



## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

**GET YOUR RESEARCH,  
NEWS, MEDIA  
RELEASES,  
RECRUITMENT TRIALS,  
EVENTS OUT THERE!!**

*Submissions by end  
May for our next  
issue out in June*

**Social Media  
submissions  
(TWITTER, FB AND  
LINKEDIN):**

*Submissions open  
anytime*

**Submissions must align  
with HDA:**

We aim to promote, facilitate and enable multidisciplinary research to advance understanding of healthy development, ensuring the physical, psychological and social health of infants, children and adolescents.

## OUR PARTNERS

### PLATINUM



### GOLD



### SILVER



### BRONZE



# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HDA SCHOLARS FOR 2022!

Congratulations to the Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) and the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation (CRF) PhD Excellence Award winners for 2022.

We thank the CRF for its ongoing financial support of the PhD Excellence Award and its partnership of 15 years helping HDA to foster research excellence and career development in South Australia.

The two successful applicants, our 11<sup>th</sup> cohort will each receive \$5,000 per annum for 3 years to augment their scholarships.



Demi Georgiou is a PhD candidate within Medical Biochemistry, College of Medicine and Public Health at Flinders University.

Demi's research project '**Elucidating the biological importance of Pregnancy Zone Protein (PZP)**' will provide much needed insight regarding the functions of PZP, a major pregnancy-associated protein, and increase our understanding of the role of damaged proteins in Preeclampsia a leading cause of pregnancy-related morbidity and mortality. "I am incredibly honoured and grateful to receive a 2022 HDA and Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation PhD Excellence Award, thank you so much! This award will support me in my research and the knowledge gained from my project has the potential to be used as the foundation for developing novel therapeutic strategies for preeclampsia", said Demi.



Joshua Robinson is a PhD candidate within the Adelaide Medical School, Robinson Research Institute at the University of Adelaide.

Joshua's research project '**Assessing and treating the impacts of maternal asthma on newborn lung function**' aims at exploring the impact of asthma during pregnancy on babies, specifically looking at lung disease. "If we can improve lung health outcomes at this early stage, we can reduce the risk of other lung diseases later in life e.g. childhood asthma", said Joshua Robinson.



Congratulations to Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) PhD Excellence Award winner for 2022, Sarah Hammond. Sarah joins our 11<sup>th</sup> cohort of Scholars and will receive \$5,000 per annum for 3 years to augment her scholarship.

Sarah Hammond is a PhD candidate within Clinical and Health Sciences at the University of South Australia.

Sarah's research project '**Using MRI to understand the impact of fetal growth restriction on brain development**' aims to determine by using a sheep model the effect of a reduced supply of oxygen and nutrients to the fetus, on fetal brain development during pregnancy.

"I am excited and honoured to be the recipient of the HDA PhD Excellence Award 2022, and sincerely grateful to Healthy Development Adelaide for both their financial support and for providing the opportunity for me to undertake such valuable professional development.

We hope that by establishing a comprehensive understanding of how the developing fetal brain responds functionally and structurally to changes in nutrient and oxygen availability, we can start to develop methods for intervention and ultimately, ensure that all babies get the very best start to life", says Sarah Hammond.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HDA WOMEN'S EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARD WINNER FOR 2022!



Congratulations to Dr Margarita Tsiros, our HDA Women's Excellence in Research Award winner for 2022.

Margarita is a Senior Lecturer in Physiotherapy (Paediatrics) at the University of South Australia, where she leads the Child Health Challenge of the IIMPACT in Health Research Concentration (Innovation, Implementation And Clinical Translation in Health). She is also an Associate member of ARENA (Alliance for Research in Exercise, Nutrition and Activity) within UniSA's Allied Health and Human Performance unit. Margarita is the Chair of the South Australian Chapter of the Paediatric Group of the Australian Physiotherapy Association.

