



To all our  
Partners, Members  
and Supporters we  
wish you all a very  
Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year.

Thank you all for your  
contributions and  
support this year!

We look forward to  
bringing you another  
year of programs and  
opportunities in 2022.

*Anne, Claire,  
Carol and Anna*

## OUR PARTNERS

### PLATINUM



### GOLD



University of  
South Australia



### SILVER



Government of South Australia  
Department for Education



Government of South Australia  
Women's and Children's Health Network



Women and Kids



Government of South Australia  
Department for Child Protection

### BRONZE



**HDA AMBASSADOR - ROSANNA MANGIARELLI**  
**7NEWS ADELAIDE**



**Welcome to our HDA Ambassador, Rosanna Mangiarelli**  
**Presenter and Reporter, 7NEWS Adelaide**  
**Board Director, Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation**  
**Board Director, Sammy D Foundation**

Rosanna Mangiarelli is an accomplished presenter and reporter for 7NEWS Adelaide and an experienced emcee. In her diverse roles, in a career spanning almost 25 years, Rosanna has reported on a vast range of topics and interviewed scores of international, national, and state identities. Rosanna hosted South Australia's number one current affairs program, Today Tonight, for 12 years.

Away from work, Rosanna dedicates her time to an array of charities including Novita Children's Services. She is a board director at the Channel Seven Children's Research Foundation and the Sammy D Foundation. A busy working mum, Rosanna is passionate about women's and children's health and wellbeing issues and is honoured to come on board as an Ambassador for Healthy Development Adelaide. Rosanna also enjoys holidaying around the state with husband Andrew and their three children – Emma, Olivia and William.



# 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. If you are unsure as to whether you align with HDA research, please contact [anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au) prior to joining.

## **Membership benefits**

The vastly subsidised fees offer great value for money and unlock the following member benefits:

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

## **Membership Fee (excluding GST)**

1 year \$20 or 3 years \$50

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

**NEW**

**OPEN TO HDA RESEARCH MEMBERS**



## **HDA Stories with 7NEWS Adelaide - Have your research heard!**

### **Do you have a publication and think it is newsworthy and relatable?**

You may be chosen to be interviewed by our HDA Ambassador Rosanna Mangiarelli or another 7NEWS reporter for 7NEWS Adelaide.

Application for consideration:

Recent research publication ideally at the time of publication.

A paragraph describing your research area and how it relates to children, youth and/or families.

This is a new initiative which will remain open and HDA 'paying' research members are eligible to apply. Looking forward to hearing from you and showcasing our great research in Adelaide.

**OPEN  
CALL**

**HDA & CHANNEL 7 CHILDREN'S RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION PHD EXCELLENCE AWARD 2022**

**Open to HDA 'paying' research members....**The PhD Excellence Award is \$5,000 per annum for up to 3 years only to augment an Australian Government Research Training Program (AGRTP) Stipend Scholarship or equivalent competitive scholarship.

**ELIGIBILITY CHANGE:** PhD students in their first year of candidature are eligible to apply i.e. commencement date between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

Applications are invited for PhD Research Scholarships in the areas of *Healthy Development*. Disciplines include, but are not restricted to, allied health, biochemistry, biomedical engineering, biostatistics, demography, dentistry, digital health, disability, economics, education, endocrinology, epidemiology, ethics, genetics, indigenous health, law, nutrition, obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics, pharmacology, physiology, politics, psychiatry, psychology, public health and sociology. <https://health.adelaide.edu.au/healthy-development-adelaide/our-research>

Applications will close at 5.00pm Friday 21 January 2022.

Contact [anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au) for the application form and eligibility criteria.



**OPEN  
CALL**

## **HDA TRAVEL & DEVELOPMENT GRANTS 2022 ROUND 1: 1 JAN 2022-30 JUNE 2022**



**Open to HDA 'paying' research members....** HDA Travel and Development Grants scheme offered to enable final year PhD students and Early Career Researchers (up to 5 years post PhD) to undertake travel related conference/research professional development in 2022.

A total of up to \$7,000 will be awarded in round 1. Travel and Development Grants of a minimum of \$200 to \$1,000 will be awarded to successful applicants. If the travel/development opportunity is <\$200, a package of up to 3 activities may be submitted to reach the minimum threshold.

