

# AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

Volume 2 Number 19, 17 June 2008

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## HOT TOPIC: SAFE SCHOOLS

*Is this symptomatic of where some of our schools are going? Parent comments suggest that it may too often be like this! Is this how it's always been?*

### Gang culture rife in schools

*Paul Weston, Sunday Mail, April 27, 2008*

Secondary students are dividing themselves up in Queensland school grounds into groups called Plastics, Gangstas, Goths and Emos, pupils say. Anyone who refuses to join are labelled nerds – or, worse, become nothings or rank outsiders to be bullied or, in extreme cases, bashed and have their home invaded.

An 18-year-old former Gold Coast secondary school student, who has survived two bashings and a home invasion, told The Sunday Mail last week that the school gang culture was on the rise and a direct import from American campuses. The former student, parents of bullying victims and psychologists pinpointed several reasons for the bully/bash revolution. They included:

- The negative influence of some American films and rap music.
- The internet, which provides plenty of opportunity for cyberspace bullying.
- The failure of working parents to police some sort of moral code for their children.

"The Americanisation in our schools is really bad," the 18-year-old former student leader said.

"Kids even talk in American accents, use their phrases. I've got a friend who has arrived from overseas and she has never seen anything like it. At school, everyone is broken up into different groups like you see in those US movies like American Pie. There's Plastics, the Gangstas, Emos and Goths."

The groups are large and easy to identify from their fashion accessories and their arrogant attitudes, but only one – the Gangstas – presents a violent threat.

"The Plastics pack on the make-up. Their hair is really hacked at, they work on it so much," the former student said. "They change their uniforms to make their shirts tighter and their dresses shorter. The guys love them, but they're called Plastics because they're so false."

The female schoolgirl obsession with good looks surfaced last week at St Patrick's College in Mackay, where students had ranked themselves from 1 to 21 – they write the number on their wrists – as part of Club 21 or Big 21.

Gothics are identified by their dark clothing and heavy-metal taste in music, and Emos (from "emotion") by being sensitive, introverted types obsessed with depressing rock bands.

But it is the group stealing the US gangsta-style culture, with its love of violent rap music, which students fear the most.

A gang of suburban teenagers armed with bats, machetes and a sword stormed a school assembly at Sydney's Merrylands High School early this month injuring 18 students and a teacher.

Queensland students told The Sunday Mail they were aware of similar gang members carrying pocket knives around secondary schools in southeast Queensland. "They all have baggy clothing, they're all bling, they have the hats with the stiff shades worn backwards and the pants around their knees showing their undies," the 18-year-old said.

"They carry boom boxes (sound systems) around the school. The Gangstas are the ones you worry about. They need to be so cruel all the time."

A parent who has a 16-year-old son at a southeast Queensland school, and an older daughter who recently graduated, has kept a diary of dozens of assaults on her children since 2003. The concerned mother, who asked not be named for fear of reprisals against her children, described the gangs as "organised groups of thugs".

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,23601220-5007191,00.html>

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### **ACSSO Comment:**

It is a fundamental right for every child to feel safe and supported at school.

It is a fundamental right for every parent that they should be able to feel that their child will feel safe and supported while they are in the care of their school.

This is reflected in the Australian National Safe Schools Framework, which was adopted by all Ministers of Education in 2003: when they jointly declared:

"Promoting and providing a supportive learning environment in which all students can expect to feel safe is an essential function of all schools.

"Students have a fundamental right to learn in a safe, supportive environment and to be treated with respect.

"The Australian community rightly expects authorities charged with managing our schools, both in the government and non-government sectors, to take all available measures to

- ensure the safety of students,
  - support students and
  - set out clearly, transparently and explicitly the policies and programmes they have in place to fulfill this important responsibility."
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## **HOT TOPIC: FUNDING**

### **Public school funding short by \$8.4bn**

*Justine Ferrari, The Australian, June 16, 2008*

Government investment in public school facilities is about one-third the amount spent by the private school system, representing a shortfall of \$8.4 billion, equivalent to \$1.2 million for every public school, a report commissioned by the Australian Education Union has found.

The report estimates \$22 billion on top of current levels of state and territory investment would be required over the next 12 years to enable public schools to match the average expenditure in the private sector.

