



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

Senate Education and Employment References Committee

Inquiry into school refusal

Issue date: 31 October 2022

The Senate Education and Employment References Committee is inquiring into school refusal.

The inquiry will examine the national trend that is affecting primary and secondary school aged children who are unable to attend school regularly or on a consistent basis. School refusal refers to difficulty attending school associated with emotional distress and can mean that children have trouble going to school or trouble leaving home.

The committee is due to present its report on 22 March 2023.

Call for submissions

The committee is seeking submissions from a wide range of people and organisations, including families affected by school refusal by **9 December 2022**.

The committee welcomes submissions from individuals. However, the committee does not have the ability to advise on, advocate for, or take action on individual cases.

If you would like to make a submission you may find it helpful to read the guide to making a submission available on the Senate website: [Preparing a submission to an inquiry](#).

If you have any questions or require special arrangements to make a submission to the inquiry, please contact the committee secretariat.

Further information about the inquiry is available on the committee website: www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Education_and_Employment/SchoolRefusal

Terms of reference

The national trend of school refusal or ‘School Can’t’ – as distinct from truancy – that is affecting primary and secondary school aged children, who are unable to attend school regularly or on a consistent basis, with specific reference to:

- a. the increasing number since the COVID-19 pandemic, of young people and their families who are experiencing school refusal;
- b. how school refusal is affecting young people and their families and the impacts it is having on the employment and financial security of parents and carers;
- c. the impacts and demands of the increasing case load on service providers and schools to support these students and their families;
- d. how relevant state, territory and federal departments are working to monitor and address this growing school refusal challenge; and
- e. any other related matters.

DATE REFERRED

27 October 2022

SUBMISSIONS CLOSE

9 December 2022

REPORTING DATE

22 March 2023

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Senator O’Sullivan (Chair)
Senator Sheldon (Deputy Chair)
Senator Allman-Payne
Senator Faruqi
Senator Liddle
Senator Nampijinpa Price
Senator Payman

CONTACT THE COMMITTEE

Senate Standing Committees
on Education and Employment
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Phone: +61 2 6277 3521
eec.sen@aph.gov.au