

Education related financial supports for children and young people in care

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Families,
Fairness
and Housing

Financial Support and Assistance

Below is a list of the financial supports available to support education for children and young people in care.

Additional Child Care Subsidy

For:

- Carers and parents experiencing financial hardship
- Children in care.

Website: [Services Australia Additional Child Care Subsidy](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy) <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy>

- A Federal Government subsidy that provides free or discounted childcare. This includes before and after-school care and holiday programs for primary school-aged children.

Eligibility

You are eligible for this subsidy if you are:

- a grandparent receiving an income support payment related to caring for a child or young person
- transitioning from certain income payments to work
- experiencing temporary financial hardship
- caring for a child who is at risk of harm, abuse, or neglect
- already receiving the Child Care Subsidy payment.

And you and/or your partner:

- care for your child at least 65% or more
- are liable for childcare fees at an approved childcare service
- meet Australian residence rules.

The child or young person you are caring for must:

- meet immunisation requirements to attend childcare
- be 13 years old or under
- be between 14 and 18 years old with a disability.

To Apply

- You need a mygov account linked to Centrelink.
- Supply a Customer Reference Number (CRN) which you can get by proving your identity:
 - online
 - over the phone
 - in person at a Centrelink Service Centre.
- You can find out more details on how to apply here: [How to apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy - Additional Child Care Subsidy - Services Australia](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy).

Early Start Kindergarten

For:

- Carers and parents experiencing financial hardship
- Children involved with child protection.

Website: [Early Start Kindergarten](https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten) <https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten>

- Provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten per week for 2 years.

- Early Start Kindergarten is available in all kindergarten programs delivered by a qualified teacher.

Eligibility

You are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten if you:

- Have a child that will be 3 years old by 30 April in the year they start kindergarten, and either:
 - are from an asylum seeker or refugee background
 - identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
 - have had contact with child protection
 - enrolled in a kindergarten program delivered by a Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) with a registered early childhood teacher.

To Apply

- Contact your kindergarten or local council for help with applications.
- You will be asked to provide details about the child and be asked to provide the following documents:
 - your child's birth certificate or any other identity documents (visa, immicard, etc.)
 - your child's medical and immunisation records
 - details of court orders or child protection involvement.
- More information and contact details on how to apply for Early Start Kindergarten is available here [Early Start Kindergarten | vic.gov.au](https://earlystart.vic.gov.au).

State Schools' Relief

For:

- Carers and parents experiencing financial hardship
- Young people in independent living or homeless.

Website: [State Schools' Relief](https://stateschoolsrelief.org.au/) <https://stateschoolsrelief.org.au/>

- Provides eligible government primary, secondary and specialist school students with:
 - new uniforms
 - footwear
 - school supplies and learning devices
 - educational resources
 - 30-day prepaid travel passes.
- Your school's principal, assistant principal or welfare/wellbeing coordinators are able to submit applications on the student's behalf.

Eligibility

Children and young people/carers are eligible for the State Schools' Relief if:

- are facing financial difficulties
- are currently in independent living and/or homeless
- are affected by domestic or family violence.
- Please discuss with your school if you are experiencing any other hardships.

To apply

- Contact your school's principal, assistant principal or wellbeing coordinator to discuss your needs. If eligible they can make the application on your behalf.
- More information about State Schools' Relief is available here: [Contact - State Schools' Relief](#).

Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund

For:

- Carers and Parents experiencing financial hardship
- Children and young people in care.

Website: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund](https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund) <https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>

- Provides payments for children to attend activities like:
 - school camps or trips
 - excursions and incursions
 - school-organised sport events
 - outdoor education programs
 - graduations.
- As of the 1st of January 2026, all eligible primary and secondary students can receive up to \$400 per year.
- Payments are made directly to the school and are allocated to the student not the school.

Eligibility

You are eligible for this fund if you are:

- holding a valid, means tested concession card
- a student aged 16 years or older (who is considered to be a mature minor) and have a:
 - Youth Allowance Health Care Card
 - Disability Support Pension Card
 - a refugee or asylum seeker
 - caring for a child or young person in care.

