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# Magazine EDUCATION

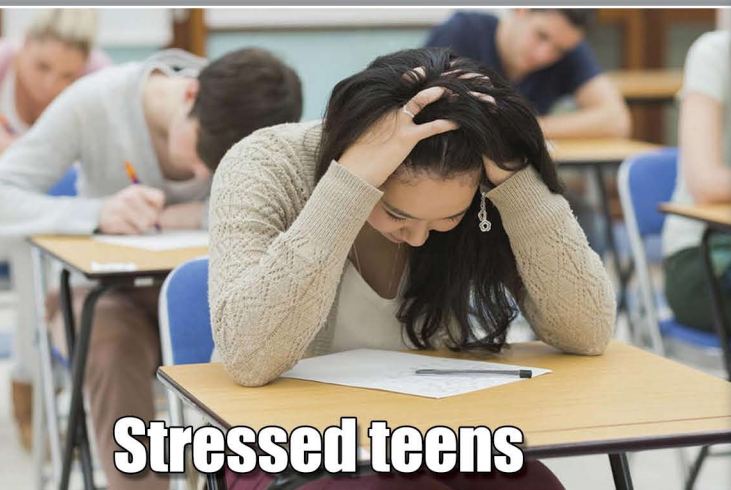
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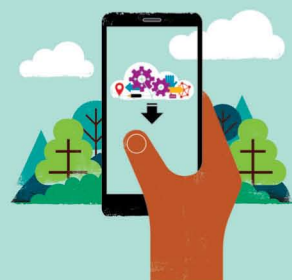


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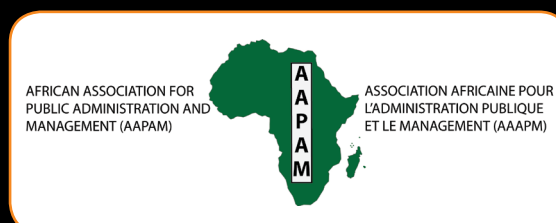
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## Editor's column

### Selective religious education in US schools

In an online article published on *The STREAM* by Nancy Flory titled Schools are teaching Islam but banning Christianity, a mom is fighting back and is on a mission to change the way her son's school teaches religion.

According to the article there's a new trend in the public school curriculum that, chances are, you know nothing about. If you think your kids are getting an unbiased education and that all forms of religion are left out of the classroom, think again. Your child, like many others, may be subjected to Islamic indoctrination.

It all started three years ago when Heather Gayer's middle-schooler put together a PowerPoint presentation about giving winter hats and gloves to children who couldn't afford them. One slide of the presentation had a Bible verse: "Caring for the poor is lending to the Lord, and you will be well repaid." (*Prov. 19:17*) The slide took all of 1.3 seconds, but that was enough to alarm the teacher, Heather told *The Stream* in an interview. The teacher told the boy that his slide show belonged in Sunday School, not the classroom, and refused to allow it to be presented to the class. She told Heather that it was "proselytizing." So Heather went to the vice-principal. He said, "We can't show this in school, it's not allowed." The superintendent said the same thing, that it was not allowed and mentioned that he would obtain legal advice and/or counsel. Heather said she was intimidated, considered it a threat, and decided that she would let it go.

A few months later her son told her they were studying the doctrines and tenets of the Muslim faith, including the five pillars of Islam. One compulsory assignment required them to complete the sentence, "There is no God but Allah and Mohammad is his messenger." Further, the class curriculum included a 20-slide PowerPoint presentation about Islam, and two videos, one of which was a cartoon character teaching a non-Muslim friend about Islam, the second of which taught the five pillars of Islam.

The school principal responded by stating, "The lessons on Islam – that some of our parents have raised as an issue – comprise approximately three days out of a 180-day school year. Further, in the scope of our full curriculum, content addressing Islam does not represent a disproportionate amount of time or resources.

Parents simply wanted to know, "Does the school spend three days on Christianity? Do you spend three days on Judaism? Do you spend three days on Buddhism? Do you spend three days on Taoism? Do you spend three days on Sikhism?"

There are numerous ongoing court cases between parents and public schools throughout the United States pertaining to this issue.

#### Yours in education

**Janos Bozsik**  
Editor



## Why your school IT network needs a spring clean

**By Colin Thornton, Managing Director of Turrto Networks and Dial a Nerd**

With the carefree promise of spring, many of us are turning our attention towards cleaning out those overfull wardrobes and cluttered rooms. While this is all well and good, the place that probably requires our most dedicated spring cleaning strategy is the office – and not because it's almost buried in paperwork. Old files, irrelevant backups, out-of-date permissions and apps and excess data bog down many IT networks. These could represent security risks at worst, and at best are slowing your IT down and hampering your efficiency. Time for a reboot!

### 1. Assess your connectivity solution

You may have had enough bandwidth to meet your requirements one year ago, but these needs change quickly – particularly as our use of Cloud services increases. Fibre is very widely available and has dropped in pricing enormously. Certain highly useful (or even critical) applications like Cloud backup or VoIP require fast connections. If you're still on ADSL it's definitely time to switch.

### 2. Remove old accounts and permissions

This is a common problem when IT isn't managed regularly. Employees and educators come and go but their accounts remain. It's possible you have ex-employees still accessing their mail or even worse, your network. Even if they aren't they might have had simple passwords and someone else can. Do an assessment of user accounts and clean them up. Sometimes temporary accounts are created for office automation devices like printer/scanners and these are very common entry points for hackers.

### 3. Rethink your security

With ransomware and other cyber threats now a daily reality, it's time to take security very seriously. For a start, make sure that you have strong passwords, with different passwords across platforms. Also, use multi-factor authentication for key applications such as the school banking. Always be aware of suspicious emails/communications and never open links within unwanted emails. Firewalls and top-quality anti-virus programs used to be nice-to-have and they're now have-to-have. Don't cut corners here – make sure you have industry leading hardware and software and make sure it stays up to date.

### 4. Implement critical updates and patches

Again, given the high risk of cyber-attacks and malware today, updates and patches are equally important to your overall security plan. More than one-half of all breaches occur because the school/user failed to patch a known security vulnerability.