Informed by her clinical career, Margarita's research strives to optimise the physical health and wellbeing of children and adolescents. Her research provides a platform for practical approaches for the identification and management of children at risk of movement difficulties, while enhancing caregiver and clinician capabilities to improve long term health, physical function, activity and wellbeing.

"It's a real honour to have my research recognised through this award. I especially want to thank all the people I have worked with over my career, as research is very much a team effort – it also wouldn't be possible without the support of the children and families who give up their time as participants", Margarita Tsiros says.

The goals of this award is to recognise and celebrate excellence of research achievement by women working in the field of developmental health, and to raise awareness of and support career development for women mid-career researchers.

"It is fabulous to see an award dedicated to recognising women mid-career researchers. Career development opportunities for women are critically important at *all* career stages, and this award will no doubt help me in my own career pathway", Margarita says.

"It is our great pleasure to recognise Margarita's excellent research, which is having an impact in the community, the physiotherapy profession, and informing clinical guidelines including those of the World Health Organization", says HDA UniSA Co-Convenor, Professor Carol Maher.

Margarita will receive \$1,000 and a certificate and present her winning research at a HDA lecture later this year.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HDA SCHOOL COMMUNICATOR FOR 2022!



Congratulations to Dr Katharina Richter, our HDA Schools Communicator for 2022, which is funded by the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation.

Katharina is a NHMRC Biomedical Researcher and Head of her own laboratory (the Richter Lab) within the Surgery Department, Basil Hetzel Institute and Queen Elizabeth Hospital, University of Adelaide.

Katharina's research focus is on developing new treatments against antibiotic-resistant bacteria, so-called superbugs, and bringing them from the lab to real-life applications.

"I am honoured to receive the HDA Schools Communicator Award and thrilled to visit schools sharing my passion for science and the positive impact science can have on our everyday lives", Katharina Richter says.

The goal of this award is to help our emerging researchers, like Katharina, to showcase their research to South Australian high school students with the aim of getting them excited about the amazing opportunities open to them in health science or science career pathways.

"I genuinely believe in the power of role models and am therefore very enthusiastic to connect with students around SA, encouraging them to pursue a scientific path to help solve the problems of today and tomorrow. Inspiring and supporting the future generation is pivotal for the prosperity of the whole society".

Katharina will visit a number of South Australian schools this year delivering her talk in an exciting and interactive format.

Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation Executive Director, Greg Ward, says the opportunity to fund the HDA Schools Communicator Award provides another exciting platform for the Foundation to expand its commitment to fostering children's research in South Australia.

"CRF has been a proud supporter of HDA since 2007 through the PhD Excellence Awards. We believe this further partnership with the Schools Communicator Award provides yet another great opportunity to build research excellence and early career development in children's health and development, in the state." Ward says.

"We congratulate Katharina on receiving the HDA Schools Communicator Award and encourage her dedication to inspire younger generations to consider a career in health science that will ultimately lead to improving the lives of children."

Katharina will receive \$2,000 + up to \$1,000 towards travel and consumables.

*Photo credit: Randy Larcombe*

## HDA MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



### Australia Day honours

**Professor Helen Marshall AM**, and current South Australian of the Year for significant service to medicine in the field of vaccinology and public health, and to education. Helen is Director of the Vaccinology and Immunology Research Trials Unit (VIRTU) at the Women's & Children's Hospital and Professor of Vaccinology in the Adelaide Medical School and Deputy Director, Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide.

Professor Helen Marshall has also been named Woman of the Year, in the Advertiser, Sunday Mail, SkyCity Inspirational Women of the Year Awards, acknowledging her dynamic contribution to medical research. She was also named Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment Leader of the Year at the Awards.

Flinders Foundation's annual Health Seed Grant Round in partnership with Flinders University. HDA member successful applicants to receive up to \$25,000 for their projects.

**Tanja Jankovic-Karasoulos** - Human placental endocrine responses to folic acid.

**Claire Jessup** – Developing effective immunotherapy approaches for ovarian cancer.

**Jacqueline Stephens** – A multifaceted study of the application of machine learning for the diagnosis of childhood otitis media.

