



Federal Parliament has completed an inquiry into the escalating number of children combining work and school. The report, entitled *Adolescent Overload*, explores how much our children are working, why and what effect it has on their education.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicates that the proportion of school students who work has risen from 25% in 1986 to 37% in 2007.

42% of girls combine work and school, compared to 31% of boys.

Australia is among a small group of countries with high levels of working students: Others include USA, Canada, UK and Denmark.

A study of 14 - 17 year-olds found the most common reasons children work:

- to save money - 25%
- to support themselves - 16.5%
- to support their families - 10.2%

ABS data from 2006 puts the total number of working students in the above age range at 359,175 - meaning that approximately 36,000 Australian school students are working to support their families.

“There is evidence which suggests that as a student’s working hours increase beyond an initial threshold, there is a reduced likelihood they will complete year 12.”

Where do children work:

- retail - 48.4%
- fast food - 29.8%
- child-care - 6.8%
- community work - 3.7%

“When I tell my colleagues in Europe or most parts of Asia, they are absolutely horrified at the idea that young people are working instead of doing their work at school.” Professor Marie Brennan

	Males	Females	Total
Year 10 or below	23	31	26
Year 11	30	48	39
Year 12	43	46	45
Total	31	42	37

% of school students aged 15 - 19 in employment by sex and year level / 2007