### 5. Be ruthless with network traffic

One good way to ensure that your network is not cluttered with junk traffic, which will slow it down, is to filter with firewalls or specialised software. Certain firewalls do this automatically and others need to be configured.

### 6. Check your backups

It goes without saying that you have backups in place but have you checked them lately? Are they backing up the correct data? Have you performed a restore? Do you have backups of your backups?

The price of good backup software and Cloud backups has dropped substantially and if you're still not doing it properly this should arguably be the first spring clean task you undertake.

This is crucial for information such as learner academic records and parent accounts.

Welcome to a new dawn of more efficient computing (and working!). ▲



# A trio of winners for ICT in Education Awards

South Africa's Internet Service Providers' Association (ISPA) has named Matema Jacobeth Malatji of Diopong Primary School as ISPA SuperTeacher of the Year following a gala dinner held as a centre point of the annual iWeek 2018 Internet industry conference and exhibition.

ISPA is the long-time sponsor of SA's longest-running national ICT in education awards and the founder and co-host of iWeek, which took place last month at Cape Town's Westin Hotel.

ISPA and the Digital Education Institute (DEI) also announced that Leanne Bishop of Grantleigh College category was selected as ISPA Tech Teacher for 2018 while ISPA Mobile Tech Teacher for 2018 is Khatija Osman, from Durban Girls' College. The latter's achievement is particularly impressive as she is a teaching intern at Durban Girls'.

According to Project Manager, Milford Malunga of DEI, "On behalf of the sponsors, we congratulate our winners and especially commend the outstanding quality and originality of their projects. The future bodes well for South Africa's learners if our country can continue to produce educators of the calibre of Matema, Leanne and Khatija."

DEI, a non-profit educational body, is ISPA's partner in the SuperTeacher competition and manages the Association's teacher IT skills training programme that originally gave rise to the ISPA SuperTeacher of the Year Awards.

The 2018 ISPA SuperTeacher of the Year competition gave educators an opportunity to showcase their skills in using Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) to improve the educational environment in their classrooms, schools or communities.

The names of the ten finalists who competed for the three titles are:

- Leanne Bishop of Grantleigh College,
- Mabore Lekalakala of Mapudithomo Primary School,
- Matthew Hains of Saheti School,
- Fiona Beal of The Rock Academy,
- Matema Jacobeth Malatji of Diopong Primary School,
- Peggy Jona of Bakuba Primary School,
- Dimakatso Sefora of Saron Primary School,
- Khatija Osman of Durban Girls' College,
- Nombuso Precious Thobela of Vulamasango Primary School, and
- Cyril Nkosana Nkabinde of Zonkizizwe Secondary School.

Several teachers are top achievers in previous ISPA SuperTeacher of the Year competitions. After participating in educator ICT training managed by DEI and sponsored by ISPA and its members, the finalists' closing projects were judged to be the best amongst the many received that demonstrated the value of the teachers' enhanced ICT skills.

ISPA's Train the Teacher project has equipped over 5 000 teachers with ICT skills thanks to continued support from ISPA's members. South Africa's longest-running ICT in education competition is sponsored by ISPA, a non-profit Internet industry representative body.

More information about the awards, and the three award winners, can be found at: [www.ispasuperteachers.co.za](http://www.ispasuperteachers.co.za)



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Image by Christof van der Walt



# IBM SA and Tshimologong Precinct launch acceleration bootcamp

IBM South Africa, through its Equity Equivalence Investment Programme (EEIP) together with Tshimologong Digital Innovation Precinct, have announced the launch of a startup accelerator taking place from 8 October 2018 to 16 November 2018. The Startup Accelerator is designed to enable the development of Growth Stage Tech and Digital Startups, using a bootcamp format that will run over six weeks.

The bootcamp will focus on enablement and development through a series of short, intensive and rigorous modules. Each module is specifically selected to address skills, resources, infrastructure and technology growth within the startup. The bootcamp culminates in an investment proposal and pitch whereby the winning participants stand in line to win up to R500 000 in required products and services.

“Growing technology startups has long been a focus of the Precinct and we are pleased to partner with IBM SA to further develop this vital segment of the market. This bootcamp is centred on investment, one of the critical elements of any growing business. We look forward to working with the teams to make a bottom-line investment in tomorrow’s future technology leaders,” says Shaun Randles, Enterprise Development Manager, Tshimologong Precinct.

The Startup Accelerator is an initiative of the Enterprise Development Programme (EDP), one of 3 streams of the IBM SA Equity Equivalence Investment Programme (EEIP). The EDP is focused on the enablement of entrepreneurs and businesses with a highly specialised ICT focus in globally relevant areas of technology such as Big Data Analytics, Cloud Computing, Internet of Things and Cybersecurity, amongst other things.

To win the investment, the tech startups need to demonstrate how the investment will be used to accelerate the business. The growth trajectory the investment will yield must be based on tangible outcomes simulating financials and thus demonstrating an increase in revenue or job creation. The investment must include their technology requirements for both internal operations and product scaling.



The startup will pitch its reasons why IBM should invest in the development of the business at an awards evening at Tshimologong Precinct taking place during Global Entrepreneurship Week 2018. The evening will be attended by a panel of industry thought leaders and influencers.

Interested participants need to ensure the business has a minimum of one-year trading as a CIPC registered business. The Growth Stage Tech Startup should be Black South African owned and managed. Turnover needs to be between R120 000 to R50 million per annum and the owner must be actively involved in the business.

See the full list of eligibility criteria as well as other pertinent information by visiting [www.tshimologong.joburg/programs/ibm-bootcamp/](http://www.tshimologong.joburg/programs/ibm-bootcamp/)



# Is stress holding your teenager back?

Teenagers grow up and eventually become the parents of teenagers! The circle of life is such that we forget, often with some relief, what it was like to deal with the stressful challenges of our changing bodies, academic expectations and social interactions when WE were teenagers. Cindy Glass, Director and Co-founder of Step Up Education Centres explains “The reality is that long-term, unchecked stress can lead to the greater challenges of anxiety, depression and negative behavioural choices in our teenagers.”