**Amy Wyatt** – Characterising the relationship between pregnancy zone protein and preeclampsia.

For more info <https://www.flindersfoundation.org.au/your-impact/funded-projects/flinders-foundation-health-seed-grant-round-2021>



**Rosa Virgara**, a former HDA Scholar has won the Ian Davey Research Thesis Prize for her thesis 'The development of physical activity & screen time guidelines for Australian Outside School Hours Care'. The award acknowledges the most outstanding thesis by a UniSA HDR.

Congratulations to Robinson Research Institute members Dr Kylie Dunning and Dr Zohra Lassi for receiving University of Adelaide *Future Making Fellowships*:



**Dr Kylie Dunning** will leverage the power of sound waves to levitate biological samples, and simultaneously exploit the highly sensitive nature of light for detailed tomographic characterisation of early embryos and ovarian follicles.



**Dr Zohra Lassi** will improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health by promoting evidence-informed and co-designed service delivery and policy making across healthcare and education settings.



Congratulations to **Prof Sarah Robertson** from the Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide for being awarded Distinguished Fellow status of the Society for Reproductive Biology.



## HDA RESEARCH MEMBER PROFILE - DR MEGAN COOPER

### COLLEGE OF NURSING & HEALTH SCIENCES, FLINDERS UNIVERSITY



I am a proud and passionate midwife! Working clinically in a regional setting early in my career made me realise the value of midwifery care and more importantly, the significance of a relational, woman-centred approach. Throughout my career I have been interested in women's perceptions and experiences of their care, and this is largely what prompted me to undertake an Honours program by research, investigating what women know about induction of labour. I consequently 'caught the research bug' and launched myself into a PhD. This involved critically analysing policies and guidelines relating to the use of water immersion for labour and birth and exploring midwives' experiences of facilitating water labour and birth. At the same time, I developed a postdoctoral project to explore women's experiences, perceptions and self-reported outcomes of having used water during labour and birth which I continue to publish from. In 2017, I was awarded a full scholarship to undertake a Graduate Diploma in Digital Learning and have used this

to be innovative and creative in the way I teach and conduct research. I also hold a MBA with a specialisation in Health Administration.

I am currently a Senior Lecturer in Midwifery at Flinders University and was fortunate to gain a balanced teaching and research position. In late 2021, I was appointed the Course Coordinator of Flinders Midwifery Programs and am currently working with the midwifery team to build a program that is underpinned and informed by evidence.

Within my current role, I am fortunate to work with and be mentored by Professor Annette Briley who is a world-renowned researcher in women's health and midwifery. Inspired by her tenacity and drive to improve maternal and neonatal outcomes, we have forged relationships across the country and internationally to establish a research portfolio that seeks to ask the hard questions of midwifery care and practice. We are currently working on multiple projects with the Northern Area Local Health Network and other partners. These projects include but are not limited to an examination of antenatal iron supplementation and iron infusions, midwives' knowledge, experience and opinions of alcohol, cigarette and drug use in pregnancy, development of the mPLUS model of midwifery care and audits examining induction of labour and substance use in pregnancy. I continue to undertake research surrounding the use of water immersion for labour and birth as part of national and international collaborations and further to this, I am working with researchers at the Joanna Briggs Institute on multiple scoping reviews – one examining women's experiences of birthing in grief and the other, postnatal care.

In addition to this, I hold membership on multiple local and national committees. As examples, I am the SA Branch Chair of the Australian College of Midwives and a council member of the Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations (CoNNMO). More recently, I was invited to join the Joanna Briggs Institute Expert Reference Group for Women's and Children's Health.

### BECOME A HDA MEMBER TODAY ...

Join us in fostering South Australian multidisciplinary research, policy and practice at basic, clinical, social and population levels to enhance the healthy development and wellbeing of Australia's future generations.

