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# **BACK TO SCHOOL 2020**

**LES TWENTYMAN  
FOUNDATION**

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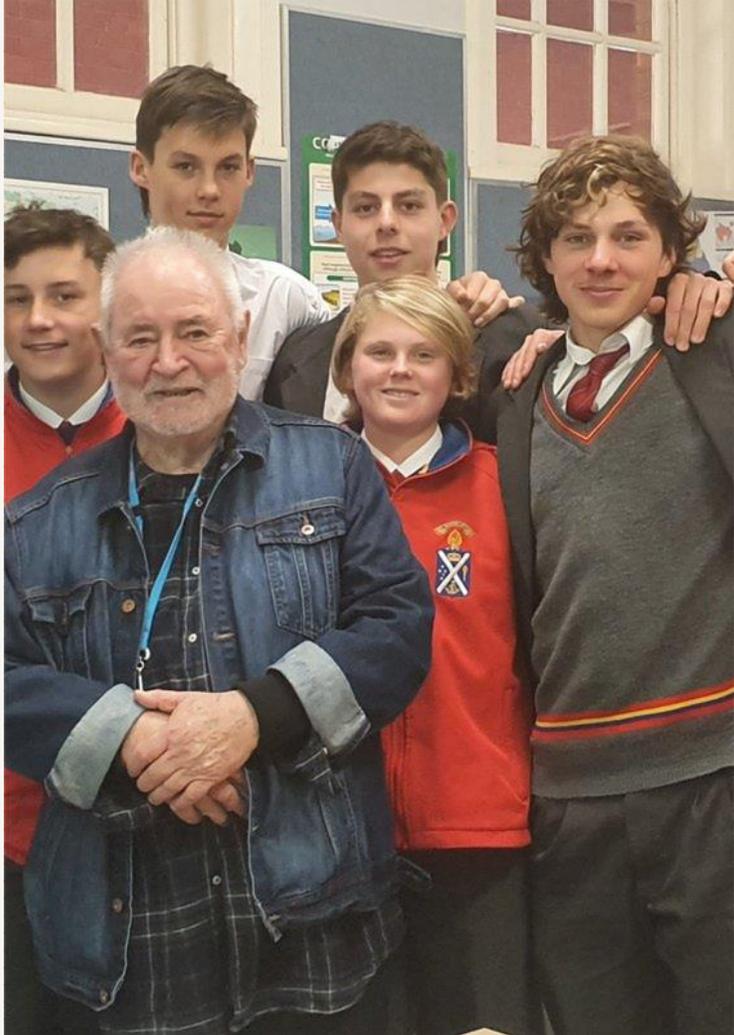
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# 1. INTRODUCTION



# ABOUT

Established in 1984, the Les Twentyman Foundation provides positive intervention and support for young people between the ages of 5 and 25 years who are at risk of disengaging from their education, family and society more broadly.



## VISION:

To see every young person reach their true potential.



## MISSION:

To provide positive intervention and unconditional support for at-risk youth.



## VALUES:

Respect, Dignity, Compassion, Culture

# CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

- 1.1 million children and young people experiencing poverty in Australia.
- Increasing numbers of young people receiving child protection services – more than 170,000 nationally including almost 50,000 in Victoria.
- Many cases are related to abuse or neglect which are often aligned with traumatic events, economic instability and stress.
- An estimated 40,000 students are detached from our education system.
- This leads to a range of adverse academic and social outcomes including low educational attainment, unemployment, poverty, mental health issues and crime.



# THE COST OF EDUCATION

There are 3.2 million people living in poverty in Australia including 1.2 million children and young people. When families experience financial disadvantage, their children's education can be negatively impacted.

