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Australian families to spend up to \$1m on K-12 education

Australian families¹ could spend up to \$1 million on their children's education, according to the ASG Planning for Education Index released today.

The survey found that for a child born in 2015 a private school education is most expensive on the east coast. Parents in Sydney can expect to spend up to \$541,275 per child, while parents in Melbourne could spend up to \$502,088.

Adelaide is the least expensive capital to privately educate a child at \$338,264, followed by Brisbane (\$360,398), Perth (\$367,541), Darwin (\$371,589), Hobart (\$381,677) and Canberra (\$421,418).

The survey revealed that Brisbane is the most expensive city for a systemic² education (\$241,849), while Canberra is the least expensive (\$207,732).

Adelaide is also the least expensive city (\$50,268) to educate a child in the public system, while at the top end, parents in Sydney could pay \$21,138 more.

The survey revealed that across Australia families living in regional areas can expect to pay less than their metropolitan counterparts for a child's education in public, private and systemic schools.

ASG CEO John Velegrinis said regardless of whether choosing to educate a child in a public, private or systemic school, parents need to start planning financially for education from the time their child is born.

"Education is one of life's major investments – in some instances it's an even bigger investment than the family home. What we're advocating is that by putting a little bit away, parents are more likely to achieve the goals and aspirations they have for their children."

Mother of two, Olga Ganopolsky decided to plan and prepare early for her children's education. Nicholas (Year 11) and James (Year 5) both attend a private school in Sydney.

"We came to Australia from Russia and I remember how hard it was for our parents to give us a quality education. It was financially difficult and they found the choices they had to make challenging. I just remember the distinct feeling that this was a really important issue and navigating through that was quite difficult.

"Nicholas is studying German and the payments have been really handy, meaning we could send him to Germany to study at a language institute for one month," Ms Ganopolsky added.

"I'd like the boys to fulfil their full academic potential, which will probably include some form of tertiary education. James is still in primary school but he's already asking questions about the best university to go to if he wants to be a geologist or maybe be an engineer."

Mr Velegrinis said school fees are only one component of total education costs.

"There is a myriad of other costs involved including transport, uniforms and school books, excursions – which can create financial headaches if they're not planned for."

¹ ABS data shows the average Australian family has 1.9 children

² A systemic education includes religious schools e.g. Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church, Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu

The ASG Planning for Education Index, compiled by the member owned organisation, measures a range of variables including school fees, transport, uniforms, computers, school excursions and sporting trips to determine the cost of education.

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Summary of total education costs for a child born in 2015

	Location	Public	Systemic	Private
National	Metropolitan	\$64,416	\$228,120	\$456,933
	Regional	\$52,407	\$169,599	\$321,663
Australian Capital Territory	Metropolitan	\$53,564	\$207,732	\$421,418
New South Wales	Metropolitan	\$71,406	\$234,887	\$541,275
	Regional	\$54,421	\$161,231	\$343,385
Northern Territory	Metropolitan	\$57,909	\$232,454	\$371,589
	Regional	\$48,817	\$153,398	\$294,810
Queensland	Metropolitan	\$59,176	\$241,849	\$360,398
	Regional	\$51,493	\$199,723	\$295,851
South Australia	Metropolitan	\$50,268	\$229,347	\$338,264
	Regional	\$49,759	\$190,817	\$281,126
Tasmania	Metropolitan	\$50,431	\$219,846	\$381,677
	Regional	\$52,542	\$138,649	\$296,007
Victoria	Metropolitan	\$69,349	\$213,916	\$502,088
	Regional	\$51,686	\$151,628	\$344,355
Western Australia	Metropolitan	\$55,458	\$219,988	\$367,541
	Regional	\$49,551	\$129,664	\$298,752

Notes: Figures have been rounded and represent the upper ranges that parents can reasonably expect to pay (including fees, extracurricular activities, clothing, necessities, and computer and internet costs). These figures are provided as a guide only. ASG cannot guarantee that they will represent the actual costs of education for a particular child.

Further information

For comprehensive summary sheets detailing the cost of education in metropolitan and regional Australia visit: www.asg.com.au/edcosts

Editor's notes

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 515,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.com.au

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