HDA membership is open to researchers, PhD students and professionals working in areas relevant to HDA's research.

#### Membership benefits

- Access to travel grants (PhD students and early career researchers)
- Access to PhD scholarships
- Eligibility to apply for HDA awards
- Free HDA event attendance certificates towards your continuing professional development points
- Build relationships with people working in areas relevant to the health and development of young children and adolescents
- Contribute your knowledge and expertise to make a difference
- Support HDA into the future

1 year (2022) for \$20 or 3 years (to 31 Dec 2024) for \$50 (excluding GST).

<https://health.adelaide.edu.au/healthy-development-adelaide/get-involved>

## New endometriosis website delivers targeted resources to more than 800,000 Australians

Media Release - 31 March, University of Adelaide

Often difficult to diagnose and certainly difficult to live with, it is estimated that endometriosis affects more than 800,000 Australians, where cells like the lining of the uterus grow elsewhere causing symptoms such as period pain, pelvic pain, infertility and fatigue. Combining the costs of healthcare, absenteeism and the loss of social and economic participation for those affected, the cost of endometriosis is estimated at \$7.4 billion.

Launched Thursday 31 March, **EndoZone** is a comprehensive and unique web-based resource, which has been developed to provide resources, and support, not only for those with the condition, but also the family and friends who support them, and the health practitioners who care for them. The project was funded by the Australian Government and Jean Hailes for Women's Health.

Minister for Health and Aged Care, Greg Hunt, said he was delighted the Morrison Government was able to support the development of this new digital platform, as well as providing an additional \$1.4 million in funding in this year's Budget for its ongoing development.

"This digital platform will assist in empowering women with endometriosis to access research, support and information to help manage their condition," Minister Hunt said.

On Friday 25 March, the Federal Government announced the additional funding for the next three years, which will be used to further develop the EndoZone digital platform. It will fund the co-creation of research projects for the endometriosis community incorporating learnings from the digital informatics contained on the platform.

University of Adelaide Chief Investigator for the project to research and develop the web-based resource, Professor Louise Hull says while there are many valuable resources available, EndoZone

is unique because it has been co-designed with hundreds of people from around Australia who have endometriosis.

"Consultation and learning from real people about their experiences and their needs has been at the heart of this project," Professor Hull says. "Other key features of EndoZone are that the site has been built to learn, so as more and more people use it, the site will respond by providing the information that is most relevant, and the site is informed by the latest research in the field, so that users can access current, evidence-based knowledge about endometriosis."

Endometriosis is not widely understood for a range of reasons. The project, led by University of Adelaide's Robinson Research Institute, responds directly to that knowledge gap and is a key initiative of the 2018 National Action Plan for Endometriosis.

"Our research revealed that 'endo' can be hugely isolating, difficult to manage and has significant impacts on people's lives," Professor Hull says. "Participants were most keen to get advice on managing pain, understanding what levels of pain were normal during menstruation, and having better communication with their health professionals."

"We found that people who are diagnosed with endometriosis were looking for accurate, accessible information that would empower them to make decisions about how they might manage their condition now and into the future. They also hoped to raise knowledge and empathy among family and friends and provide rapidly accessible tools for doctors to support them in caring for people with endo."

Supported with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Jean Hailes for Women's Health, the three-year project to develop EndoZone, represents the first Australia-wide consultation with people who suffer endometriosis.

The new web resource is available at [www.endozone.com.au](http://www.endozone.com.au)



### Participants needed for refugee and migrant wellbeing during the First 2000 Days study

Are you a service provider with experience supporting refugee or migrant women and families from South or Southeast Asia during the first 2000 days (conception to age 5)?

Researchers from the School of Psychology at the University of Adelaide (Ria Aiyar, A/Prof Clemence Due, Dr Alyssa Sawyer, Dr Amanda Taylor) are seeking service providers to participate in an interview exploring wellbeing and service provision for S/SE Asian refugee or migrant women and families in Australia. This includes provision of support relating

broadly to wellbeing, pregnancy, early childhood, mental or physical health during the first 2000 days. Interviews will last ~1 hr and can be conducted at a time and place convenient to you, including via Zoom.

