EDITORIAL

Graeme Perry

Gabbie Stroud (2022) asks "Why are teachers leaving Australian schools?" She has vocalised the concerns of many teachers in offering an explanation. Stressors include a general baseline of stress due in part to 'destroying' work expectations—increased administration requirements (data entry), added house-keeping tasks (distributing RAT tests) and management of antisocial behaviour but also lack of trust, lack of respect for skills and a casualised work force (1 in 5 in the public system) who are 'jumping through hoops' to retain their jobs as uncritical 'system players'. But perhaps most telling are Theresa's (cited in Stroud, 2022) claims of a mental health crisis amongst children.

> **We're not dealing with the impact of the pandemic … Our students are lacking a sense of belonging, resilience, commitment and organisation on a grand scale. Rather than addressing this, we're told to get students 'back to normal'. But you know what? It wasn't so great before. (para. 22)**

Earlier observation of COVID impacts in the US advised addressing these needs in schools (Abramson, 2022) by recommending the funding of more psychologists in schools, consequently needing to train more psychologists, and Howell (cited in Abramson, 2022) asserts in the interim "we don't just want to bring in interventions that only we as experts can deliver … We need to make it sustainable by teaching those on the front lines how to equip kids with the skills they need to thrive" (para. 11). Offering teachers professional development to respond in more informed ways to trauma is advocated.

Kosmeier's interview in this issue of Mr J (p. 4) provides insight into pandemic impacts on students' experiences, some Australian school reactions and online resources that reflect local recognition of these needs. Shields (p. 6) discusses Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD) from a Christian school's perspective, sharing proactive responses to a condition potentially more frequently occurring in a time of common trauma. Christian and Morton (p. 27) share children's perceptions of how a garden program helps make them better people.

Maddie (Stroud, 2022), in the process of leaving teaching for another career laments,

> I felt there would never be enough of myself to give in order to meet the needs of my students. I thought I was not enough, that I would never be enough, … I feel immense sadness walking away from teaching. Overwhelming grief. (para. 27)

How can teachers be optimally prepared for their career and retained? University programs need to flex to these new social contexts and future teacher supply shortages predicted. Morrison et al. (2022) warn against students being included as paid 'school teachers' before they meet professional standards. Is student preparation for wellbeing an important element of course programs? Avondale University suggests wellbeing is a rewarding focus as reported for 'The Lift Project' (Hinze and Morton, 2017) and a more recent ACE initiative (Beamish, 5th June, 2022, personal communication). Stacey (2022) reporting results of the 2021 Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Student Experience Survey, notes the survey ranks;

> Avondale as number one for satisfaction with quality of teaching practices and skills development. … it is the first time Avondale has been benchmarked with other universities. 'So, to achieve the highest overall student satisfaction ratings of any Australian university is a remarkable achievement,' says Provost and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Kerri-Lee Krause. (paras. 3, 5) TEACH

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