

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Education

Minister for Women



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FREE MEALS TO HELP FAMILIES OVER THE HOLIDAYS

The Andrews Labor Government has provided thousands of Victorian students with food packs to ensure they can get healthy meals over the school holiday period.

Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins today visited the Brooklyn distribution warehouse used by Foodbank Victoria to pack and deliver School Breakfast Clubs products to school communities doing it tough over the holiday period, at a time when the cost of living is rising for many families.

Almost 6000 holiday food packs were delivered to families for the summer break, while more than 28 million free, healthy meals have been provided to students in Victorian schools as part of the Labor Government's School Breakfast Clubs program.

The program, which is delivered in partnership with Foodbank Victoria, provides free healthy food for students at 1,000 government schools.

The Labor Government has invested more than \$71 million in the program since its establishment in 2016. It will return again in schools across the state when Term 1 begins later this month.

Under the program, healthy breakfasts are available to all students, with lunches and home food supplies, including food products for holiday periods provided to students requiring additional support.

Interactive cooking classes focused on healthy and accessible meal choices are a feature of the program and offered to families in 100 disadvantaged school communities.

Foodbank Victoria also operates mobile supermarket buses that visit schools around Victoria to provide healthy and nutritious food to families in need.

Feedback from schools has shown the School Breakfast Club program has delivered benefits beyond making students happier and healthier.

It has also fostered a sense of connection for students and the school community, improved student engagement and concentration, strengthened staff-student relationships, enhanced social skills and improved academic performance.

The Government's delivery of the School Breakfast Club program is another way we are easing cost of living pressures felt by many Victorian families.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

"We're making sure Victorian students – especially those whose families are doing it tough – are still getting access to healthy meals during the school holiday period."

"We understand that programs like the School Breakfast Club provide many students and their families with a helping hand and that's why providing holiday food packs over the summer break is so important."

"The program has already made a huge difference to students who need a bit of extra support to have a nutritious, delicious meal every morning and we're proud to support the School Breakfast Club all year round."

Media contact: Anthony Templeton 0475 256 383 | Anthony.Templeton@minstaff.vic.gov.au