The report, *Rebuilding Public Schools: Investment Targets for 2020*, was written by an independent education economist, Adam Rorris, who has worked for the UN, the World Bank and international development agencies. He was previously the manager and principal analyst of the Schools Resourcing Taskforce, which advises federal, state and territory education ministers.

Federal and state governments allocate more than \$10,000 a year for each public school student, compared with \$6000 for each private school student.

However, in a comprehensive look at national capital expenditure in both public and private schools, Mr. Rorris found that while private sector investment grew substantially in that period, government spending was static.

Over the three years the report's authors studied the issue, the average amount spent by private schools rose from \$1380 to \$1560 per student in 2008 dollars, while spending by the states and territories only increased from \$537 to \$542 per student.

The report says the largest differences in spending between the public and private sectors are in the three biggest states of NSW, Victoria and Queensland, which have total funding gaps of about \$3 billion, \$2 billion and \$1.5 billion respectively.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23869281-2702,00.html>

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### **Call for New Standard and Timeline to Rebuild Schools**

*Angelo Gavrielatos, AEU, 16 June 2008*

The Australian Education Union is calling on the Rudd Government to establish a new standard for buildings and facilities in public schools after an independent report found a \$2 billion annual shortfall in capital investment.

A national audit of all public schools is required to assess the state of buildings, heating and cooling, sports, art and music facilities and maintenance, says AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos.

"An independent report commissioned by the AEU found that between 2002 and 2005, public schools, on average, missed out by about \$1.2 million each when compared with private school capital investment," said Mr. Gavrielatos.

"This shortfall is being felt right across the country and the Rudd Government must set an urgent timetable to renovate and rebuild run-down schools.

"Every Australian child deserves to be taught in a school with quality learning environments and modern equipment.

Read AEU Response to the Report at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/Rebuildingresp.pdf>

Download the Report "*Rebuilding Public Schools: 2020 Investment Targets*" at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/Rebpuclschls.pdf>

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## **Public Schools: The poor cousins in hunt for funds**

*Justine Ferrari The Australian June 16, 2008*

Public and private schools are becoming misnomers.

Public schools are primarily funded by government but increasingly rely on private contributions from parents, whether as a term-based fee or through fundraising to pay for a music teacher.

Private schools are primarily funded through fees and church contributions, but they too receive government funding, about \$6.3billion this year and growing. By 2012, the federal government will give more money to private schools than universities.

No one will be surprised to learn that private schools often have better, bigger and newer facilities - but these are subsidised by taxpayer money.

Yet as the *Rebuilding Public Schools* report shows, governments are not even close to spending as much on public schools as the private sector invests - they spend one-third the amount on capital works.

Governments are letting down public school students by failing to take seriously the quality of school environments, the standard of facilities and their suitability to teach in the 21st century.

It is a core responsibility of government to provide a universal high-quality school system.

The public school system by and large is the one educating the socially disadvantaged.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,24897,23869244-12332,00.html>

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## **HOT TOPIC: AUSTRALIA ON THE WORLD STAGE**

### **Australia's Presentation To The 4th APEC Education Ministers Meeting**

*Hon Maxine McKew MP, Lima, Peru, 11 June 2008*

Your Excellency Senor Chang Escobedo, other Distinguished Ministers of Education and their Representatives, delegates and observers, ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to be here today representing the Australian Government.

The APEC region is immensely important for Australia, and we value the opportunity to exchange ideas with you on the very important areas of education and training.

We see education in Australia as crucial contributors to achieving our broad economic, human and social objectives.

The new Australian Government which came to office just over six months ago has from its very first days made education front and centre of our agenda. We know that education is the key to productivity, to opportunity, to equity.

As a new Government of tremendous energy and enthusiasm we are very interested in new ideas, fresh thinking and innovative approaches. So I am very excited to be here today, to have the opportunity to discuss issues and learn from your experiences.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/McKew/Releases/AustraliasPresentationToThe4thAPECEducationMinistersMeeting.htm>

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## **HOT TOPIC: TEACHER TRAINING**

### **National accreditation of teaching courses**

*Gregor Ramsey, Chair, Teaching Australia 13 June 2008*

Teaching Australia notes media reports (The Age, 12 June) that Commonwealth and State education ministers have agreed to establish national accreditation of programs to prepare teachers.

