



# GLASSES FOR KIDS

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Evaluation 2018



“ The day he received his glasses was the most amazing day! He could suddenly look at us and after a short period, could walk unaided.

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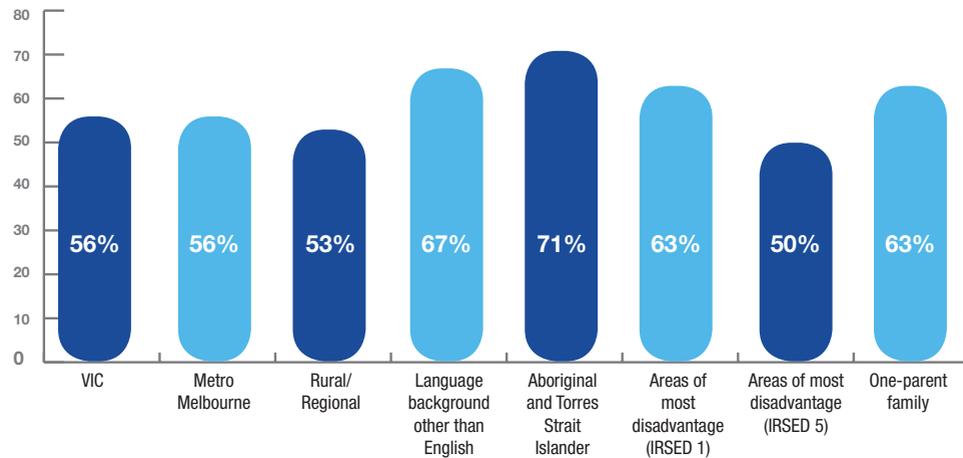
# Overview



**State Schools' Relief** is a unique charity, providing anonymous assistance through the provision of uniforms, shoes and now glasses, to students who have been identified by teachers, ES staff and principals as struggling with the impact of material disadvantage.

**The Glasses for Kids program** aimed to remove vision impairments as a potential barrier to educational engagement. The program was generously supported by the Victorian Government as part of its commitment to build the Education State by ensuring that children from vulnerable families do not experience barriers to education and that they are supported to participate in education from the early years.

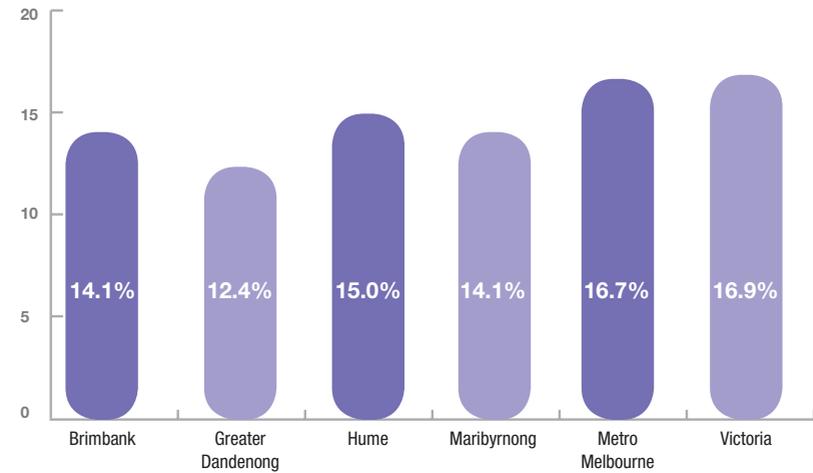
**Chart 1: Proportion of prep children whose parent expressed concerns about child's eyesight but did not attend a vision service.**



There was evidence that children from vulnerable families were not accessing eye health at a critical point in their lives. **Chart 1** above highlights that parents from disadvantaged backgrounds did not access eye healthcare despite having a concern regarding their child's sight.

**Chart 2** further shows that very few Victorian children are seen by optometrists in the year prior to starting school, particularly in disadvantaged Local Government Areas.

**Chart 2: Children reportedly seen by an optometrist in the last year**



While Medicare funded vision testing is available to children through their local optometrist, no funding is provided for lenses or frames and this cost can be prohibitive to families and prevent disadvantaged children from achieving their potential.

State Schools' Relief created a coalition of like-minded organisations from across universities, charities, small businesses, community organisations and large corporations to deliver the Glasses for Kids program. The project partners worked in a range of different ways to deliver the Glasses for Kids program.

**By September 2018, over nine months ahead of schedule, the Glasses for Kids project concluded after having worked in 290 Victorian primary and special schools across both metropolitan and regional areas.**



# Outcomes

**290**

Primary Schools, P-12  
Colleges, Special Schools  
and Special Developmental  
Schools participated



**20,634**

Children participated  
in the program



**128**

Schools were in  
Metropolitan Melbourne



**162**

Schools were in  
Regional Victoria



**33**

Special schools participated



**1,905\***

Number of pairs  
of glasses provided  
to children



Over **20,000** children  
in **290** schools across  
Victoria participated  
in the program.  
Nearly **2,000** pairs of  
glasses were provided  
to children.

\*This figure includes all glasses that could be counted up to, and including, 30th of September 2018. Many more vouchers were issued for families to access glasses at an optometrist and these vouchers are valid for at least six months. As such, it is predicted that the figure will increase

# Our Partners



**State Schools' Relief** developed a coalition of like-minded organisations to deliver the Glasses for Kids program.



Eyecare Plus Bendigo  
 Eye-Visit Optometry  
 GMHBA  
 Portland Eyecare  
 Kosmac and Clemmens

Sunraysia Eyecare  
 Teachers Health  
 Warrnambool Eyecare  
 Wodonga Eyecare  
 Wodonga Optical Superstore

# Feedback



The feedback we have received from schools, families, optometrists and our partners has been **universally positive**:

“ A student in year 1 - Kayla is now wearing glasses and has made considerable progress in her learning. She loved reading before, but ‘now everything is clearer.’

