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OFFICEWORKS BACK TO SCHOOL APPEAL TO HELP 2,000 AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS THRIVE WITH THE SMITH FAMILY

More than \$1.3 million raised in annual appeal to support students impacted by poverty

An additional 2,000 Australian students impacted by poverty will receive support through The Smith Family's *Learning for Life* program this year after Officeworks and its generous customers raised more than \$1.3 million through the retailer's annual Back to School Appeal.

Officeworks' 2024 Back to School Appeal, which ran from December 26 to February 11, raised funds for The Smith Family's *Learning for Life* sponsorship program. Funds raised will help families impacted by poverty afford the cost of their child's essential school supplies like uniforms, books and excursions, as well as providing personal support and extra educational programs to help students stay motivated and connected to their learning.

Over the course of its more than a decade long partnership with The Smith Family, Officeworks' customers and team members have contributed more than \$9 million through the retailer's annual Back to School Appeal, enabling The Smith Family to provide more than 14,000 one-year *Learning for Life* scholarships for students across Australia.

21-year-old Emma is just one student who has been supported by *Learning for Life* over the past decade. She joined the program at 13 and received continued support throughout her education; from funding the art supplies needed at school, to the laptop and digital devices she currently uses while studying a Bachelor of Science at Swinburne University. Now, Emma has hopes of pursuing a career in forensic science.

The Smith Family CEO Doug Taylor said: "We are so grateful for the ongoing support of Officeworks, their generous customers and passionate team members, who have come together to support young Australians with their education."

"When young people start school without the essentials they need to keep up with their peers, they risk falling behind and disengaging from their learning. With this long term, wrap-around support, even more students will be able to stay engaged at school and make the very most of their education. Students just like Emma, who is creating a bright future for herself through her studies."

Officeworks Managing Director Sarah Hunter said: "We're incredibly thankful for the generosity and passion that our teams, customers and local communities have shown in getting behind this year's Back to School Appeal. More families than ever need a helping hand and this year's appeal fundraising will give 2,000 students the support they need to help make bigger things happen at school this year."

"We're passionate about ensuring every child in Australia has the opportunity to have an education, no matter what their circumstances are. We're proud that Officeworks' long-term partnership with The Smith Family makes a real impact in students' lives, helping to close the literacy, numeracy and social connection divide for so many young people in Australia."

The Back to School Appeal is part of Officeworks' People and Planet Positive commitment to support 30,000 students by 2025. Having already supported more than 40,000 students since 2020, and more than

16,000 Australian students in FY23 alone, Officeworks revised this goal to support 60,000 students by 2025. Learn more in Officeworks' latest [People and Planet Positive Report](#).

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ABOUT OFFICEWORKS

Established 30 years ago in Richmond, Victoria, Officeworks is committed to making bigger things happen for its customers, team, the community and stakeholders. It operates 170 stores across Australia, a website that is home to more than 40,000 products, a national call centre, and a business team that helps micro, small and medium-sized businesses start, run and grow.

Officeworks offers customers a wide range of office supplies, technology, furniture, art supplies, education resources and helpful services like print & copy and on-site and remote tech support through Geeks2U – delivering an experience that is easy and engaging, no matter how customers choose to shop.

Officeworks is focused on the safety, wellbeing and career progression of the more than 9,000 team members it employs. It's also dedicated to operating in a sustainable manner, including building and maintaining meaningful connections with the communities in which it operates, fundraising for its national partners and local community groups, continuing to reduce its impact on the environment and source responsibly.

ABOUT THE SMITH FAMILY

The Smith Family is a children's education charity that helps young Australians experiencing disadvantage to create better futures for themselves through harnessing the power of education. Visit www.thesmithfamily.com.au

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