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## Australia's largest independent education survey reveals What Parents Want

A major survey of more than 4000 Queensland parents has found preparing students for life, good discipline and encouraging a responsible attitude to work as the top three reasons for choosing an independent school for their children.

*What Parents Want: Independent Schools Queensland Survey*, released today, the largest independent survey of its type in Australia, revealed 72% of parents felt the ability of an independent school to prepare the student to fulfil their potential in life was the major influence on their choice.

This was closely followed by a belief independent schools provide good discipline (68%) and encourage a responsible attitude to work (66%).

Executive Director of Independent Schools Queensland Dr John Roulston said the Survey, which questioned 4116 parents and guardians from 78 independent schools across Queensland, proved parents are looking for a strong option when it comes to their child's education.

"Selecting which school your child will attend is one of the most important decisions a parent can make and the diverse range of independent schools available presents parents with a choice on the type of education their child receives," Dr Roulston said.

"Independent schools are renowned for addressing students' individual needs and helping students achieve high academic results and much of this is due to good discipline and teachers that actively encourage students to learn.

"For the majority of responding parents (61%), an independent school was the only education sector they had considered."

Among the most frequently cited reasons for moving students into an independent school were 'poor discipline', 'unhappy with school management/discipline policy' or 'bullying'.

Together these three reasons comprised 16.3% of responses from parents who had transferred students in primary school and 17.3% of parents transferring students in secondary schooling.

Transferred students were most likely to have moved from a State school rather than another independent or Catholic school.

"Not surprisingly, family relocation is actually the main reason children change schools, however, behaviour management issues rank as a close second," Dr Roulston said.

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“Through the survey and also through our day-to-day contact with parents, we know parents feel comfortable placing their children in schools with high standards of discipline.”

“Other reasons given for transferring children into an independent school include wanting to improve academic grades, having more attention on individual needs and in some cases parents simply want a school with similar values and principles to those the parents are enforcing at home.”

“Given the standard of education and discipline parents believe is available at independent schools, it is not surprising many make personal sacrifices to ensure a spot for their child.”

‘It’s also interesting to note that 74% of parents surveyed did not attend an independent school themselves, yet they obviously see the value in it for their children.’

*ABOUT THE SURVEY: What Parents Want: Independent Schools Queensland Survey was conducted in August 2006 and was distributed by 85 independent schools throughout Queensland with responses received from 78 schools. A total of 31 questions were asked. Parents with children who had recently begun school – preschool or preparatory; first year primary or secondary; or students who have transferred schools – were specifically targeted as it was assumed they had made a recent decision regarding school selection. The Survey Report is available at [www.aisq.qld.edu.au](http://www.aisq.qld.edu.au)*

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