- Financial stress and budget pressures top the list of concerns that keep mums awake at night.
- A survey conducted by BIG W found it's getting more expensive to send kids back to school, with parents spending a national average of \$538 per child – up 13% on last year. In Victoria, the cost is higher with an average of \$608 per child.
- We know that the timing of back to school costs is a 'pressure cooker' moment for many parents and carers. With families just getting over the cost of Christmas and school holidays, school expenses at the start of the new year tip many over the edge.
- While public schools offer a free education, many parents and carers are experiencing increased costs associated with education including uniforms, text books, materials, excursions, transport, devices and internet access.
- We want to ensure that families are not forced into further financial hardship through accessing credit like payday loans, rent-to-buy and after pay to cover school expenses.
- In our experience the lack of funds to purchase school text books and other supplies is a major contributor to school truancy and to kids disengaging from their education.

# 2. BACK TO SCHOOL

# BACKGROUND

## Getting kids back to school

Since 1989, our Back to School program has provided education resources, text books and stationery to students and families experiencing financial difficulty.

The aim of the program is to remove financial barriers to attending school. Research shows that there is a direct correlation between education, or a lack of it, with incarceration – with over 75% of those in prison have not completed secondary school.

The program operates on an annual basis with referrals commencing from late November and running until late January (or until funds are exhausted).

A young person must meet specific criteria to be eligible for the program and they are referred by their support worker or school.

## Key statistics

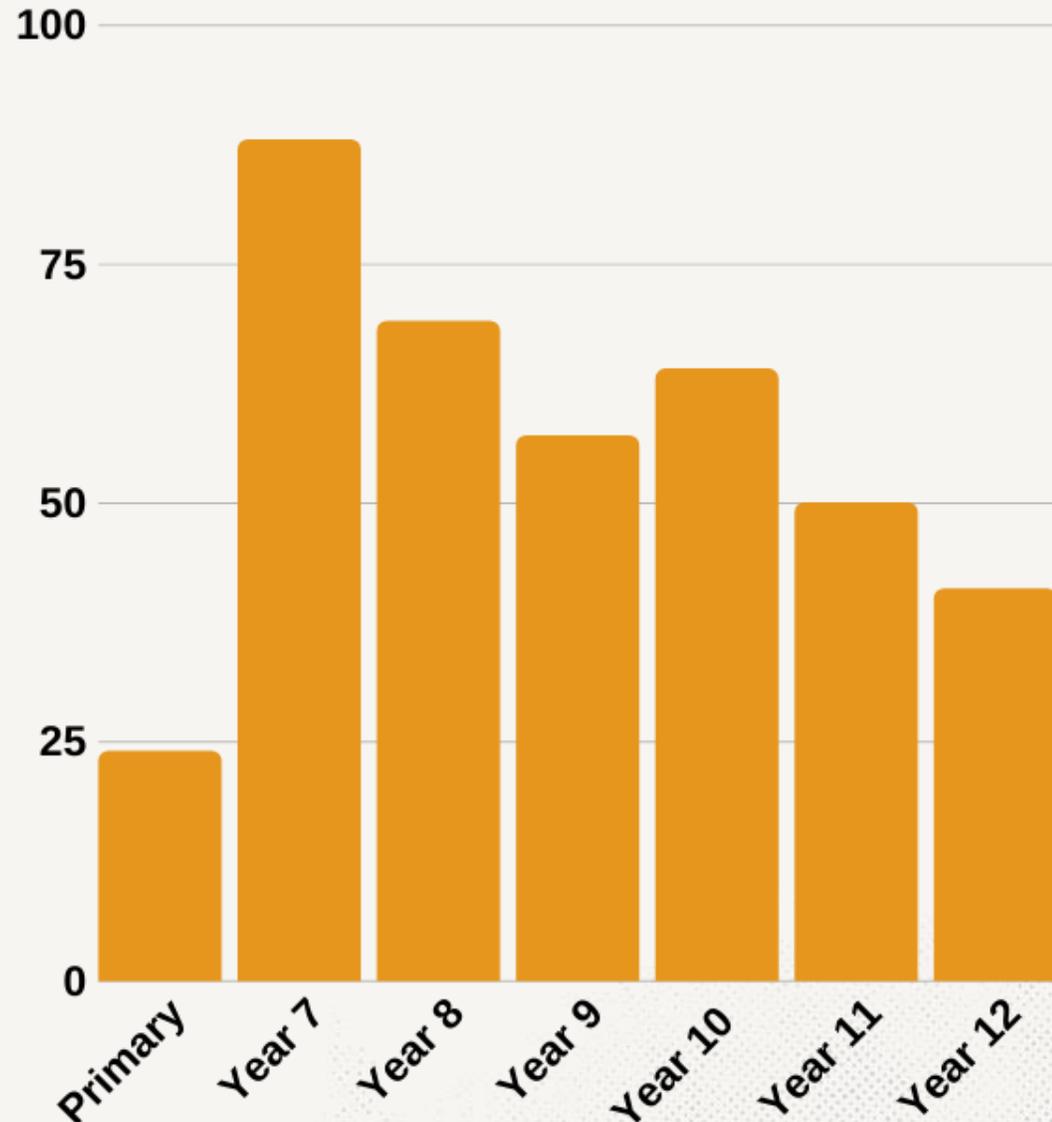
- ▶ Almost 400 young people supported from 111 schools across Victoria
- ▶ Nearly 40% of students were Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander
- ▶ Students came from a wide range of cultural backgrounds – almost 40 nationalities
- ▶ Almost \$400 per student invested



