

Commissioner Connolly calls on government to invest in school excursions to support SA families doing it tough

South Australia's Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly, has today released her Anti-Poverty Week Statement calling on the South Australian government to provide financial support to enable all students in SA to participate in active learning experiences. These include attending a school camp, going on a field trip, or being part of a music or sports tour.

For this year's National Anti-Poverty Week (15 – 27 October) Commissioner Connolly is focusing in on the impact that missing out on school camps, field trips and excursions has on children and young people. She argues that because of the benefits we know these interactive learning experiences offer students, we should ensure that all students can participate in them.

One of the ways to fix this inequity quickly is to cover the costs for those who are already qualified to have a School Card. In addition, the government should develop a state-wide grant program to enable all students to participate in school active and immersive experiences, particularly those from low-SES and regional and remote schools who are currently missing out.

A new state-wide Educational Excursions and Camps Grant Program would enable students from disadvantaged regional and remote government schools to attend educational excursions to Adelaide and elsewhere. It would also enable these students to attend outdoor school camps, enjoy cultural visits and attend vocational career and work experience opportunities designed to help children and young people make more informed decisions about their future.

Active and immersive experiences provide students with a rich variety of activities outside the school setting. This places them in different environments that promote their participation and engagement with sporting, cultural, educational, and outdoor activities. In addition, they can promote better school attendance and foster an environment of striving for better educational performance overall.

The Commissioner calls on the government to “walk the talk” and provide opportunities that enable all students to experience the aspirational benefits of immersive education by closing the equity gap through eliminating the financial barriers faced by families and support all students to flourish.

Quotes attributable to Commissioner Connolly:

It is not good enough to acknowledge the value of interactive education opportunities for children’s learning wellbeing, and at the same time deny the opportunity to thousands of students simply because their families are struggling with cost-of-living pressures. It is not fair. All children and young people, including those in lower SES, rural and remote schools, have a right to be experiencing the same opportunities as their more advantaged peers.

To download the full Anti-Poverty Week Statement – click on the link below:

<https://www.ccyp.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/202310-Anti-Poverty-Week-Statement-FINAL.pdf>

For further information on the work of the Commissioner visit: [ccyp.com.au](https://www.ccyp.com.au)

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