



This week's stories from the media

- Government sets deadline to make SA leader in music
- Pay remote teachers more and waive uni debts
- Uni entrance should go beyond ATAR
- How physical activity can help prevent depression
- Dodgy daycare blitz saves \$3 billion
- Surveillance in school playgrounds

**Pay Remote Teachers More**

Tony Abbott recommends boosting pay and conditions for teachers in remote areas, including waiving university debts, to improve the quality of indigenous education.

The former prime minister also suggests deducting fines imposed on parents for breaking truancy rules from other government payments, rather than using the "often ineffective" threat of jail time for refusing to pay.

Abbott encouraged schools to engage more closely with housing authorities and police.

The proposals are contained in his first report as the government's special envoy on indigenous affairs, which he presented to federal parliament on Thursday.

Abbott wants the government to waive the HECS debts of teachers who, after two years experience at other schools, move to extremely remote schools and stay there for four years.

[Read the story](#)

**Government Sets Deadline To Make SA The Leader In Music Education**

South Australian schools will lead the nation in music education by 2029 under a State Government plan to reverse what teachers say has been as a gradual slipping of SA's standing.

Education Minister John Gardner released a new \$7 million music education strategy aimed at strengthening the quality of music education across all South Australian public primary schools, preschools and early childhood services.

From the \$7 million package, \$500,000 will be invested into a new music education fund which will be used to purchase new music equipment and support "innovative" music education programs in schools.

Announcing the strategy, Gardner said too many students in South Australia did not have access to expert music tuition.

The strategy also outlines a plan to upskill non-specialist music teachers through yearly professional development placements and to engage "music experts" in schools to support teachers in delivering programs.

Ciccarello, who joined Gardner in releasing the strategy, said the ASO was pleased with the strategy's promise to deliver universal music education across the state.

The strategy also received praise from Adelaide University's Elder Conservatorium director Professor Graeme Koehne, who described the strategy's goals as "wonderfully progressive and innovative".

"[It] recognises the growing mountain of scientific and real-world experience that demonstrates the physical, intellectual, cognitive benefits of music, particularly in the early and primary years," he said.



***“...The research indicates physical activity is associated with reduced risk of depression in young people...”***

### Uni Entrance Should Go Beyond ATAR

**University entrance will be based on more than just Year 12 students' grades under a proposed shake-up of South Australia's tertiary education admission process.**

The Marshall Government announced the review in June with SA Secondary Principals' Association vice-president Wendy Johnson appointed reviewer.

Johnson's review found an “overwhelming consensus” that the current Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) used to determine university eligibility negatively impacts on students' subject selection choices and well-being.

According to the review, students are more concerned about getting the best possible ATAR rather than focusing on their learning outcomes, meaning some students are turning away from subjects such as mathematics, arts, languages and sciences, opting instead to study “the easiest possible subjects to get the best results for their ATAR”.

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### How Physical Activity Can Help Prevent Depression

**Adolescence is a critical time for the development of mental health problems. In fact, depression is most likely to occur during adolescence and young adulthood. It's the leading cause of disability in young people worldwide.**

By year 9, students who have experienced a mental disorder are on average two years behind in academic achievement compared to those without a mental disorder.

An increasing body of evidence indicates physical activity and exercise are effective for improving mood.

The Australian guidelines state young people should engage in 60 minutes of physical activity a day. The majority of young people don't reach this target.

In fact, disengagement from regular exercise, physical activity and sporting clubs steadily increases during adolescence. This coincides with the average age of onset of depression.

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### Dodgy Daycare Blitz Saves \$3b

**The federal government has stopped almost \$3 billion in taxpayer money going to fraudulent and dodgy family daycare operators since 2014, with new figures showing hundreds of millions more have been saved since June.**

Education Minister Dan Tehan told The Australian there have been 155 sanctions, suspensions and cancellations imposed on 144 childcare providers in the nine months to September.

Mr Tehan said 27 people had been charged with criminal offences for childcare fraud. Nineteen of those have been found guilty since January 2014.

[Full Story](#)

### Happy Holidays

**SAASSO wishes you and your family a safe and happy holiday.**



### Surveillance In School Playgrounds

**Australian school councils have come out pushing for surveillance cameras to be implemented into school playgrounds to help fight bullying and crime.**

This is a highly delicate issue, as one of the keys for creating a positive, social school playground is providing a level of freedom for students to gain independence away from adult scrutiny.

Supervising school playgrounds is an area many teachers wish to forego due to the many other demands that can be placed on them beyond classroom duties (for example, crowded curricula and the pace of change).

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