

Wednesday, 5 December, 2012

Research finds kids learn life lessons about money from parents who save

- Latest report finds 81% of Saver Plus participants encourage children to save -

Saver Plus, the financial education and matched savings program developed by the Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ, is encouraging a new generation of children to save.

This was one of the outcomes identified in new research launched in Melbourne today, Wednesday 5 December, by the Hon Jenny Macklin, Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

The 2012 Saver Plus evaluation report findings from RMIT University showed that 81% of Saver Plus participants encouraged family members - including children - to save; 31% encouraged their children to save money earned from doing chores; and 19% have since opened bank accounts for their children.

The report found this will be a powerful mechanism for increasing the household savings of future generations, particularly in light of research suggesting that learning to save as a child is an important factor in predicting savings behaviours as an adult.

Participants in Saver Plus, many of whom are single mothers or parents on low incomes, used the program to pay for essential educational items for their kids including computers, school uniforms, excursion costs and musical instruments, with savings up to \$500 matched by ANZ.

"I used Saver Plus to teach my son about saving. We worked together to save the monthly amounts towards his laptop for high school and he did some lawn mowing for his share. He understood income was tight, but the program was a tool to teach my son about budgeting and saving and setting a goal," said Saver Plus participant Michelle.

Other findings of the evaluation report's survey of 1,201 participants include:

- 89% reported that the educational product they bought with their matched savings had a positive effect on their own or their child's education experience.
- 87% were still saving the same amount or more up to a year after they completed Saver Plus.
- 79% said they were better equipped to deal with unexpected expenses.

Brotherhood of St Laurence Executive Director, Tony Nicholson, said Saver Plus helped put participants in control of household finances and improved wellbeing. "It's based on the philosophy of providing the mechanisms and infrastructure to assist people on low incomes to save and acquire assets. Savings provide a buffer against situations that can lead to long-term financial hardship, such as the illness of a breadwinner," he said.

ANZ Managing Director, Retail Distribution, Mark Hand, said: "Saver Plus is the largest and longest running financial education and matched savings program in the world, with more than 16,000 Australians having participated. We will continue to work with the Australian Government and our community partners to ensure the program reaches more people."

ENDS

Details for launch on Wednesday, 5 December 2012 at 2.30pm:

- ANZ Centre, Upper Ground Floor, 833 Collins Street, Docklands, Victoria.
- Launch by the Hon Jenny Macklin, Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
- Saver Plus Workers, Verity Tunevitsch and Dani Dados, and their participants, Annie Simpson and Michelle Ringuini, will be at the launch and available for interview.

For media enquiries contact:

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A copy of the report is at www.bsl.org.au/saver-plus and www.anz.com/saverplus.

About Saver Plus:

- Saver Plus is the largest and longest running financial education and matched savings program in the world.
- To date, more than 16,000 Australians have participated in Saver Plus, now nearing its 10th anniversary of operation.
- The program aims to reach 10,000 more Australians by June 2014, with a further \$10 million commitment from ANZ.
- Saver Plus assists people on lower incomes to develop a savings habit and achieve a savings goal, with the added incentive provided by ANZ of matching savings up to \$500. Participants also undertake ANZ's MoneyMinded financial education workshops.
- Saver Plus, was developed by the Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ in 2002, and piloted in three communities in 2003. From 2009 to 2011 the Australian Government committed over \$13 million for the expansion of Saver Plus across Australia to 60 communities. In 2011 the Australian Government committed \$19.5 million for a further three years, until 2014.
- It is delivered in partnership with The Smith Family, The Benevolent Society and Berry Street. ANZ and the Australian Government fund the program.
- Participants are assigned a Saver Plus Worker and open an ANZ Progress Saver account at their local ANZ branch, into which they make regular deposits. They attend MoneyMinded workshops to build their financial management skills and when they reach their savings goal after at least 10 months ANZ matches the amount, up to \$500, for the purchase of the nominated educational item.
- Community partners that deliver the program include the Brotherhood of St Laurence, The Smith Family, The Benevolent Society and Berry Street. Other agencies that deliver Saver Plus include Anglicare NT, Anglicare SA, Anglicare WA, BGT, Bethany Community Support, Jewish Care Victoria and Haven.