

# HATCHING A SOLID FOUNDATION

The Smith Family helps to change lives – especially at the start of a new school year.

Tasmanian teenager Zac was entranced by chickens long before he could collect their eggs. And now, with help from The Smith Family, his hens are helping him map out a future that looks beyond disadvantage to the promise of a bright future.

Zac's family moved to the Apple Isle when his mum, Dagmara, was expecting. His early life on their farm sparked an entrepreneurship that has now grown into a profitable business called Zeggs (from Zac's Eggs), with Zac delivering farm-fresh eggs from his ever-growing collective of chickens.

As Dagmara says fondly: "Zac actually held a chicken before he could walk. He tried to give it a kiss, only it looked like he wanted to eat it! It was quite funny. Then, when Zac started walking, he was excited to collect the eggs. He understood how fragile they were and really tried his best to be careful."

Even so, his love of poultry may have remained just a hobby without The Smith Family, which gave Zac the critical educational support that empowered his side hustle – and his future.

Through a *Learning for Life* scholarship, he was able to access financial support for school essentials, as well as out-of-school learning

programs, including Future Seekers, which provides career-related learning, and Student2Student, a reading support program.

"It helped me read and learn different words... and learn so much more about chickens," he explains. "I have learnt to spell and write words, and learned about maths and time."

For Dagmara, the impact has been tangible: "I am very grateful for the support, which helped Zac build his confidence. Without The Smith Family, I don't believe Zac would be where he is right now."

“ EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL CHANGE AGENTS. ”



Zac's mum Dagmara proudly supports his success with Zeggs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[THESMITHFAMILY.COM.AU/SPONSOR-A-CHILD](https://thesmithfamily.com.au/sponsor-a-child)

## Day in the life

Empowered by the charity's support, Zac's weeks involve a family-supported juggle of books and business.

"I usually wake up at 6am, have a shower, get dressed and go feed my chickens," he says. "Sometimes, my younger sister Sky and big brother Max come and help."

"We leave at 8am and go to school, then I come home, check on my chickens and collect the eggs with Sky; she helps me clean the pens. Then I eat dinner, have a shower, go to bed and do it all again the next morning."

It's a routine anchored

in his love for his animals.

"Chickens are smart and they have unique personalities," Zac says. "It's really hard to explain but I love them so much."

They're also the basis of his future dreams. "I would like a huge property with lots of land and as many chickens as I can get. Hundreds and thousands – as many breeds as possible," he says. It's just one example of how The Smith Family supports young people to shape a vision for success.

## Powerful legacy

Through generous *Learning for Life* sponsors, the charity gives financial, extra learning and personal support to more than 67,000 students nationally. At this time of year, the need for help is critical, with many families unable to cover basics such as uniforms and shoes. A survey of parents and carers whose children are supported by The Smith Family found nine out of 10 respondents were worried about affording their child's school necessities this year.

It's a disadvantage that can begin before they even get to school. But it can turn around, as Dagmara was grateful to see for Zac. "It brings a tear to my eye and makes my heart burst with pride knowing he's reaching for the stars," she says.



15,000  
THAT'S HOW MANY CHILDREN ARE URGENTLY WAITING FOR A LEARNING FOR LIFE SPONSORSHIP



Zac, who adored chickens from an early age, has an ultimate dream: "I would like to have a huge property with lots of land and as many chickens as I can get!"



Photography supplied; words Lisa Chant

## YOUR CHANCE TO CHANGE A LIFE

Evidence shows education is one of the most powerful change agents to help overcome educational inequality caused by poverty. The Smith Family has an array of services to support students experiencing disadvantage, including its flagship *Learning for Life* program. This has three pillars: financial aid for school necessities; access to evidence-based, out-of-hours educational activities and programs; and personal support. *Learning for Life* sponsors can change a child or young person's life for just \$1.90 a day. See [thesmithfamily.com.au/sponsor-a-child](https://thesmithfamily.com.au/sponsor-a-child) ■