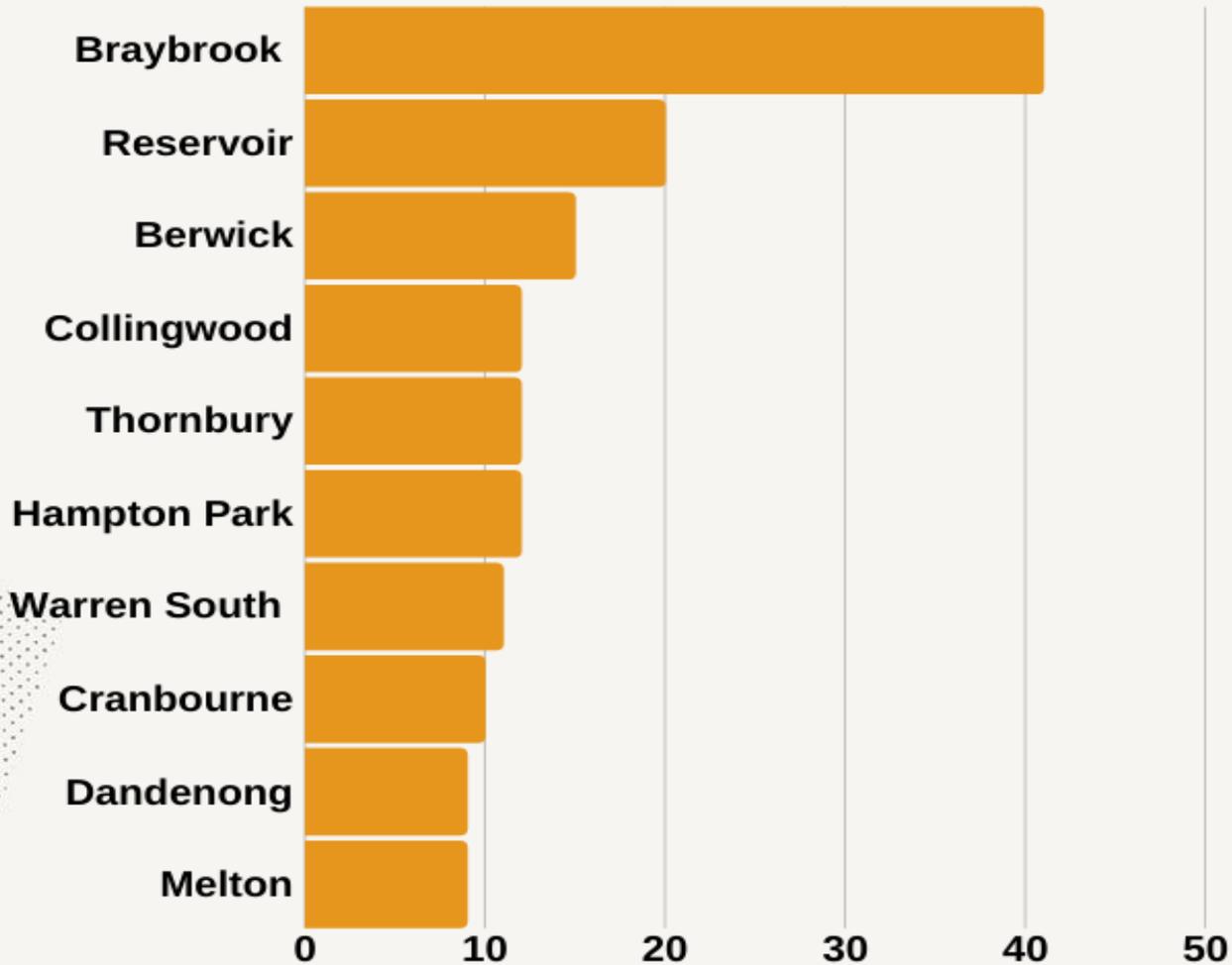
# Demographics

## Age

- In 2020, 395 students received assistance with text books, stationery and digital tools.
- This consisted of 220 females and 175 males.
- All were secondary students bar 17 who were at primary school. The ages ranged from as young as four to 19 years old.
- The largest demand was from students starting secondary school.