Cindy looks at this important subject in greater detail:

## 1. What causes stress in teenagers?

- Teenagers are complex, over-thinkers by nature. It is not surprising then, that what may seem to us to be a minor challenge, could indeed be a cause of debilitating stress in our teenager!
- Negative body, and self-image.
- School pressures, these can be social or academic.
- Making mistakes (including poor behaviour choices) and the fear of failure.
- Financial or personal concerns arising from their families.

## 2. What are the signs of excessive stress in teenagers?

- They start sleeping too much or too little.
- They experience panic attacks.
- They can start acting aggressively or withdrawing from activities that they once enjoyed.
- Fatigue that affects normal activities.
- Stressed teenagers tend to eat way too much or way too little. This would be out-of-character.
- Regular mood swings, crying and angry episodes can indicate excessive stress.

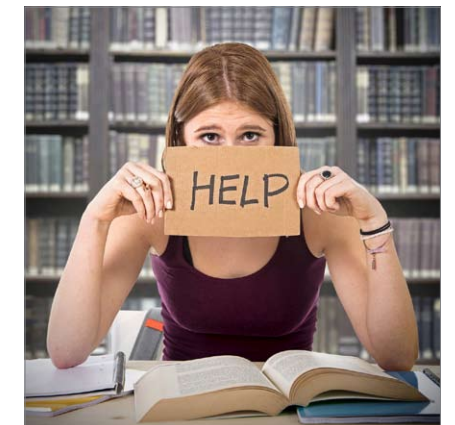
## 3. How can you help?

- Non-judgemental communication is key! Aim to listen to understand! Listen to support and help them find positive solutions. Challenges are a part of teenage life and cannot be avoided, just make sure your teen knows that you are the go-to person they need!
- Encourage your teen to exercise regularly and to make healthy nutrition choices. A healthy, fit body can weather many-a-stressful-situation.
- Teach emotional intelligence skills: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills are essential in developing positive body- and self- image. These skills will also help your teenager navigate the complexities of interpersonal relationships!
- Know that mistakes are inevitable. Speak of mistakes being learning opportunities and help your teen to find positive solutions.
- Discuss perspectives. It is essential to understand that everyone is coming from his/her perspective and that, so often, upsetting encounters with others is as a result of their experiences and perspectives of life in that moment. Remember, if you have not caused the negative encounter, it is not your stuff!

## 4. When would you need to seek expert help?

- Seek immediate professional help if your child is having suicidal thoughts.
- Seek help if the symptoms of stress are not subsiding or if they are getting worse.

Cindy explains “Stress can be a two-edged sword. It can motivate us to positive action, and it can result in potentially serious emotional and physical challenges if it becomes long-term and excessive. Watch for the latter and aim at seeking ways to ease the effects of negative stress in your teenagers!”





# An Open Letter To My Teacher



Dear Teacher,

I think it's time I told you why I have been acting out at school and crying sometimes. I think you know that something is wrong, because you keep asking me, "What's the matter?" The reason I haven't told you before is that I can't talk to you in the hallway with all the other kids staring at me - and until now, I didn't feel like I could talk to anybody about it.

I'm worried about my schoolwork. I keep getting in trouble for not doing my homework, and not listening in class. Sometimes I am so scared that I just get mad at everybody. I don't mean to yell. I just feel like everyone is picking on me at home and at school.

You see, my dad has a drinking problem. It's called "alcoholism." It means that he can't control his drinking. He comes home some nights really drunk and yells at all of us. Then Mom yells back at him for being drunk and spending all the money. Sometimes he hits her, or my sister and me for no reason, just because he is drunk.

Sometimes my sister and I are so scared that we hide in our room.

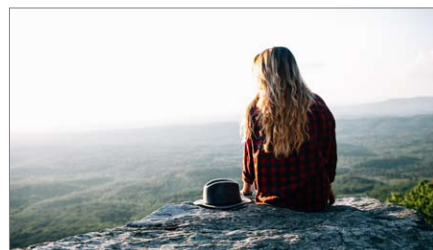
I used to hate my mom and dad for all that - Mom for yelling at Dad and making him even madder, and Dad for his drinking. I don't hate them anymore because I found out why they were like that.

One day a lady came and talked to my mom, and I listened, too. She was the one who explained to us what alcoholism is. I learned that my dad was not horrible, just sick. He has a disease called alcoholism. She told us that when there is someone in the house with a drinking problem, the whole family gets hurt by it. She also told my mom about Al-Anon. That is where families and friends of problem drinkers go to understand the disease of alcoholism and how they can stop being so scared and mad all the time.

Now Mom goes to Al-Anon. It works, too. Mom doesn't scream at Dad or us as much anymore. I go to Alateen, that's for kids affected by someone else's drinking. Sometimes we have friends that drink too. Now I understand, and it feels good not to be the only one with my kind of problem.

I think that teachers should know about alcoholism, because then they would understand kids like me. If you know of any kids who might have a problem with a drinking parent or a drinking friend, you could tell them where they can get help. It really helped me.

Your Student



\*\* This letter has been copied from [www.alanon.org](http://www.alanon.org). Alateen is a recovery group for adolescents ages 9 to 19 that helps children and teenagers who are relatives or friends of alcoholics cope with the issues of alcoholism that are affecting their lives in some way. Alateen was founded in 1957 as a part of its parent organisation, Al-Anon Family Groups. Every Alateen group is sponsored by an active Al-Anon member who provides guidance and support for its meetings. The structure of Alateen's meetings is based on the Al-Anon Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service (based on the Alcoholics Anonymous

model), and each sponsor acts as a guide to help the group stay focused on its goals.

