



#### This week's stories from the media

- STEM student shortage risks national security crisis
- SA kindy kids kicked out of class
- Most young Australians can't pass financial literacy test
- Reducing bullying in primary schools
- Air pollution link to ADHD
- National parent and teacher survey

#### Kindy Kids Kicked Out Of Class

The Children's Commissioner is worried that schools are increasingly resorting to suspending students with complex behaviours, or who have a history of trauma.

In a new report, SA Children's Commissioner says schools should be required to gain approval from the Department for Child Protection before they suspend or exclude children who have been taken into state care.

"It is happening younger and younger. You're talking about Receptions, Grade 1s and Grade 2s, which is where we're seeing big increases," Ms Connolly said.

Education Department figures show there were 25 Preschool or Reception aged children suspended in 2022, up from 18 in 2021.

There were no exclusions in that age group in 2022 and one in 2021.

Across Years 1 and 2 there were 782 suspensions in 2022, up from 379.

[Read](#)

#### STEM Student Shortage Risks National Security Crisis

**The number of teens studying advanced maths has dropped to an all-time low – and that has huge and worrying implications for the defence industry jobs of the future.**

More students need to study key maths and science subjects or else SA will face significant issues in creating a workforce capable of developing nuclear submarines.

Professor Andrew Norton, from ANU, said he had held a "long-term concern" over the declining number of Australian students undertaking high-level maths subjects in the final year of secondary school.

High school enrolments in advanced maths dropped to a historic low in 2020.

Just 9.2% of students studied high-level maths, down from 11.6% in 2008.

Enrolments in intermediate-level maths plunged from 23.3% in 2008 to 17.6% in 2020.

In SA, the picture is just as bleak - in 2012, 1050 students studied specialist mathematics in the final year of SACE.

A decade later, the number is slightly lower at 992.

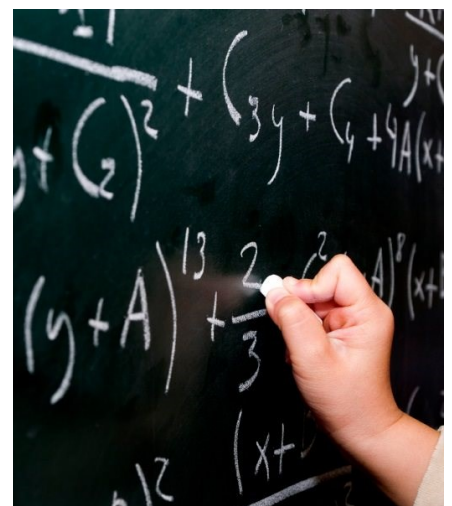
"There's a shrinking pool of people at the year 9 level who are performing at the top level in maths," he said.

"That may flow through to fewer people doing more demanding maths subjects in the next few years."

Blair Boyer said the government was doing "a range of things" to address the issue including \$2m teaching scholarships to get more women teaching STEM.

He hoped this would "encourage more female students".

[More](#)



## “...\$2m teaching scholarships to get more women teaching STEM...”

### Most Young Australians Can't Pass Financial Literacy Test

**Younger Australians have particularly poor financial literacy, a new report has found, leaving them vulnerable.**

The results of an online financial literacy test designed by Canstar shows just 30% of Gen Z and 47% of Millennials are able to answer the majority of financial literacy questions correctly.

Meanwhile, 60% of Gen X and 72% of Baby Boomers passed the quiz.

Almost half of all those taking the test, failed it, with 66% of males passing, compared to 42% of females.

Almost three-quarters of respondents believe if a credit card offers an interest-free period of 55 days, it generally means that you do not pay interest on any purchase until 55 days after you buy the item.

The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics (HILDA) survey of about 17,000 people in 2020 showed a sharp fall in the financial literacy of younger Australians - particularly those under 24 - since 2016 .

[More](#)

### Reducing Bullying In Primary Schools

**‘Big Talks for Little People’ program, has been successfully implemented in a number of primary schools throughout SA, and is now looking to expand to the rest of the nation.**

The program is the work of Flinders Uni researcher Professor Phillip Slee.

The program sees primary school-aged students participate in a six-part lesson plan focusing on key aspects that include emotions, resilience, conflict management and exclusion.

As a way of tracking progress, the program asks participants to self-evaluate their skills, both before and after the program, as well as a third time later in the year to see if skills have been retained.

The program's content centres around cartoon-like characters called ‘Peeps’ (short for ‘people’), specifically designed to not have an identifiable gender, nor can one identify features of the character's culture or race.

[More](#)

### Air Pollution Link To ADHD

**A likely El Niño weather event is expected to worsen pollution, as a raft of studies build evidence that fine atmospheric particles are linked to higher incidences of lung cancer, depression and ADHD.**

Analysis of 164,000 Chinese schoolchildren that found for every 10 micrograms of PM2.5 (particles smaller than 2.5 microns) per cubic metre they were exposed to, children were 1.65 times more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD.

The particles, a fraction of the width of a human hair, likely affect health because they travel into the lungs and bloodstream.

Exposure higher for people who live near roads where vehicles stop and start – and in urban corridors bordered by high buildings that trap pollution.

[Full Story](#)

### World Environment Day

June 5 2023

#BeatPlasticPollution



### National Parent & Teacher Survey

**The Australian government has launched a national survey for parents, students and teachers, to help shape the future of education.**

The survey is part of a national review of our school system.

The survey covers student mental health and wellbeing, funding transparency and accountability and teacher recruitment.

Complete the [parent survey](#)

Complete the [teacher survey](#)