“ Student K’s new glasses arrived in the post promptly. She had been wearing an old prescription for some time and the first time she put on her new Glasses for Kids prescription she said, “Now I can see properly!”

“ We have a little boy in our Special Education sector of our college who is deaf. He has had multiple medical interventions over the years including cochlear implants. All the focus has always been on his hearing. He is a very loud boy (sounds not words) and walked with his head down.

This all changed once he was seen by the Glasses in Schools optometrists who quickly realised he had severely impaired eyesight also. The day he received his glasses was the most amazing day. He could suddenly look at us and after a short period could walk unaided, looking ahead and was obviously seeing the world. He has quietened down as a result also.

What a tremendous program. It profoundly changed this little boys world and staff and carers are delighted for him.



“ This program has been extremely successful for 14 students at our school. We are so grateful the program exists. I feel it should be rolled out across the state for all primary school students. Every school has students who learn to adjust to not seeing properly when this program could identify a weakness and eye wear could make their lives a lot easier.

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“ Students have been less tired as they have not had to strain their eyes while working with the interactive whiteboard.

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“ The Glasses for Kids program identified vision problems with students from families that would not attend a clinic outside of school. This has made a dramatic improvement in at least two children in both their behavioural and academic outcomes.



**The Glasses for Kids program has made a significant impact on the learning experiences and opportunities for the children who participated.**

State Schools' Relief is extremely proud of the work that was done in the Glasses for Kids program.

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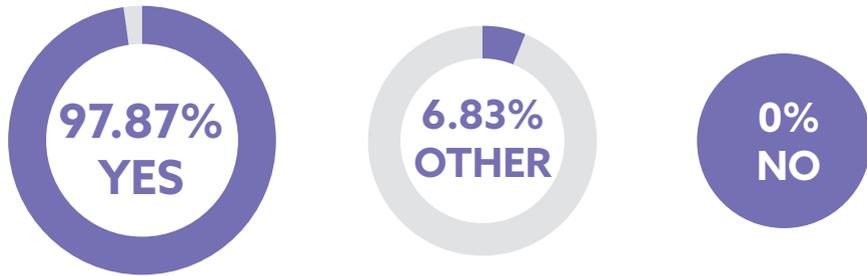
# The Results

Three questions were asked to participating schools in order to monitor the success of the Glasses for Kids program. **These were the results:**



## QUESTION ONE

Was the Glasses for Kids program of benefit to your school?



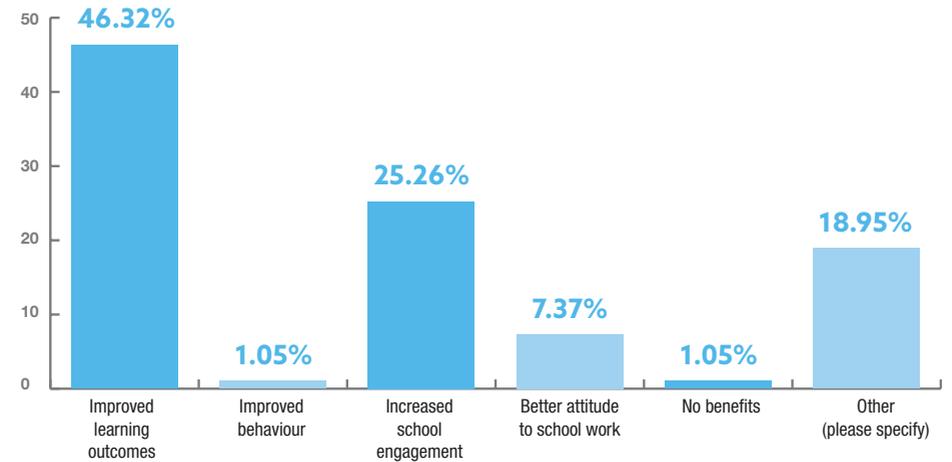
## QUESTION TWO

Would you like to see the Glasses for Kids program delivered on a regular basis?



## QUESTION THREE

What benefits has the Glasses for Kids program brought to the children who participated?



# Summary

The Glasses for Kids program was delivered to over **20,000** prep to grade three students in some of Victoria's most disadvantaged communities. The program concluded nine months ahead of schedule in September 2018.

The program was delivered in partnership with 17 organisations including a university, charities, community health organisations, small businesses and large corporations. Glasses for Kids had a flexible approach to program delivery using a variety of different processes to achieve the same outcomes.

The feedback demonstrates that the impact of the Glasses For Kids program has been transformative not only for the children who participated, but also for the teachers, educators and support staff who have witnessed first-hand the positive learning outcomes for thousands of children throughout Victoria.



**“ When the glasses arrived at the school two weeks later, he put them on and was immediately fascinated as to how clear things were.**

He just stood turning in circles to look at people's faces and at the classroom around him.



# Acknowledgements

**State Schools' Relief** would like to acknowledge the support of the Victorian State Government.

We would also like to acknowledge the **Helen Macpherson Smith Trust** and the **Australian Education Union – VIC Branch** for their support of the **Glasses for Kids** program.