**For more information please contact:**  
[alanongso@iafrica.com](mailto:alanongso@iafrica.com) /  
**24 hr Helpline – 0861 25 66 66 /**  
[www.alanon.org.za](http://www.alanon.org.za) ▲

## FOR EDUCATORS & PRINCIPALS

### What is Alateen?



#### Alateen is:

...a fellowship of young Al-Anon members, usually teenagers, whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. **It is NOT for teens who already have a substance abuse problem**

#### Purposes of Alateen

##### Young People Come Together to:

- share experience, strength, and hope with each other
- discuss their difficulties
- learn effective ways to cope with their problems
- encourage one another
- help each other understand the principles of the Al-Anon program

#### Alateen Members Learn

- compulsive drinking is a disease
- they can detach themselves emotionally from the drinker's problems while continuing to love the person
- they are not the cause of anyone else's drinking or behaviour
- they cannot change or control anyone but themselves
- they have spiritual and intellectual resources with which to develop their own potentials, no matter what happens at home
- they can build satisfying and rewarding life experiences for themselves

#### Sponsorship & Supervision

**In order to be registered as an Alateen group, there must be TWO Alateen Group Sponsors at each meeting. These sponsors – Al-Anon Members in Alateen Service (AMIAS) – are experienced Al-Anon members, certified through the Alateen Service certification process, prior to serving, and are in possession of a SAPS Police Clearance Certificate, renewed annually.**

#### Where Alateens Meet

Alateen groups meet in church halls, school rooms, or other suitable places (often in the same building as an Al-Anon group, but in a separate room as **Alateen meetings are CLOSED to non-certified adults**).

#### Alateen Literature

Members are encouraged to read Al-Anon and Alateen Conference Approved Literature and materials. Written from members' personal sharings, these recovery tools can help them deal with their problems.

\*\*\*\*\*

We believe alcoholism is a family disease because it affects all the members emotionally and sometimes physically. Although we cannot change or control our parents, we can detach from their problems while continuing to love them.



**We do not discuss religion or become involved with any outside organisations. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECT OF ALCOHOLISM ON CHILDREN

For nearly 70 years, Al-Anon Family Groups, globally, has helped the families who live with the disease of alcoholism.

The disease of alcoholism in a family member or friend affects children and teenagers in many ways that impact on their behaviour and ultimately, their school work.

Frequently, students and educators do not realise that a relationship with an alcoholic could be a factor in poor performance, disruptive behaviour and other problems.

*Alateen helps young people understand how alcoholism affects the lives of all who are associated with a problem drinker.*

#### Alateen in South Africa

We have learned that learners are very cautious about attending Alateen meetings at their schools.

In some areas Alateen meetings are held in the evenings in a nearby church hall, community centre or somewhere secure.

Parents/guardians must give written permission for Alateen attendance.

Alateen South Africa has groups across the country.

A list of Alateen meetings may be found on our websites:

<http://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>  
<http://www.alanongauteng.co.za/>  
<https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/>

**alanongso@iafrica.com –**  
**24 hr Helpline – 0861 25 66 66**

*Literature & more information is available. Just call us.*

  
 Al-Anon Family Groups  
 Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

# NAPTOSA condemns violence against teachers in schools

The National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) is deeply saddened by the untimely death of the 24 year old North West teacher, Mr Gadimang Daniel Mokolobate, at school at the hands of a learner. This incident reminded teachers across the Country of the harsh and hostile conditions in which they are forced to work.

Teachers are concerned that not enough is being done by their employer to ensure their safety. Violence against teachers is not a new phenomenon. Violence and the indiscipline of pupils in schools are, however, under-reported. NAPTOSA argues that violence in schools is a reflection of South African society, generally. When pupils see adults manhandling one another in high places of society such as Legislatures and Parliament they start to think that violence is an acceptable norm to resolve differences.

NAPTOSA has been inundated with disturbing testimonials concerning the levels of violence against teachers in schools, said Mr Ntantala, President of NAPTOSA. The Country has also been witnessing a series of shocking videos showing violence by learners towards teachers. Violence in schools has resulted in some teachers leaving the profession. People in positions of authority in communities should intervene in order to safeguard the integrity of the teaching profession.

The Business Day of 12 June 2018 highlighted the violent situations in schools in which learners were involved in verbal abuse, including assaulting teachers and other learners.

## Some shocking stats

- In Limpopo alone the Department was handling 942 cases of attacks on teachers.
- Gauteng schools had expelled 151 learners, 31 of them for assaulting teachers and other school staff.

"It was disturbing to learn of so many cases of violence perpetrated against teachers in a single year. Teachers have reported that their personal property is being vandalised on school property, when they try to instil discipline in the classroom and perpetrators often go unpunished," said Mr Ntantala.

These incidents are indicative that the Department of Basic Education's measures to deal with violence in schools is failing. "The Department must employ stringent measures such as working in collaboration with police who must conduct regular searches for weapons and drugs and provide trained security personnel at schools to deter learners from assaulting educators," said Mr Ntantala.

Whilst NAPTOSA acknowledges that violence in schools requires a multi-facet approach to curb, NAPTOSA is of the view that the Department can do much more to protect its employees. The Department should ensure that teachers receive the much needed psychological help.



NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS' ORGANISATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Department has to accept that current measures employed to deal with disruptive learners who physically and psychologically assault teachers, are not effective at all. For example, the relocation of abusive learners to other schools merely shifts the problem from one school to the next and only perpetuates the cycle of violence against teachers and, furthermore, puts other learners at risk. These learners should be provided with professional help to rehabilitate them before they are placed in any other school.

Mr Ntantala concluded that NAPTOSA does not wish to see a situation wherein teachers refrain from instilling discipline in schools for fear of being attacked by their own learners. If the delinquent's behaviour is allowed to go unaddressed in schools, the consequences may be dire for the delivery of quality education as teachers may leave the profession in droves, and it may not be easy to replace them. The safety of teachers and learners in schools requires urgent attention from the Department.

## For further enquiries please contact

- **Mr Nkosiphendule Ntantala (President) 072 198 0599**
- **Mr Basil Manuel (Executive Director) 079 508 6228** ▲

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# The importance of taking a lifelong approach to learning

By Jackie Carroll, CEO and co-founder of Media Works

The world commemorated International Literacy Day on 8 September under the theme “literacy and skills development”. As technological advancements continue to drive the global economy, linking these two aspects of learning has become essential. To be employable and relevant in the 21st century, employees not only need to be literate and skilled, but must also have the capacity to acquire additional skills. Learning has to be viewed as a lifelong activity, and all parties have to be committed to its sustained progress.

