



This week's stories from the media

- Experts to lead consent education overhaul
- Reading skills remained stable during Covid
- Desperate parents seek help to combat issues kids face
- New school campaign to stop vaping
- Subs in schools program
- New online safety resources for teachers

Reading Skills Stable During Covid

The Progress in International Reading Literacy study ranked Australia 11th overall for reading abilities out of more than 50 countries.

Most countries that participated in the study recorded a decline in literacy between 2016 and 2021.

The results showed Australia's literacy levels have remained stable.

About 77% of Australian boys' reading scores exceeded standards, the study showed, against 84% for young girls.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds scored more than 50 points lower than their more advantaged counterparts.

The results found the gap for First Nations students who, on average, were close to the 'low' benchmark, scored 50 points below non-Indigenous students.

"These are the results that need the most attention as they again highlight the inequity of Australian school education."

[Read](#)

Experts To Lead Consent Education Overhaul

The federal government has unveiled the group of experts tasked to deliver its \$83.5m consent education program.

The working group will conduct a "rapid review" into how sex and consent education is currently being delivered in schools.

Consent education became mandatory for all school children this year after state and federal education ministers came to a unanimous agreement in 2022.

Education minister Jason Clare said the group will work to ensure "age-appropriate, evidenced based respectful relationships school education is delivered."

"Teaching respectful relationships education in schools assists students build the skills, values and attitudes required to develop and maintain positive, healthy, and respectful relationships," he said.

Chief of violence prevention organisation Our Watch Patty Kinnersly will chair the working group, who will guide national collaboration between states, territories, the non-government schooling sectors.

Members also include Teach Us Consent founder and activist Chanel Contos.

"The creation of a youth-led expert advisory group will take this aspect of our work to the next level."

The consent education expert group will oversee development of a national framework to assist schools to select providers of respectful relationships education.

[More](#)



“...Consent education became mandatory for all school children this year....”

Desperate Parents Seek Help With Bullying And Vapes

Desperate parents have flooded a free parenting program as they face issues such as vaping, bullying, and nude selfies.

More than 100,000 mums and dads have signed up to Triple P's online course - a university-developed, government-funded program - in the past year, wanting help as their children navigate unfamiliar terrain.

University of Queensland's Professor Vanessa Cobham says the uptake has been compounded by a lack of access to psychologists and paediatricians.

Professor Cobham said 14% of 12 to 17-year-olds admitted to using vapes, with more than half of them under 16.

The distribution of nude images among teens, and even tweens, is also leaving parents feeling a “sense of helplessness”.

Professor Cobham said around 70% of 12-13 year olds had at least one bullying experience in the past 12 months.

[More](#)

New School Campaign To Stop Vaping

South Australian schools will receive posters showing the harm of e-cigarettes and more support and guidance to manage students' vaping as part of the state's new campaign.

"Children with a nicotine dependency may have difficulties concentrating in class, difficulty sleeping, anxiety, irritability, restlessness, frustration, anger, and strong cravings to relieve symptoms with repeat nicotine exposure," Professor Spurrier said.

"This education campaign will give parents, carers, and teachers the tools they need to inform and advise young people on the risks of vaping."

All state high schools, including R-12, local education office and combined and area schools, will receive posters depicting the dangers of vaping.

The posters will show the harmful substances in vapes, such as nail polish remover, weed killer and bug spray.

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Subs In Schools Program

The next generation of SA geniuses are being cultivated in a school program aimed at developing skills to work on nuclear-powered submarines.

The Subs in Schools program is hosted across Australia for high school students as they develop working small-scale submarines in a competition pitting teams from across the country against each other.

The program, in tandem with others including F1 in Schools and SPACE in Schools, co-ordinated by Re-Engineering Australia since 1998, is designed to introduce STEM education into schools to meet industry demand.

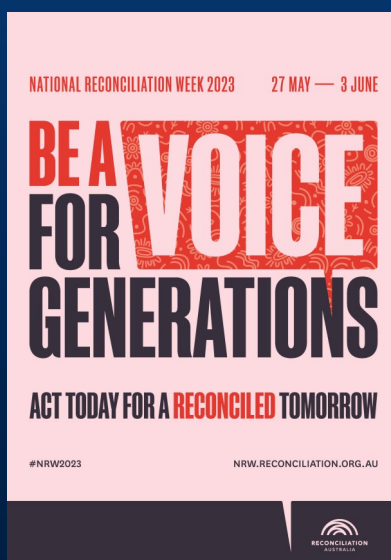
Since the AUKUS submarine announcement, the program has been “on fire” with hundreds of SA students enrolling.

[Full Story](#)

National Reconciliation Week

May 27 - June 3

'Be a Voice for Generations' urges everyone to act today for a more reconciled country.



New Online Safety Resources

Australia's teachers will receive resources and training to teach primary school students how to be safe online.

The eSafety Commissioner released an online training package to help primary school kids develop good practices around online usage.

"Our research shows 81% of parents with children aged 2 to 5 report their child is using the internet, so we have to start educating them at an early age."

According to the Commission, students face a broad range of dangers online, such as coming across sexual content in games, pornography, images of cruelty to animals, and real or simulated violence.

[Read more](#)