

It's about giving young Australians a Start In Life...

Who Is A Start In Life?

We are a dynamic, registered Australian charity that for over 87 years has been helping to change the future of young Australians, regardless of race, colour or creed who are victims of family financial crisis and/or tragedy. We ensure our young Australians receive the financial and emotional support and the equal opportunity they need for a well-rounded education.

What is Compass Youth Education Program?

Compass Youth Education Program is a program run by the charity and providing an education gift program assisting students from pre-school right through to tertiary qualification. The Program provides for the education essentials – fees, textbooks, stationery, uniforms and necessary dental, optical, tuition – also ensuring each student has the necessary technology to complete their school and university work. Compass Youth Education is about shaping good citizens and levelling the playing field for struggling young Australians.

How do Families and/or Students apply for assistance?

Family and student applications are assessed against specific eligibility criteria set by the Program regardless of their academic achievements. We understand that everyone's situation is different and not always straight forward. Our eligibility criteria allow us to assist those who are experiencing challenging times and finding it difficult to meet the costs of sending their children to school or university.

There are certain initial guidelines which must be met in order to apply for the Compass Youth Education program:

- Students are Australian citizens;
- Students are engaged in full time education from Pre-school (at least 2 full-time days) to a Tertiary qualification;
- Students must be under the age of 25 years;
- Independent High School and Tertiary students should be receiving Youth Allowance or Abstudy;
- While being financially assisted by the Program, Tertiary students must meet their course requirements and achieve at least a pass in all subjects per semester.

If a Family or Student meets the above initial guidelines and is experiencing financial hardship, simply complete, sign and attach the required supporting documents to either the Family or Tertiary/Living Away from Home application form and send it to A Start In Life to be assessed.

Applications may be downloaded from our website www.astartinlife.org.au.

How does Compass Youth Education program work?

Once a family or student has qualified for the Compass Youth Education program assistance, they are sent out a 'Welcome Pack' which outlines the form of assistance provided and their obligations to the program.

The Compass Youth Education program provides financial assistance by way of paying for school fees directly, monthly payments or gift vouchers. On a case by case basis, we may assist with additional expenses such as tuition fees, dental and optical treatment. The assistance provided is generally calculated in relation to the family's or student's financial situation and the schooling or tertiary year of the student.

As a part of the program, we maintain a close relationship with our families and students through regular newsletters, promotion to participate in our Adopt An Aussie program, fundraising events and moral support. We often hear from our students throughout the year when they write, phone or email us about their schooling and achievements. At the end of each year, the Compass Youth Education program also has Recognition Awards for those students who have worked hard and/or excelled in areas of their educational and community activities.

There is a serious side to our Program and each student has an obligation to meet the Conditions of Acceptance of the program. Examples of these obligations are providing us with quarterly bank statements and examination results/school reports. The documents are requested to ensure that the assistance is being directed toward schooling expenses, and that students are attending full time studies and meeting their subject requirements. Should the conditions set out in our program not be met by any family/student their assistance may be suspended or discontinued.

How long is a student a part of the program for?

Families and Students may be a part of the program from pre-school right through to tertiary education, should they continually meet the criteria and benchmarks in assessing eligibility for the program. Annually each family or student is required to complete an Annual Review Application to assess their current situation.

How are the assistance payments made?

Each student is required to have an individual bank account into which our payments can be deposited. For the convenience of our families/students, the charity has a streamlined, no fee arrangement with Westpac to enable them immediate access to funds. This is not a criteria of the Program, it simply means less hassle for families, immediate commencement of assistance and a reduction of ongoing costs to students and the charity. Once approved, applications to open one of these accounts may be requested as a part of the Welcome Pack.