Applications close 5pm Friday 31 December 2021.

Contact [anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au) for the application form and eligibility criteria.

**OPEN  
CALL**

## **HDA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AWARD 2022-2023**

**Open to High Schools....** To support adolescents enrolled in Year 11 and Year 12 in South Australian schools who are experiencing financial adversity and challenging life circumstances, and who want to obtain a tertiary education in a field relevant to health or education.

The scholarship will be for \$1000 per student provided over a two-year period. Applicants will be nominated by their school and will be enrolled in Year 11 from 2022.

Applications close 5pm Tuesday 14 December 2021.

Contact [anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au) for the application form and eligibility criteria.

**CLOSED**

## **HDA SCHOOLS COMMUNICATOR AWARD 2022**

**Open to HDA 'paying' research members....** To help our emerging researchers communicate their research to high school students in years 10, 11 or 12. To raise awareness of, and get high school students excited about, health science / science career pathways.

Submissions are currently being assessed by the HDA Executive Committee.

## HDA MEMBER NEWS



### **South Australian Australian of the Year Congratulations to Professor Helen Marshall MBBS DCH MPH MD**

Professor Marshall is a clinician researcher and NHMRC Practitioner Fellow with specialist training in child health, public health and vaccinology having completed a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery, Doctorate of Medicine, Master of Public Health and Diploma in Child Health and the Advanced Vaccinology Course at the Pasteur Merieux Institute, France.

Professor Marshall holds the position Professor in Vaccinology in the Adelaide Medical School and is the Deputy Director of the Robinson Research Institute at The University of Adelaide, Consultant in Vaccinology, at the Women's and Children's Hospital, South Australia. She is an international leader in vaccines and vaccine preventable diseases. She was awarded the NHMRC's "10 of the Best" research projects nationally and the SA Science Award for Excellence in Research for the Public Good and SA Science Award for Excellence in Research Collaboration. In 2020 she received the Inspiring South Australian Women award, Australia Day Council, South Australia.

Professor Marshall has been involved in game-changing studies that have had a global impact. A key focus is the fight to stop meningococcal B. Helen is a lead investigator for the 'B Part of It' study, which assessed the effectiveness of meningococcal B vaccines on invasive meningococcal disease in Australian teens and young adults. The study is the largest of its kind globally and investigates the herd immunity impact of the meningococcal B vaccine.

**Would you like to be in the Spotlight?**

Email [anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au)

## HDA MEMBER FUNDING SUCCESS

The NHMRC Ideas Grant Scheme was introduced in 2019 and is designed to support outstanding medical research, providing greater opportunities for more breakthroughs, so that Australians of all ages have improved health.

The successful awardees and projects receiving funding for up to five years, commencing in 2022 are:

Professor Rebecca Robker, Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide - Remodelling the ovary to extend female fertility and health - **\$1,449,102**

Associate Professor Leonie Heilbronn, Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide - Only a matter of time? A comparison of caloric restriction versus time restriction of food intake - **\$1,189,927**

Associate Professor Luke Grzeskowiak, College of Medicine and Public Health, Flinders University - Using population-based data to improve maternal asthma management & offspring health & development **\$979,886.40**

Dr Dusan Matusica, College of Medicine and Public Health, Flinders University - Development of a nociceptive measuring device capable of differentiating chronic pain states - **\$777,495.20**

## HDA TRAVEL AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT RECIPIENT REPORT

**Dr Nahal Habibi, Post-doctoral Researcher**

**Adelaide Health and Medical Sciences & Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide**

I used the HDA Travel and Development Grant to fly to Perth to meet with A/Professor Rae-Chi Huang and her research team, Professor Trevor Mori, and Dr Juliana Zabatiero at the University of Western Australia. I presented our research plan to the team at the Telethon Kids Institute.

Publications and conference presentations from this work will expand my expertise in pregnancy research and in particular, expand my knowledge in the area of Developmental Origins of Health and Disease. These critical findings will provide the scientific evidence to perform future studies to determine the utility of telomere length as a biomarker of future disease risk in children born from a complicated pregnancy. This will increase the visibility of my research, strengthen my CV and facilitate future collaborations. In addition, this will enable me to be more competitive to apply for funding next year such as Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation and NHMRC Ideas grant.