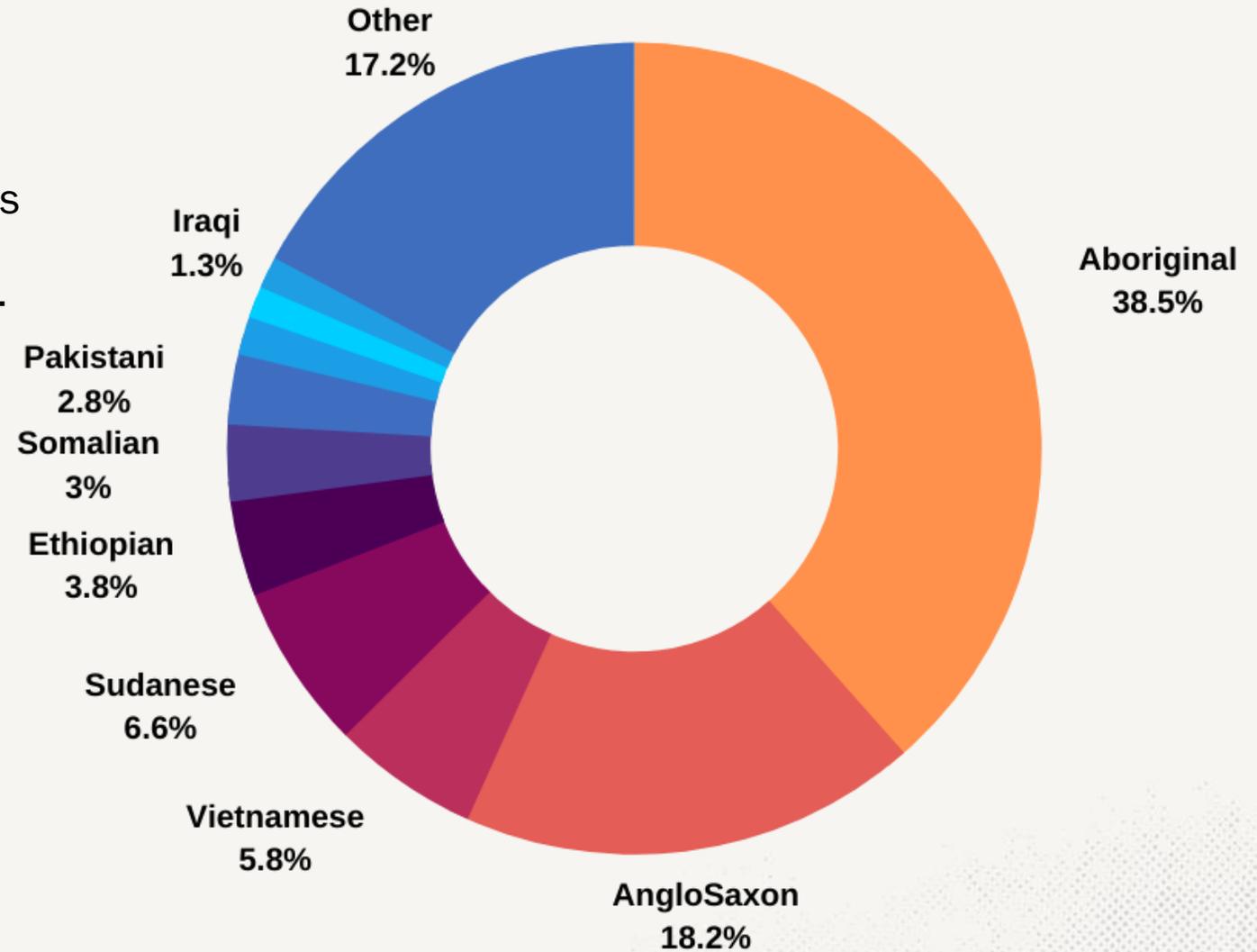
# Location



- The Back to School program was originally established in the western suburbs of Melbourne.
- While most of our students are from Braybrook, word of mouth has increased our reach across many suburbs from Melton to Cranbourne.

# Cultural backgrounds

- Reflecting the Les Twentyman Foundation's commitment to Closing the Gap, 154 students identified as First Nations people. That equates to almost 40%.
- A total of 40 cultural backgrounds were recorded in our data.



