teacher engages their students with reading.

The videos – which cater to children in years two, six and eight, as well as kindergarten-aged children - are now embedded in the University's Initial Teacher Education programs.

UniSA's Dr Colton says pre-service teachers must interpret real classroom data to plan and evaluate teaching, but often lack opportunities to access authentic data during their training.

Dr Colton said there has been "extremely positive" feedback from the pre-service teachers who have engaged with these videos.

[More](#)



“...a new reading initiative is helping pre-service teachers gain valuable insights about how to build students’ reading and literacy skills....”

Injured Stressed Teachers Awarded \$169m Compensation

Thousands of stressed, injured SA teachers awarded \$169.1m in workers compensation, FOI data shows.

More than half of the tens of millions taxpayers spent on educator payouts are for stress-induced injuries, including an almost \$1m mental health claim awarded to a primary school teacher, official figures show.

Education Department data, released under Freedom of Information laws, reveals almost 7400 worker compensation claims, worth more than \$169.1m, were awarded over the past decade.

The FOI showed almost \$44m was awarded to 661 education workers for “work pressure” while a further \$28.2m was paid to 452 staff suffering job-related “harassment and/or workplace bullying”.

More than \$1m was paid out to victims of “racial harassment”.

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How To Help Students Create Friendships

According to the latest State of the Nation Report, more than 27% of primary school students and 36% of secondary students reported high levels of anxiety, depression, or both.

With October marking World Mental Health Month, governments, schools, communities and private sector organisations are shining a light on this profoundly important topic by introducing a range of initiatives aimed at helping young people build resilience and cope both in and outside school.

A key focus is ensuring that young people feel connected to their friends, families, and communities.

Research shows that students who feel a sense of connectedness at school experience numerous benefits, including a more positive school culture, reduced bullying behaviours, higher attendance rates, and improved academic outcomes.

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Schools Educate On Social Media

Increasing concern about the effects of social media on has driven the SA and NSW to convene a joint summit in October to examine imposing a social-media ban on those under 14.

Most Australian children have access to an electronic device, usually a smartphone, which can open the door to a range of disturbing websites and social-media platforms.

The burgeoning potential of - generative artificial intelligence, and the potential for deepfake images and deepfake videos, adds yet another element to the watchlist.

[Full Story](#)

ADHD Awareness Month

October is ADHD awareness month.



Sweden Back To Basics

Long held up as a model, Sweden is going back to basics to reverse a decline in performance.

It is starting by scrapping pre-school.

Sweden will start primary school a year earlier to arrest its educational performance.

It is part of a broader back to basics approach that includes a partial ‘de-digitalization’ of the classroom, a return to writing with pen and paper and a greater emphasis on the teaching guiding pupils through the curriculum.

It is not clear yet what balance the new first year of school will strike between play and more directed subject-specific teaching.

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