



Voice for Regional Education

Working Together to ensure access to

Established in 1971, the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) is a national organisation representing regional students and their families at all stages of education and has a large network of branches throughout Australia.

MEDIA RELEASE

12TH September 2024

ICPA WA CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE MORE USEFUL INVESTMENTS TO EASE THE INCREASING COST OF LIVING FOR RURAL, REGIONAL AND REMOTE FAMILIES.

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Western Australia (ICPA WA) while welcoming the State Government's recent series of family activities it will subsidise, believes the money could be better spent to assist the rural, regional, and remote families they advocate for.

ICPA WA President Jane Cunningham said, "While these initiatives are great for our city counterparts, many regional families who would also enjoy these initiatives won't be able to afford to access them, once you consider travel, accommodation, and food costs associated with attending these venues.

"We believe if the Government is serious about easing the financial strain of the increasing costs of living, they should significantly increase the Boarding Away From Home Allowance (BAHA) for all rural and remote families", said Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham believes an increase to the BAHA would provide tangible assistance with the true cost of educating rural children, instead of a one-off gesture that benefits metro families and further isolates rural ones.

A quick survey of the 9 ICPA State Councillors showed that accessing the 9-day VacSwim program this summer would cost between \$633.60 and \$1900.80 per family. A trip to accept the Government's free zoo tickets would cost between \$686.40 and \$2,912, depending on their locations around the State.

"Rural families need real support; the BAHA must be significantly increased to help address this inequity in education. Families already find themselves around \$4,000 out of pocket under the current funding model and this doesn't include additional expenses such as kilometers travelled, accommodation required when traveling and days parents and caregivers spend away from work to drive their children to and from a residential facility", Mrs Cunningham said.

For more comments contact:

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