



Good Shepherd
Microfinance

MEDIA RELEASE
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***See over for state by state education cost comparison**

Rising school costs put Queensland families at financial risk

Rising back-to-school costs are draining household budgets, threatening to send thousands of Queensland families into debt, warned the national non-profit Good Shepherd Microfinance.

New research shows the average Australian household spends \$44 per week on education - up 44 per cent in six years and up 1,300 per cent since 1984¹.

Good Shepherd Microfinance CEO Peter McNamara said this time of year always saw more parents applying for no interest and low-fee loans to help make ends meet.

“There’s truly no such thing as a free education,” Mr McNamara said.

“The expectation that students bring their own device, like a laptop or tablet, is just an impossible expense for many families.

“Then you add uniforms, books, excursions, music or sport; parents have to find hundreds, if not thousands of dollars before their child even starts the new school year.

“That can make it desperately difficult for people on low incomes to afford their normal bills, like food and power.”

In Brisbane, the average cost of Government schooling for a child through to Year 12 is more than \$75,000, according to the latest data released by the Australian Scholarship Group.

“Low income households don’t usually have savings they can draw on,” Mr McNamara said.

“But they can borrow up to \$1,500 from our national No Interest Loan Scheme, called NILS, and repay only what they borrow. No interest loans are available from hundreds of community groups across the country.”

NILS client John Duncan knows first-hand just how valuable a no interest loan can be.

“I’ve had a no interest loan before, to pay for repairs to my car. It’s so much cheaper than a loan from payday lender,” Mr Duncan said.

“My daughter needs a laptop for school this year. I’ve taken out another no interest loan to pay off the laptop through my daughter’s school, safe in the knowledge that the repayments are manageable and affordable.”

Find your nearest NILS provider at nils.com.au

Media Contact: Tammy Shipperley | Sequel PR | 0403 090 914

Tim Cox | Sequel PR | 0418 357 449

STATE	AVE SPENDING PER WEEK ON EDUCATION ⁱⁱ	TOTAL COST OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLING FROM PREP TO YEAR 12 ⁱⁱⁱ	
National	\$44	\$68,727 metro	\$57,994 regional
ACT	\$61	\$55,064 Canberra	N/A
WA	\$50	\$54,134 Perth	\$53,094 regional
VIC	\$49	\$70,604 Melbourne	\$47,224 regional
NSW	\$45	\$66,470 Sydney	\$73,808 regional
SA	\$37	\$54,938 Adelaide	\$51,615 regional
QLD	\$36	\$75,601 Brisbane	\$65,410 regional
NT	\$31	\$42,628 Darwin	N/A
TAS	\$19	\$48,241 Hobart	\$40,489 regional

NATIONAL AVE SPENDING ON EDUCATION PER WEEK						
1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2010	2016
\$3.30	\$5.84	\$8.57	\$12.87	\$18.12	\$30.56	\$43.86

ⁱ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/6530.0Main%20Features32015-16?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=6530.0&issue=2015-16&num=&view=>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6530.02015-16?OpenDocument>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.asg.com.au/doc/default-source/2019-ASG-Planning-for-Education-Index/asg-2019-planning-for-education-index_national.pdf?sfvrsn=0