If you are a service provider with relevant experience, would like to participate or would like further info, please contact [ria.aiyar@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:ria.aiyar@adelaide.edu.au)

## Study to lift vital vaccine uptake to protect pregnant women and vulnerable children

Media Release - 22 February, University of Adelaide



The University of Adelaide has secured more than \$960,000 from the NHMRC to lead an international project to improve the uptake of vaccinations against influenza and COVID-19 for some of our most vulnerable people – pregnant women and children with chronic health conditions. Led by South Australian of the Year, University of Adelaide Professor Helen Marshall, AM, the project team includes researchers from around Australia and the UK and paediatric and obstetric specialists in hospitals in South Australia, Victoria, and Western Australia. Partners on the project include the Women's and Children's Health Network, Southern Adelaide Local Health Network, Northern Adelaide Local Health Network, SA Health and Dept. for Trade and Investment, SA Government, Victoria Dept. Health, Government of WA, and Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation.

Professor Marshall says part of the problem is that the risks of negative health outcomes for unvaccinated pregnant women and vulnerable children are widely underestimated in the community.

"Pregnant women are 3 times more likely to die from COVID-19, and with influenza, they are more than seven times more likely to be admitted to an intensive care unit, than non-pregnant women," she says. "What we are also seeing with COVID-19 is damage to the placenta and a greater risk of still and pre-term births. Children with some chronic diseases already have a higher risk of hospitalisation and admission to intensive care from influenza, and following COVID-19 infection, there's increased potential for long term disability."

Despite these alarming risks, Professor Marshall says vaccination rates in these two vulnerable groups are suboptimal.

"Uptake of the recommended influenza vaccine among pregnant women and medically at-risk children in Australia is only about 50% and based on recent surveys, uptake of COVID-19 vaccine among children is similar," she says. We are heading into winter with co-circulation of influenza and

COVID-19 and a likely severe influenza season. Adding to elevated risk is that a large proportion of the population now has low immunity due to no exposure to influenza for past two years."

Professor Marshall says the NHMRC-funded project brings together not only health experts and practitioners but will also engage pregnant women and parents of children with chronic health conditions, to look at what factors can positively influence the uptake of vaccinations.

"We will be exploring what elements of health care and health communication will act as an effective nudge to encourage vaccinations," Professor Marshall says. Targeted, evidence-based interventions in hospital settings are urgently needed rather than a 'one size fits all' approach, if we are to reduce hospitalisations, long-term negative health outcomes, and deaths for these most vulnerable groups."

Using randomised controlled trials, the project team will evaluate the effectiveness of new, multi-level interventions, that have been co-designed with parents, pregnant women, doctors, nurses, and hospital administrators. "We are looking at how, across a person's engagement with the health care system, a combination of "nudges" might deliver increased vaccination rates," co-investigator, Ivo Vlaev, Professor of Behavioural Science at the University of Warwick says.

"It could be a combination of things - easier access to vaccines, text message reminders, or checklists for doctors, nurses or health professionals to discuss vaccination with their patients," he says. "It might be where vaccination clinics are located, pre-booking vaccine appointments – we want to canvass ideas from pregnant women and parents and health sector workers by holding 'nudegethons', and then use gold standard research methods to assess whether nudges work."

Professor Marshall says the team will be working to find strategies that are easily implementable in hospitals and that are proven to increase immunisation coverage for two very vulnerable groups. "We know that COVID-19 is not going away in a hurry and every year influenza is a risk," she says.

Co-investigator on study and paediatrician at Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, A/ Prof Margie Danchin says passive health information alone is not enough to move the vaccination uptake statistics. "Proven strategies that can be rolled out nationally at obstetric and paediatric hospitals have the potential, not only to reduce the cost of hospitalisations, but also to save many lives," she says.