Chair of Teaching Australia, the national body for the teaching profession, Gregor Ramsey, said that teachers and principals were intensely interested in the quality of programs to prepare teachers. A high standard of teacher preparation is fundamental to the quality of teaching, the standing of the profession, and particularly student learning in schools.

"It is high time Australia had a national system for accrediting university programs for the preparation of teachers. To be effective, such a system must assess courses against a single set of rigorous national standards, focusing on the quality of the teaching of new graduates in schools rather than compliance, and using a thorough set of national accreditation procedures", said Dr Ramsey.

"Anything less will leave the way open for a continuation of the variability in the quality of courses noted by the House of Representatives Top of the Class report last year."

"Teaching Australia has promoted national accreditation for more than two years. It has been instrumental in raising awareness of the issue, and has worked closely with the Deans of Education and the teaching profession to develop elements of an effective national system, including rigorous national accreditation standards" said Dr Ramsey.

"We will make the knowledge, resources and draft standards we have produced available to the new accreditation body. We look forward to the continuing involvement of the teaching profession in a national system."

Read more at <http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go/home/projects/teacheraccreditation>

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### **New benchmarks for teacher courses**

*Farrah Tomazin, The Age, 12 June 2008*

UNIVERSITY teaching courses will be required to meet tough new national standards under a landmark agreement by state and federal governments to boost the quality of teachers in schools.

Education ministers discussed the idea during a telephone conference yesterday, amid growing public concerns that too many teachers are graduating ill equipped to deal with life in the classroom.

Under the changes, all Australian university teacher training courses will, for the first time, be forced to meet a set of national benchmarks in order to be accredited. The benchmarks will be established by a national body, rather than the current system, in which courses are regulated by state authorities.

Victorian Education Minister Bronwyn Pike, who pushed for change at yesterday's meeting, said the shift would alleviate an existing problem, whereby teachers who train in one particular state aren't always qualified to work in another because of the lack of consistency in the accreditation of courses and the registration of teachers.

The push to improve the quality of teacher training comes after years of concern from politicians and educators about the low entry levels for education degrees and the quality of such courses. In a damning assessment of the state of the teaching profession, a Senate committee report last year said teaching no longer attracted the same proportion of "clever young people" as it did 40 years ago and recommended all high school teachers should obtain an arts or science degree before studying education.

A union survey of 2000 teachers released this year also called for government intervention, after finding most new public school teachers felt they were inadequately trained to deal with classroom demands, abusive parents or difficult colleagues.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/new-benchmarks-for-teacher-courses-20080611-2p4v.html>

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## **HEALTH & WELL-BEING**

### **NSW Protecting Children from Tobacco Review – Submissions Close 22 June 2008**

*Stafford Sanders, Action on Smoking & Health (Aust)*

Just a reminder that public submissions close on June 22 for the NSW government's review of measures to "Protecting Children from Tobacco" - including options we've been campaigning for. The proposals include:

- banning point of sale tobacco display;
- restrictions on under 18 selling of tobacco;
- tobacco seller licensing;
- a total ban on tobacco vending machines;
- tighter proof of age controls;
- a limit of one point of sale per outlet;
- no tobacco in shopper loyalty programs; and
- making cars carrying children smoke-free.

Read more at [http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2008/protecting\\_children.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2008/protecting_children.html)

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## **RELIGION AND SCHOOLS**

### **Chaplains in State Schools**

*Senator Lyn Allison – "Religion Report" ABC Radio National 11 June 2008*

Ever since the Howard government introduced a program of school chaplains in public schools, there's been controversy, and that controversy shows no sign of abating. Last week in Senate Estimates, Democrat Senator Lyn Allison raised concerns that the chaplaincy program was being used to introduce a Hillsong project called 'Shine', aimed at teaching girls self esteem, through hair and make-up. The government has agreed to investigate. Here's Senator Lyn Allison.

Lyn Allison: Well first of all I'd say we're not opposed per se to chaplains in schools, I think if school communities wish to have them, if parents want them to be engaging with their children, I see no

problem with that. But I do question \$165-million being spent on a program which is largely discriminatory. So you can only get access to the \$20,000 that's on offer to each school if you agree to have a religious chaplain. If that money was available to schools to engage a counsellor who might do similar pastoral work, then I would be in favour of it, but it's not.

