

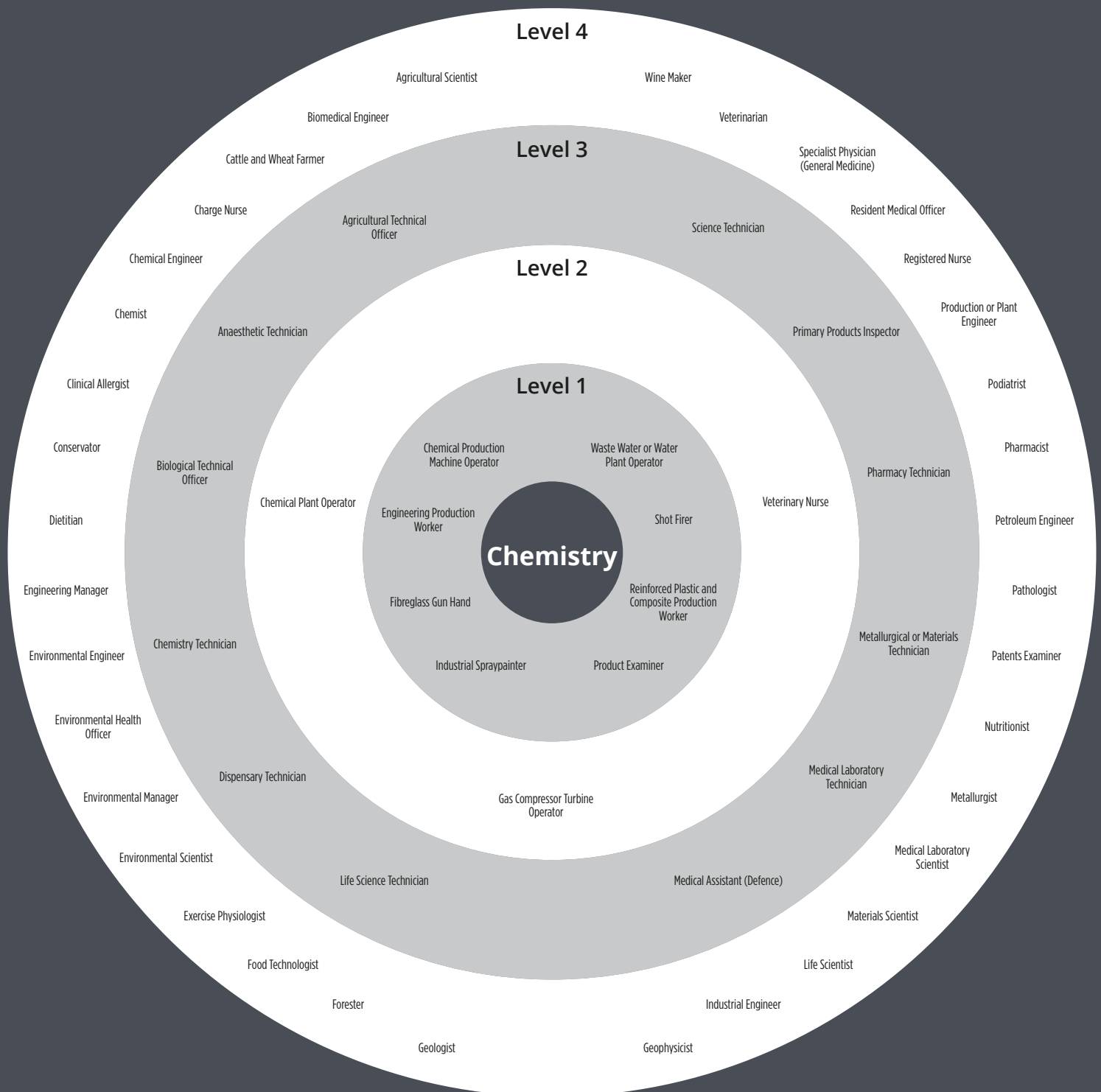
# PARENTS SAY

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PARENT COMMUNITIES INC.  
VOL. 43 NO. 1 | FEBRUARY 2020

## AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS PILLOWCASE PROGRAM



# Do you enjoy or are you good at Chemistry?



## Training levels and requirements

### Level 1

Usually has a skill level equal to the completion of Year 10, a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, Certificate I or II. Australian Apprenticeships may be offered at this level.

### Level 2

Usually has a skill level equal to a Certificate III or IV, or at least three years relevant experience. Australian Apprenticeships may be offered at this level.

### Level 3

Usually requires a level of skill equal to a Diploma or Advanced Diploma. Study is often undertaken through TAFEs or Registered Training Organisations. Some universities offer studies at this level.

### Level 4

Usually requires a level of skill equal to a Bachelor Degree or higher qualification. Study is often undertaken at a university.

This chart shows a selection of occupations that have some relation to the subject of **Chemistry**. The four education and training levels are to be used as a guide only. These levels indicate the most common education and/or entry requirements for these jobs.

For further information, visit:  
[www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au)

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## PRESIDENT'S SAY



**JENICE ZERNA**  
**PRESIDENT**

Welcome to the 2020 school year, and an especially warm welcome to those parents who have just started with their child on the education journey.

If time allows we encourage you to become involved at your preschool or school. There are many different ways this can be done – helping in the classroom, fundraising, working in the canteen, covering library books, turning up for a working bee, to list just a few. Another way to become involved is by joining the parent group, or the governing council or a subcommittee; this may give you the opportunity to be a part of the decision making processes of the school or preschool. Whatever you choose, whether it be a small or a large contribution, it all makes a difference to the children and the school community.