Participating hospitals in the project include:  
SA – Women's and Children's Hospital, Lyell McEwin hospital, Flinders Medical Centre  
Victoria – Royal Children's Hospital, Royal Women's Hospital  
WA – Perth Children's Hospital, King Edward Memorial Hospital



## Anxiety about vaccine safety

Media Release - 16 February, Flinders University



Expectant parents are encountering misinformation about children's vaccinations on social media and in small inner circles because they feel inadequately informed by some healthcare professionals who lack sensitivity, according to new research.

Pregnancy should be an ideal time to provide education on both pregnancy and childhood vaccinations but a new study at Flinders University looking at the reasons behind jab refusals has highlighted the immediate need to provide more information and improved education on vaccinations.

Published in the *International Journal of Nursing Studies Advances*, a review of 31 existing papers from high to middle income countries from around the world, including Australia, determined concerns about vaccine safety cause considerable anxiety amongst expectant parents, with fears of adverse reactions and long-term side effects.

Measles has resurfaced recently in Australia, largely due to pockets of low immunisation uptake. Despite the potential of death associated with Measles, it is often considered by parents to be a minor childhood illness, according to the authors.

Lead author of the study, Susan Smith from the College of Nursing & Health Sciences, says poor healthcare relationships can result in vaccine refusal because of safety and other concerns.

"In Australia for example, childhood immunisation

uptake is high recently, achieving over 95% coverage for five-year-old children, but there is significant uptake shortfall in some communities, as well as in the uptake of antenatal immunisations. This shortfall in immunisation uptake suggests varying degrees of vaccine hesitancy," says Mrs Smith.

"The research indicates multiple factors influence decisions to accept or reject vaccines based on perceived safety concerns, including false reports of autism links in the case of measles, which concerningly persist despite significant evidence to debunk this theory. Importantly, some healthcare professionals report feeling inadequately prepared for the role of immunisation promotion and provision so we can safely assume they feel further training and support is needed."

The review also reveals that education and support in vaccine decision making is best provided during pregnancy for expectant mums, and midwives are best placed to deliver information, but many feel underprepared for this role.

"There is no doubt that educating and informing parents is a complex task so improved healthcare provider education and a consistent approach may help in addressing this," says Mrs Smith.

Australia has adopted a consistent approach by refusing to accept non-medical exemptions to vaccination, however, this is not the case in other countries. Eighteen states in the USA still allow non-medical reasons for exemption, including religious and philosophical reasons for vaccine exemptions, which don't help build confidence.

The research also shows the desire for a more natural lifestyle, often described as salutogenic parenting, has been associated with hesitancy around vaccination.

"Parents have reported using a focus on health and wellbeing parenting as a means of supporting the wellbeing of children and this is an area where healthcare professionals are well placed to address concerns and correct misinformation."

The paper 'Decision making in vaccine hesitant parents and pregnant women – an integrative review' is published in the *International Journal of Nursing Studies Advances*.

### Basil Hetzel Institute Research Report 2021

Professor Guy Maddern, Director of Research at the Basil Hetzel Institute, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, invites you to read the **Basil Hetzel Institute Research Report 2021** which celebrates 60 years of research at TQEH.

<https://www.basilhetzelinstitute.com.au/latest-news/research-reports>

# 'I just go to school with no food' – why Australia must tackle child poverty to improve educational outcomes

The Conversation, 10 March by Professor Gerry Redmond, Flinders University



About one in six children in Australia live in poverty. These children generally have poorer educational outcomes than more advantaged children. Our recently published research shows students who live in poverty also experience more social exclusion at school than their more advantaged peers.

These findings suggest disadvantage at home carries over into disadvantage at school.

Interventions such as anti-bullying programs and increased funding for schools in disadvantaged communities can help. However, our analysis suggests there's a bigger structural problem. To reduce educational disadvantage, action is needed to reduce child poverty, which has remained stubbornly high since the early 2000s.