I want to thank Healthy Development Adelaide for the Travel and Development Grant that provided me with an excellent opportunity to continue to develop my research career and research trajectory.

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

### HDA NEWSLETTER

Submissions by end January for our next issue out in February.

### Social Media (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.

## PARTNER NEWS

### DEPARTMENT FOR CHILD PROTECTION



#### **The Safe and Well 2021 Annual Report**

The report highlights the significant progress that has been made across the child protection system in the past 12 months to support our families, protect children and invest in their futures.

Significant 2020/21 achievements include:

- Investing a record \$52 million into the Child and Family Support System over the next four years specifically targeting the reduction of child abuse and neglect through a range of new measures and actions
- Piloting an internationally renowned specialised foster care program Treatment Foster Care Oregon that will give our most vulnerable children and young people the opportunity to live with a specially trained carer who will provide full-time, one-on-one support
- Transitioning the Family Group Conferencing pilot to an ongoing measure, a service which aims to keep vulnerable families together if safe to do so
- Recruiting an additional 78 foster carers
- Increasing the number of Aboriginal children and young people placed in care in accordance with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle from 977 at 30 June 2020 to 1092 at 30 June 2021
- Launching a new online hub promoting priority access to services for children and young people in care and post-care as part of the recently expanded Investing in their future initiative
- Announcing additional funding for government preschools and schools to use for children in care, including at key transition points in their schooling.

#### **New National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse (2021-2030)**

The 10-year strategy launched by Prime Minister Scott Morrison, which is supported by a \$307.5 million investment from the Commonwealth Government, is a whole-of-nation framework to establish a co-ordinated and consistent approach to better prevent and respond to child sexual abuse.

Key aims of the National Strategy include supporting and empowering victims and survivors, preventing offending from occurring, including online, and improved community education and awareness.

Minister for Child Protection Rachel Sanderson said the Department for Child Protection worked closely with the Federal Government to design this national strategy and will now ensure it is delivered.

“Ultimately, we want to continue to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children, young people and their families, and prevent child abuse before it starts,” said Minister Sanderson.

“Delivering new measures that protect and support our most vulnerable South Australians remains a priority. As a key partner to the new National Strategy, we will be able to leverage the expertise of our South Australian and interstate colleagues to deliver better trauma-informed services that will help keep all children safe and all victim-survivors supported across key areas including health, education, human services and child protection.

Our efforts are firmly focused on intervening earlier and more intensively because we know there is a growing number of families right across the state with complex needs.

The National Strategy builds on the state’s strongest ever plan to support our most vulnerable children and families, specifically targeting the reduction of child abuse and neglect through a range of new measures and actions and a record \$52 million funding injection.”

Further information can be found at [www.childprotection.sa.gov.au](http://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au)



## RECENT HDA EVENTS



**HDA and Novita forum + NovitaTech Tour: Assistive Technology – Innovations for children and young people.** Chaired by HDA Co-Convenor, Dr Anna Kontos, Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide.

**Mark Stewart**, General Manager, NovitaTech - Assistive Technology Solutions, Novita - **Overview of NovitaTech**; **Kerry Evans**, Practice Lead: Neuromotor, Novita - **Developing prescription guidelines for powered wheelchair standing devices in Duchenne muscular dystrophy and understanding their potential benefits for young people**; **Catriona Bauve**, Child Development Unit, Women's and Children's Hospital, Women's and Children's Health Network and former Research Officer and Physiotherapist, Novita - **Measuring motor skills and supporting young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder to 'Get into the Game': Initial validation of the Ignite Challenge.**



**HDA and SAHMRI Women and Kids forum: Breastfeeding and human milk banking: unlocking benefits for premature babies.** Chaired by Professor Maria Makrides, Deputy Director, SAHMRI and the Theme Leader for SAHMRI Women and Kids.