Most importantly you can make a real difference to your own child by supporting their learning at home. So it's important you

- have high expectations for your child
- help your children develop positive attitudes
- read together (in any language)
- develop a good relationship with the school
- talk about school.

### **What is SAASPC**

We are a statewide association and a strong and committed supporter of public education. SAASPC promotes and develops the interests of parents in the education and general wellbeing of children at preschool and school; develops and maintains contact with parent groups throughout the state and acts as an advocate for parents in educational matters. As part of our ongoing work we provide information sessions for parents and volunteers on

- Responding to Abuse and Neglect (RAN) or mandatory notification
- Merit selection for governing council panel nominees and those interested in the appointment processes of principals and preschool directors
- Parent groups and their role in schools, parent participation and involvement.

We have the opportunity throughout the year to meet with the Minister for Education and the Chief Executive of the Department for Education as well as with other people working in the Department for Education. We are able to raise concerns about issues affecting parents and to be briefed on what is happening in education from their point of view.

### **Vacancies on SAASPC's Executive committee**

At this time we have vacancies for officers or general members on our Executive committee. The work load is not large and in fact it is enjoyable, interesting and rewarding – and you learn a lot! We meet on the last Monday of the month and we cover expenses such as travel and accommodation when required – so country members are supported.

If you are interested in education, you want to know more about what is happening in our schools and preschools, or you feel you could make a contribution to our association, then please consider joining us – we would love to welcome some new members. For more information please ring or email us.

### **Affiliation with SAASPC**

Affiliation invoices for 2020 have been sent to all government preschools and schools. Please keep an eye out for the invoice and consider affiliating with us for a small fee. Individual membership is also available for those people who might like to join us personally. The affiliation invoices are available on our website. Affiliation fees help support the work that we do and supplement the small operating grant that we receive from the Minister for Education.

Remember – SAASPC is YOUR association – we are here to assist you in any way that we can, to listen to you, to advocate for you and to provide the parent voice in education.

### **South Australian Association of School Parent Communities (SAASPC)**

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email [info@saaspc.org.au](mailto:info@saaspc.org.au) | [www.saaspc.org.au](http://www.saaspc.org.au) | we are also on Facebook and Twitter

*The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Association; nor does the Association necessarily endorse products/services advertised*

**THE HON  
JOHN GARDNER MP  
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION**



It is customary for most of us to begin the New Year with high ambitions and good intentions for the time ahead. In my role as Minister for Education in the Marshall government I feel confident, based on the initiatives we have successfully put in place during our time in government, that 2020 will be a memorable and successful year. A year when we can consolidate gains and further enrich the lives of the young people for whom we have the responsibility to provide a quality education.

For a number of our children, families and staff who have been affected by the tragedy of the bushfires, 2020 presents some high level challenges and one of my priorities is to ensure that we care for and support, in the best way possible, those in need.

In my time as Minister I have visited over 200 schools and preschools and while they are all unique in their locations and the communities they serve, there are many common threads in the way in which they go about their work. I have been consistently impressed by the knowledge and passion our educators bring to their daily endeavours, their concern for the needs of individual children and their constant quest to model good learning processes and do all in their power to create a pathway to a joyous and fulfilling life for each child.

Many of the key determinants in our lives are given to us at birth and a constant challenge facing our teachers and our schools is to ensure that these circumstances alone do not dictate a child's destiny. I have been witness to many situations where children's lives have been greatly enhanced by a teacher who has gone the extra mile to connect them to learning which was rich and meaningful. Most people, I find, prefer to send their children to caring schools which have high expectations, which stimulate the curiosity and build the self-efficacy of our young people, and where everyone knows what the school stands for. Your engagement as parents is pivotal in this process, as no one knows your children as well as you do.

At its best education can be seen as an expression of affection for our young people, helping them to challenge themselves and develop the knowledge, skills and capabilities which enable them to be successful. Many of the initiatives we have undertaken such as the high speed internet for schools, the Music and Languages strategies, the focus on STEM (Science, Technology Engineering and Maths), the updating of SACE, Entrepreneurial Education, The Literacy Guarantee, the Aboriginal Education Strategy, the revamping of Vocational Education as a priority option for young people, are all designed to create deep, engaging and varied learning experiences for all of our young people, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances. While STEM has rightly attracted much attention as the bedrock of many of our future industries and employment opportunities, we know that a well- rounded education develops the whole person's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and ethical capabilities. Many of our future job opportunities will require not just knowledge and technical skills but also high levels of communication, collaboration, emotional intelligence and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. The focus on developing the full range of students' capabilities so that they can engage meaningfully in the social and cultural life of their communities is essential for the future. As the Director of the London School of Economics, Minouche Shafik, has foreshadowed:

*In the past, jobs were about muscle, now they are about brains, but in the future they will also be about the heart.*

We want an education system and a society which finds a purposeful place for everyone and helps successful futures be born.

As we move into the New Year I look forward to doing all we can to work with you as parents to harness your insights, and those of your children, to provide learning which will serve our young people well as individuals and as community members.

May your best wishes be fulfilled in the year ahead

# SCHOOL CARD APPLICATIONS NOW ONLINE



**CHRIS BERNARDI**  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER  
DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

Two years ago the Department for Education launched a 10 year strategy to build a world class education system in South Australia. To realise this ambitious vision, we're aiming for growth for every child, in every class, in every school.

