



WORKING TOGETHER: Parents know their children best and want what's best for them.

PHOTO: ISTOCK

Parent power the key to the best education



SCHOOL OF THOUGHT
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REGULAR readers of my column will know I am a big fan of Sir Ken Robinson.

He is one of the world's most influential educators and his TED talk *Do Schools Kill Creativity?* is one of the most viewed TED talks of all time.

He has just released a new book, *You, your child and*

school: Navigate your way to the best education, written specifically with parents in mind.

It offers helpful information about the kind of education children really need to make the best use of their talents and navigate today's world.

Many parents are worried about the current climate in education which focuses heavily on testing, competition, and a narrow curriculum.

As parents we sometimes think we cannot be involved in our children's education – but we need to be.

We know our children best and we want what is best for them.

“THE MOTIVES FOR 'RAISING STANDARDS IN SCHOOLS' ARE MAINLY ECONOMIC.”

We want them to live productive, fulfilled and happy lives, doing things they are good at, passionate about, love.

Sometimes those behind the schooling system forget the decisions they make affect the lives of our precious children and teens.

The motives for “raising standards in schools” are mainly economic. Standards are seen as equating to national

prosperity and competitiveness.

Unfortunately, the “testing and standards obsession” is backfiring and mostly just making many schools unhappy places to be.

Sir Ken says “a child's education should not be a nerve-racking steeplechase of testing and grades, haunted with a constant fear of failure”.

Sir Ken's book offers support for us as parents.

We can be voices for change.

We can support our children's interests in learning and respond intelligently to the many difficulties they face in school, such as stress, bullying,

and excessive homework.

We have options and power as parents, supported by research and experience.

We can actively engage with what is happening in the schools our children attend.

We can press for changes to the system and education more broadly. Or, we can choose to educate our children outside the system through home-schooling and un-schooling.

If you are anxious about your child's education or interested in transforming education, this book offers practical support, new hope and a sense of possibility.

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