To apply

- Apply using the following application forms:
 - [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund application form](#)
 - [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund application form – students aged 16 years and over](#)
 - [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund application form – students aged 16 years and over requiring parent consent](#)
- Applications need to be submitted to the school your child is attending.
- You can find out more information about the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund here: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund | vic.gov.au](#).

Get Active Victoria

For:

- Parents and carers experiencing financial hardship
- Children and young people in care.

Website: [Get Active](https://www.getactive.vic.gov.au/) <https://www.getactive.vic.gov.au/>

- Get Active is an online resource that promotes living an active lifestyle.
- The 'Kids Voucher Program' covers up to \$200 towards uniforms and equipment, membership and registration fees at participating sports clubs and associations.

Eligibility

You are eligible for the 'Kids Voucher Program' if you are:

- a Victorian resident aged between 0-18 years old
- named on a Health Care Card/Pensioner Concession Card and Medicare card
- a refugee or asylum seeker
- caring for a child or young person in care.

To apply

- You can apply here <https://www.getactive.vic.gov.au/vouchers/apply-for-vouchers/>.

Supports for Learning and Transitions to Higher Education:

Below is a list of online and in person supports for a range of topics, subject and circumstances.

Raising Expectations

For:

- Young people in all care types.

Website: [Raising Expectations](https://www.raisingexpectations.com.au/) <https://www.raisingexpectations.com.au/>

- The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (CECFW) partners with Victorian TAFEs, Universities and Government to provide support for higher education for young people exiting care.
- Raising expectations supports include:
 - outreach and student support services at partner TAFE and universities
 - TAFE and university scholarships and grants
 - referrals to supports- including TAFE tuition fee waivers and other supports
 - peer mentoring support
 - tailored TAFE and university tours and campus experiences
 - workshops for care experienced young people.

Eligibility

Young people are eligible for Raising Expectations support if they:

- are pursuing a TAFE or university course
- have had experience in kinship, foster, permanent or residential care.

To apply

- Contact Raising Expectations hello@raisingexpectations.com.au for more information on which supports would work best for you or a young person in your care.

The Regional Education Support Network (RESN)

For:

- Children and young people who live in rural or regional Victoria or New South Wales.

Website: [Regional Education Support Network \(RESN\)](https://www.resn.org.au/) <https://www.resn.org.au/>

- A free, online service that supports rural and regional senior students to access free online tutoring.
- Students are split into small tutoring groups and can access:
 - online academic tutoring 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
 - a learning database with practice questions, study guides and tertiary and career information

- online workshops and consultations
- online and in school seminars on how to make the most of year 12
- mentoring programs.

Eligibility

Young people are eligible for RESN if they are:

- a student from a regional or rural school partnered with RESN
- an individual student not attending a partner school and experiencing mitigating circumstances.

To apply

- Discuss with your teacher or principal to request RESN tutoring on your behalf. If your school is not a partner school, contact RESN for more information at hello@resn.org.au to discuss individual support from RESN.

Transport Accident Commission (TAC) L2P Program

For:

- Carers and parents who are unable to supervise the young people they care for
- Young people between the ages of 16 and 21 who do not have access to a regular supervising driver or vehicle to gain driving experience.

Website: [Transport Victoria TAC L2P Program](https://transport.vic.gov.au/registration-and-licensing/licences/learner-permit/tac-l2p-learner-driver-mentor-program) <https://transport.vic.gov.au/registration-and-licensing/licences/learner-permit/tac-l2p-learner-driver-mentor-program>

- A free program for eligible learner drivers to gain driving experience for a Victorian probationary licence (P plate).

Eligibility

Young people are eligible for the TAC L2P program if they:

- are aged between 16 and 21 (in certain cases, up to 23)
- hold a current Victorian learner's permit
- do not have access to a supervising driver and/or suitable vehicle
- are an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- are a new arrival and/or refugee.

