



This week's stories from the media

- Labor's \$136 billion for marginal seats
- Kids of 7 learn gender diversity
- China's kids excel at half the cost
- Shorten misled voters on schools boost to GDP
- Rough play with dad healthy
- Shorten mentions childcare relief
- Labor silent on Safe Schools

Kids Of 7 Learn Gender Diversity

Children as young as seven have been exposed to lessons about "transgender experiences", with the Victorian head of the Safe Schools Coalition admitting having taught the secondary school program in primary schools.

Titled Transgender Experiences, the lesson aims to provide students with an "opportunity to explore the topic of gender and gender diversity".

"Many students may believe gender can only be either male or female and that they have specifically related behaviours and characterises," says the guide, co-authored by Ms Ward.

Ostensibly designed as an anti-bullying program, Safe Schools has attracted criticism from conservative quarters, particularly religious groups, for its politically correct approach to sex education and contested ideas about gender.

There are 75 primary schools nationwide that are currently signed up to the coalition.

[Read the full story](#)

Labor's \$136 Billion For Marginal Seats

Labor has promised schools in marginal seats \$1.36 billion in extra federal funding, despite having no power to dictate school-by-school spending by state governments.

Declaring the 2016 election to be a "referendum on education", Bill Shorten yesterday released an electoral breakdown of \$3.8bn in bonus "Gonski" spending over 2018 and 2019.

The 55 seats held by a margin of less than 6% will soak up 36% of spending, with some electorates promised more than \$50 million in extra funding over the two years.

Labor's schools package would give \$355m to South Australia over 2018 and 2019.

Labor's spending would be on top of the extra \$1.2bn the Coalition allocated to schools between 2017 and 2019 in last week's budget. It would honour the six-year Gonski funding deals the Labor government signed with the states before the 2013 election.

Labor will also today announce a \$4.6m plan to extend an individualised teaching scheme, promising to get Australian students back in the world's top

five for reading, maths and science by 2025.

"Targeted Teaching", which has already been rolled out in some schools, uses in-class diagnostic testing to gauge a student's ability, enabling schools to tailor their teaching to each student.

The scheme was reviewed by the Grattan Institute, which found it was a particularly effective and efficient way to improve results and recommended its expansion.

[More](#)



“Singapore spends slightly less than Australia - \$115,665 per child - yet its students are twice as likely to top the tests in maths and reading...”

China's Kids Excel At Half The Cost

Chinese students are trouncing their Australian counterparts in literacy and maths but cost half as much to educate, the latest data shows, as schools funding becomes a key election issue.

Australia spends \$132,945, on average, to educate a student from primary school to Year 10 - double the \$66,463 spent on students in Shanghai and 40% more than the \$93,630 cost in South Korea, the latest comparative OECD data shows.

More than half the students in Shanghai and nearly a third of Korean students top the class internationally in maths - compared with just one in seven Australian students.

One in five Australian students failed the minimum standard in maths in the OECD's 2012 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), compared with 3 per cent of Shanghai students and 9 per cent of Korean teenagers.

[More](#)

Shorten 'Misled Voters' On Schools Boost To GDP

Bill Shorten stands accused of misleading voters over the boost to growth from his \$37.4 billion school funding plan by claiming an economic lift “straight away” from the spending despite economic research that shows the gains would take decades.

In a blow to the Opposition Leader's economic case, the author of the global study used to justify the Labor spending told The Australian there would be no “immediate” boost to growth - and that more money was not the key factor in producing the economic benefit.

“How money is spent is more important than how much is spent. This does not mean that money never counts, or that money cannot count. It simply means that doing more of the same is unlikely to lead to significant changes in student outcomes.”

Labor finance spokesman Tony Burke is under fire for predicting the 2.8 per cent increase in growth would flow from “the moment” children gained better skills and finished high school, sparking a government attack on his “demonstrably false” claims.

[More](#)

Rough Play With Dad Healthy

Rough and tumble play that's much loved by dads also helps children emotionally, a new study has found.

High-quality physical play is linked to fewer emotional difficulties and better self-regulation in kids, researchers from the University of Newcastle have found.

“We know both girls and boys enjoy physical play with dads, but we were interested to see it also pointed to good outcomes for children as well,” lead researcher Jennifer St George said.

“Children whose fathers engage in rough-and-tumble play that was warm and playful are also children with better emotional and behavioural outcomes.”

[Full Story](#)

Shorten Mentions Childcare Relief

Bill Shorten has let the \$3 billion cat out of the bag revealing working parents earning between \$60,000 and \$80,000 will secure more childcare relief under a Labor government.

It's the first time he has confirmed he will offer an alternative to the Turnbull government's new, means-tested single payment for childcare.

“While we haven't announced our final childcare policy, what I can say is this: we understand that childcare affordability is a giant handbrake on people being able to return to work; we understand the costs are going up all the time,” Mr Shorten said.

[More](#)

Labor Silent On Safe Schools

Labor education spokeswoman Kate Ellis is yet to declare whether the party will fund the Safe Schools program, but yesterday noted that it “does incredibly important work”.

The anti-bullying program, which was supported by the Labor Party, was gutted by the Coalition in March in response to concerns that it promotes a leftist ideological agenda.

“We established the Safe Schools program and we think it does incredibly important work,” she said. “The government will cut this program entirely next year. Labor will have more to say on our education policies in the lead up to the election.”

[Read more](#)