

Support with educational costs in Western Australia

This resource includes information about assistance that may be available to Western Australian households with primary or secondary school aged children to help with educational costs.

Government assistance and concessions

Both the Australian Government and the Government of Western Australia have programs available to assist eligible recipients with educational costs. Further detail about relevant Government programs is outlined below.

Secondary Assistance Scheme

Program	Eligibility	Application
An Education Program Allowance which is paid to the school and a Clothing Allowance that is paid to the parent.	Available to parents/guardians with children enrolled in secondary schooling who hold an eligible concession card.	Applications can be made through the Secondary School at which the child is enrolled.
<p>Search: <i>Secondary Assistance Scheme – Concessions WA</i> https://concessions.communities.wa.gov.au/Concessions/Pages/Secondary-Assistance-Scheme.aspx</p>		

ABSTUDY – Support for Secondary School

Program	Eligibility	Application
ABSTUDY is a group of payments and support available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students through Services Australia.	The Scheme is available to parents/guardians with children enrolled in secondary schooling who hold an eligible concession card.	<p>If you're 15 or younger, your parents or guardians need to claim ABSTUDY for you. They can read more about doing this online (link below)</p> <p>If you're 16 or older, you can claim ABSTUDY by calling the ABSTUDY line on 1800 132 317.</p>
<p>Search: <i>Abstudy – Services Australia</i> https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/abstudy</p>		

Secondary Assistance Scheme - ABSTUDY Supplement

Program	Eligibility	Application
The supplement allowance is available to parents/guardians with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in secondary schooling who receive ABSTUDY payments. Comprises of the Education Program Allowance which is paid to the school.	Available to parents/guardians with children enrolled in secondary schooling who receive ABSTUDY payments through Services Australia (Centrelink).	Applications can be made through the Secondary School at which the child is enrolled.
<p>Search: <i>Secondary Assistance Scheme ABSTUDY Supplement – Concessions WA</i> https://concessions.communities.wa.gov.au/concessions/Pages/Secondary-Assistance-Scheme--ABSTUDY-Supplement.aspx</p>		

Student SmartRider

Program	Eligibility	Application
Card holders will get the student fare for any journey Monday – Friday during the school year and concession fares on the weekend and during the Christmas school holidays.	Primary or secondary school students can use the Student SmartRider.	Primary and Secondary school students can order a student SmartRider online. Secondary School Students can also ask their school’s administration about getting started.
<p>Search: <i>Student SmartRider – Transperth WA</i> https://www.transperth.wa.gov.au/smartrider/types-of-smartrider/student-smartrider</p>		

KidSport

Program	Eligibility	Application
Helps WA children take part in community sport and swimming lessons. Eligible children can receive up to \$300 per financial year to cover the costs of joining any approved KidSport Club.	To be eligible applicants must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged 5 to 18 years • Residing in Western Australia • Named on a valid Services Australia Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card • Registering with a KidSport Club. 	Applications are open year-round and can be completed online.
<p>Search: <i>KidSport Portal</i> https://kidsport.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/kidsport/apply-for-kidsport-1/</p>		

Programs

Several community service organisations in WA provide free programs to support households with educational costs. The program criteria and types of assistance that can be provided through each service are outlined below.

The Saver Plus Program

Program	Eligibility	Application
<p>A free 10-month program which provides participants with a personalised savings plan to assist with their education costs and includes group financial literacy activities.</p> <p>Participants can build financial skills, develop life-long savings habits, and receive up to \$500 to assist with education costs.</p>	<p>Participants must have all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card AND an eligible Centrelink payment • Have a child in school OR be studying yourself • Have regular income from work • Be 18+ years old 	<p>Contact 1300 610 355 saverplus@thesmithfamily.com.au</p>
<p>Search: <i>Saver Plus – The Smith Family</i> https://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/programs/financial/saver-plus</p>		

WA No Interest Loans Scheme

Program	Eligibility
<p>Support people on low income with no interest loans in Western Australia.</p> <p>Eligible people can borrow up to \$2000 to pay for educational fees or equipment, including computers, booklists, uniforms, excursions and camps.</p>	<p>To qualify you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in Western Australia. • Have a Health Care Card / Pension Card OR Earn less than \$70,000 p.a before tax (net \$57,000 p.a) or \$100,000 p.a before tax (net \$75,000 p.a) for couple or people with dependents • Have Lived at your current or previous address for 3 months or more. • Be managing your current bills. Either your bills are all paid / up to date or you have a payment arrangement in place • Have the capacity to repay the proposed loan
<p>Search: <i>WA No Interest Loans</i> https://www.wanils.com.au/loans/wa-nils-loan/</p>	