## Literacy and learning in South Africa

Statistically speaking, South Africa’s literacy rate is in a better position than it has been for some time. In the 15 years between 2002 and 2017, Stats SA reports, the percentage of people over the age of 20 who were regarded as functionally illiterate dropped from 28.5% to 13.7%. But “functional literacy”, unfortunately, only indicates an education of Grade 7 or above, and not an individual’s ability to read and write at a level suitable to acquire and maintain a job.

In fact, very few young adults are adequately prepared for further learning or employment. South Africa’s leading adult education and training (AET) institutions continue to supply literacy training at levels that are below Grade 9, and constantly have to create programmes designed to improve their learners’ skills.

This situation has far-reaching ramifications. Often referred to as a silent disability, poor-quality and low levels of literacy hinder personal growth and limit opportunities. Collectively, they perpetuate poverty and inequality, and can constrain entire economies. Investing in both literacy and skills is critical to the advancement of individuals, communities and countries.

## Why skills development matters

“In order to find a place in society, get a job, and respond to social, economic and environmental challenges, traditional literacy and numeracy skills are no longer enough; new skills, including in information and communication technology, are becoming increasingly necessary,” says Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO’s Director General.

Today, employees need to be equipped not only with soft skills, such as the ability to communicate effectively, work in a team and think critically, but also hard skills that require deliberate instruction and training. The latter ranges from basic computer skills, which are essential for most positions (or at least for acquiring them), to anything from knowing how to weld to knowing how to code. Without these skills, doors remain closed to prospective employees.



Jackie Carroll

businesses, and learners and employees themselves. In order to be successful, this task has to be undertaken collectively, and in as innovative and integrated way as possible.

## An innovative and integrated approach to learning

As technology makes demands on literacy and skills development, perhaps the best solution is to use technology to improve the way we learn and teach. Such approaches have the capacity to be meaningful, beneficial and to support sustained, lifelong learning.

Media Works, South Africa’s leading AET provider, recently launched a programme with precisely this method in mind. The programme, Accelerate Pro, uses a combination of computer-assisted and face-to-face training methodologies to meet the literacy and skills development needs of adult learners. Its high-quality computer- and paper-based course material is made available to learners through a variety of media, and its textbooks contain quick response (QR) code technology, which provide learners with access to short multimedia lessons via their mobile phones. These lessons >>



Acquiring these skills, however, is only the first part of the equation. They also need to be sustained and constantly updated as technology evolves. Ensuring that this ongoing learning takes place is the responsibility of educational institutions (including AET entities), non-governmental organisations,

<< explain complicated concepts and provide practical examples, so facilitating learning and improving understanding.

If used effectively, technology-based learning programmes have the capacity to access learners across all levels, subjects and geographic locations. They also provide a consistent level in the quality of instruction, and are not dependent on the qualifications and abilities of facilitators, which inevitably vary.

## Taking a lifelong view

“Preparing young people and adults for jobs, the majority of which have not yet been invented, is a challenge,” says Azoulay. “Accessing lifelong learning, taking advantage of pathways between different forms of training, and

benefiting from greater opportunities for mobility has thus become indispensable.”

The first step to transforming literacy and skills development in South Africa is enhancing the collective understanding that learning happens consistently, throughout the course of a lifetime. Effective learning programmes therefore require perseverance and continuous adaptation. ▲

# Sensory adventure awaits Seotloana Primary learners

Learners at Seotloana Primary School in Tembisa can look forward to having their senses tickled after the Peermont Community Benefit Trust (PCBT), a CSI initiative of Emperors Palace, recently created a sensory garden at the school. “While the garden has added to the greening of the school, the idea is that it can be used as a fun, educational tool”, comments PCBT Manager, Jenny Findlay.

The garden is suitable for all the learners from the Grade R’s through to the Grade 7’s, and gives educators an opportunity to conduct outdoor classes where learners can find out more about the plants and herbs. “The garden is divided into different sections, namely taste, smell, touch and sound, which allows learners to explore through their senses and learn about nature. The garden creates a safe and developmentally appropriate outdoor learning environment with curriculum benefits, especially with regards subjects like Life Sciences,” adds Findlay. While children can be hesitant about approaching plants, this sensory garden is an exciting place for them to connect with nature as they are invited to touch, rub, smell and even eat some of the plants.

“We planted easy to grow plants that have interesting textures, striking colours, stimulating aromas, tasty leaves and flowers, with some also creating intriguing sounds. The plants are also hardy, so that it can withstand the children’s constant touch and other challenges experienced in keeping a primary school

garden thriving,” says Plantcentric’s Calvin Becker, who designed and installed the garden.

Seotloana Primary School is one of two schools where the PCBT have planted a sensory garden. The other was at Ntsikana Primary School in Daveyton, and more of these gardens will be established at selected schools in the local area. “One of the main goals of the Trust is to educate and empower learners, and these gardens are a fun, outdoor way to impart knowledge to children of all ages,” Findlay concludes. ▲



Seotloana Primary School Grade R learners, Amukelani Sabeka and Sanele Otshiki enjoy the outdoors learning more about the smells, tastes, sounds, colours and textures of plants in the sensory garden created at the school by the Peermont Community Benefit Trust (PCBT). With them, during a recent visit to the school, is Plantcentric’s Calvin Becker, who planted the garden on behalf of the PCBT and Trustee, Vusi Zwane. (Photograph by Yolanda van der Stoep)



Grade R learner at Seotloana Primary School, Innocentia Ngcobo smells one of the herbs planted in the sensory garden created at the school by the Peermont Community Benefit Trust (PCBT). (Photograph by Yolanda van der Stoep)



During a recent visit to Seotloana Primary School in Tembisa, Peermont Community Benefit Trust Trustee, Fihliwe Nkomo inspected the new sensory garden the Trust created at the school. Here she is pictured with Grade R learner, Refentse Matsepa and the school’s principal, Hilary Ramokgopa as they learn about the smells, tastes, sounds, colours and textures of plants in the sensory. (Photograph by Yolanda van der Stoep)



# Raising superheroes through reading – in 2018

In a country of great contrasts and diversity, in which the future seems filled with uncertainty, our focus should be on empowering our young people at all costs. What better way to do so, than with helping them discover facts about their world, and most importantly, about themselves, through that one little gift we should be passing on from generation to generation; from child to child: the gift of reading.