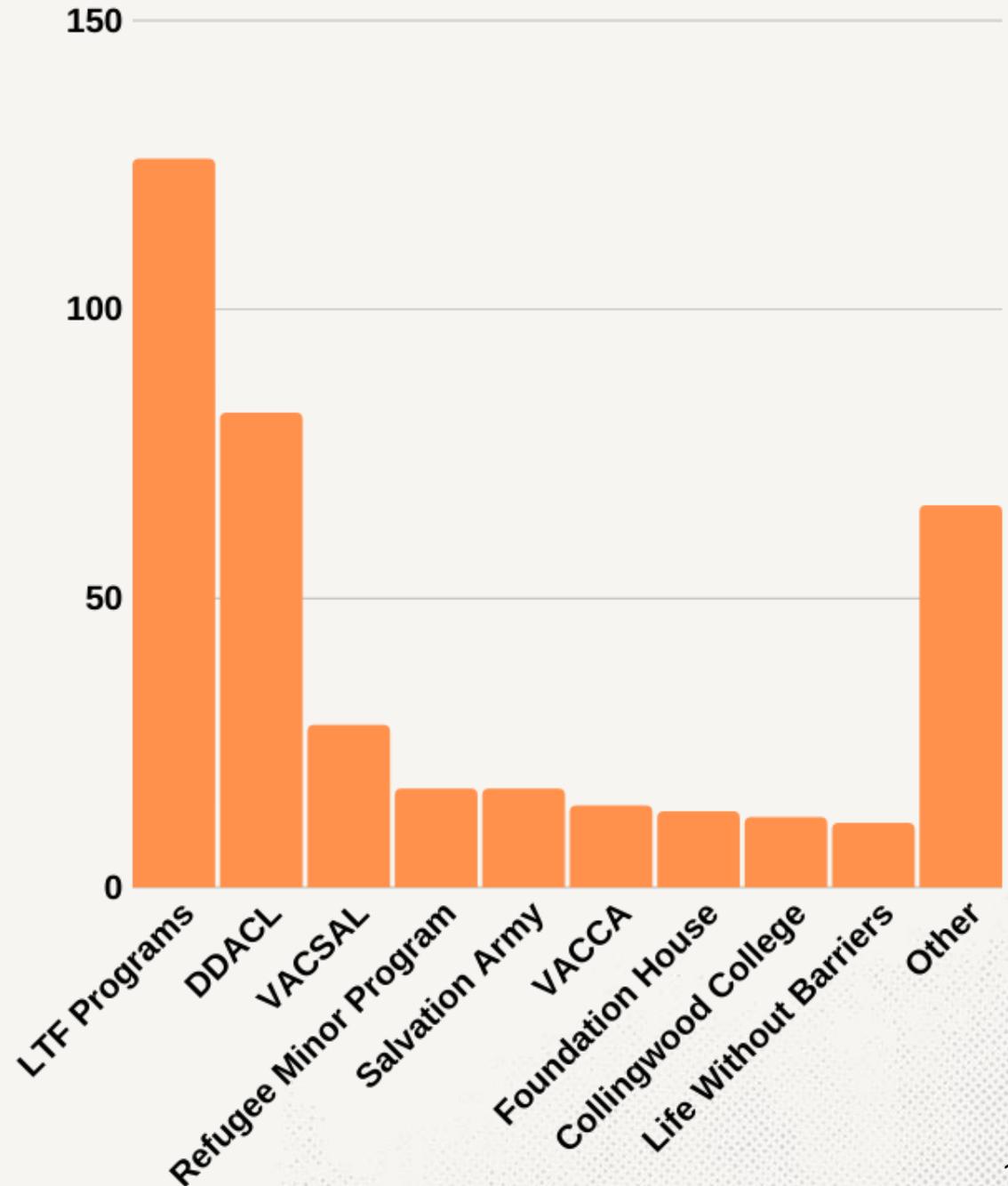
# Schools

- The number of schools who had students access the program was 111.

Al Siraat College	Greensborough College	Pakenham Secondary College
Alkira Secondary College	Hallam Secondary College	Parade College
Al-Taqwa College	Hallam Senior College	Pascoe Vale Girls College
Antonine College	Hampton Park Secondary College	Patterson River Secondary College
Ashwood High School	Heathmont College	Point Cook Secondary
Bacchus Marsh College	Hume Central Secondary College	Presentation College
Bacchus Marsh Primary School	Ilim College	Reservoir East Primary
Bayside P-12 College	Keilor Downs College	Reservoir High School
Bayside P-9 College	Keysborough College	Richmond High School
Beaconhills College	Kings Parade Primary School	RMIT Urban School
Berwick Secondary College	Koo Wee Rup Secondary College	Rosehill Secondary College
Boronia K-12 College	Koonung Secondary College	Saint Josephs Flexible Learning Centre
Box Hill Senior Secondary	Kyabram College	Somerville Secondary College
Braybrook Secondary College	Kyneton High School	Springside West Secondary College
Camberwell High School	Lakeview Senior College	St Albans Secondary College
Caroline Chisholm Catholic College	Lalor Secondary College	St Aloysius College
Carrum Downs Secondary College	Laverton P-12 College	St Francis Xavier College
Catholic Regional College	Lyndale Secondary College	Sunshine Secondary College
Charles La Trobe P-12 College	Macleod College	Swinburne Senior Secondary
Cheltenham Secondary College	Manor Lakes College	Taylor Lakes Secondary College
Coburg High School	Marian College	Templestowe College