Our strategic plan focuses on 5 key areas: challenging learning, quality people, strong engagement, better support and targeted resources.

One of our approaches to providing better support is by updating and modernising our processes, including moving more forms online, simplifying financial management for schools and preschools, and improving complaints management.

I am pleased to announce that as part of this approach we have created new online application forms for School Card. From the start of this year applications for all types of School Card can be completed online by parents, carers, and, where applicable, students.

The project has involved extensive research, consultation and work, taking into account feedback from both parents and schools. The result is a modern, functional, and easy to use service. The new system will not only improve the quality of application data but also reduce the amount of manual data entry undertaken by schools. This saves time and allows schools to focus more on learning and student achievement.

A guide is available for parents and carers on how to complete the new online forms, and copies have been sent to schools so they can assist families wishing to apply through the new online process.

The new system works on internet enabled devices including computers and mobile devices, such as tablets and smartphones.

Since launching in mid January we have received overwhelmingly positive user feedback, and are continuing to improve and update functionality based on feedback from parents and carers using the system. Ongoing improvements and planned upgrades will occur throughout the year to ensure the new system and process continues to work for parents, carers and school staff.

Paper forms are still available for parents or carers who prefer this option or who may have limited internet access.

The School Card scheme offers financial assistance with school fees for students that school year. It is available to low income families with children over 4 years of age who attend school full-time, independent full-time students undertaking an approved learning program, and adult re-entry students undertaking department-funded subjects at a government school.

School Card is an essential service that helps us support every student to achieve their highest potential – regardless of their circumstances.

For more information on the School Card scheme or to apply online please visit [sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard](http://sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard).

If you have any questions or feedback on the new online process, please email [educationschoolcard@sa.gov.au](mailto:educationschoolcard@sa.gov.au).

## SA SCHOOL TERM DATES

2020	28 January - 9 April	27 April - 3 July	20 July - 25 September	12 October - 11 December
2021	27 January - 9 April	27 April - 2 July	19 July - 24 September	11 October - 10 December
2022	31 January-14 April	2 May-8 July	25 July-30 September	17 October-16 December

# BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS IS THE KEY TO YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION SUCCESS

With my eldest child entering Year 10 this year, the finish line for his formal education journey is almost in sight. Which is crazy because I swear we only just sent him off to school yesterday!

Reflecting on the experiences we've had along the way, it really has been quite the journey. My son has been through a lot over the years. He's been given four different diagnoses, has attended four different schools and throughout it all, he's kept smiling. Currently thriving in his local mainstream high school, it's been a struggle over the years to find the right placement for him. It's been a battle at times to access the supports he needs. Most of all, it's been difficult to get others to see past his diagnosis and recognise his potential.

Despite the challenges, we've been incredibly lucky to have found schools who've been willing to work with us to give him the chance to thrive. Looking back, a lot of that has been due to the positive relationships we've been able to build with each team.

## Relationships matter

In a previous life, I was a relationship manager in a government department. In that role I learned a lot about building trust, following through, communicating with purpose and how to understand the motivations of the other side. These were skills that I brought with me when I entered the school gates as a parent. Initially, I didn't know I was using these skills, but over time it was clear that we achieved more positive outcomes for our son because of the value of the relationships we established.

Starting with the two special education settings we enrolled in first, through to the mainstream primary and high schools we moved to later, positive relationships are the common denominator when we review our success in each setting.



Establishing a positive relationship with everyone at each school made it easier for us to:

- Plan a successful transition
- Quickly build trust
- Focus on strengths
- Understand our common goals
- Develop a friendly rapport
- Manage issues as they arose
- Proactively address potential issues
- Identify opportunities for growth

These positive relationships were vital as we navigated an education system that didn't quite fit the needs of our son. In many ways, he's a square peg in a round hole. He doesn't fit the mould of mainstream yet he doesn't fit the mould of special education either.

To help him succeed, we've had to forge positive relationships so we could somehow find a way to make things work. Building positive relationships from the outset has helped us effectively advocate for his needs, highlight his strengths and acknowledge his challenges.

It might seem like a simplistic solution but my son's experience proves that concentrating on building strong relationships can increase understanding and deliver improved outcomes for all. Here are some simple ways you can start improving relationships with your child's school.

## Relationship management 101

So, how do you build and maintain a strong partnership with your child's school? By following this 10 step plan. Incidentally, these principles are just as relevant for schools and teachers too.

1. Introduce yourself - don't wait to be invited, introduce yourself to everyone at the school, including executive, office staff, teachers, aides and volunteers. Make the effort to create rapport and get to know people BEFORE something goes wrong.
2. Listen carefully - if you don't listen to others, how will they listen to you? It's not easy to hear what others have to say, especially if they have an opposing point of view. But, giving each other the opportunity to speak is the foundation of a good relationship.



3. Set objectives - know what you want to work toward and focus on that. If your goal is regular attendance, make that known to the school so you don't waste time on academic improvement. Set mutual objectives to keep both sides focused as you move forward.
4. Understand motives - put yourself in the shoes of the school when developing a relationship. Understand their motivation and how you can harness that understanding when advocating for your child's needs (it makes things much easier!)
5. Concentrate on solutions - explain your issue but also explore ways it can be resolved. Share your ideas with the school and work with them to develop a solution. This will make it easier to deal with issues as they arise and build trust and goodwill.
6. Know your value - you know your child best and should be valued for this knowledge. Share your knowledge with the school and consider yourself an equal partner. The school might be the expert in education but you are the expert in your child.