**A/Prof Alice Rumbold**, Principal Research Fellow and co-lead, Perinatal and Pregnancy Care Program, SAHMRI on **Breastfeeding premature babies: benefits, challenges and new research to support mums and babies**; **A/Prof Amy Keir**, Consultant Neonatologist, WCH / NHMRC Early Career Fellow, SAHMRI and University of Adelaide on **Maternal breastmilk, donor milk and quality improvement – bring them all together!**; **A/Prof Luke Grzeskowiak**, Channel 7 CRF Fellow (Medication Use & Safety) / Head, Paediatric & Perinatal Pharmacoepidemiology Research Group, Flinders University and SAHMRI on **Using medications and other substances to boost breast milk supply – evidence vs. hype**; **Dr Laura Klein**, Research Fellow, Australian Red Cross Lifeblood on **Milk Banks' roles in providing vulnerable infants with a human milk diet.**

The recording can be found here <https://health.adelaide.edu.au/healthy-development-adelaide/events/list>

# WELLBEING SA: EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Government  
of South Australia

## Wellbeing SA

Established in January 2020, Wellbeing SA is an independent State Government agency leading preventive health initiatives in support of the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of all South Australians.

With a long term vision to create a balanced health and wellbeing system that supports improved physical, mental and social wellbeing for all South Australians, Wellbeing SA is working to change the approach to health from being one primarily focussed on treatment, to one that also promotes wellbeing, preventing ill health and injury, and supports people to stay well and lead healthier lives.

One of Wellbeing SA's three strategic areas of focus, is to ensure South Australian children and young people have the best start in life. Wellbeing SA's Health Promotion Branch Early Years, Children, and Young People team have been working in support of this vision, engaging key partners and stakeholders across South Australia and funding initiatives with a focus on the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive health and wellbeing during pre-conception, pregnancy, birth, and the early years.

Recent initiatives led by Wellbeing SA with a focus on the early years include:

### **Strengthening routine antenatal care addressing smoking, alcohol use and weight gain in pregnancy**

Wellbeing SA, together with other state and territory health departments, have a five-year agreement with The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre to support a comprehensive prevention agenda. This involves over 24 research projects (funded through National Health and Medical Research Council and the Medical Research Future Fund) across Australian universities and research partners.

One of these, is a multi-jurisdictional project that will use implementation science/quality improvement methodologies to identify strategies to improve antenatal care addressing smoking, alcohol use and weight gain in pregnancy. The 2.5-year project is a partnership between practitioners, policy makers and researchers and will be undertaken in three maternity services in South Australia (the Women's and Children's Hospital, Adelaide), Tasmania (Launceston General Hospital) and New South Wales (John Hunter Hospital, Newcastle).

### **Healthy Towns Challenge – Partnering for Children's Wellbeing**

The SA Healthy Towns Challenge – Partnering for Children's Wellbeing is a grants program supporting preventive health and wellbeing initiatives for children and families in regional and rural towns. Originally launched in 2018 as part of the SA Government's Healthy Communities Program, the SA Healthy Towns Challenge has invested in 22 initiatives supporting the improvement of health and wellbeing, and prevention of chronic diseases in regional and rural communities.

This latest phase is the first time this program has specifically provided support to infrastructure projects that create healthier environments for the wellbeing of children and their families, and represents a \$750,000 commitment over the next two years. Applications closed on Friday 15 October 2021 with winners to be announced later in November 2021, with the successful projects to be announced on our website, so stay tuned.

### **Public Health Partnership Authority Agreement – Early prevention of obesity in childhood**

Wellbeing SA is also working to further its strategic objectives through formal Public Health Partner Authority agreements (PHPAs). PHPAs recognise that the health of individuals and populations are shaped by broad factors that do not necessarily sit within any one sector. Partnerships across sectors involving different levels of government, industry, and not-for-profit organisations are necessary to create physical and social environments which support a healthy and thriving community.

Wellbeing SA has recently entered into a PHPA agreement with the Flinders University Caring Futures Institute, and one of the first activities as part of the PHPA will be to conduct interactive idea generation workshops, exploring new opportunities in primary health care systems for supporting healthy behaviours from a young age. Workshops will be held next year and will also be delivered in collaboration with the Centre of Research Excellence in Early Prevention of Obesity in Childhood (EPOCH-CRE).

For further information or enquiries regarding Wellbeing SA, Health Promotion Branch Early Years, Children, and Young People team please contact Dr Natasha Schranz, Manager, Early Years, Children and Young People at: [Natasha.Schranz@sa.gov.au](mailto:Natasha.Schranz@sa.gov.au)



## Are your kids keeping up at school?

Media Release - 19 Nov, University of South Australia



How a child learns is as individual as the child themselves. Yet with the pressures of large class sizes, decreases in school funding and, most recently, home-schooling, many teachers are struggling to keep track of their students' performance.

