

**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
PRESS RELEASE 913
STATE SCHOOLS RELIEF
AND LAPTOPS FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS**

**Our State school children are underfunded approximately \$200 per student below the resource standard. SO it has come to this. Our disadvantaged children – 80% in public schools, for essential educational resources, are dependent upon CHARITY!
But charity is there -**

Victorian NFP, State Schools' Relief is aiming to raise \$500,000 for 1,000 laptops and internet dongles (at an approx. cost of \$500 per device) via a GoFundMe Campaign to enable full engagement in home-based learning to further strengthen educational outcomes for students in need.

Repeated lockdowns have meant that students are often restricted to home-based learning. It is estimated there are thousands of Victorian students who do not have access to a device. Some homes may have one device and three children so learning is challenging and some students will miss out.

In April, SSR trialled a program to give laptops to senior VCE/VCAL students so they could continue their learning. The laptops are theirs to keep so they can be used in post-schooling career training such as trade school, or tertiary study. The impact was immediate, as evidenced by feedback from students and their families.

However, while the trial of Access 1000 was able to assist some students immediately, there were still 931 students who did not receive the technological support to continue remote lockdown so State Schools' Relief is continuing the 'Access 1000' Project and has established a GoFundMe campaign to raise \$500k to ensure that no child is left behind during Victoria's extended lockdowns.

Donations can be made via the GoFundMe website. <https://bit.ly/3mDrfly>

When: Applications are currently open.

Where: Members of the public are encouraged to donate via this website <https://bit.ly/3mDrfly>.

Available for Interview: Sue Karzis, CEO, State Schools' Relief

The following is a Press Release from the State Schools Relief Group:

Access 1000 Project to help bridge the 'digital divide' in education through GoFundMe Campaign

State Schools' Relief raising \$500k to provide 1,000 laptops to vulnerable Victorian students

[Melbourne, Victoria] – 8 November 2021 - State Schools' Relief, a Victorian not for profit, has set the target to raise \$500,000, to provide laptops to 1,000 financially disadvantaged Victorian students to help bridge the 'digital divide' and remove lack of technological access as an additional barrier to education.

State Schools' Relief is aiming to raise \$500,000 for 1,000 laptops and internet dongles (at an approx. cost of \$500 per device) via a GoFundMe Campaign to enable full engagement in home-based learning to further strengthen educational outcomes for students in need.

The inherent inequality in education was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-2020, when many vulnerable students were unable to participate in their learning remotely due to not having access to the digital tools necessary to facilitate their education.

In response, State Schools' Relief, in partnership Gandel Philanthropy, the Bennelong Foundation and Equity Trustees, was able to provide financially disadvantaged students with 30 Chromebooks, 132 internet dongles (with 4G mobile broadband access) and 178 laptops to assist them in continuing their education remotely in 2021.

While these partnerships were able to positively impact many disadvantaged students immediately, there were 931 students remaining that were unable to be provided with a device - an issue State Schools' Relief is seeking to rectify through the continued efforts of the 'Access 1000' project and their GoFundMe campaign.

Sue Karzis, CEO of State Schools' Relief, believes that by providing these students with the digital means to continue their education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty in Australia.

“COVID-19 brought to light the digital divide and the lack of access and equity to the digital tools required to engage with remote learning. This includes not only having a device, but also internet connectivity and access to a dedicated space in which to study.

Students from vulnerable backgrounds are already starting at a disadvantage, and they need assistance to stay engaged with their education, which I believe is a pathway to breaking the cycle of poverty,” she says.

State Schools' Relief is currently seeking to connect with and inspire those who would like to be a part of the Access 1000 Project and donate to help **raise \$500,000 for 1,000 laptops and internet dongles** to further strengthen educational outcomes for students in need.

Sue Karzis, CEO, State Schools' Relief

About State Schools' Relief <https://stateschoolsrelief.org.au/>

LISTEN TO THE DOGS PROGRAM
855 ON THE AM DIAL: 12.00 NOON SATURDAYS
<http://www.3cr.org.au/dogs>