7. Be creative - think of alternative ways to achieve a solution. Seek advice outside the school to get fresh ideas and be ready to compromise to get a positive outcome. It may not be the exact result you're after but it helps to be flexible to move forward.
8. Follow up and follow through - this builds trust and goodwill and is key to every successful partnership. Follow through with your actions and don't be shy in following up the school with theirs to achieve a positive outcome for your child.
9. Look to create a real partnership - don't enter into a relationship to only get what you want for your child. The school will be more inclined to help you if you've shown you are committed to the partnership and want to contribute to the benefit of the whole school.
10. Schedule time and be available - it's hard to create a solid partnership if you can't find the time to be available for meetings and events. It can be tricky but developing a good relationship is much easier when you are known, ready to meet and able to help out.

Never underestimate the power of relationships. Building positive partnerships with your child's school could very well be the key to their educational success.



*Kirsty Russell is founder of Kirsty Russell Consulting, a service committed to bridging the gap in understanding between parents, schools and disability service providers. Discover more at <https://www.kirstyrussell.com.au>.*

## INTEROCEPTION – OUR EIGHTH SENSE

Hackham East Primary School is a R-7 School in the southern suburbs area of Adelaide. The school has an enrolment of approximately 280 students and has a well respected history of innovative and supportive practices that develop the whole child – socially, emotionally and academically.

If you Google Interoception, you will find extensive information outlining the supporting research. Models of Interoception have been developed and reviewed to support children on the Autism Spectrum who often have less awareness of their internal emotional and physical body states.

Interoception is one of our eight senses. Although everyone has heard of the five senses, there are three other senses that people don't discuss as regularly. The sixth sense is Proprioception, the seventh is Vestibular and the eighth sense is Interoception.

Interoception is that sense that tells us when we are thirsty, hungry, breathless, angry, upset and many more internal feelings that we relate to what our body is trying to tell us. Interoception is the awareness of your internal body reactions and how these link with your feelings and emotions. Being connected to our emotions, understanding what our body is telling us – hunger, thirst, toilet. Without Interoception a student who feels sick may disengage and be unable to focus, a student who gets bumped may lash out for no reason.

Interoception exercises teach us to focus on creating and noticing a change in an aspect of our internal self, such as

breathing, temperature, pulse etc. In particular our focus is on using Interoception to build students self-awareness and self-regulation around their bodily reactions and related emotions, feelings and the relationship to how they may then react or act out when not recognizing this.

In 2017 our school introduced Interoception as a whole school approach as an additional strategy to support the development in skills linked to the 'Personal and Social Capabilities' (Australian Curriculum General Capability).

Our goal is for children to become aware of their body signs and related emotions and to ask or independently engage in an Interoception exercise that will support them to self-regulate and control their 'feelings' leading to stronger behaviour choices. Self-regulation awareness is a life skill that we are teaching our learners.

Our staff frequently refer to how we use Interoception exercises in our life to help us self-regulate and make strong 'behaviour' choices. A couple of examples are:

- Public speaking and noticing that my face is getting hot and my heart is starting to race. I can use breathing and or/stretching of a particular body part to help me focus and remain calm.
- I am going into an exam/test. I can feel my hands and legs starting to shake a bit. I can use focusing on a spot on the wall and then use that to focus my breathing. I can use counting in and out to help me control my shaking.





### **Interoception room**

We have established an Interoception room that can be accessed by any student throughout the day. The room is a calm, tranquil and peaceful area, with low lighting, soft furnishings and a range of sensory and fiddle tools. A number of trained staff including the Leadership team are rostered to support in the room, ensuring there is an adult to guide students when they attend the room.

If a student is feeling upset, angry, worried etc they can ask to visit the room or an adult may notice a change in the child and direct them to visit the Interoception space to support them. A slip is filled out by staff and brought to the room with a brief description of how the child may be feeling. When arriving at the room the child is supported in doing an Interoception exercise with a staff member, followed by a discussion about their feelings, why they were feeling that way and what they could do differently at the time of those feelings. They then participate in a short calming activity, and return to class within approximately 10 minutes.

### **Interoception groups**

We also run small Interoception groups of 4-5 students to provide additional teaching of emotions and feelings and how Interoception exercises can help us.

A small group starts with an Interoception exercise followed by reading a book or watching a short video around feelings followed by a discussion linked to interoception body reactions and how this makes us feel. We use this time to build vocabulary around emotions, body feelings and reactions and what our body is telling us and how this impacts on our reactions and behaviour choices.

### **Classroom Interoception**

Every class across the school does an Interoception exercise after the play breaks to help students settle back into learning. A key



question after doing the exercise is ‘Where did you feel that in your body?’

### **Impact of Interoception at Hackham East Primary School**

The impact of Interoception at our site has been significant. We have noticed an improvement in many students who are able to better self-regulate by using Interoception exercises, often independently in the classroom and even at home.

We document and track data on students who need to come to the office due to not being able to self-regulate which then results in them making weak behaviour choices. Over time with the introduction of Interoception exercises and students having the option to use the Interoception Room there has been a significant reduction in the number of students who come to the office as follow up for inappropriate behaviours.