Now, world-first research from the University of South Australia is prioritising student learning to ensure all children are better monitored and supported throughout their school education.

Using current student data, the team is creating individual student learning profiles – real-time assessments of each student's learning against curriculum requirements, as well as social and emotional wellbeing, extracurricular activities, and study behaviours – all presented in an easy-to-access online 'dashboard'.

The new learner profiles and dashboard are hoped to provide teachers with an easy-to-use, quick reference tool to ensure all students – especially disadvantaged students – are appropriately supported and positioned for success.

It's a timely study, especially given declining rates of literacy and numeracy in Australian schools across the past two decades.

Lead researchers, Dr Rebecca Marrone and Dr Vitomir Kovanović, with UniSA's Centre for Change and Complexity in Learning (C3L), say the learner profiles have the potential to significantly improve the quality of teaching and learning in Australia.

"Strategies to improve teaching quality are paramount in Australia, particularly given the overall decline in reading and mathematics," Dr Kovanović says.

"Yet, as many parents will attest, student success does not only rely upon academic achievement – it also embraces student interests, goals, and social and emotional wellbeing.

"For teachers, the challenge is often time and resources – while they strive to deliver the best teaching, one-on-one support is near impossible; this research makes it one step closer.

"By looking beyond static, traditional grade-based methods, and by using real-time student data across a range of measures, we're able to create individual profiles for each student.

"These profiles will show how a student is learning at any point in time, and when they're plotted onto our dashboard, will help teachers quickly identify which children need additional support or interventions, and precisely when they need them.

"In this way, teachers can respond to children's needs in a timely and appropriate manner based on their individual profile."

The team is currently working with several Australian schools to develop prototype learner profiles. Dr Marrone says the goal is to help teachers and students without adding extra work.

"There's no doubt that COVID-19 has imposed restrictions on so many aspects of our lives, and for a lot of schools, the response has been a quick shift to blended and online learning," Dr Marrone says.

"So, we now have far more data, collected in real time. But how many schools are leveraging this data?

"This project draws on all possible data sources to create single place for collated student information.

"This could seriously change the way teachers support students. And the added beauty of the tool is that it aims to alleviate teachers' workloads, not add to them."

### A failure at 6? Data-driven assessment isn't helping young children's learning

Children's early years from birth to the age of eight are crucial for their social, emotional and intellectual development.

Read more at [www.theconversation.com/au/education](http://www.theconversation.com/au/education)



## Advanced wound dressings to change how burns are treated in children

Media Release - 15 Nov, University of South Australia



Burns are one of the most common injuries suffered by Australians and one of the top causes of death in children under four. While survival rates for burns patients have improved substantially, treating paediatric burns remains challenging, especially with rise of multi-drug resistant bacteria.

Now, new technology from the University of South Australia could revolutionise burns treatments in children by using stimuli-responsive dressings that safely reduce infection and stimulate healing.

This research builds on the recent publications by the research team in *Acta Biomaterialia* and *Biomedicines* journals describing antimicrobial efficacy of ultra-small silver nanoparticles against wound biofilms.

The advanced silver nanoparticle hydrogel-coated dressing developed by a research team at UniSA's Future Industries Institute (Dr Zlatko Kopecki, Professor Allison Cowin and Professor Krasimir Vasilev) will deliver an 'on demand' release of ultra-small silver nanoparticles that can safely break down antibiotic-resistant bacteria and promote wound repair.

The treatment innovation lies in a delivery system that responds to changes in pH and temperature, activating only when infection is present.

Lead researcher, UniSA's Dr Zlatko Kopecki, says the novel treatment could significantly change the clinical management of burn infections.

"Wound infection and sepsis are daily problems for children with burn injuries," Dr Kopecki says.

"Silver-based wound care products can inhibit the

growth of bacteria, but they can also cause toxicity when they deliver too much silver to wounds.

"Our treatment is unique in that it capitalises on the anti-bacterial properties of silver, but avoids over-exposure, by only activating when infection is present.

"These advanced, 'on demand' silver nanoparticle dressings will regulate inflammation while promoting tissue regeneration, making this a much safer and effective treatment for children."

UniSA's Professor Vasilev says the new technology will be a gamechanger for burns management.

