



This week's stories from the media

- School violence roundtable
- Experts plead for single-sex classes
- 1 million single parents - 80% are women
- Bullying can be invisible to adults
- 62 school capital works projects
- Teacher faces court for child sex offences

**Experts Plead For Single Sex Classes**

**An education expert has called for STEM and literacy classes to be separated by gender.**

Earlier this week, state Labor announced plans to expand catchment areas for co-ed schools to diversify options for parents and students.

Australian Catholic University associate professor Laura Scholes said while co-ed schools have a lot of advantages they should still tailor to students' specific learning needs and interests.

"Bringing both genders together and then having options to cater for boys and girls would be optimal."

According to Scholes, girls are often not given the same opportunity as boys to participate equally in STEM learning in the classroom.

Having girls-only classes in STEM subjects could help to foster their interest and allow them more space to participate in conversations, she said.

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**School Violence Roundtable**

**A high-level roundtable has been held to discuss ways to combat violence within South Australian secondary schools.**

Education Minister Blair Boyer gathered principals, community groups, mental health experts, academics and researchers, at the Entertainment Centre for a closed workshop.

Mr Boyer called the summit in the wake of widespread publicity involving the filming of fights at Whyalla Secondary College and Golden Grove High School.

Before the meeting started, Mr Boyer said he wanted participants to discuss the causes of violent behaviour in schools and how it was being addressed.

"I also want to know how the South Australian Government can further support preventive action to reduce this behaviour among students and parents," he said.

Mr Boyer later said he had not wanted the roundtable to "just be a talkfest".

"While the number of violent incidents in schools are relatively small, and most students feel safe and well supported by their schools, any incident is unacceptable."

Mr Boyer said he would work with the Education Department to implement ideas suggested at the forum.

"This is just the beginning," he said.

"I am determined to ensure long-term change by working with school staff, unions, parents and the broader community."

***SAASSO participated in the roundtable event.***

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**“...While the number of violent incidents in schools are relatively small, and most students feel safe and well supported by their schools, any incident is unacceptable....”**

### 1 Million Single Parents - 4 Out of 5 Are Women

According to ABS census data released in June, the number of lone parent households has grown since the last survey conducted in 2016.

There are roughly 1 million people in Australia single-handedly supporting a dependent - and four out of five are women.

About 300,000 single mothers, one-third of the single parent population, are living near or below the poverty line.

"In the last 10 years, about 30 per cent of single mums have lived in poverty and we haven't switched the dial."

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### Bullying Can Be Invisible To Adults

**School bullying is a huge and distressing problem.**

In 2015, 43% of Australian year 8 students were bullied each month. A 2022 Mission Australia survey of Australians between 15 and 19 found 47% were "extremely" or "somewhat" concerned about bullying.

The picture is similar overseas. In 2020, the WHO reported one in three students aged 11-15 years suffered bullying in the preceding month.

Young people in new research talked about how bullying is hidden by physical buildings and social expectations in schools.

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### 62 School Capital Works Projects

**Two secondary schools in the spotlight for violence are receiving improvements worth a total of \$870,000.**

The projects are among 62 extra capital works projects totalling \$18.5m across the state's primary & secondary schools announced by Education Minister Blair Boyer.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars will each be spent on improving disability access at Brighton Secondary School, Oakbank Area School and Para Hills High School.

"These upgrades will include things such as roof repairs, disability access, toilet upgrades, security & bitumen replacements."

[Full Story](#)

### Merry Christmas

We wish you and your family a safe, healthy and happy Christmas!



### Teacher Faces Court For Sex Offences

**Parents have been told a second relief teacher has been charged with indecent assault, just weeks after another faced court over an unrelated incident.**

In a letter to parents, Burnside Primary principal Susan Copeland said there was "no need for concern" and the incident did not involve any students at the school.

Police allege between May 2 and May 13, 2022 at Mitchell Park, the teacher indecently assaulted a child under the age of fourteen years.

It is also alleged, one the same dates, they committed an act of gross indecency to a person under the age of 16 years.

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