

The problem: school refusal

School engagement is pivotal to successful education and vocational outcomes for young people.

School refusal, a form of school disengagement, is associated with early school dropout, long-term unemployment, financial difficulties, social and economic disadvantage, criminal involvement, and physical and mental health problems. Notably, each early school leaver costs Australia almost \$1m on average over a working lifetime, due to lost taxes and social costs.

Increasing concerns about school refusal both nationally and internationally have led to a recent [Senate inquiry](#) into school refusal.

School refusal

Persistent difficulty attending or staying at school precipitated by significant emotional distress associated with attendance.

School refusal commonly occurs in the context of depression and/or anxiety disorders.



THE TURNER INSTITUTE FOR BRAIN AND MENTAL HEALTH

EMPOWERING PARENTS TO RESPOND TO SCHOOL REFUSAL

The need: evidence-based support for parents

Parents are at the forefront of the response to school refusal, playing a crucial role in supporting their child at home, and as a conduit between the family and school systems. These parents often feel overwhelmed by the burden of responsibilities placed on them, which impacts their own wellbeing, economic status (e.g. reduced paid work), and productivity.

Our solution: Partners in Parenting-Education

Partners in Parenting-Education is the latest adaptation of the **award-winning, evidence-based online parenting program** *Partners in Parenting*. The original *Partners in Parenting* program, which focuses on prevention and early intervention for adolescent anxiety and depression, has been rigorously evaluated and shown to improve parent and youth outcomes. The new version provides additional content to help parents better understand and respond to their teen's school refusal, with the ultimate aim of improving their teen's mental health and school engagement.

We have developed *Partners in Parenting-Education* with extensive input from key stakeholders, including international expert consensus and a co-design process involving education sector experts, parents, and young people with lived experience of school refusal.

Partners in Parenting-Education includes:

- an initial **parenting self-assessment** with **personalised feedback**,
- up to **13 interactive online modules**,
- up to **8 one-on-one coaching sessions** with a parenting coach via video conference.



Further information

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THE TURNER INSTITUTE FOR BRAIN AND MENTAL HEALTH

CONNECTING COMMUNITY AND RESEARCH TO ENHANCE BRAIN AND MENTAL HEALTH

Monash University was the recipient of Australia's largest single philanthropic gift to the field of preventative mental health in 2018. David Winston Turner was a Monash economics graduate.

This extraordinary generosity from the David Winston Turner Endowment Fund, has enabled the University to establish the **Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health** to undertake ground-breaking research, training and treatment solutions for brain and mental health conditions.

The Turner Institute was officially launched on 2 July 2019.

It is led by Sir John Monash Distinguished Professor Kim Cornish. The Hon Professor Greg Hunt is the Chair of the Turner Advisory Council.

One in five Australians suffers from a **mental health illness** every year. **One in six** will be affected by a **brain disease or disorder** in their lifetime.

The work of the Turner Institute is driving solutions and being an agent for change to the current and emerging brain and mental health challenges of the Australian community.

Our key strength is our focus on early detection and prevention of brain and mental health conditions.

With our **280+ world class clinicians and researchers** we pursue three core themes of developing well, living well and ageing well. We aim to build resilient, healthy brains across the life course.

This is achieved through our world class research, driven by outcomes and our education programs, training the next generation of allied and mental health professionals.

We work with families, education providers and community groups and in people's homes to co-design and develop resources that are available to everyone.

We work with community leaders to co-design and develop personalised resources for hard to reach communities.

We are agile so we can translate our research from the lab to the clinic anywhere in the world.

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