Stephen Crittenden: In Senate Estimates last week, you raised questions about the Hillsong 'Shine' program, and the government has said that it will investigate that. What's the problem?

Lyn Allison: I understand that Hillsong 'Shine' is designed for at-risk girls - and girls in regional areas - is my understanding. And the basis of that program is to build self-esteem, through make-up and discussion about being pretty, being attractive, making yourself beautiful. Now we know that at-risk use whilst they may engage in that kind of activity, will be further at risk by that being seen to be the only way in which they can fit into society. So I think any woman will tell you that problems run a bit deeper than just how to do make-up and how to make up your nails, that it is much more important that some more fundamental work is done on these young people who are at risk to uncover if you like, some of the problems that they might be having, and to deal with that in a professional way. And I don't regard exercises in make-up as being professional for these kids.

Stephen Crittenden: So are you suggesting that the chaplaincy program is being used by Hillsong almost as a Trojan Horse to get this fairly socially conservative program into schools?

Lyn Allison: Yes, I believe that's what's happening, particularly in Queensland where there's by far the largest uptake of chaplains and where Hillsong and the Scripture Union are very active in recruiting chaplains and encouraging schools to take them on. And it's been my experience that the schools themselves, who are supposed to give their approval across the board, there has to be broad consensus in a school for a chaplain to be there before the Commonwealth says it's OK. But my experience is that a lot of schools are not reaching broad consensus, in fact a lot of the parents are not even told that this is happening and that there is no formal procedure or process in place for parents to be asked Yes or No, whether they want their children involved.

Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/religionreport/default.htm>

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## **STATE & TERRITORY EDUCATION BUDGET ROUND-UP 2008**

### **TASMANIA**

*Previous editions have successively summarised the sequence of budget announcements from the other States and Territories: now the Tasmanian Budget has been brought down:*

### **Education A Budget Priority**

*Hon David Bartlett, Premier & Minister for Education and Skills*

A record investment of \$1.06 billion will be injected into the Tasmanian education and training sector to drive an improvement in the literacy and numeracy levels of school children and adults.

The Premier and Minister for Education and Skills, David Bartlett, said today that \$34.8 million would be spent over four years on two significant and far-reaching new literacy initiatives as part of a record 2008-09 Education Budget.

"\$32 million has been allocated over the next four years for the Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap initiative, specifically targeted to support primary school children with functional literacy and numeracy skills," Mr. Bartlett said. "This is the single biggest investment in literacy funding in this State's history.

"The Community Adult Literacy Coordinators Initiative will receive \$2.8 million over four years to appoint literacy professionals to support trained volunteers in providing a program of community-based literacy support for those Tasmanians most in need.

"Both these initiatives are targeted at literacy improvements in schools plus a program of community literacy support for adults and families with very low literacy. These funds are on top of the \$22.3 million already included in the Education budget for a range of literacy and numeracy initiatives throughout the State.

"This Government recognises that one of the best ways to alleviate poverty and encourage economic growth is to provide Tasmanians with better educational opportunities. It is widely acknowledged that literacy and numeracy skills are the foundation upon which all other educational achievement is built.

Read more at <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/dept/budgets/budget0809/Education-A-Budget-Priority.pdf>

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## **Tas budget boosts education spending**

*Nine News, 12 June 2008*

Tasmania will spend a record \$1.06 billion on education, Treasurer Michael Aird announced on Thursday, as he handed down a budget which he says "puts ideas into action". The budget, the biggest in Tasmanian history at more than \$4 billion, announced a net operating surplus of \$106 million and a fiscal surplus of \$30 million.

Mr. Aird said economic growth of three per cent was forecast in the 2008-09 year, with employment growth predicted at two per cent. "The government's ability to set and implement credible fiscal strategies has delivered four credit rating upgrades for Tasmania," Mr. Aird said. "This is a budget for Tasmania created by a government that believes in offering opportunities for everyone so they can fulfil their potential. We are putting ideas into action, for today and tomorrow."

The \$1.06 billion would be spent on education to help boost literacy and numeracy rates in Tasmanian school children and adults.

Premier David Bartlett, who is also education minister, said \$34.8 million would be spent over four years on two new literacy initiatives. The money included \$32 million for a program to boost numeracy and literacy in primary school children and \$2.8 million for community-based literacy support.