"Currently there are no responsive wound dressings on the market," Prof Vasilev says. "This collaborative effort will enable the utilisation of smart materials to the benefit of patients and clinicians."

In Australia, approximately 50,000 burns-related hospital admissions are recorded per year, with young children particularly at risk. Scald burns (65 per cent) or flame burns (20 per cent) are the most common burn-related injuries for children aged four years and under.

Nearly 75 per cent of all scalding burns are preventable. Research partners Dr Bernard Carney and Dr Andrew May, of the Burns Unit of the Women's and Children's Hospital (WCH), are working in partnership with UniSA to better understand pathogens present in child burns and develop targeted therapy approach.

"Every year, the WCH's Burns Unit treats around 600 children suffering from burns, with scalds making up a significant proportion of these injuries," Dr May says.

"Most commonly these incidents happen at home. Children under five are most at risk because they like to mimic adult behaviour, which means that hot drinks, taps, and saucepans are all big danger zones.

"Despite modern advances in burns surgery, infection remains a big challenge for these vulnerable children and so topical silver treatments are used widely to combat this.

"We are pleased to be collaborating with the great minds at UniSA in bringing new silver treatments to give children the greatest opportunity to recover from burns and live their best lives."

## Endometriosis: targeting a different type of pain may be key in improving treatment – new research

Around one in ten women worldwide suffer from endometriosis.

Read more at [www.theconversation.com/au/health](http://www.theconversation.com/au/health)

## Students' word of the year is 'power'

Media Release - 24 Nov, Flinders University



After another disrupted school year during the COVID-19 lockdowns, it's not surprising that Australian students have used their imaginations to reclaim control of their lives through their writing.

As a result 'power' has been made the Oxford Australian Children's Word of the Year 2021 – after 'virus' and 'bravery' in the previous two studies – based on data from Oxford University Press in partnership with Writing Legends, the largest story-writing platform in Australia.

Oxford Children's Language Australia and children's language experts, including Flinders University special education expert Anne Bayetto, analysed more than 76,000 short stories and over 9 million words written by Australian students aged seven to 13 years old.

Shortlisted words included 'love', 'kindness', 'choice', 'dragon', 'imagine', 'happiness', 'humanity', 'power' and 'environment'. The usage of the word 'power' had increased by 61.8 per cent compared to 2020.

"We witnessed a significant change of mindset among students this year, especially when compared to last year, as the usage of the word happi-

ness increased by 280%," says Ms Bayetto.

"Overall there is a distinctly more positive tone within the writing, which is a stark contrast to last year's sentiment which saw 'bored' and 'boring' in the top 100 adjectives.

"This illustrates the surprising resilience our students' have demonstrated this year, despite another year of continued restrictions and distance learning."

The use of power also indicates a desire from students to exercise their freedom of choice after a long period of lockdown restrictions, says Lee Walker, Director of Publishing, Editorial and Design at OUP ANZ and is also President of the Australian Publishers Association.

"It may also suggest a feeling of disenfranchisement and lack of control on important issues such as climate change."

This year's study found a strong trend towards fantasy themes, such as superpowers and flying. Students wrote about electrical power, the power of nature, and political or social power, reflecting awareness of global issues. In fiction and non-fiction stories, students pondered what it means to have and use power in an unequal world.

Other themes that emerged within the large body of writing included a strong feeling of positivity, an appreciation of connection and a degree of introspection following a year of upheaval.

Many of the more complex popular verbs used within the students' writing described thought processes and reflection, such as 'decide', 'believe', 'realise', 'wonder', 'forget', and 'remember'.

This indicates a level of introspection and reflection perhaps brought about by having less distractions due to lockdowns or by another year of disruption and unfamiliarity.

## Child Development Council

**Policy Brief: *The hidden cost of young South Australians shaping up for an unhealthy future*** highlights the need for robust data for prevention and intervention strategies in early life to alter a lifelong trajectory of weight-related problems for individuals and the state.

**Policy Brief 1: *South Australia's surprising downward trend in AEDC results*** highlights the need to proactively monitor the development of all children in South Australia from birth to school age. It provides crucial evidence to guide decision-making and planning to improve outcomes in terms of health, wellbeing and academic success.

Further information at [www.childrensa.sa.gov.au/policy\\_briefs](http://www.childrensa.sa.gov.au/policy_briefs)