

ASG Profile

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) helps realise education dreams. ASG offers a proven and proactive way to help parents nurture and fund their children's education. ASG is a not-for-profit organisation and specialist education benefits provider. For almost 40 years, ASG has assisted its Member parents to foster their children's education outcomes.

Education opens doors to life's opportunities

At ASG we believe education positively shapes children's lives. This belief has widespread support. Nations worldwide recognise, as Australia does, that building the education skills of its population is vital. Education helps build skills for the future, develop resiliency for times of hardship, and propel nations to greater levels of prosperity.

Parents hoping to prepare their children for future success in life recognise the importance of education too. They believe education opens the door to many opportunities. Education provides a means for their children to pursue their career dreams and fulfil their potential. They realise education is one of the greatest gifts parents can give their children. They want to nurture their children as they progress through their schooling experiences, just as they would prepare them for other important events.

Rising education costs

Education is one of the fastest rising components of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). During the past 10 years, education has risen at almost twice the rate of inflation. Therefore, ASG encourages parents to take a proactive approach to their children's education early in their children's lives. This enables parents to have greater choice and peace-of-mind.

Total education costs

Many parents under-estimate the costs of education. Education costs encompass a spectrum of costs, including fees and levies, extracurricular activities, clothing, necessities, travel, and computer costs.

ASG is a leading voice on the costs of education. ASG's Education Cost Calculators assist parents to estimate the future costs of their children's education. The calculators are available as a free resource on ASG's website – www.asg.com.au

Lifetime value of schooling and education

While there are costs associated with education, the benefits are many. Schooling offers the literacy and numeracy skills to equip children for life. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of schooling because it forms the basis for any future education and learning.

Research suggests that young people who complete secondary school have richer education and career outcomes than early school leavers. School completers are more likely to earn more, work full-time, experience shorter and less frequent periods of unemployment, and be concentrated in high-skill occupations with broader opportunities for training and extensive career prospects.

NATSEM's (National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling) research has found that young people who complete a bachelor degree are forecasted to earn approximately \$1.5 million more than their lesser educated colleagues over their lifetime.

Preparing for children's education

ASG's Education Program™ gives parents a disciplined way to prepare for the costs of their children's education. Increasingly, parents want to provide a range of options for their children's education. ASG is able to offer Members a range of contribution, benefit, and payment options.

The foundation of ASG's Education Program™ is The Education Fund, which provides for basic secondary and post-secondary costs. The Education Fund is designed to encourage children to pursue their post-secondary qualifications through the payment of a scholarship to the child if post-secondary study is undertaken. Contributions begin from around \$11 per week.

Parents can also choose to supplement their program. They can put aside additional funds towards their children's primary, secondary and post-secondary education with contributions beginning from \$15 per week. ASG's Future Education Program offers people the ability to plan for the education costs of their future children. This is a unique concept and the first program of its type in Australia. ASG's Future Education Program contributions start from \$15 per week.

As ASG funds are designed specifically for education, they fulfil the requirements of a 'scholarship plan' under the Tax Act. This allows the funds to receive concessional tax treatment, which in turn optimises the child's scholarship benefit.

ASG Members gain the peace-of-mind that comes from preparing for education with an organisation that cares as much for their children's education as they do.

Snapshot of ASG

- ASG has helped more than 412,000 Member parents prepare for their children's education. Currently ASG has 172,000 Member parents.
- ASG has more than \$1.6 billion in funds under management.
- The organisation has returned more than \$1.4 billion in education benefits to Members and their children.
- In the past financial year, ASG supported more than 72,000 students in their secondary or post-secondary education.
- ASG is Australia's leading not-for-profit organisation specialising in supporting its Members to create education opportunities for their children.
- With a history of nearly 40 years, ASG was established as a parent cooperative—utilising the structure of a friendly society.

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Member benefits

ASG strives to provide its Member parents with a range of resources designed to assist families to achieve better education outcomes for their children. Education and family information and career guidance resources are provided through various specialty websites and Member communications, such as ASG's Member newsletter, *ASG's Scholastic*. ASG Member parents also receive offers for discounted services, from home loans to medical insurance.

National network

ASG's Head Office is in Melbourne, Australia. ASG has a further 15 offices located throughout Australia and New Zealand, and more than 170 licensed Counsellors. ASG employs more than 100 staff. For more information about ASG and ASG's Education Program™, phone 1800 648 945 or visit www.asg.com.au

Other products and services

Educational products distribution

Marcom Projects is a leading supplier of educational DVD and CD-ROM programs to schools, colleges, universities, public libraries, businesses, community organisations and government departments across Australia and New Zealand. More: phone 07 3340 8900 or visit www.marcom.com.au

Making school fee payments easier

Managing the payment and collection of independent school fees and costs effectively and conveniently is emerging as a major education issue for parents and schools. ASG's School Plan is a payment plan for managing school fees and costs that offers benefits for both families and schools. More: phone 1800 337 419 or visit www.schoolplan.com.au

Community and education support

ASG is committed to supporting a range of education and community initiatives for children, parents, and teachers.

Family benefits through others

ASG supports families in the community by building relationships with organisations such as Early Childhood Australia, The Smith Family, Melbourne Graduate School of Education – University of Melbourne, Australian Children's Literary Board, Cognition Education Limited (NZ), and Life Education Trust (NZ).

Developing social-emotional well-being

Licensed to ASG, You Can Do It! Education (YCDI) aims to provide Dr Michael Bernard's foundations of achievement to develop children and young people's social and emotional well-being in school, home, and the community. Many thousands of primary and secondary schools use YCDI resources. YCDI produces the leading social-emotional curriculum available for the early childhood setting. More: 1800 803 135 or visit www.youcandoit.com.au

Recognising teachers - NEiTA

The National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEiTA) has long acknowledged that outside the family home, a teacher has the greatest influence on a student's learning and performance. The NEiTA ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards have recognised inspirational teaching and excellence since 1994. More: phone 1800 624 487 or visit www.neita.com.au

Education and Junior Horizons

ASG publishes two educational journals—one each for the primary teaching profession and early childhood education. The journals focus on professional self-development, new teaching techniques and practices. They aim to support and inspire teachers and educators, combining current theory and practical information to help educators nurture and guide children to reach their potential.

ASG's KidsLife

Through its websites, www.kidslife.com.au and www.parentbriefings.com.au, ASG offers parents access to hundreds of articles. The articles aim to assist families to understand and address their children's developmental needs. These free online resources provide helpful family support and information. Monthly and quarterly email newsletters provide new and timely resources.

Important research

ASG Student Social and Emotional Health Report

ASG supported research that unveiled groundbreaking findings into the social and emotional health of more than 10,000 Australian students from the early years of schooling to senior secondary school levels. More: visit www.asg.com.au/social-emotional

ASG Early Intervention Research Program

ASG supports the need for early intervention, believing the early years to be critical to the positive education outcomes of children. ASG committed its support to undertake much-needed research in the area of early childhood learning and literacy. The research project aims to discover why some children experience learning challenges at primary and high school, by studying how children learn at the early childhood level when they are potentially most receptive to learning.

Under the auspices of the Melbourne Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne, ASG's Early Intervention Research Program is expected to provide a framework for teachers and parents on how to intervene with children facing learning challenges, and help children gain education success. The program is housed at the university's Early Learning Centre, Abbotsford. More: visit www.asg.com.au/asgeirp

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Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) – a not-for-profit organisation

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