Read more at <http://news.ninensn.com.au/article.aspx?id=579233>

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## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

### **Better quality information to parents about Child Care Services**

*Hon Julia Gillard MP & Hon Maxine McKew MP, 16 June 2008*

Last week the Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, wrote to all child care services, implementing the first phase of the Rudd Labor Government's election commitment to provide better quality information to parents about child care services.

The letter outlines the three key areas in which the Government is committed to improving the information available to parents about fee increases, vacancy data and service quality.

The Government is asking services to provide information on their current fees and the fees they will be charging from July 31 2008. At this stage, the provision of fee information is voluntary and will be published on a new Information for Parents website.

The Government acknowledges that most services do the right thing when it comes to passing on the ordinary increases in operating expenses to parents and we expect that this will continue. Parents

should be able to see which centres in their local area are keeping fee increases to a necessary minimum.

Read more at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0608/mseceed160.php>

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## **DIGITAL EDUCATION REVOLUTION**

### **Round One Delivers more than 116,000 new computers to 896 secondary schools**

*Hon Julia Gillard MP 12 June 2008*

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today announced 896 secondary schools across Australia would receive funding for 116, 820 new computers under the Rudd Government's \$1.2 billion Digital Education Revolution.

These schools have been identified as being most in need of new school computers with a ratio of one computer for every eight students or worse.

The \$116 million in funding from Round One of the National Secondary School Computer Fund will bring these schools up to a ratio of 1:2.

Under the funding agreements, Education authorities have up to two years to ensure the purchase and installation of the computers in the 896 schools.

Round Two applications will open on 14 July, allowing all remaining schools across Australia to receive funding for a ratio of 1:2 by the end of the year.

The Rudd Government is providing grants of \$1000 per computer to schools through State and Territory Governments or non-government school block grant authorities.

This funding process will deliver savings through bulk purchasing arrangements that can be used for associated costs.

For example, if a computer can be purchased for \$500, the remaining \$500 can be used for upgrading power supplies or installing wireless connections.

The provision of school computers has traditionally been the responsibility of State and Territory Governments and the non-government school sectors.

But the Rudd Government believes there is an urgent need to upgrade the information and communications technology in our secondary schools through a Digital Education Revolution.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/DigitalEducationRevolutionRoundOneDeliversmorethan116000newcomputersto896secondarieschools.htm>

For more information please visit <http://www.digitaleducationrevolution.gov.au>

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## **TERTIARY EDUCATION**

### **Funding to advance University Infrastructure**

*Hon Julie Gillard MP, 6 June 2008*

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard and Minister for Innovation, Senator Kim Carr today announced the opening the 2009 round of the Rudd Government's major higher education infrastructure investment fund.

The Education Investment Fund (EIF), announced in the recent Budget, is an \$11 billion fund that will fuel strategic investment in Australia's universities, vocational education institutions and major research institutes.

The EIF expands and broadens the Higher Education Endowment Fund (HEEF).

The 2009 funding round will focus on higher education institutions with \$304 million available for new research facilities or capital expenditure in Australia's universities. Universities have been gearing up for this funding round expected under the HEEF and now the Rudd Government is following through on this as it transitions from the old fund to the expanded EIF.

Guidelines for this funding round have been developed by an Advisory Board lead by Mr. Philip Clark AM. Mr. Clark has been consulting widely in the higher education sector over the past months to shape this round of funding and he will be advising the Government on the full development of the EIF.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/FundingtoadvanceUniversityInfrastructure.htm>

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## **Back to school with iTunes U**

*Ella Morton, CNet, 04 June 2008*

University is supposed to be the place where fertile young minds engage in intellectual intercourse, propagating an illustrious academic future that benefits humanity.

For many, it's also an era of goon swilling, penny pinching and caffeine-fuelled late-night cramming that will be looked back on with considerable fondness.

If you've not had these formative experiences, fear not — you can now get a taste of varsity life courtesy of iTunes. Apple has partnered with a bunch of local universities to offer free lectures, guest speeches and student work through iTunes U, the higher-education section of the online store.

Participating universities include UNSW, the ANU, Swinburne University, Griffith, the University of Melbourne and UWA. Content is organised by institution and topic area, and ranges from more general overviews to week-by-week lectures from particular courses.

