

**Submission  
No 60a**

**ACCESS TO TRANSPORT FOR SENIORS AND  
DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE IN RURAL AND  
REGIONAL NSW**

**Organisation:** Isolated Children's Parents' Association of NSW Inc  
**Name:** Mr Bruce Paynter  
**Position:** Secretary  
**Date Received:** 16 September 2016



## The Isolated Children's Parents' Association of New South Wales Inc.

Secretary: Mr Bruce Paynter, 822 Bowman Farm Road,  
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Mr Adam Marshall, MP  
Suite 1 Ground Floor  
175 Rusden Street  
PO Box 77  
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

16<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

Dear Mr Marshall,

### **RE: Submission to Community Transport Enquiry**

This submission is based on an equity group of 3-4 year old children who are unable to access the prescribed 600 hours (15 hours a week) of Preschool / Early Childhood Education under the National Quality Framework in rural and remote areas of NSW.

### **ICPA-NSW RECOMMENDS:**

- That Transport for NSW formally recognises that bus companies be authorised and funded to carry pre-schoolers (3-4 year olds) on rural and remote bus runs during the year prior to school.
- That Transport for NSW includes Pre-Schoolers in the Private Vehicle Conveyance and the School Student Transport Scheme.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) analysis, along with other studies, finds that pupils who had attended at least one year of pre-primary education tend to perform better than those who had not, even after accounting for the pupils' socioeconomic background. PISA research also shows that the relationship between pre-primary attendance and performance tends to be stronger in school systems with a longer duration of pre-primary education.

It has come to the attention of ICPA-NSW that New South Wales compares poorly with other states in pre-school participation. Of the children attending pre-school in regional and remote areas, only 47% do so for at least 15 hours per week (the level of the Universal Access Guarantee). In contrast, in every other state in Australia, regional and rural participation at or above 15 hours per week is at least 60% (ABS, Pre-school Education 2013).

ICPA-NSW suggests that rural and remote education in NSW needs rebuilding from the ground up, and perhaps the greatest potential for change is to ensure that all rural and remote children participate in 600 hours of pre-primary education.

However, in rural and remote areas in New South Wales, access to existing services can be difficult. Despite the fact that school buses travel rural routes transporting older children to school, parents are left to provide their own arrangements for pre-schoolers. Commonly,

parents drop children onto the school bus and then follow that bus into town driving their pre-schoolers to the service.

In remote areas where distances are large, frequently the parent has to wait while the child attends the service because the distances are too great to allow two return trips in the same day. The outcome is that, even where regional and remote children do access early childhood services, they do so for fewer hours per week than metropolitan students.

Kindest regards,

***Bruce***

Mr. Bruce Paynter

ICPA-NSW Secretary

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