



Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia

Advocating for equitable access to education for students in rural and remote Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

May 9, 2018

ICPA Welcomes Youth Allowance Inclusion to 2018 Budget



ICPA Australia has welcomed news released in the 2018 Federal Budget that acknowledges a national focus for regional, rural and remote education. The direction which rural education must take is obvious if children living in rural and remote locations are to overcome the current educational inequities they experience.

In particular, ICPA (Aust) welcomes the enhanced access to higher education for rural and remote students wishing to receive assistance through Independent Youth Allowance while attending a tertiary institution.

Following on from the Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education (IRRRRE) conducted in 2017, Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham has announced improved access to Youth Allowance for regional students who must relocate to study. The Parental Income cut-off for the regional workforce independence criterion will increase from \$150,000 to \$160,000, plus an additional \$10,000 increase to the cut-off for each additional child in the family.

Federal ICPA President Mrs Wendy Hick said, "It is encouraging to see the Federal Government recognise the struggle regional, rural and remote students face in trying to access Higher Education. We thank Minister Birmingham for his consideration which could see as much as a 75% increase in regional students qualifying for Youth Allowance."

ICPA (Aust) has been advocating for changes which include the Parental Income Limit for both Dependent and Independent Youth Allowance for quite some time. After years of lobbying, in November 2015 the Family Assets Test for Youth Allowance was lifted and the complex parental means test was no longer applicable for rural and remote families who were applying for financial support. In January, the time required for a "gap year" for regional and remote students was reduced from 18 months to 14 months. These measures, along with the Budget announcement, are game changers for the many students wishing to continue their higher education and ICPA is extremely pleased that the Federal Government has continued to acknowledge the vigorous lobbying to see equity of access for rural and remote students in tertiary education.

The ICPA (Aust) IRRRRE submission highlighted many areas in need of change. Follow this [link](#) to view our submission.

For further information and comments please contact:

Nikki Macqueen, Federal Publicity Officer ICPA Australia Ph: 0417 793 705

Email: FedPublicityOfficer@icpa.com.au