13 May 2024

[Name including any post nominals]

[Position]

[Address]

Email: [Email]

Dear [Salutation],

VIEW stands for Voice, Interests and Education of Women and is a women’s volunteer organisation with over 14,000 members across Australia exclusively supporting The Smith Family’s work to improve educational outcomes for Australian children and young people experiencing disadvantage.

VIEW members sponsor students, volunteer, fundraise and advocate to improve the life outcomes of Australian children and young people experiencing disadvantage.

Through its supportive network, VIEW women build lasting friendships, connected by the common purpose to support The Smith Family. VIEW also empowers women to have their voices heard on issues of importance for the future wellbeing of Australian society.

A recent national vote by our members endorsed the following motion:

**That VIEW Clubs of Australia call on Australian Governments to work together to ensure all young Australians have the digital resources and skills they need to fully participate in education particularly in rural and remote areas.**

All Australian children deserve access to high quality education. Education is a basic need not a luxury restricted to those who can afford it.

Many families in rural and remote areas educate their children full time at home via remote learning. With Distance Education in all states being delivered mainly online, students miss major sections of their study if they do not have reliable and affordable internet. Families in remote camps (stock, fencing, earth moving camps) which involve moving from place to place away from their permanent residence during the season rely on transportable satellite units as the only means students can keep up with their schoolwork.

The proportion of very remote students who meet each education milestone is between 19-48% points lower then the general population. Children in these areas are less liketly to attend school and have less positive disposition towards school on every measure (belonging, self confidence, purpose and perserverance) then their regional and metropolitan peers.

The Smith Family has long recognised the importance technology plays in a child’s education, having delivered digital technologies to families in their programs beginning in 2007. In 2022/2023, The Smith Family delivered over 2,500 Digital Inclusion Packs to *Learning for Life* families in need of digital access and almost 11,000 students and family members were connected through Optus Donate Your Data.

A survey in 2020 with families who had received a Digital Inclusion Pack found the following;

* 97% of parents reported having a device and/or internet in the home has been helpful for their child’s education.
* 65% of parents reported that having a device/internet helped their child/ren with online learning during COVID-19.
* 75% of parents reported their child/ren’s ability to undertake schoolwork has increased.
* 74% of parents said their child/ren’s skills in using a computer has increased.

Our organisation would appreciate an opportunity to discuss these matters and the National President can be contacted through the VIEW National Office on 02 9085 7178.

On behalf of our members, I therefore seek your support in this matter and forward the above for your consideration. I look forward to your reply and would be pleased to communicate your response to our VIEW members.

Yours faithfully,

[Your name]

[Title/Position]

[Club Name]

VIEW Clubs of Australia