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Parent survey on home-school dynamic launched

How can parents and teachers stay on the same page and work together better? That's the question driving a new national survey by the Australian Parents Council (APC).

It will look at what builds a good home-school relationship and what can be improved, from the unique perspective of parents.

The survey drills down into the detail of the real parent experience, according to APC President, Shelley Hill.

'We would like to identify what's working and what's not working. We want to know how welcome parents feel, how schools share information and if that works for parents. We're looking for feedback on what parents want to speak to teachers about, the quality of information they receive and whether parent teacher interviews are effective. Everyone is encouraged to detail their insights as comments,' explains Hill.

The survey has already attracted the attention of Federal Education Minister Dan Tehan, who is interested to hear parents' views.

'Parents know their children better than anyone so their feedback is vitally important to help further improve our education system. Our Government wants to hear from parents about their experiences and where they think the education can be further improved.'

One of the driving forces behind the survey has been recent negative media coverage of parents.

'Parents want to encourage and protect their children. That's natural. It's perfectly legitimate to ask for information about your child's progress and wellbeing at school, and to be able to discuss any issues with teachers,' says Shelley Hill, APC President.

'Yet there's been no end of criticism of parents in the media recently. We've been variously labelled as pushy, helicopters, lawnmowers, incapable of saying no, and blamed as the cause of all the problems in Australian schools. Literally.

'While inappropriate behaviour is never okay, friction comes when there's a lack of, or breakdown in communication and trust, from both sides.

'We know that good partnerships with home help children achieve their best at school. So we need to look at how we strengthen the dynamic between the two most important figures in most children's lives – parents and teachers - for everyone's benefit.



AUSTRALIAN PARENTS COUNCIL Inc.
PO Box 5011, Launceston TAS 7259

‘There are many examples of positive and effective home school collaboration that we can learn from. But the experiences and perspectives of parents have to be part of this debate if we are going to move forward. That’s why we are asking parents across the country to share their insights with us,’ explained Shelley Hill.

The survey is open to all parents of school age children in Australia, is anonymous and takes just a few minutes to complete.

Ends

The survey is available via: www.surveymonkey.com/r/QFW999L

Contact: Sharon Leifer APC Media and Communications Manager media@austparents.edu.au or 0410 149853 or Shelley Hill APC President president@austparents.edu.au or 0428 740743 for more information or interviews.

Background

- APC is an apolitical, non-profit organisation representing parents of children at non-government schools and parents generally. To find out more about APC please visit www.austparents.edu.au.
- APC also wrote a joint letter with other parent organisations earlier this year calling on education leaders to commit to improving the home school relationship. Joint letter from APC, ACSSO and CSPA: *Parents and Schools Working Together – Better* austparents.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Parents-and-Schools-Working-Together-%E2%80%93-Better.pdf
- This is the second annual survey conducted by APC. The 2018 survey looked at what parents considered the most important issues in education. austparents.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/APC-Media-Statement-National-Parent-Survey-on-Education-results-5Dec18.pdf