Collingwood College	Maribyrnong Secondary College	The Grange P-12 College
Copperfield College	Melba College	Thomastown Secondary College
Cranbourne Secondary College	Melbourne Girls College	Thornbury High School
Dandenong High School	Melbourne High	Timbarra P-9 College
East Preston Islamic College	Melton Secondary College	Truganina South Primary School
Edgars Creek Secondary College	Melton West Primary School	Victoria University Secondary College
Epping Secondary College	Mernda Central College	Wallan Secondary College
Essendon Keilor College	Mernda Primary School	Wandong Primary School
Flinders Christian College	Monmia Primary School	Warragul Regional College
Footscray High School	Mordialloc College	Wellington Secondary College
Fountain Gate Secondary College	Mornington High School	Western Autistic School
Frankston High School	Mount Alexander College	Western Port Secondary College
Gladstone Park Primary School	Mount Ridley P-12 College	Whittlesea Secondary College
Glen Eira College	Narre Warren South P-12 College	William Ruthuen Secondary College
Glenroy Central Primary School	Noble Park Secondary College	Williamstown High School
Glenroy College	Padua College	Wyndham Central College

# Referring Agencies

- There were a total of 45 agencies which referred students to the program.
- Consistent with previous years, the highest number of referrals were from the Les Twentyman Foundation. This enables us to provide holistic support to young people in our programs.
- The second highest number of referrals was from the Dandenong & Districts Aborigines Co-operative Limited (DDACL).