Our students, staff and school community support and understand the importance of having our Interoception room and teaching our students Interoception exercises to assist them in building lifelong self-regulation skills, which we hope will then positively impact on them being lifelong learners!

**SALLY SLATTERY, PRINCIPAL  
HACKHAM EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL**



# AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS PILLOWCASE PROGRAM

Emergencies can happen at any time. They can be as large as a bushfire, flood or cyclone or as personal as a death in the family. But the better you prepare for them, the easier it is for you and your family to recover.

To help children prepare for, cope with and respond to emergencies, Australian Red Cross run a disaster resilience education program, called the Pillowcase Program. It's a free one hour workshop delivered in schools by Red Cross volunteers and staff.

The goal of the program is to build resilient communities and support people in disasters by creating a generation of children who are aware of the importance of personal preparedness, are empowered to take action, and share what they have learnt with friends and loved ones.

Aimed at students in Years 3 and 4, the workshop involves engaging discussions and interactive activities to help students:

- Understand and discuss the importance of being prepared
- Prepare their mind for the thoughts and feelings that may arise before, during and after an emergency
- Know the difference between need and want items and what to pack in an emergency kit.

Each student is then given a pillowcase to decorate and take home, to start their own personal emergency kit.

Since 2015, the Pillowcase Program has been delivered to over 30,000 students in over 500 schools across Australia. The program has been shown to enhance the preparedness knowledge of students, help to reduce fears around emergencies and has led to positive behaviour change in response to emergency situations.

To book a FREE Pillowcase workshop or get further information, visit [redcross.org.au/pillowcase](http://redcross.org.au/pillowcase).



## Getting your household prepared

When children know what to do in an emergency, they are more likely to cope, stay safe and provide meaningful help. Red Cross suggests taking the following actions to prepare your households and children for emergencies.

- All the children in our house know what an emergency is (a serious, dangerous and scary situation where help might be needed)
- All the children in our house know how to stay calm by 'breathing with colour' (slowly breathing in their favourite colour and then slowly exhaling their least favourite colour to regulate their breathing)
- All the children in our house know how and when to call for help (for guidance visit [kids.triplezero.gov.au](http://kids.triplezero.gov.au))
- We have a safe meeting place outside our house and have practised how to get there
- We know who to call if we can't find each other
- We have an emergency kit packed ready to go if we have to leave our house quickly.

For further guidance or to create a household emergency plan you can download Australian Red Cross' Get Prepared app or visit [redcross.org.au/prepare](http://redcross.org.au/prepare).



*Now I know some things to do in an emergency—like who to call.*

Year 4 student, Strathewen Primary School, Victoria

*I think it will help because I'll be able to sleep better.*

Year 3 student, Strathewen Primary School, Victoria

*The pillowcase will help me know where things are and I feel safer.*

Year 4 student, Strathewen Primary School, Victoria

*I learnt how to be calm if something goes wrong and what to bring if I was in an emergency situation.*

Year 4 student, South Australia

*Today I learnt that you do different things in case of different emergencies and that we should be aware of emergencies.*

Year 4 student, Western Australia

*I enjoyed every aspect of the Pillowcase Project, especially the follow up for the parents—and the pillowcases!*

Year 4 teacher, Western Australia

*To me this project allowed the students to not dwell on THE one disaster impact but to embrace preparedness for all emergencies. I very much was aware of that focus during the delivery of the program. My students talked about this activity the next week, about caring for their pillowcase and storing it where they can get to it quickly. It obviously was something that impacted on many of my students to have THEIR pillowcase where they want it!*

Principal, Queensland

*My nine-year-old daughter came home and told me about the presentation and then went into her older sister's room and told her about it too. The two then proceeded to put together an emergency kit and talk about what they'd do in different emergency scenarios if my husband and I weren't there.*

Parent, New South Wales

# LANGUAGES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

The government acknowledges the value of learning languages and encourages languages education in South Australia through its Languages in Schools initiative containing a broad suite of measures to strengthen the study of languages. These include:

- enabling four new public schools to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme
- expanding options for SACE languages by enabling more students to continue studying languages in years 11 and 12 through Open Access College and supporting current languages students through school holiday programs at School of Languages
- expanding the Languages Alive holiday program at School of Languages for primary students during the April, July and October school holidays. Further information can be found at <https://schooloflanguages.sa.edu.au/>
- providing grants for primary schools to explore innovative approaches for languages delivery
- providing improved professional learning opportunities for language teachers
- providing scholarships for language teachers to improve their language skills
- reviewing the demand for new language teachers and the language content of teaching degree courses
- providing study tour scholarships for students

Further information about these measures can be accessed at <https://strongplan.com.au/policy/language-in-schools/>

## Why schools teach languages

Languages is included as one of the learning areas of the Australian Curriculum. All South Australian government schools are required to teach languages along with the other learning areas in the Australian Curriculum and students are required to learn a second language from Reception to at least Year 8.

## Why learning languages is important

Language is such a fundamental part of life. It is how we express ourselves, how we connect with each other and how we investigate the world around us. For most of us, it is how we communicate with each other.

The intercultural understandings gained through learning languages build empathy and respect for others, which is vital for a peaceful world in which we value the contributions and rights of all.