To apply

- Create and log into a myVicRoads account
- Apply as a learner driver through the 'licences and learners permits' tab
- Instructions are available here myVicRoads account [Log into myVicRoads : VicRoads](#)

The Pyjama Foundation

For:

- Children and young people in all care types.

Website: [The Pyjama Foundation](https://thepyjamafoundation.com/) <https://thepyjamafoundation.com/>

- The Pyjama Foundation aims to expand the education and life skills of children and young people in care.
- The 'Love of learning' program sends volunteers to a child's home once a week to aid and support them with at-home learning exercises and homework.

- The 'Teen Life Skills Program' provides young people aged between 12 and 24 with a volunteer mentor to help with:
 - educational and vocational skills
 - goal-setting skills
 - promoting inclusion and building community resilience.

Eligibility

Children and young people are eligible for the Pyjama Foundation if:

- they are in care
- live in Victoria, New South Wales or Queensland.

To apply

- A referral is required from one of the following:
 - child protection practitioner
 - carer
 - foster care agency
 - case worker.
- Find out more information on eligibility and applications here: [The Pyjama Foundation](https://thepyjamafoundation.com/)
<https://thepyjamafoundation.com/>

Embrace Education Victoria

For

- Carers experiencing financial hardship.

Website: Embrace Education

- A University student-run organisation that offers free tutoring to high school students experiencing financial challenges.
- Provides in person for tutoring and homework clubs for students who are experiencing disadvantage.
- May provide calculators, textbooks and stationary items for students in need.

Eligibility

Young people are eligible for support from Embrace Education Victoria if they are a current VCE student and:

- are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background
- come from a refugee or recent migrant background
- are experiencing difficulties with their academic performance
- are unable to pay for tutoring.

To apply

- A referral is required by a:
 - teacher
 - social worker or equivalent.
- Find out more information about Embrace Education here: Embrace Education <https://www.embrace-education.org/>

The Smith Family Foundation

For:

- Carers and parents experiencing financial hardship.

Website: [The Smith Family](#)

- The Smith Family supports children facing financial challenges to access education and learning programs.
- The 'Learning for Life' program allows members of the community to sponsor a child or young person through their schooling.
- 'Learning for Life' provides:
 - financial support for uniforms, books and excursions
 - a coordinator to provide support throughout the student's education cycle
 - ongoing access to targeted Smith family education and mentoring programs.
- 'Learning for Life' deliver several programs that relate to the student's interests and circumstances:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs
 - arts programs
 - financial programs
 - literacy and numeracy programs
 - technology programs
 - work experience programs.

Eligibility

Children and young people are eligible for the Smith Families 'Learning for Life' program if:

- you live in a community where the Smith family operates
- you hold a Pension Concession or Healthcare Card
- the child/young person attends school regularly.

To apply

- Contact the school your child or young person attends to see if they are a partner of the Smith Family.
- If your school is not a partner, contact your foster care worker or case manager to discuss an application for the 'Learning for Life program'.

Supports for Supplies and Materials

Backpacks 4 Vic Kids

For:

- Carers and parents experiencing financial hardship.
- Children and young people in all care types.

Website: [Backpacks 4 VIC Kids](#)

- Provides a variety of care packs for children and young people in care in Victoria
- The 'School Essentials Packs' includes:
 - stationery
 - lunchboxes and drink bottles
 - combination/padlocks
- These packs can be individually tailored to suit a child or young person's needs.

Eligibility

Children and young people are eligible for a 'School Essentials Pack' program if you:

- are caring for a child or young person in care
- are facing financial difficulties
- are currently in independent living and/or homeless
- are affected by domestic or family violence.

To apply

- Apply for packs on their [Backpacks 4 Vic Kids](https://www.backpacks4vickids.org.au/) <https://www.backpacks4vickids.org.au/> website.

To receive this document in another format, email Care Services <careservices@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

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Available at [Education supports for children in care](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/education-supports-children-care) [\(2501278\)](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/education-supports-children-care)