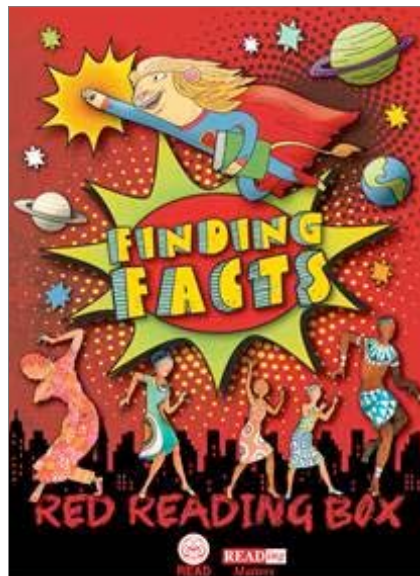
For nearly 40 years, READ Educational Trust has focused on promoting literacy across South Africa. This is achieved through various programmes, with Readathon being READ's pride and joy. In conjunction with National Literacy Month, held in September, READ is excited to unveil the fifth Readathon Red Reading Box; an invaluable tool to encourage reading amongst a broad cross-section of learners.

Each Red Reading Box has had a fascinating theme, and this year's is no different. The 'Finding Facts' box is visually appealing with its 'Superpower' look and feel. It is designed to help children discover their special skills through a fact-finding mission which begins and ends with reading. Children are taught that reading is their superpower ... it's the key to unlocking facts about the world around them, about what interests them, and about what they are good at!

In the 2018 Red Reading Box you'll find a 'Finding Facts Magazine' – a place to find out about our ancestors, our family, our country and our culture. The 'Superhero Journal' is a journey of self-discovery, and 'Everyday Heroes' is a book filled with stories about children similar to the readers. The 'Finding Facts Cut-Outs' book contain instructions for all the games in the box, as well as fun cut-outs. Games include a 'Flags of Africa' game, 'Word Power Playing Cards' and more.

While we're on the topic of facts, a heartening statistic is that 12 000 children have been reached through Red Reading Boxes over the past four years. The Pizza Hut Initiative in support of the Africa Literacy Project, distributed an additional 2 500 this past year, and READ aims to distribute 3 000 new Red Reading Boxes this year.

An additional Literacy Month activity saw the new Box being launched at Boepakitso Primary School in Soweto, on Friday 7 September. Children were delighted to explore the boxes and their contents, and were even more thrilled with the donation of several Red Reading Boxes for their school.



Educators and parents are urged to purchase a Readathon Red Reading Box for only R255. Every cent of the profits is ploughed back into promoting literacy in disadvantaged communities across South Africa.

To find out more, visit [www.read.org.za](http://www.read.org.za)  
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# Calling all school entrepreneurs – R100 000 is up for grabs!

## Scooler | The School Entrepreneur Movement launches the R100k Scooler Clash

The mammoth unemployment rate in South Africa emphasises the serious need to cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit in our schools – enter Scooler | The School Entrepreneur Movement who is challenging government and businesses to stop talking about unemployment and commit to creating an entrepreneurial spirit in our schools.

The company's purpose is to draw Grade 8 to Grade 12 students from across the country and from all walks of life into the School Entrepreneur Movement by making them aware of what entrepreneurship is about and to create and inspire them to shape their own futures by exploring an alternative to mainstream tertiary education.

As early as Grade 8, high-school students are being called upon to make monumental decisions as to their future and career but with the current state of employment in South Africa, limited opportunities make for much tougher choices. Typically, the options for school-leavers are to study, travel or take a gap year, but more and more youngsters are looking to be their own bosses and to shape their own destinies.

But, as the founder of Scooler, Leon Lategan, points out: "We have found a serious lack of information available to students at school around the subject of entrepreneurship, resulting in very few of them exploring this avenue after school." He adds that statistics reveal grim prospects for school-leavers – 49% of students with Grade 12 and 23.3% with a tertiary education will not find jobs.