In 1987, Prime Minister Bob Hawke famously pledged to end child poverty by 1990. As a result of his government's actions, child poverty initially declined before increasing again. Child poverty rates now are only slightly lower than in 1999. In that time, child poverty has been largely absent from policy agendas. Failure to act on poverty will cripple the life chances and productivity of future generations.

## The high costs of social exclusion at school

Our research has looked at the schooling experiences of 3,535 students aged 13 to 14 in every state and territory. Children whose families lacked items most Australian households take for granted, such as cars, computers or holidays, were identified as experiencing family poverty. Children who reported lacking items that most children see as essential were identified as experiencing child deprivation. These items included clothes that allowed them to fit in with other children, and their family having money to send them on school camp.

The proportions living in family poverty or child deprivation were highest among children who experienced multiple forms of disadvantage. One in five children with a disability lived in poverty, as did one in three who had a caring responsibility for a family member. Over one in four Indigenous children and children with a language background other than English also lived in poverty. By comparison, this was the case for only one in eight children who were not part of a marginalised group.

Teachers make great efforts to support the education of disadvantaged students. Despite these efforts, children living in poverty have lower school completion rates and lower scores on national tests such as NAPLAN. And our study shows the effects of poverty still permeate school classrooms and playgrounds.

In our study, we asked children how much they agreed with the statement: "At my school, there is a teacher or another adult: who really cares about me; who believes that I will be a success; who listens to me when I have something to say." The children experiencing deprivation reported less support from their teachers. They also reported higher rates of bullying than non-deprived children.

These experiences were in turn associated with students reporting lower levels of life satisfaction. That's an early indicator of mental health problems in youth and adulthood.

## Children's potential is being stifled

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducts comparable academic tests of 15-year-old students in all OECD countries. Gaps in test performance between the most socioeconomically advantaged and the most disadvantaged students in Australia have hardly changed since the surveys were launched in 2000.

The gaps for the most recent tests in 2018 represented around three years of education for reading, maths and science literacy. When students fall that far behind, it seriously blights their life chances.

Teachers recognise that children living in poverty face many challenges that impact their learning and relationships. Children also talk about the challenges of poverty. One boy explained: *"My mum would take me to the op shop because I keep on splitting my pants when I kneel down but she can't afford to buy me new pants. I don't get pocket money and have to make my own lunch and sometimes I don't even do that. I just go to school with no food."*

....continued next page.

## ....continued >> 'I just go to school with no food' – why Australia must tackle child poverty to improve educational outcomes

That such experiences should be associated with poor educational outcomes is not surprising. What is surprising is how badly Australia's education system is failing to achieve a key objective: to support all children to reach their full educational potential.

### It's time to focus again on child poverty

Child poverty and children's educational disadvantage require different solutions, but they are closely linked. The more poverty there is in Australia, the harder education systems and individual teachers have to work to compensate for its effect on student outcomes.

The Gonski 2.0 package of school funding reforms, launched in 2018, aims to at least partially address educational disadvantage. However, it is unlikely to break the poverty-educational outcomes nexus on its own.

The challenge that Hawke set 35 years ago, to end child poverty in Australia, needs to be taken up again. Both the Hawke government's actions in the years following his pledge and the current Australian government's responses to the COVID-19 pandemic show how this can be done.

After 1987, family payments were significantly increased and targeted to lower-income families. This increased support helped reduce child poverty.

In 2020, in response to the growing COVID-19 emergency, the Morrison government introduced the JobKeeper payment and added the Coronavirus Supplement to the Jobseeker Allowance. Poverty rates declined, at least temporarily, while these supports were in place.

Money does not solve all the problems of child disadvantage. But it does matter.

The next Australian government could follow Hawke's example and set targets to reduce child poverty. History (in Australia and elsewhere) suggests that action will follow and child poverty will fall.

Reducing poverty will have positive flow-on effects for children's well-being, development and educational outcomes. It will also represent a major step towards Australia achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goal of halving poverty rates of all men, women and children by 2030.

