



APRIL 2023

Brighter Futures

A start in life
a brighter future for young australians



🌟 A START IN LIFE TURNS 100!

100 years of helping students

Founded in 1923 to support children who lost parents in World War I, *A Start in Life* focused on providing basic financial assistance which enabled students to complete studies appropriate to the professions they were pursuing.

Basics then were considered to be items such as books, railway fares and sustenance. Over the past 100 years as our society, its needs and the education of young Australians have transformed, we too have evolved and adapted.

Today, we continue to support young Australians from all walks of life who are facing financial and other barriers to their education. We still provide the essentials; however, we also go above and beyond to ensure these students thrive and are uniquely positioned to obtain the skills and behaviours needed to be successful in their careers and to enjoy fulfilling lives.

We focus on the individual and their distinctive needs. We meet regularly with students and their carers. We encourage engagement with their education and extra-curricular activities, facilitate digital literacy, and promote development of time management skills. By doing this, we not only support the current education of each student, but also enhance their future career prospects.

We are committed to helping Australia's younger generations into the future and ensuring our educational support remains relevant. This year, we have added a pilot program focused on equipping students with 21st Century skills and broadening their career horizons (read more about this on the back page!). Over the next 100 years, with societal and employment changes occurring ever more rapidly, our programs and support will evolve accordingly. We are excited to continue this invaluable work, with ongoing involvement from you, our generous supporters.

In 1959, our charity helped cover the annual fees for a university student, totalling 37 pounds (or \$74). Annual fees for a university student studying Accounting in 2023 are over \$15,000!





“We left for school AND came home from school with a SMILE! This is such an unbelievable change to previous years.”

– Scotty’s mum

CELEBRATING OUTCOMES

Student Strides

Every student faces their own personal challenges. Yet, through our support, they also each experience their own personal achievements.

Learn about some of the special strides Dee and Scotty have made below.

Dee Year 11

Dee has been supported by *A Start in Life* since Kindergarten. Her single mother is extremely supportive, telling us she didn’t want to let financial difficulties “get in the way of something as important as school and education”. Dee’s mother never learnt to read or write. This has been an ongoing challenge for Dee as she has not had help at home to consolidate her learning, such as being able to check homework with a parent. We became aware of this when Dee began receiving our assistance, as she was already falling behind in Kindergarten and her principal was advocating for extra educational support. In light of this, we provided Dee with additional learning resources including tutoring, technology to access specialised learning aids, and books for reading at home. These have proven to make an incredible difference to Dee’s education over the years and she told us the biggest help has been tutoring – “When I am stuck with anything at school, I know I have [my tutor] to go to”. Over the years, she has been an SRC

“Since receiving support from *A Start in Life* I have achieved so much... I really appreciate [you] helping me in my school life.”

– Dee

leader, library monitor, member of school clubs, and has won various school awards. Through our regular check-ins, we have encouraged numerous learning goals as well as Dee’s love of reading, where she won our read-a-thon in 2021 by reading an impressive 2,717 pages in a month! As one teacher said, “It is an absolute pleasure teaching Dee. She arrives at school each day with a smile, ready to learn.” Dee told us she was proud of her Maths exam result last semester, and in her recent school report her teachers commended her continued progress, willingness to develop her skills and understanding, and “extensive understanding of herself as a learner”.

Scotty Year 10

Our support for Scotty began in Year 6. Scotty always struggled with his learning and has been diagnosed with neurodevelopmental disorders. He also struggled socially, including interacting with his peers and teachers. His single mother is very passionate about his education, and previously enrolled Scotty in tutoring but had to withdraw due to financial constraints. As part of our support, we initially provided specialist one-on-one tutoring to Scotty, which increased his concentration and engagement. Only one semester after commencing our support, Scotty wrote us a thank you letter, proudly stating “for the first time ever I got an award for most academic improvement”. Scotty later transitioned to small group tutoring, which greatly improved his confidence and interactions with others. Our funding has also enabled Scotty to engage in various extra-curriculars, excursions and camps, where he has further developed his social skills and has enjoyed making friends. Over time, his confidence increased so much he ran for the SRC and was elected. He has also received an SRC leadership award, 100% attendance awards, and a service award for dedication to his peers whilst helping in the canteen. His engagement at school and interpersonal skills have continued to improve, with his school advisor recently saying Scotty is “very friendly and ... is always willing to assist staff and peers”. We have very regular interactions with Scotty and his mum, which have been a significant support for the family. We have helped him establish a study routine and his grades have continued to improve, achieving Bands 8 in Reading and Numeracy in NAPLAN. Scotty’s mum and tutor have both expressed they are “extremely proud” of how far he has come!



Scan this QR code to donate and discover other ways to help



OUR COMMUNITY

Community support comes in all forms, and some are very unique!

As a small charity, it means a lot that we have a community who cares deeply about what we do. All donations we receive are incredibly meaningful, impactful and appreciated by students. So too are the unique and inspiring stories shared below.