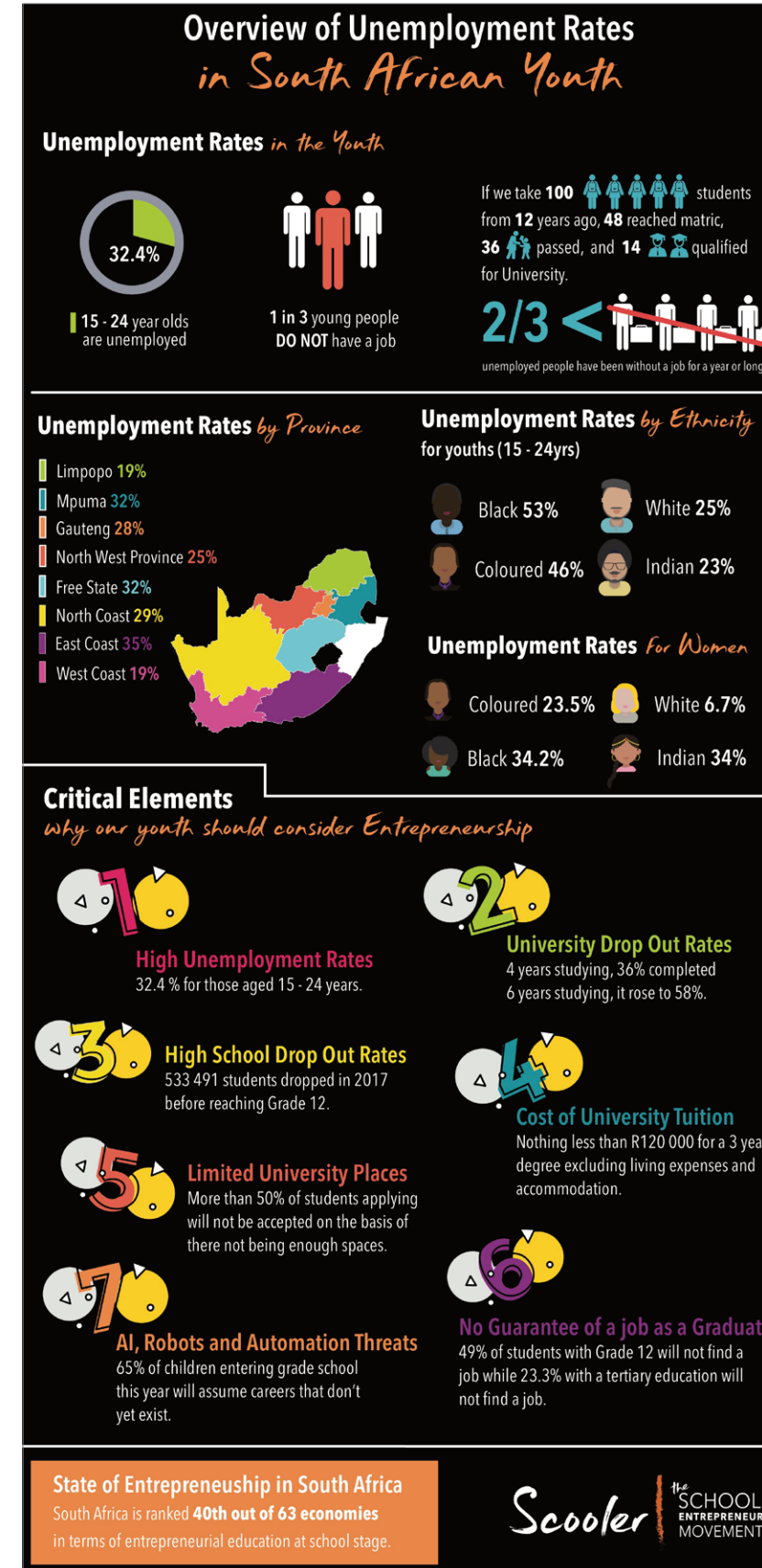
One also has to consider the extremely high unemployment rate of 5.98 million in South Africa, the excessive drop-out rates at universities – in 2017 alone, after 4 years studying at University the completion rate was only 36%, and at schools 533 491 students dropped out before reaching Grade 12! The prohibitive cost of tuition is also cause for concern where students can expect to pay no less than R120k for a three year degree, and that excludes living expenses and accommodation, not to mention the fact that more than 50% of students applying to get into university will not be accepted due to limited space. And, just to add salt to the wound there is the threat of automation, artificial intelligence and robotics to vie with too.



Scooler provides a platform for students at school to start asking vital questions and exploring entrepreneurial alternatives. On the website and via their social media platforms, students have access to valuable information about how to run a business; how to secure funding for their business; connection to like-minded youth and exposure of their existing school businesses / money making initiatives to the community, corporates and investors.

In order to create awareness about Scooler | The School Entrepreneur Movement, The R100k Scooler Clash was launched on Thursday, 23 August, calling on all Grade 8s, 9s, 10s, 11s and 12s to enter for free and battle it out to win R100 000 for the best existing business / money making initiative currently run by a student at school. The winner will receive a R50 000 cash prize and R50 000 worth of mentoring, coaching, advertising and social media exposure for their business. All the submitted businesses will be profiled on the Scooler website where friends, family and the Scooler community get to vote for who they believe is the best entrepreneur running the best business at school. Four runner ups will each also receive R10 000 worth of coaching for their businesses.

Self-confessed university drop-out Lategan says, "I was never exposed to the idea of entrepreneurship and yet my career path shifted into just that. I went to university, failed a Bachelor of Business Science/Marketing degree and today I am an International Speaker



and Consultant on the subject of Marketing, without any qualifications, crazy isn't it?." He adds that he was also deeply concerned at seeing South Africa's unemployment rate rocket from 1.6 mil to 5.98 million since 1995, with predictions of over 6 million in 2019, and was moved to step up and stop waiting on government and business to take action by launching Scooler, to create and inspire an entrepreneurial spirit in our schools.

Enter online at [www.scooler.co.za](http://www.scooler.co.za)  
Entries close: 26 October  
Voting closes: 02 November  
Winner announced: 09 November

## About Scooler | The School Entrepreneur Movement

Scooler is about providing a platform for students at school to start asking vital questions about their futures and exploring possibilities.

Brainchild of Leon Lategan, CEO of The Lions Den, an entrepreneurial company involved in numerous initiatives around coaching, educating and creating entrepreneurs, he identified the need to cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit in schools, to enable the youth to shape their own futures by exploring an alternative to mainstream tertiary education.

On the website and via their social media platforms, students will have access to valuable information about how to run a business; how to secure funding for their business; connection to like-minded youth and exposure of their businesses to the community, corporates and investors.

Website: [www.scooler.co.za](http://www.scooler.co.za)  
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# What to do if your parents don't agree with your study choice

Many Matrics considering their study options for next year are finding themselves in the difficult position of being at odds with their parents or guardians about their preferred direction. While this conundrum has always been around, it is even more pronounced today, given that there are a myriad qualifications and careers that didn't exist even a few years ago.

**"P**arents often have expectations of the potential careers they see their children pursuing, and it can be hard for them and their children to get on the same page when the parents are in favour of the more traditional qualifications, while the child would prefer to pursue a qualification the parents don't know much about," says Nola Payne, Head of Faculty: Information and Communications Technology at The Independent Institute of Education.

She says it is important for families to have a respectful dialogue based on facts and research when they find themselves in this position.

"If you are the young adult who would like to pursue a career in, for instance, digital marketing or game design and development, but your parents would rather you do a BCom at a public university, there are ways to get them to see your side of things," she says.

