

Back to School Information Pack 2025

Reminder

Schools fees are voluntary for Government schools

Government schools provide students with free curriculum and ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that they need for their regular classes.

The school may invite you to:

- Make a voluntary money contribution to support the school.
- purchase extra-curricular items and activities
- purchase educational items to own.

You are not required to make payments or voluntary financial contributions to your school. Schools cannot refuse your child school if you do not contribute.


Start at your school


First off talk with your schools' principal, assistant principal, KESO or Koorie support worker, wellbeing coordinator or even a teacher you get along with to talk about your situation and see what supports they can offer.

How do I apply?

Ask your school about their Financial Help for Families policy or contact DE below.

For more information.

 1800 338 663

 enquiries@education.vic.gov.au

State-wide Information

State Schools Relief

State Schools Relief supports families in buying school supplies, such as shoes, uniforms, books & learning devices in State Schools for disadvantaged students attending **Government schools**.

They offer the following:


- Glasses for Kids Program. Providing glasses for students with visual impairments.
- Graphing Calculator Program. Providing graphic calculators for secondary students doing STEM subjects in terms 1 & 4.
- iPad Program. Providing iPads for non-verbal students.
- Travel Pass Program. 30-Day Travel Pass for any primary, secondary or specialist school students experiencing crisis, such as family violence or sudden financial hardship, to ensure they can continue to travel by public transport.
- Work boots for students enrolled in VET subjects.
- Discount items from direct from their online store, such as:
 - School basics.
 - School shoes.
 - Workwear uniforms.
 - Swimwear.

How do I apply?

Requests for assistance are made by the school staff, this could be a principal, wellbeing coordinator, KESO or a teacher. A request can also be made by a support agency.

Ask your school or support service about applying for assistance through the State Schools Relief program.

For more information.

 03 8769 8400

 contact@ssr.net.au

 <https://stateschoolsrelief.org.au/>

 1/8 Johnston Court, Dandenong South
VIC 3175

Opening the doors foundation




Opening the Doors Foundation provides grants to support the extra costs of school, including school uniforms, books, school camps & excursions, IT equipment, stationary and other school associated costs (schools fees and tutoring not included). The fund is open to students of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent currently enrolled in a **Catholic or Independent education institution**.

How do I apply?

Complete the online form below:
<https://app.openingthedoors.org.au/>

The form can be completed by the student/family, a school support person, or a support worker from another organisation.

For more information.

-  0401 487 414
-  enquiries@openingthedoors.org.au
-  <https://www.openingthedoors.org.au/>


School Saving Bonus

Students are entitled to the School Saving Bonus which provides one-off support for Victorian school-aged students. More information is available for parents and carers with children attending a **Victorian Government school**.

***Catholic and Independent Schools are means tested, so please check with your school.**

The School Saving Bonus will provide \$400 in support for Victorian school-aged students in Term 4, 2024 for use on 2025 school costs.

For more information.

-  <https://www.vic.gov.au/receiving-school-saving-bonus>

Les twentyman foundation's back to school program

The Les Twentyman Back to School Program provides educational resources, textbooks, and stationery for young people in **Government, Catholic & Independent schools** experiencing financial difficulty and unstable living conditions.

How do I apply?

A young person must be referred by their school or a support worker from a 3rd party organization (ie. VACCA, VACSAL, VAEAI, local co-op or health service) and must meet specific criteria to be eligible for the program. First nations students are eligible for assistance through the program. The worker referring should email the full booklist to the program when applying.


For more information.

-  03 9689 4800
-  info@lftfoundation.com.au
-  <https://lftfoundation.com.au/our-services/back-to-school/>

Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund expenditure (CSEF)

The CSEF provides payments to assist eligible families to cover the costs of camps, sporting activities and excursions. Payments are made directly to an eligible student's school. Schools must use a CSEF payment only for the eligible student. The program is set to resume in 2025, although the department has not yet released the application timeline. For the most current information and updates, please refer to their official website. This support is available for **Government schools**.

For more information.

-  <https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>

The Smith Family Learning for Life

Through Learning for Life, The Smith Family connects students to sponsors whose support helps families by providing students with financial support for school costs, coordinator guidance and access to out-of-school programs

How do I apply?

Contact your local Learning for Life office.

Bairnsdale
03 5116 1620

Dandenong
03 9793 9852

Ballarat
0458 716 669
0428 487 916

Epping
0466 089 570
0411 792 879

Bendigo
0481 911 725

Geelong
0428 137 622
0466 474 229

Brimbank
03 9311 2367

Morwell
03 5133 9065

Broadmeadows
03 9066 3635

Shepparton
0466 776 682

Lakes Entrance
03 5155 5159

0428 642 164

Melbourne
03 9473 4300

Werribee
03 9473 4300
03 9473 4343

Aboriginal Co-ops and Organisations.


Reach out to your local Aboriginal Co-op or Organisation. They may be able to provide assistance on a case-by-case basis according to the needs of your family and their available resources.

Regional Specific Support

South-East Victoria

Emergency Relief


Through VACCA Dandenong.

 9108 3500

Cranbourne Community Information & Support


Provide financial support through their Education Assistance Program.

Only for families located in Hampton Park, Cranbourne, Blind Bight, Cannons Creek, Clyde, Pearcedale, Tooradin, Warneet, Lyndhurst, and Lynbrook. Health care card required.

 <https://www.cranbourneiss.org.au/service-s-programs/educ-assist-program.html>

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)

Community benefit fund. Only for Gunaikurnai people.

 <https://gunaikurnai.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Community-Benefit-Fund-Policy-v4.pdf>

Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative (GEGAC)

Can offer limited supports for school uniform, and school supplies,

but to utilise funds you must complete and intake and assessment and meet the criteria and be eligible for the programs.

South-West Victoria

Goolum Goolum: Back to School Day

Students will receive a bag, drink bottle, lunchbox, and haircut voucher. These events in Stawell and Horsham, is an opportunity for families to learn about Goolum Goolum's support programs for 2025.

Stawell

Date: 21 January 2025
Location: Goolum Hub
Time: 11am - 2pm

Horsham

Date: 23 January 2025
Location: Aunty Irene Room
Time: 11am - 2pm

North-West Victoria

Njernda

Offering \$250 per child. Parents can pick up application form at Njernda's youth club.

Contact Nicole Cooper

☎ 0499 820 320

✉ nicolec@njernda.com.au

Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS)

Can help existing and current serviced clients/families.

For more information.

Mildura office
(03) 5018 4100

Swanhill office
(03) 5032 8600

Kerang office
(03) 5412 6004

VACSAL - BWAYS Aboriginal Early School Leavers 'Back to School' Program.

VACSAL - BWAYS AESL program supports students from Prep - Year 12 in the **Northern & Western Metropolitan Region of Melbourne**. They offer support for families of low-income and single income parents by ensuring that their children receive the best start to their school year. The program is offered from 1st December-1st February each year.

They offer the following support:

- school textbooks ~ referrals to Les Twentyman "Back to School" program
- negotiate with schools regarding payment plans for school fees.
- offer case management to those who wish to receive further support for young people who are at risk of disengagement at school

For more information.

Contact Lyndell & Ella at VACSAL-BWAYS on 9484 5310

North-East Victoria

Ganbina

Can help kids that are already part of the program. Our program is open to all young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, from the age of six to 25 years old. You can join at any time, and it's free.

They offer the following support:

- Help cover school or work related expenses.

For more information

☎ 03 5821 7333

✉ info@ganbina.com.au