Hundreds of handwritten letters

Roy Horrocks was a school teacher, principal, highly respected member of his community and fervent supporter of *A Start in Life*. With a warm and generous nature, he championed our charity in numerous ways before sadly passing away recently. Just one example of his tireless efforts included personally handwriting over 100 letters each year to his colleagues and community, informing them of *A Start in Life's* work and encouraging them to join him in supporting us... with many inspired to donate in response! Perhaps the best reflection of his zest for our charity is captured in this email he sent our CEO about meeting with one of his local groups "...will be seeing [them] at our meeting next Thursday and will exhort them to give until it hurts. Should some of them appear to be unresponsive, I will resurrect my long buried headmasterly powers of persuasion".

An auction with a difference

Charlie Gibbon was another loyal and longstanding supporter of *A Start in Life* who passed away last year. In honour and memory of his passion for the education of young Australians and our work, his wife decided to hold a special fundraising auction. This auction, however, was a little different! With the help of a local real estate agency, various furniture items were auctioned off to the local community and all the proceeds were donated to our charity to continue helping future

generations of students thrive. As one of his friends said when he called to tell us about the success of the event, "I am sure Charlie would be very happy".

Local community advocates

Over recent years, a number of Masonic Hall companies have not only exhibited displays about *A Start in Life* within their halls, but have also actively advocated to associates and those using these facilities of the benefits of the educational assistance we provide to students. As a result, valuable donations have been garnered! We are fortunate to also know a few other local groups like these who are equally enthusiastic about what we do and work hard to continually spread awareness about us within their communities.

Other support for *A Start in Life* comes from hands-on fundraising events such as barbeques and lawn bowls days, bequests, community awards, workplace giving, local businesses and organisations, loyal trusts and foundations, the Freemason community, one-off donors and regular donors. With our proud 100 year history, our present work and the future in mind, we continue to build on the work that the charity was founded upon – helping young Australians overcome barriers to their education so they can achieve brighter futures. Our sincere thanks to each and every one of you – our generous supporters – for helping us continue this valuable work.

"...supporting those less fortunate than others, nurturing young folk with education and life principles to become good citizens."

Double Bay Masonic Centre on why supporting A Start in Life is important to them



Pilot scholarship launched!

We are delighted to announce the launch of our additional program of assistance, the Career and Skills Development Scholarship.

Although school is where vital academic knowledge is taught, there is often little time available to focus on future employment and the additional skills that modern careers require. That is why we're introducing the Career and Skills Development Scholarship – to train students in the most relevant skills for 21st Century careers and to broaden their career horizons.

Did you know current Australian students may have up to 17 different jobs across five different industries in their lifetime? With recognition that a modern career no longer means one job for life, but numerous jobs across numerous industries, this scholarship will help students discover and explore wider career options early, identify their innate talents, and equip them with transferrable job skills to help achieve career longevity, flexibility and fulfilment. We call this 'future-proofing'.

We've spent much time researching the major academic, professional, social and behavioural skills that will help career growth and long-term employment, and have put together a program of workshops focused on enhancing these 21st Century skills for students.

Additional highlights of the scholarship include monthly one-on-one meetings with a trained Career Coach, development of an individualised Career Action Plan, assistance in discovering how personal strengths and values may relate to future careers, opportunities to explore possible careers through interactions with

21st Century Skills



Leadership



Communication



Creativity



Organisational skills



Information and digital literacy



Critical thinking and problem solving



Flexibility and adaptability



Social and cross-cultural skills



Professional skills



Study skills

industry professionals, study skills training, and access to job preparation tools and resources.

Beginning in Year 9 and running through until the conclusion of Year 12, this scholarship will be targeted towards students who face financial barriers, yet are aspirational and show a high level of potential. In its pilot phase this year and involving a small number of students, we look forward to sharing more information with you soon. Stay tuned!

I want to help A Start in Life and invest in the future of young Australian students

How you can make your gift:

Donate online at www.astartinlife.org.au

Call us on (02) 9264 3017

Scan and e-mail to support@astartinlife.org.au

Complete and mail this form to
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PO Box 20606
World Square NSW 2002

Deposit donation to
BSB: 032 006
Account No: 424 978
Account Name: A Start in Life
Reference: Your name

OPTION 1

☐ I'd like to make a single gift of:

☐ \$75 ☐ \$125 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$1000 ☐ Other \$ _____

OPTION 2

☐ I'd like to make a regular monthly gift (min. \$20) of:

\$_____ You may change/cancel at any time.

I wish to pay by: ☐ Cheque/Money order (Made payable to A Start in Life)

OR please debit my credit card: ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Amex

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ I would like a receipt emailed to me.

☐ I would like to opt out of receiving future newsletters from A Start in Life.

Donations of \$2 or more may be tax deductible

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