Learning another language offers young people many benefits including:

- intellectual benefits – improving literacy and cognition in all learning areas
- inter-personal benefits – learning about others
- intra-personal benefits – learning about self and place in the world
- cultural benefits - developing world views understanding and valuing our own culture and the cultures of others here and overseas
- recreational benefits – interest and motivation to explore the world around us

## Aboriginal languages

South Australian Aboriginal languages are important elements in the *Aboriginal Education Strategy 2019 to 2029* (<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/dept-ed-aboriginal-education-strategy-2019-2029.pdf>) and they hold an equal footing with other languages programs in government schools.

South Australian Aboriginal languages may also be learned as whole-school second language programs under the Australian Curriculum (<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/languages/framework-for-aboriginal-languages-and-torres-strait-islander-languages/>).

## Languages offered in government schools

Details about the specific languages offered by schools can be accessed at: <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/curriculum-and-teaching/primary-and-secondary-curriculum/languages-offered-government-schools>



**PETER LIND**  
**REGISTRAR, TEACHERS**  
**REGISTRATION BOARD OF**  
**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



As the school year commences, the Teachers Registration Board is winding down from its busiest period, renewal of registration which runs from early October to the end of January.

This was the first renewing cohort required to gain a Working with Children Check, a mandatory obligation brought in under the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, as well as establish their identity as part of a new requirement from the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission who are contracted to undertake our Nationally Coordinated Criminal Record Checks.

Despite the increased requirements, I am happy to report that the renewal period ran smoothly and almost 10,000 teachers have now renewed their registration and commenced the school year.

The start of a new year is a time for new beginnings and it is with some sadness that I announce the end of my five year tenure as Registrar at the Teachers Registration Board.

I have been fortunate to have been Registrar of the Board at such an exciting time in the Australian education sector and I have been involved in and witnessed a number of initiatives during my tenure including:

- amendments to the *Teachers Registration and Standards Act (2004)*
- the introduction of mandatory professional learning for all teachers
- the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Test for initial teacher education graduates
- the introduction of the Working with Children Check for teachers
- the Board being given the power to suspend a teacher's registration in the event of a teacher being charged with a proscribed offence.
- the National Review of Teacher Registration
- the initial collection of data for the Teacher Workforce Data Strategy that aims to build a nationwide picture of the teaching workforce.

All of these measures are contributing to improving teacher quality, strengthening child safety and streamlining the teacher registration process across Australia.

The Board will continue to build its presence and relevance to the work of teachers under the guidance of the new Registrar, Leonie Paulson. Leonie holds a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Adelaide and brings a vast range of knowledge and experience to the role including time operating within tribunal settings as Director of the Northern Territory Guardianship Board and experience working in the health, legal and child protection sectors.

This year will be an exciting one for the Teachers Registration Board as amendments to the Teachers Registration and Standard Act 2004) come into effect, and I am confident that Leonie will make a very significant contribution both to the Board and to the national debate around teaching as the TRB moves towards enacting new legislation.

The Teachers Registration Board will continue to work hard to ensure that all teachers working at school sites throughout South Australia not only meet their registration commitments but also actively seek out professional learning opportunities that facilitate their capacity to teach and broadens their knowledge of teaching and learning.

Leonie's tenure will commence on 1 March 2020.

## SACE UPDATE



**PROFESSOR MARTIN  
WESTWELL**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
SACE BOARD OF SA**

The start of a new academic year is an exciting time for many students – a chance to take part in a range of new opportunities and to receive the education they are entitled to.

As parents, we want the best education for our kids but sometimes it's hard to know whether they are actually receiving the education they deserve, particularly when you constantly hear the phrase 'back to basics' in the media. This has been thrown around a lot lately, particularly with Australia's apparent poor showing in the international comparison of 15-year-old's reading, mathematics and science. But if the results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tell us anything, it's that a back-to-basics approach will pull us down even further.

If I correctly understand what is meant by back to basics it's about building robust and substantial foundations upon which future learning will build. The problem with a back to basics approach is that it never gets above ground level. It's all earthworks and pouring concrete. Crucially important stuff but worthless if we don't take it to the next level, and the next.

This year at the SACE Board we will continue to cover the basics, old and new, and work to make sure that all students in Year 11 and 12 get the education to which they are entitled. As the world changes, so too must South Australian education and the SACE. For example, we remain committed to ensuring

students understand cybersecurity and the needs of a fast growing industry, even without any dedicated cybersecurity teachers. We are finding new ways to show evidence of student learning so students can show the world who they really are and what they can really do.

We won't develop young people who can thrive in the future South Australia with back to basics. We won't build an economy that can thrive globally on back to basics. Our community won't be able to thrive despite the worldwide challenges facing the environment and democracy with back to basics. We'll survive, but we won't thrive.

The world is asking our young people to use their knowledge and skills that can make a change, add value and influence other people's decision making and creative risk taking. That's how young people will thrive in an uncertain world. That's how they will succeed at university, how they will prosper as an apprentice. That's how South Australia will thrive. That old definition of 'the basics' won't work anymore. At the very least, it needs to be expanded.

A simplistic 'back to basics' approach to education will continue to send us backwards. Moving forward with a vision to stretch and challenge young South Australians – now that's more like it.