## First Review of South Australia's Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People



We need your help with the first review of South Australia's Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People.

The framework is there to guide organisations to make things better for children and young people. By reporting data we can all see where efforts are needed most to improve outcomes. It's a useful tool and can help everyone work together and more effectively.

You can influence change by telling us what's important to you and your communities.

There are more than 369,000 children and young people under the age of 18 years living in South Australia – that's 21% of our total population (2020).

Children and young people come from diverse backgrounds and cultures with many different circumstances:

- 4.9% are Aboriginal
- 1.12% are in out-of-home care
- 16.7% live with disability

**Closing Date: 30 June 2022**

Find out more at the Child Development Council website

<https://childrensa.sa.gov.au/outcomes-framework-review-2022>



# FETAL AND NEONATAL WORKSHOP OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## 34<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING



University of  
South Australia



ROBINSON  
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13-14  
MAY  
2022



#FNWANZ2022



### Bradley Forum

Level 5 of the Hawke Building  
City West campus,  
50-55 North Terrace, Adelaide

*UniSA requires vaccination of all people on  
campus and mask wearing*



F2F or virtual attendance options



Celebration of the scientific  
contributions of Prof Mary Wlodek



Abstract submissions by 25<sup>th</sup> March



### Local Organising Committee:

Prof Janna Morrison  
Dr Jack Darby  
Dr Ashley Meakin  
A/Prof Kathy Gatford

Jess Roach  
Josh Robinson  
Sarah Hammond



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Adelaide Convention Centre | [www.psanz2022.com.au](http://www.psanz2022.com.au)

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## **WEBINAR: Early Childhood Education and Care for infant mental health and strengthening a child's environment**

ARACY in partnership with Thrive by Five are hosting a webinar bringing together a panel of subject matter experts to discuss how early interventions and support in ECEC can provide a key stabilising influence protecting a child's development and supporting infant mental health.

**Wednesday 6 April, 11.30-12.30 ACST**

Speakers include Dr Jon Jureidini from the University of Adelaide, Alma-Jane O'Donnell from Goodstart Early Learning and Dr Prue McEvoy, Lead Psychiatric Director for the South Australian Department for Child Protection.

Further information and to register go here:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6314657328390561807>

## **VOICES IN ACTION CONFERENCE**

**Voices in Action Conference**  
**26-29 April 1pm AEST, Online**

Proudly hosted by CREATE Foundation, the national consumer body representing the voices of children and young people in out-of-home care, the Voices in Action - Resilient, Resourceful, Remarkable Conference is aimed at young people with a care experience aged between 12 and 25 years interested in meeting others with similar life experience and helping to improve the care system, carers and professionals seeking advice from the care sector's young leaders about what works and what doesn't, and leaders looking for a grassroots approach to tackling problems.

Further info here: <https://voicesinaction.create.org.au>

## **FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIP SERVICES CONFERENCE**

**Family and Relationship Services Australia National Conference 2022**  
**16 - 19 May, Hilton Adelaide**

The FRSA National Conference is heralded as a highlight event for the Family and Relationship Services network and is one of the largest annual gatherings of practitioners, academics and policy makers working to support children, families and communities. The theme for this year's 'not to be missed' event – Together we can: Connect, Innovate, Transform – captures the spirit, resilience and adaptivity of the family and relationship services sector.

To find out more <https://frsa.org.au/frsa-national-conference-2022>

## **National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Forum**

**National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Forum 2022**  
**13 - 14 May 2022, Online**

NOFASD Australia is presenting *The FASD Forum '22* - a major online conference with the support of Presenting Partner - Australian Government Department of Health. For those who are keen to learn more about FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) this event provides the ideal opportunity to hear from experts in research and experts in lived experience from around Australia and the world. Early Bird discounted registrations close on Friday 1st April.

For further information and to register go to <https://pheedloop.com/FASDFORUM22/site/home>