

Dear Senators,

We despair of the changes to Youth Allowance!

While getting a child to university now is a challenge of hoop-jumping proportions, the proposed changes to YA has made it financially impossible and eliminated the option of metropolitan study for country children.

We have 4 high achieving children and live in rural NSW. Our 2 older children have both elected to study 5 year combined law degrees, necessitating moving to Canberra and Sydney. The college living cost each is between \$15 000 and \$20 000 per annum. [That's not thinking about HECS or textbooks or transport or personal products or getting a few sticks of furniture together to move into leased lodgings.] For our family of 4, that's \$60 000-\$80 000 per year for a multitude of years. Impossible on our nurse and teacher incomes.

Our eldest 2 children achieved independence by working a fantastic UK Gap year and fruit picking/ waitressing and qualified for YA and an Equity scholarship [for which we are extremely thankful!] and are well on the way to becoming useful, thoughtful, contributors to society.

But for our other children coming through, under the proposed changes, I just don't see any options. As we near retirement age and are constantly urged to look to financing our own future, it seems unjust to suddenly be forced to take out loans to pay for our kids who have to live and study away from home, or be scotching their own aspirations to excel and succeed.

Please re-think these changes.

Yours Sincerely,

Terri Jorgensen