### Don't forget...

SAASPC provides information sessions, together with the required resources, for parents and volunteers in schools and preschools on

- **Responding to Abuse & Neglect (Mandatory notification)**
- **Parents on principal/director selection panels**
- **Parent participation and involvement**

If you would like to organise a session contact us - tel 1800 724 640 email [info@saaspc.org.au](mailto:info@saaspc.org.au)

# LIMITING SCREEN USE IS NOT THE WAY TO TACKLE TEENAGE SLEEP PROBLEMS – HERE’S HOW TO BROWSE HEALTHILY AT NIGHT

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<https://theconversation.com/limiting-screen-use-is-not-the-way-to-tackle-teenage-sleep-problems-heres-how-to-browse-healthily-at-night-117527>



Both in Europe and the US, more than 90% of adolescents have their faces buried in screens before bed. Often, this comes at a cost to sleep. Frequent screen users are much more likely to report falling asleep later, sleeping less, and waking during the night. Such difficulties are linked not only to poorer academic performance, but also increased risk of health issues such as diabetes and heart disease in later life.

As a result, teenage screen use is treated as an unhealthy addiction among much of the media. But this narrative is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the research. The problem isn't use of screens at night, but how they're used

After a recent study demonstrated that limiting screen use for a week could restore normal sleep patterns in adolescents, media headlines widely hailed this as the salvation for sleep troubled teens. However, these headlines almost exclusively ignored the fact that wearing blue light blocking goggles was just as effective

Exposure to alertness inducing blue light is undoubtedly a problem – when it comes from our screens at night, it can disrupt the natural circadian rhythms that secrete sleep hormones to prepare our bodies for rest. But it's also an easy issue to solve. Applications already exist on phones and laptops that shift the blueness of light with the time of day, sidestepping the somewhat unrealistic expectation of teenagers donning special goggles

## Content is key

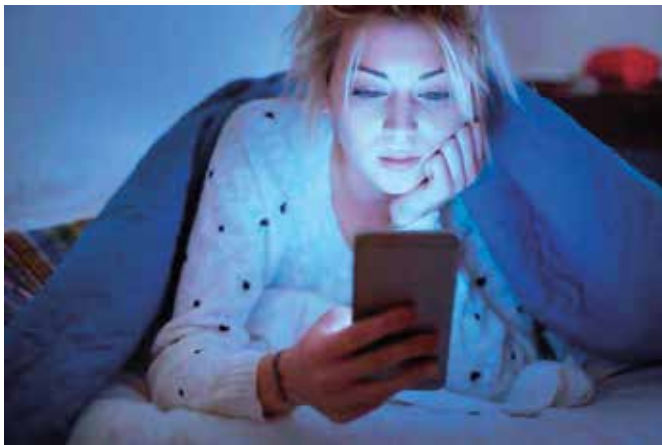
There's a much more urgent issue at the heart of the relationship between bedtime devices and sleep not just in youth, but for all of us. The screens we watch are not devoid of content, and how we interact with them is key

Passive activities such as reading neutral content are largely unproblematic, as long as care is taken to avoid keeping the brain whirring late into the night. The key area of concern is social media. Almost half of 13 to 17 year-olds admit to being online almost constantly, and these frequent users are much more likely to report later sleep onset, as well as waking during the night.

But these negative impacts are also dependent on our relationship with social media, rather than our mere use of it. Work from both our own lab and others suggests that the negative impacts of social media use on sleep quality may be a result of the anxiety, depression, and lowered self esteem that it can induce. Crucially, the negative mental health effects of social media are not inevitable, but dependent on the way we interact online. When used in the right way, screen use can actually be beneficial.

For example, time spent using image based platforms like Instagram and Snapchat (but not text based platforms like Twitter) is associated with decreased loneliness, possibly due to an enhanced sense of intimacy and interconnectedness. However, this benefit is dependent on using the platform to interact with other people – those who simply broadcast content actually report increased loneliness. It's also dependent on following people you know – the more strangers you follow, the more likely you are to have depressive symptoms.

It may also surprise you to know that making social comparisons is not always problematic – what's important is how we make them. Ability based comparisons, such as comparing oneself to 'fitspiration' posts showing body images only a few of us have the time and ability to achieve, can lead to



*Blue light disrupts our body's internal clock – but it's an easy issue to solve*

depression and envy. Opinion based comparisons, on the other hand, where social media users seek out the views of others to make sense of the world around them, can lead people to feel inspired and optimistic.

### **Healthy nighttime browsing**

With that in mind, here are some tips based on the latest research on screen and social media use to help you make the best out of your evening browsing, and have a good night's sleep

- Use your platforms to create communities and maintain connections through interaction – too much silent browsing and self broadcasting can harm your peace of mind, and therefore your ease of sleep. And remember – the best selves you see are not representative of real life
- Try to reserve the last half an hour before bed not doing anything too stimulating. Putting the phone down a little while before bed is a good habit to get into, but if you are going to use it, use a blue light blocking app, and do something passive and unemotional that will allow the sleepy feeling to come
- If you think that activities are getting in the way of you feeling sleepy, or that household bedtime routines do

not match your rhythm, then talk to someone. Sleep is important but parents sending teens off to bed before they're ready is not always the best plan.

We need to move away from the dominant narrative of screen and social media use as an evil, as a hindrance to healthy development. Our bedtime devices needn't be guilt inducing vices. The online world is rich and diverse

Like any social interaction, social media use can be damaging if navigated in the wrong way, but the virtual world it opens up can also be fulfilling, informative, and empowering. So let's create a society that uses it healthily – not just by blocking out blue light, but by blocking out the things that make you see yourself in a blue light



*Leaving social media until the morning isn't essential, but it's still a good way of disconnecting.*

*Heather Cleland Woods Lecturer in Psychology, University of Glasgow and Holly Scott PhD Candidate in Psychology, University of Glasgow*

**ANDREW FULLER**



## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP STUDENTS IN THE SENIOR YEARS OF SCHOOL

When you have a student completing the senior years of school, everyone in the family is doing Year 11 or 12. Here are a few ideas for coming through these years flourishing, and having everyone's dignity intact.

