

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**BACK TO SCHOOL BOOST FROM COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**



Families in need are set to benefit even more this year through the generous 2006 Back to School Program an initiative of the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR), the Sidney Myer Fund, VISY and the DOXA Youth Foundation. A total of \$16,500 is being granted through Western Australian Community Foundation (WACF) this year to areas of need within communities state-wide.

With recent research revealing average costs of more than \$2000 per year to send a child to a primary school, the program is designed to support parents in funding those essential 'back to school' items needed to send their child to school. The support is in the form of vouchers which are valued at \$50 each and can be spent on items from the Coles Myer and Target stores. The vouchers are currently being distributed through regional WA by local Anglicare and St Vincent de Paul regional offices. It is expected up to 300 families will benefit from this years program.

"There are currently 16% of families in our state living below the poverty line which means a staggering 16,000 families are in need. Many parents would know the cost of going back to school can leave some families in dire financial circumstances so this is really appreciated" said Kathryn Sydney-Smith Chief Executive Office of WACF.

Ms Sydney-Smith is delighted that the Foundation has been able to partner with the FRRR and the Sidney Myer Fund to ensure WA families had access to this vital funding. "We should never underestimate the impact of a small gift. WACF will continue to identify the current and emerging needs of our communities and look forward to seeing this program grow for families in our state and assist even more families each year".

The program was such a great success last year that the 2006 Back to School Program is offering even more vouchers this year with an extra \$6,500 for communities to spend on last year's total. The increase was also helped along with WACF's donation of \$2000 which was matched by the same amount from FRRR. It is expected with this positive trend, next year's amount could surpass \$20,000 and WACF hopes this will encourage other companies, individuals and businesses to contribute to the program.

WACF is an independent not for profit, created to assist communities and special interest groups across the state establish their own endowed funds for the future. There are currently 1,200 Community Foundations in the world, many of them well established in the USA, Canada and Europe with trillions of dollars invested providing grants for their communities now and forever.

If you are interested in supporting the Foundation's 2006 Back to School initiative please contact the Foundation on 9323 5556.

**For more information contact Trevor Chapman Ph: 9323 5688 or Mobile: 0419 210558**