

MEDIA RELEASE

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Call to support the leadership and wellbeing of school principals

National principal wellbeing workshop series launched

As students around the country commence their school year, Principals Australia Institute is calling on Australians to respect and support school principals.

“Our students need great leaders. Great leaders need great support,” says Susan Lenehan, Chair of Principals Australia Institute’s Board.

Research clearly shows that the profession is a challenging one.

Principals and deputy/assistant principals:

- experience far higher prevalence of offensive behaviour at work than the general population
 - adult-adult bullying is 4-times higher
 - threats of violence are 5-times higher
 - actual violence (7-times the rate of the general population)
- score less than the general population on positive health measures such as happiness, mental health and the personal wellbeing index.
- score higher than the general population on all negative measures including burnout, stress and sleeping troubles.

Source: *The Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Survey: 2011-14*, Associate Professor Philip Riley <http://www.principalhealth.org/au/index.php>

The Institute is calling on parents, carers and communities to actively and positively engage with their school principals and school leaders.

“School communities that support and get behind the principal, teachers and the school send powerful messages to young people,” explains Susan.

“When students have doubts about the quality of their school it hinders their learning. Likewise, when students have confidence in their teachers and school leaders, they thrive at school.”

Principals Australia Institute is also taking a pro-active role in supporting school leaders with the launch of a national workshop series aimed at supporting the wellbeing of principals and teachers.

The recently released kit and training program - **workON Health and Wellbeing** - is designed to assist school leaders to strengthen staff health and wellbeing strategies in their school.

“The profession is a demanding and complex one,” says Jim Davies, CEO, Principals Australia Institute.

“Research by the Institute shows that 8-10% of school leaders are struggling to maintain their wellbeing.

“This workshop series is designed to give school leaders practical tools to help support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of their teachers, staff and students.”

The workshops will help leaders to build long term, whole-school strategies to support staff and champion sustainable and healthy ways of working.

The series is touring the country with events in:

Sydney	2 March
Adelaide	10 March
Brisbane	12 March
Melbourne	16 March
Perth	18 March

For more information about the workshops visit www.pai.edu.au

Interviews: Jim Davies and Susan Lenehan are available for interview.

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Principals Australia Institute (PAI) provides professional learning, leadership development and support to the nation's 10,000 principals and schools. PAI is a not-for-profit organisation supporting primary and secondary schools across all schooling sectors (government, Catholic and independent).