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# Volunteers & supporters

- The Back to School program operates with the support of dozens of volunteers:
  - 26 schools donated second hand books to the program, coordinated by volunteers. This diverts good quality second hand books from landfill.
  - Long term support of a number of individuals including Galia and Alan Hardy, Kate McCarthy, Roslyn and John Andrews, Neil Jenkins and Dick Kennedy.
- The program is also supported by a number of publishers including:
  - Donations of new edition text books from John Wiley & Sons (trading as Jacaranda) and Oxford University Press, to the value of more than \$20,000 RRP.
  - Donations of second hand books to the value of \$2,000 from second hand retailer, I Love Books.
  - Jacaranda has agreed to provide all digital text books free of charge in the future.

# EXPENDITURE

Item	Value
New text books	\$31,346.35
Stationery	\$2,168.68
Staffing	\$46,580.00
Transport / van hire	\$3,000.00
Bags / backpacks	\$2,000.00
Admin, volunteer expenses, packaging	\$12,764.25
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$97,859.28</b>
Second hand text books (in-kind value)	\$70,084.00
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>\$ 167,943.28</b>

# 3. TESTIMONIALS



“

Oh my God! I was in such a panic financially after Christmas. I borrowed money from friends and family to buy gifts for my kids. I didn't know how I was going to send my two children to school on their first day without their books.

A friend told me that LTF would be able to help. I met the school welfare coordinator and they put in a referral for both my children's school books. I received a phone call from a lovely gentleman called Richard who told me that my children's books were ready to be picked up. I picked up the books and was given a voucher to get the rest off them from the book shop.

My kids faces said it all on their first day of school, their smiles were priceless. Thank you LTF for your support for enabling my kids to get to school with dignity on their first day. - Helen

”

“

**I wouldn't have been able to send my three children to school on their first day with all their education essentials had it not been for the support of the Back to School program.**

**My kids deserve the right to attend school and this year they didn't feel different to all of their classmates.  
Thank you - Wendy**

”

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“ Last year my 13 year old child refused to go to school. We found out later that he was teased for not having his school books and proper uniform.

He only attended for a few days and spent all the other time in his room.

After getting counselling support from the Les Twentyman Foundation, they also equipped him with all his school essentials, uniform, shoes, lap top, school books and stationary.

He is yet to miss a day of school this year and seems more confident in himself.

I will be forever grateful for your support and on behalf of both my children thank you - Deb