Read more at <http://www.cnet.com.au/mp3players/musicsoftware/0,239029154,339289576,00.htm>

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## **ADULT LITERACY**

### **Adult language, literacy and numeracy skills discussion paper released today**

*Hon Julia Gillard MP 12 June 2008*

A new discussion paper is calling for comment on the future direction of the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program.

Minister for Education, Julia Gillard released the discussion paper today, and invited all interested parties to comment on the make up of the services in the next contract period of service delivery.

The Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) helps Australians who have low levels of language, literacy and numeracy skills.

Increasing people's proficiency in these areas provides greater opportunity to fully participate in the workforce and the community.

The Rudd Government is committed to having a world class education and training system.

The LLNP is an important part in helping those people who, for whatever reason, don't have adequate skills to take up work or training opportunities.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/Adultlanguage-literacy-and-numeracy-skills-discussion-paper-released-today.htm>

The discussion paper is available at <http://www.llnp.deewr.gov.au>

Submissions close 11 July 2008

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## **PRIZES & AWARDS**

### **MS Readathon Update**

**It's not too late to register**

***"Inspiring Aussie Kids to read to change the lives of Australians living with Multiple Sclerosis"***

This year's MS Readathon kicked off on 1 June – and runs right through to 30 June.

So the good news is that it's not too late to register.

Why not take the challenge? An opportunity to widen your reading range. Lift your reading skills. Experience the fun and pleasure of reading. And at the same time make a real contribution to help others in your community.

Read more more at <http://www.msreadathon.org.au>

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### **Search for Young Australian Photographer of the Year**

***Free entry to young photographers 21 and under (Deadline for submissions July 25)***

The search for the Australian Young Photographer of the Year and the Australian Adventurer of the Year are just two of the new categories in RovingEye's 2008 Expose Your World photo competition.

"The focus of this year's expanded competition is travel with winners sharing more than \$70,000 worth of prizes from major sponsors including Abercrombie & Kent, Tarraleah Lodge, Nikon, SanDisk, AsukaBook, Asus and Vibe hotels," says RovingEye's Business Manager Dianne Engesser. "As well as a bigger prize pool, we've extended the opportunities for photographers - both professional and amateur - to be recognised for their exceptional work."

Finalists in all categories will also be part of an end of year winners' exhibition with photos and video presented by Pixel Perfect Prolab. A selection of the winners' images and stories will feature in the Australian Traveller magazine, be displayed in the stunning RovingEye coffee-table book by AsukaBook and have the opportunity to be represented by RovingEye.

Read more at <http://www.exposeyourworld.com/info/comp.pdf>

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## **P&C Awards 2008**

### ***Prize Pool of More than \$60,000 to Honour Australia's Dedicated Parents Groups***

Paradise Foods and *The Australian Women's Weekly* are calling for entries for the 2008 P&C Awards to showcase this invaluable role of parents in schools.

In its second year, the national awards program celebrates the vital work of Parents and Citizens associations and their equivalents that help deliver quality education facilities and resources to students.

One award will be made to the best entry from each state and territory in Australia. Each of the eight winners will receive a crystal trophy, \$2000 prize money, \$1000 voucher from Rebel Sport, a Tefal Quick Cup and airfares for a representative to attend a special awards ceremony hosted by Paradise Foods and *The Australian Women's Weekly* and Paradise Foods at the Sydney Harbour Marriott on Tuesday January 27, 2009.

A national winner will be chosen from the state and territory winners and will receive The Australian Women's Weekly Paradise Foods P & C Award for 2007 plus a further \$10,000 and \$2000 voucher from Rebel Sport.

The first 100 entries will receive a Paradise Foods hamper filled with cookies, crackers, family favourite biscuits and other goodies. Valued at \$150, this basket makes a great prize for fundraising events and celebrations.

For information on how to enter the awards see the July issue of *The Australian Women's Weekly*.

Submissions must be received by 31 August 2008.

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## **CONFERENCES & EVENTS**

### **Teaching Australia Network Forum**

***22-23 June 2008, Novotel Brighton Beach, Sydney***

Teaching Australia has invited 34 associations to join in a national network. The Network comprises Teaching Australia and other national professional associations of teachers, principals and teacher educators with a major focus on the practice of teaching and leadership in early childhood, primary and secondary education settings.