Parents have a vital role in helping students:

- Manage time
- Manage energy
- Manage stress
- Manage to get everything in at the right time and in the right place.

In addition to this you have to manage yourself.

### Developing the System

Regular planned times for study throughout the year creates better results. Short regular sprints of learning are more effective than long study marathons. To create this you need to work out a system.

Sit down with your student and map out an ideal week including-

- Times for sleeping (at least 8 hours a night)
- Times for unwinding and relaxing
- Best breakfast foods
- The best times for study
- The best time of the week for consolidating notes and extending memory
- Time to catch up with friends
- Required school hours
- Time for part time work (less than 10 hours a week)
- How to handle invitations around exam times.

Without a plan, you are simply left with doing what you like when you feel like it and often feeling like studying is not the most likely emotion in teenagers' lives.

Study sprints should be ideally 20 minutes long and never longer than 50 minutes with a ten-minute break between study sessions.

Usually on the weekend, have some time set aside for organising information and testing memory of new information.

Patience, talk through the system until you all feel that you have the best plan. Ask them how often you should remind

them of the system when they don't seem to be following it.

You may also need to discuss minimizing distractions- excessive social media use, listening to music while studying, multitasking or chatting with friends online is not compatible with studying. Multi-tasking is just splitting your attention and means you'll need to study four times longer than you need to.

As a parent of a senior school student, keep yourself informed. Come to information sessions and parent-teacher meetings yourself. Stressed students don't always store detailed information well so take notes of key dates and requirements.

### Steering students back to the system

It is hard to get through Year 11 or 12 without some meltdowns. When a meltdown occurs, rather than starting a long conversation about it or providing a motivational pep talk, think about what your student needs- Food? Rest? Exercise? Some social time? Try to quietly arrange for this to occur.

### How to deal with the catastrophic thinking

Pacifying or reassuring the unsettled senior school student is a fine art. Acknowledge to yourself in advance that anything you are likely to say is probably going to be heard as the "wrong thing".

Generally what you do is more important than what you say. Providing meals, comfort and for some, reassuring hugs is often more powerful than words.

Some teens "freeze up with fear" and want to avoid schoolwork completely. Try to avoid getting into lengthy debates about the merits of the current educational system or their own intellectual ability. Instead, go back to basics. Feed them. Hydrate them. Rest them.

Then gently bring them back to the topic. Ask them to tell you what they do understand about an issue. If they will initially reply with, "I know nothing" say, "Well, tell me what you think you know". Slowly rebuild confidence.

### What to do when the system breaks down

When you are planning the system develop a rule of "never miss twice". We know there are days when even the most well thought through system falls into tatters. Accept this but also plan never to miss twice. For example, I can take a complete

break from my study routine for one day but not for two days in a row.

Around August is the most common time for students to become disheartened and lose motivation. However the work done in August and September probably adds more to the final results than any other stage of the year. The reason is that by this time most of the basics have been covered and we are now able to add the higher order thinking and deepen understanding.

If taking on new information seems too much at this time, go through the process with them of organising information, drawing up flow charts, making memory aides and consolidating notes.

#### **What if my teenager won't listen to me?**

Have a confidential chat with one of their key teachers so that they can have a conversation with your student directly about their progress and study strategies.

#### **How to deal with the build up to exams**

Here is the time to trust the system. Keep things as calm and

consistent as you possibly can. Ensure that your student has enough sleep, good food, exercise and social time.

Consider ceasing part time work in the lead up to exams. Also discuss not using or at least, lessening the use of social media sites.

If your family has major birthdays during this period it may be worth delaying celebrations until after the exam period.

#### **It is not the end of the world**

Your student's Year 12 result is not their future. There are many other more important and powerful determinants of success and happiness in life.

Many people who did not get the Year 12 results they wanted find careers where they thrive.

Above all, remain calm and believe in your student. Adding an anxious parent to a panicking teenager is always a recipe for disaster.

Andrew's most recent book is "*Unlocking Your Child's Genius*" (Finch Publishing, 2015).

## **SAASPC Affiliation fees 2020**

Preschools	\$40.00
Schools	
1-200 students	\$50.00
201-600 students	\$70.00
601-1000 students	\$90.00
1001+ students	\$110.00
Individuals	\$55.00

*All fees are GST inclusive. Affiliation is on a calendar year (January - December)*

Parent groups are encouraged to affiliate with SAASPC, but if the school or preschool has no parent group, the Governing Council or Management Committee is welcome to affiliate.

For more information go to [www.saaspc.org.au/affiliation.html](http://www.saaspc.org.au/affiliation.html) or contact us on 1800 724 540 or [info@saaspc.org.au](mailto:info@saaspc.org.au)



If your child's education and wellbeing is important to you...

If the education and wellbeing of other children is important to you...

then why not join the SA Association of School Parent Communities' (SAASPC) executive committee...

you may be surprised about what you learn and how you can contribute

For more information contact us

t 1800 724 640 e [info@saaspc.org.au](mailto:info@saaspc.org.au)