"And if you are the concerned parent, worried that your child's preferred qualification is lightyears away from what you think they should be doing, there are also a few ways you can set your mind at ease," says Payne.

She says it can be helpful for parents and future students finding themselves at loggerheads to approach the situation as follows:

## Do the research and understand the options

There are many more study options today than in the past. The range of qualifications on offer has grown exponentially, while the institutions offering them have also multiplied. All registered and accredited higher education institutions – whether they be public universities or private – are registered by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). They are only registered if they have been accredited by the Council on Higher Education

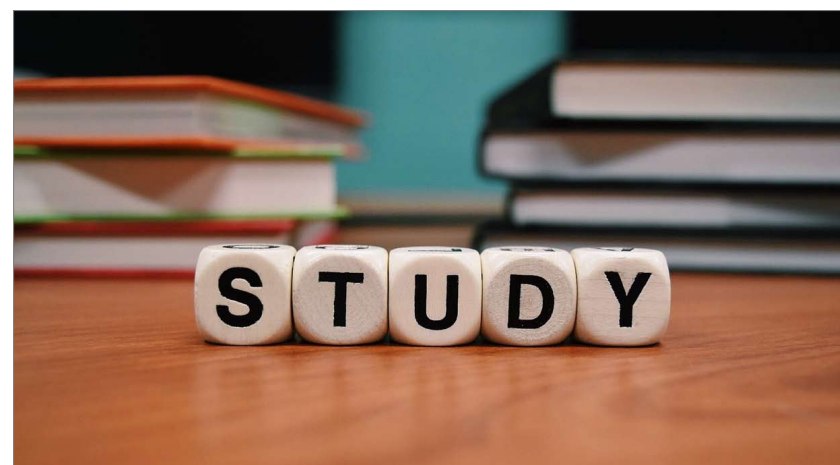


(CHE) and registered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Looking up a qualification on the NQF is as easy as going to the SAQA website and typing in a few words. An institution should also be able to give you the SAQA identity number immediately. This means that prospective students and their parents can be confident about the bona fides of any qualification they want to pursue, provided that the institution is recognised by DHET and the programme is listed on the NQF which can be found on the SAQA website.

## Face reality

The world of work looks a lot different today than it did a decade ago, with numerous new and emerging careers on offer, such as brand management, big data analysis, app development, and >>



# Tech nerds for hire at \$10 per hour

## Social initiative aimed at reducing poverty has launched

Nerd Academy, a free digital skills training programme aimed at alleviating poverty by assisting with skills development and helping the unemployed find work, is offering nerds for hire at \$10 per hour for any basic digital job including admin tasks, sales and marketing support, customer service, LinkedIn outreach, video editing, data entry, manning chatrooms, call centre work and any virtual assistant tasks. With a goal to eradicate poverty, address digital inclusivity and overall skills development, the Nerd Academy is a cost-effective way to access labour, while also supporting a struggling community.

**T**he programme was launched by Piehole.tv, an animated video production company together with ProcurementExpress.com, a purchasing software company. For a mere \$10 per hour, organizations around the globe can contract workers for a range of digital tasks. The Nerd Academy has grown in size and reputation since its launch and has already assisted several individuals to improve digital skills, while also earning an income. Piehole.tv CEO, Priscilla Kennedy, says that it is heartening to watch these passionate Nerds develop skills and gain a sense of achievement as they provide a much needed digitally-inspired skill.

Located in Somerset East, South Africa, the Nerd Academy launched in 2018, and addresses the higher than national average unemployment rate of 27 per cent: "The community has very little hope of finding employment and the Nerd Academy, as a free digital skills training programme for unemployed people within the community, teaches people how to create a good profile in online marketplaces, how to pitch for business, and also work on data entry and other admin tasks," says Kennedy.



Visit <https://www.piehole.tv/the-nerd-academy/> for a glimpse of this social initiative.

**Hire a nerd from Nerd Academy through their Upwork page or visit [www.nerdacademy.co.za](http://www.nerdacademy.co.za) for direct contact with your nerd.** ▲

<< digital design, to name a few. The traditional, generic 3-year degree is no longer a golden ticket to landing a job.

Prospective students would do well to pursue a career-focused qualification which fits well with their talents and interests, and which will prepare them to step into the workplace with confidence. Career-focused qualifications will often also include work-integrated learning, which allows students to build a portfolio of work throughout their time at varsity. This puts them in a much stronger position after graduation when applying for a position.

## Understand the marketplace

What can you do with your qualification after graduation? That is an important question to ask before committing to a programme. A great way to determine the demand for a qualification and your future earning potential, is to look at career sites and job ads, to see how much demand there is in marketplace. Speaking to an advisor at a higher education institution's career centre can also go a long way to clarifying your prospects post-graduation.

## Understand the motivation for studying

Pursuing a degree requires a substantial investment of time and money. And handling the demands of higher education and young adulthood is not a walk in the park. The dropout rate among first years is very high, in part because the reason for heading to university wasn't sound.

So if the motivation for further study is for the sake of status rather than to lay the foundations for a specific and successful career, or if a student is only studying to fulfil the wishes of their parents, it would be better to wait, investigate all the options, and only apply when they have found something that gets them really excited about your future.

"Parents need to understand that the best approach now is to study and prepare for a world that's changing, and that the traditional way and 'safe' careers may not be the best course of action," says Payne.

"And prospective students need to understand that while the difference in opinion may be frustrating, it is up to them to present their case calmly, clearly and respectfully, with the research to back up the viability and prospects of their choice." ▲



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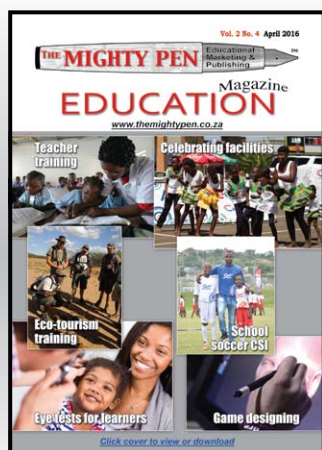
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