The aim of the Network is to sustain a lively teaching profession, able to play a key role in shaping directions for education and in meeting the challenges of quality teaching and school leadership into the future. It will facilitate communication, interaction and collaboration among all the organisations in the Network.

The Forum is the first of what will be annual forums providing an opportunity for associations that are members of the Network to come together to discuss issues and directions for the profession.

Read more at <http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go/home/projects/op/edit/pid/511>

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## **Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference**

## **Families Through Life**

*9-11 July 2008, Melbourne Exhibition Centre*

This national event offers a forum for extensive debate surrounding a wide range of family issues that are of key relevance to researchers, policy makers and practitioners. It provides a platform for researchers to report findings from their family-related research and to contribute to ongoing discussions and provide policy input.

The Conference will focus on five major themes – Family Relationships; Children, Youth and Patterns of Care; Families and Work; Families and Community Life; and Violence and Protection Issues. These are the themes around which the Institute's current work is organised.

They are closely related to national policy priorities and areas of particular research interest. Within the framework of these broad themes there are sub-themes covering an extensive range of topics related to families that allows a broader scope for discussion.

Although these areas are the focus of the conference, individual papers and symposia are not restricted solely to these themes.

Read more at <http://www.aifsconference08.com/>

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## **ACWA08 Association of Childrens Welfare Agencies Conference**

**Strong, Safe and Sustainable: Responding to Children, Young People and Families in a Civil Society**

*18-20 August 2008, Sydney Convention Centre*

The ACWA Conference is now widely regarded as a seminal event on the calendar for child and family practitioners, policy personnel, researchers and academics. This year's conference however is rather more special than most in that it provides an opportunity to celebrate 50 years of ACWA and we look forward to welcoming those who may be new to the sector or haven't had the opportunity to attend before.

We look to the ACWA Conference to be influential, challenging, thought provoking in a way that encourages the lateral, which looks to positive change for vulnerable children and families and connects those who seek to achieve this, the effects of which we hope will sustain practitioners and policy makers alike, long after the conference has concluded.

The 2008 agenda will bring together eminent internationally renowned keynotes from Australia and overseas. Our overseas keynotes this year are Jonathan Bradshaw: University of York, Diane DePanfilis: University of Maryland, Cindy Blackstock: First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, Robert Chaskin: University of Chicago and Mark Courtney: University of Washington.

Read more at <http://www.acwa08.com/>

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## **International Outdoor Education Research Conference**

*April 15-18 2009, La Trobe University, Beechworth, Victoria*

The Fourth International Outdoor Education Research Conference will be hosted by the Centre for Excellence in Outdoor and Environmental Educaiton at La Trobe University and held at the Beechworth campus in north-eastern Victoria .

The conference will build on the three previous conferences held at Buckinghamshire-Chilterns University (UK) in 2002, La Trobe University (Australia) in 2004, and the University of Central Lancashire (UK) in 2006, and continue to promote and foster an international community of researchers whose work critically examines outdoor education theory and practice.

The conference will be structured around paper or poster presentations and discussion forums. Special interest group meetings and excursions to local outdoor environments will also be offered.

Read more at [http://www.latrobe.edu.au/oent/research\\_conf\\_2009.htm](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/oent/research_conf_2009.htm)

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## REMI NDERS

1-30 June - MS Readathon - <http://www.msreadathon.org.au>

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11-12 June - National Conference on Climate Change - Canberra -  
<http://www.manningclark.org.au/events/conference2008/index.html>

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26-28 June - World Education Forum SA International Conference - Adelaide -  
<http://www.infront.com.au/evt/wef/>

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28 June - Early Childhood Teachers Association National Conference - Brisbane -  
[http://www.ecta.org.au/01\\_cms/details.asp?ID=17](http://www.ecta.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=17)

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6-9 July - National Conference for Teachers of English Literacy - Adelaide -  
<http://www.englishliteracyconference.com.au>

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6-9 July - Annual Conference of the Australian Science Teachers Association - <http://www.asta.edu.au>

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9-12 July - Environmental Education Up The Track - Darwin - <http://www.cdu.edu.au/ehs/AEEE/>

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10-12 July - Outdoor Education Association of Queensland State Conference - Rockhampton -  
<http://www.oeaq.org.au/events.asp>

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17-19 July - International Conference on Education, Economy & Society - Paris, France -  
<http://education-conferences.org/default.aspx>

