

Check your skin for unusual moles, freckles or marks



Tax rebates for expenses

BACK TO SCHOOL | Expenses such as uniforms, stationery, computers, excursions, fees, equipment and text books can add up at an alarming rate.

However, with the school year about to begin once more, parents are being encouraged to consider claiming many of their school-related expenses as part of the Education Tax Refund (ETR).

Introduced in 2009, the ETR allows families to claim up to 50 per cent of eligible education costs, with a maximum refund available of \$794 for high school children and \$397 for primary school children.

As of July 1, 2011, school uniforms are also included on the list of claimable items along with computers and computer-related equipment, software and repairs; internet connections; textbooks and other printed learning material; stationery; and trade tools for secondary school trade and apprenticeship courses.

Other school clothing items such as hats, shoes and sports uniforms will also be claimable from July 1 this year.

However, expenses such as school fees, excursion and camp expenses, tutors, sports and musical equipment, building and school equipment levies, and transport are not eligible ETR expenses.

www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au

Claimable expenses

- School-approved uniforms
- Computers and internet connections
- Computer-related equipment, software and repairs
- Textbooks and other printed learning material
- Trade tools for secondary school trade courses

Healthy habits

Healthy lunchbox tips

- Include something from each of the five food groups every day
- Use wholegrain bread for sandwiches and wraps or wholegrain crackers
- Plenty of vegetables, such as corn on the cob or crunchy vegetable sticks
- Fresh colourful salad, cut to finger size.
- Plenty of salad on sandwiches to fill them up
- Include fresh fruit in season or tinned fruit
- Add reduced fat cheese to sandwiches or salads
- Use cold meats, hard-boiled eggs, baked beans, or tinned bean mix

BACK TO SCHOOL | Starting the school year with healthy habits will stand a child in good stead, according to Queensland's chief health officer Dr Jeannette Young.

"Making time in the morning for a nutritious breakfast, putting on your hat and sunscreen and packing a balanced lunchbox are essential," Dr Young said. "Sunscreen needs to be applied 20 minutes before going outside, so it's best to put it on before children leave the house each morning."

"It should be re-applied every two hours before going outside. Remember the best protection is to find shade, wear a hat and sunsafe clothing."

"Children's skin is particularly susceptible to sun damage, so it's vital their skin is protected with clothing, a wide-brimmed hat and sunscreen whenever they're outside."

Dr Young also encouraged parents to spend time planning and preparing nutritious lunches.

"Food eaten at school makes up a large proportion of a child's overall diet during their important growth and development years, so it's really important to prepare a healthy lunchbox," she said.

Dr Young also reminded parents, especially those with young children, to keep their hair tied back at school and to regularly check for head lice.

"The most effective way to check for head lice is the 'conditioner and comb' method," she said. "The conditioner stuns the lice for about 20 minutes, so they don't move around and find it difficult to hang on, giving you time to comb with a lice comb."

Parents of Prep pupils also need to ensure their child's immunisations were up-to-date and provide the school with a copy of their records.

"A child's immunisation record, known as their Immunisation History Statement, is automatically sent to parents once kids

have had their four-year-old vaccines,"

Dr Young said.

"If you did not receive an immunisation history statement, or

need another copy, contact the Australian Childhood

Immunisation Register (ACIR)." Tel: 1800 653

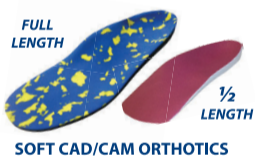
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