

STATE SCHOOLS' RELIEF

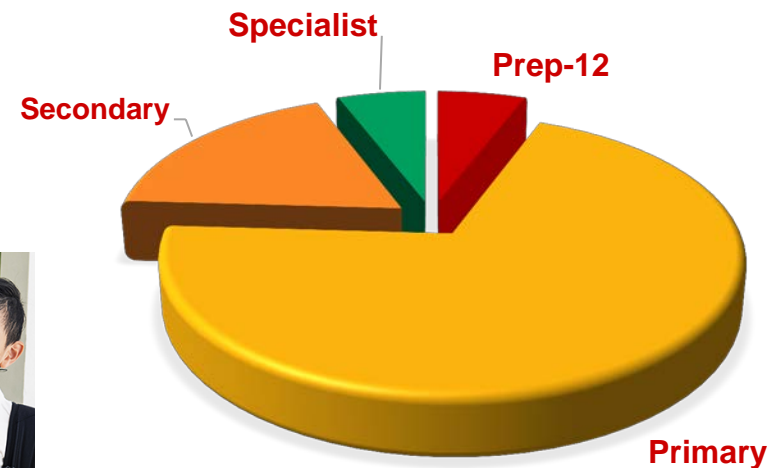
The importance of *belonging*
for students in our state schools



- ❖ Sue Karzis
Chief Executive Officer
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Who receives State Schools' Relief assistance?

- In the 2018/2019 financial year a total of **56,622** Victorian state school students were supported by SSR
 - Items valued at **\$6,336,549** were provided kids in **1,282** schools
 - That's an average of **\$4,892 in support** per school
 - At an average cost of **\$111.00 per student**



Schools assisted
Prep-12 = 75
Primary = 900
Secondary = 234
Specialist = 75

Why **belonging** is so important

- Belonging is primal; it's fundamental to our sense of happiness and wellbeing
 - Isolation, loneliness and low social status can harm a child's subjective sense of wellbeing, as well as intellectual achievement, immune function and health. Research shows that even a single instance of exclusion can undermine wellbeing and IQ test performance
 - For children and young people to thrive at school they need to feel “personally accepted, included and supported by others in the social environment” (Goodenow, 1993)
 - Children who may struggle to feel included and belong are those who are perceived as different in some way and those children who have poor school attendance (Mentally Healthy Schools)
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What can schools do?

- Create an environment in which children feel that they belong and feel valued
- School staff need to be aware of children who are struggling and communicate the support available to them
- Research by Sanchez Colon & Esparza (2005) found that a sense of belonging significantly predicted academic outcomes including motivation, effort and school attendance



ACER research findings

- A 2018 report by ACER found that Australian students on average reported a poorer sense of belonging at school compared to students across the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)
- The report also found that the sense of belonging has declined between 2003-2015
- The report found that males felt a greater sense of belonging than females and less than 8% of indigenous students felt that they belonged at school
- The statement “I feel like I belong in school” resonated with only 65% of students in the lowest socioeconomic quartile compared to 78% of students in the highest socioeconomic quartile

ACER research findings

- 73% of low socioeconomic students said they felt awkward and out of place in their school, compared to 82% of high socioeconomic students. There was a similar difference in the proportion of each group of students who said they felt like an outsider at school



The Impact of Disadvantage

- Children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds often feel judged and like they don't belong
- <https://youtu.be/rDFbthW53fg>



How we can support

- State Schools' Relief can assist with the following items:
 - Uniforms
 - School shoes
 - Underwear, socks, singlets
 - Swimwear
 - School bags (in the form of vouchers)
 - Text books for secondary students
 - Graphing calculators for STEM students
 - iPads for non verbal students
 - Myki cards - pilot program beginning Term 1, 2020

How to access our help

- State Schools' Relief provides support to any Victorian student attending a government school (primary, secondary, specialist or language) on the advice of the school
- If you require financial assistance with your child's uniform, school shoes, etc., you will need to make an appointment with the school principal, assistant principal or wellbeing/welfare coordinator to discuss your situation
- The school will then place an application for assistance directly with us, on your behalf
- Should additional support be required, please contact us and we can liaise with the school directly



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