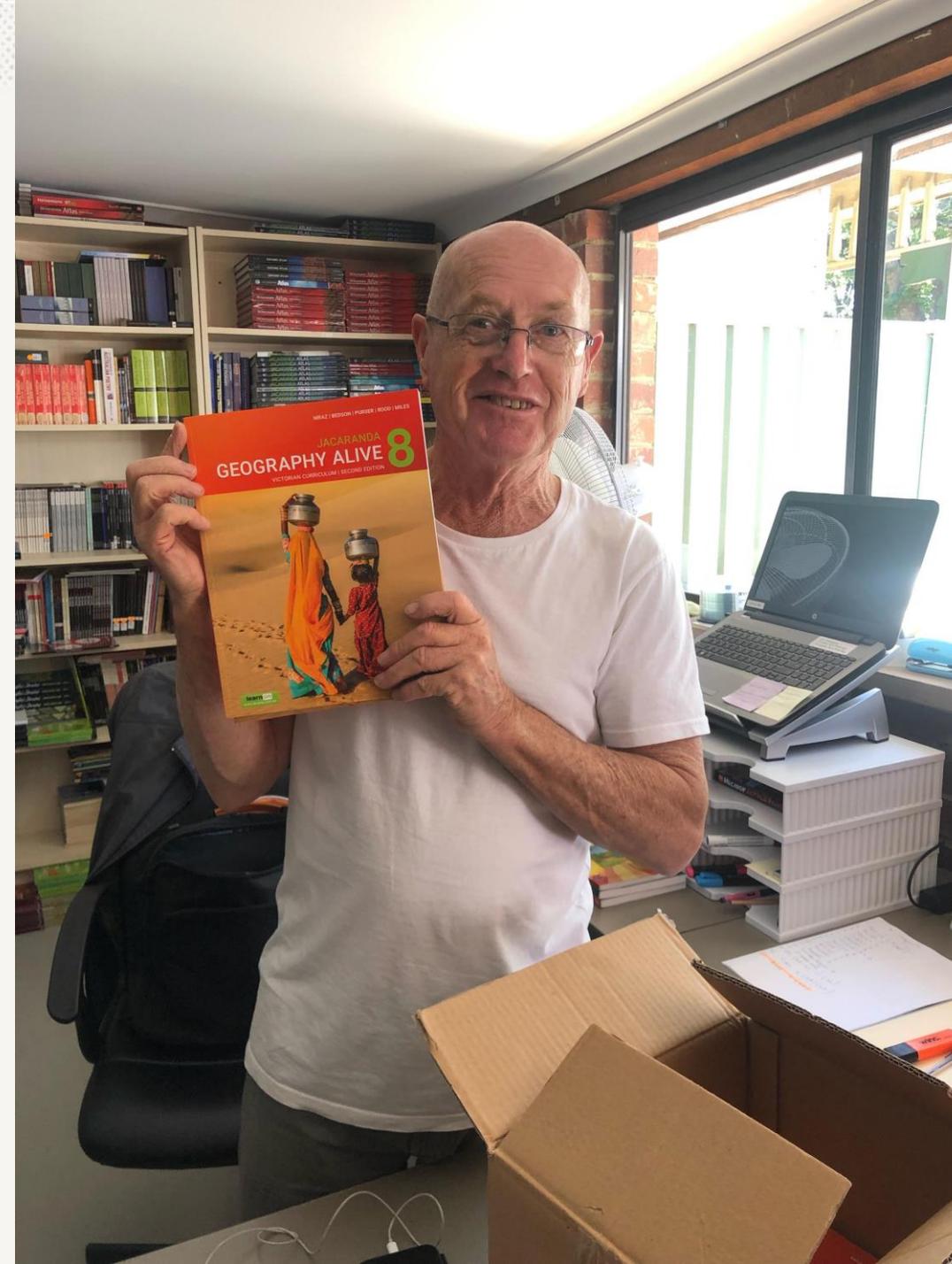
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“

**The support of the Back to School program took the financial pressure off me.**

**After Christmas, paying the rent and bills, I am now up to date and able to provide for my son moving forward thanks - Fred** ”

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# 4. FUTURE FUNDING

# THE FUTURE OF BACK TO SCHOOL

There is high demand for our Back to School program. While we don't actively promote the program, word of mouth has travelled far and wide across Melbourne suburbs. We expect demand to increase further, as the economic impacts of COVID-19 emerge later this year.

- All funding for this program has now been expended.
- We are looking for future partners to ensure we can continue providing this service to families experiencing financial difficulty.
- We are expecting demand to significantly increase as a result of the economic impacts of COVID-19 on low income families.
- One key learning is that this program gets efficiencies with scale. The more young people we reach, the cheaper it is to run per student.
- Scale also enables us to better negotiate prices with suppliers and to maximise volunteer opportunities over the summer holidays.
- We are seeking supporters to provide grants and donations so that we can meet demand and create more opportunities to reduce the cost of education for families.
- We are also seeking to better understand the social return on investment and would like to undertake an impact evaluation in 2020-21.

Number of students	400	800	1,000
Total investment p.a	\$98,000	\$160,000	\$200,000
Cost per student p.a	\$245	\$212	\$200
Impact evaluation	\$20,000		