Little Friends Scholarships

Program	Eligibility	Application
These scholarships support children to either further their education and/or be able to participate in extra-curricular activities. A minimum of two scholarships are awarded per State, up to \$500 per child.	Families experiencing the financial impact of domestic and family violence.	The scholarship application can be completed online.
https://www.friendswithdignity.org.au/little-friends-scholarships/		

Support for parents and caregivers

Steps to take if you are struggling to pay school expenses

The National Debt Helpline has an online resource outlining steps to take if you are struggling to pay school expenses such as fees, uniforms, books and extracurricular activities.

<https://ndh.org.au/debt-problems/school-expenses/>

Financial Counselling

Financial counsellors work for not-for-profit organisations and can help you to sort out your debts and work with your creditors. Locate your nearest financial counsellor by visiting Financial Counsellors' of WA. <https://fcawa.org/>

Ngala Parenting Line

Ngala run a free telephone support service for WA parents and caregivers of children from conception to 18 years. Parents are supported with up to date child development information, parenting support and referrals. The Parenting Line operates as a call-back service. To request a call, contact **9368 9368**. The free call number for country callers using a landline is 1800 111 546. The service operates between **8 am to 8 pm, seven days a week**, including public holidays.

Positive Parenting Program

The Triple P - Positive Parenting Program, gives parents and carers ideas and strategies to help their child develop the skills and behaviours they need for a healthy childhood. Triple P offers a free online program for parents and also hosts free seminars on various topics, across WA.

<https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/au/triple-p/>

Phone support services

A list of emergency support lines is available on the Department of Education website.

<https://www.education.gov.au/about-department/contact-us/emergency-support-services>

WA Connect – Search for community organisations who can assist with school supplies

WA Connect is an online directory of community services in Western Australia. To locate emergency relief providers who may be able to assist with educational costs, use the search form on WA Connect and search for 'educational support'.

Search: 'WA Connect' - <https://wacconnect.org.au/>

Support available to community organisations and schools

Below is a list of services which may be able to assist organisations with the support they are able to provide. These are not suitable to share directly with community members.

Dandelions WA - backpacks

Dandelions WA provide brand-new school backpacks filled with essential items like stationery, lunch boxes, water bottles, hats, and toiletries. Schools and organisations who can distribute backpacks to students can register online for supplies <https://www.dandelionswa.org.au/schools>

Variety EduKids Grant

Variety EduKids Grants help WA kids receive an essential education by providing funding for school equipment. Assistance is available directly to government primary and high schools to support disadvantaged children. Applications for the school year ahead will open in October – November. <https://www.variety.org.au/wa/programs/variety-wa-grants/>

Give Write – stationary packs

Give Write is a not-for-profit organisation which provides stationery for school children. Requests for stationary packs can be made online at <https://givewrite.org.au/donations-2/request-support/>

DijiRed - devices for students

DijiRed's Laptops for Students initiative recycles digital devices and provides them to students at a reduced fee. Fee structure varies between \$150-\$800 depending on the device available. Providers can support a community member to request a device using the online form. <https://dijired.org.au/request-a-device/#page-content>

Refurbished computers

The Wanneroo Community Men's Shed undertakes refurbishment and recycling of computers. The refurbished computers are for sale at affordable prices, to Centrelink recipients, charity organisations and non-profit organisations. Visit <https://wcmenshed.org/>

Zephyr Education Inc – school supplies

Zephyr supplies families impacted by violence who are being supported by a shelter or other service provider, with essential school supplies. This includes school uniforms, shoes and socks, text books and stationery, school bags, sports bags, swim packs, and all other school essentials. Zephyr can also pay resource fees for eLearning and other purposes. Further information and requests <https://zephyreducation.com.au/contact-us/enquiry/>

GIVIT – NFP organisations requesting items on behalf of a community member

GIVIT run appeals requesting funding or donations of items that can be used to support education. Organisations can request specific items in the 'Ready to Learn' appeal. Visit GIVIT for more information and to make requests. <https://www.givit.org.au/ready-to-learn>