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25-27 July - NSW Federation of Parents & Citizens Associations State Conference - Albury -  
<http://www.pandc.org.au/>

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31 July-1 August - Isolated Children's Parents Association Annual Conference - Hobart -  
<http://www.icpa.com.au/Conference.asp>

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16-24 August - National Science Week - <http://www.asta.edu.au>

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18-31 August - ANTSEL Video Online Conference - <http://www.cybertext.net.au/antssel2008.htm>

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27-29 August - Society for Provision of Education in Rural Australia Conference - Melbourne -  
<http://www.spera.edu.au>

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28-29 August - Professional Development Network 12th Annual School Leaders' Conference - Gold Coast -  
<http://www.griffith.edu.au/education/centre-leadership-management-education/events/leadership-conference-2008>

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9 September-2 October - Australian Computers in Education Conference - Canberra -  
<http://www.acec2008.info/default2.asp?orgid=1&suborgid=12>

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10-12 September - World Conference on Mental Health Promotion - Melbourne -  
<http://www.margins2mainstream.com/>

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18-20 September - English Australia Conference - Canberra - <http://www.eaconference.com.au/>

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19-20 September - AASE/AJCPTA National Conference - Fremantle - <http://www.gemspl.com.au/aase/>  
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29 September-2 October 2008 - Australian Computers in Education Conference - Canberra - <http://www.acec2008.info/default2.asp?orgid=1&suborgid=12>  
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30 September-2 October - ACEL International Conference - Melbourne - <http://www.acec.org.au/index.php?id=225>  
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30 September-3 October - National History Teachers' Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.qhta.com.au/conferences.htm>  
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1-3 October - VETnetwork Australia National Conference - Sydney - [http://www.vetnetwork.org.au/01\\_cms/details.asp?ID=47](http://www.vetnetwork.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=47)  
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7-10 October - Australian International Education Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.idp.com/aiec/>  
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20-21 October - ACSSO National Education Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.acsso.org.au>  
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22-25 October - Frontiers in Education (FIE) Conference - Saratoga Springs, USA - <http://fie.engrng.pitt.edu/fie2008/>  
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25-28 October - International Research Conference on Service-learning and Community Engagement - New Orleans, USA - <http://www.researchslce.org/2008conference.html>  
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7-11 December - World Indigenous Peoples Conference: Education - Melbourne - <http://www.wipce2008.com/>  
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8-12 December - International Consortium for Experiential Learning - Sydney - <http://www.education.uts.edu.au/icel/index.html>  
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4-7 January 2009 - Hawaii International Conference on Education - Honolulu, USA - <http://www.hiceducation.org/>  
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18-21 January 2009 - Summer School For Australian Teachers - Canberra - <http://www.anu.edu.au/hrc/freilich/>  
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## RESOURCES

### Educational Experience

Educational Experience began its operations in Newcastle NSW in 1977 and today is Australia's leading supplier of educational resources and equipment to child care centres, preschools, OOSHs and primary schools. We remain dedicated to the supply of creative and practical ideas to help children learn and develop and are the Teacher's choice for variety, quality and customer service.

At present Educational Experience's product range consists of over 8,500 product lines showcased in our annual Teachers Catalogue. Our speedy delivery is recognised as being the most efficient and reliable service offered in the industry. The products sold by Educational Experience are sourced from Australian suppliers where possible or imported from reputable international suppliers. To ensure all our products are of the highest quality and meet safety standards, our suppliers must show product compliance testing to Australian standards.

To view our product range please visit [www.edex.com.au](http://www.edex.com.au)

Educational Experience initiated our generous Toys and More fundraiser to help Australian children's education. Early childhood centres and schools who participate in this fundraiser, are rewarded with a credit voucher valued at 20% of the total value ordered by parents and friends and may qualify for additional resources. For more information please visit [www.toysandmore.com.au](http://www.toysandmore.com.au)

Educational Experience remains committed to the educational needs of all Australian children.

Educational Experience, PO Box 860, Newcastle NSW 2300

Telephone 02 4923 8222 Fax 02 4942 1991 Toll free 1300 134 211 Email <mailto:hotline@edex.com.au>

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Fundraising Directory - <http://www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au> and  
<http://www.fetesandfestivals.com.au>

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Drug Awareness Website - <http://www.drugawareness.com.au/>

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