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The soaring cost of education – REGIONAL TASMANIA

Regional Tasmania is one of the most expensive regions in Australia to educate a child at a private school according to exclusive research released today.

The ASG Planning for Education Index discovered for a child born in 2017 the forecast cost of a private education in regional Tasmania (\$350,211¹) is \$8400 more than the national regional average (\$341,811) and third only to regional Victoria (\$370,570) and regional New South Wales (\$364,230) as the nation's most expensive.

The index results are better for parents who plan to send their children to government or systemic² schools in regional Tasmania.

The forecast cost of a government education in regional Tasmania is \$48,064, seven per cent or \$3884 below the national regional average (\$51,948), and second only to regional Western Australia (\$44,783) as the country's most affordable.

The estimated cost of a systemic education in regional Tasmania is \$165,042, eight per cent or \$13,651 below the national regional average (\$178,693), but more expensive than regional Victoria (\$161,757) and regional Western Australia (\$147,522).

The ASG Planning for Education Index also forecasts preschool or kindergarten in Australia could cost parents between \$2818 and \$8506 depending on the school type.

The survey also discovered that the estimated cost of a private education across regional Australia has soared by 61 per cent in the past decade. For a child born in 2017 the forecast cost of a private education across regional Australia is \$341,811, a jump of \$130,148 compared to a child born in 2007 (\$211,663).

The estimated cost of a regional systemic education has also skyrocketed by 52 per cent over the same period to \$178,693, while the estimated cost of a government education has climbed 19 per cent over the decade to \$51,948.

Based on more than 12,500 responses, the index calculates a range of variables including school fees, transport, uniforms, computers, school excursions and sporting trips to determine the cost of education.

School fees, the cost of extracurricular activities including excursions and uniforms have all risen in the past year, however computers and transport costs have fallen when compared to 2016.

Launceston father of three Travis McKeon says it's important to plan for education costs so his three children, Clay (year 12), Sunny (year 2) and Ruby (year 2) won't feel the burden of paying for their higher education.

¹ These figures are the average estimated costs and represent the highest amount parents and families could expect to pay.

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

"Sunny and Ruby attend a public school so the costs are reasonable for now, but being twins, we're going to have to factor in two sets of uniforms, school bags and fees each year.

We want to make sure we have a financial buffer so the ASG funds are available when they want to go to university. But if they want to do a trade, we will support them with their choices. It's been seamless—our contributions just come out of our bank account and we never really miss it.

Clay (year 12) would like to go to university and he will definitely welcome his scholarship benefit. He's hoping to stay at home and study in Launceston so he won't have to worry about rent or food. This will give him a bit more breathing space to cover his tuition and other expenses."

ASG CEO John Velegrinis says the cost of education has risen at two and a half times the rate of inflation over the past decade.

"Our research predicts the cost of education will increase, irrespective of whether you send your child to a government, systemic or private school.

The estimated cost of a government education across regional Australia has jumped \$8443 in the past decade. That is why we encourage parents to start planning for education as early as possible, even from the moment their child is born."

Mr Velegrinis says Australians are fortunate to have excellent government, systemic and private schools to choose from, but costs can spiral out of control.

"If you have three children, the cost of educating them in Tasmania's regional private education system could top \$1 million. That's more than the purchase price of the average family home.

We advocate parents use a disciplined approach by putting a little bit away each week so they can financially afford to meet their children's educational goals and aspirations."

Independent statistician and Managing Director of foreseexchange Charlie Nelson says a range of economic factors influence the cost of education.

"Employment growth, hourly wages and inflation all impact the cost of living, which puts extra strain on the family budget.

With school fees likely to rise further, it has never been more important for parents to financially plan for their child's future."

For more information about ASG call 131 ASG (131 274) or visit www.asg.com.au

Summary of total forecast education costs for a child born in 2017

	Location	Public	Systemic	Private
National	Metropolitan	\$68,613	\$239,672	\$487,093
	Regional	\$51,948	\$178,693	\$341,811
Australian Capital Territory	Metropolitan	\$52,012	\$233,194	\$447,307

New South Wales	Metropolitan	\$75,080	\$250,862	\$575,140
	Regional	\$53,806	\$173,354	\$364,230
Queensland	Metropolitan	\$60,135	\$243,964	\$372,037
	Regional	\$51,299	\$199,328	\$337,027
South Australia	Metropolitan	\$58,587	\$246,786	\$377,131
	Regional	\$50,079	\$197,508	\$295,924
Tasmania	Metropolitan	\$45,832	\$201,212	\$433,990
	Regional	\$48,064	\$165,042	\$350,211
Victoria	Metropolitan	\$77,371	\$224,548	\$536,515
	Regional	\$54,510	\$161,757	\$370,570
Western Australia	Metropolitan	\$56,788	\$235,800	\$407,627
	Regional	\$44,783	\$147,522	\$319,135

A very small number of responses were received from the Northern Territory in the most recent survey. As such, the provision of cost estimates for the Northern Territory in isolation would be highly unreliable and therefore have not been included. It is recommended that those in the Northern Territory refer to the national figures or the figures for adjoining states as a basis for planning. These figures are the average estimated costs and represent the highest amount parents and families could expect to pay. 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

ASG conducts the ASG Planning for Education Index annually, asking parents to estimate education costs, which cover preschool, primary and secondary schools in Australia. Cost estimates are based on 12,500 responses collected by ASG.

To help with the costs of education, ASG Funding Solutions is an annual education costs payment service that takes the financial pressure off parents, families and guardians and allows you to pay for your child's school fees, uniforms, books and other education items in manageable instalments over the year.

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 530,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.5 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.com.au

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