



# CARING FOR OUR STUDENTS

## Keeping our students happy and healthy

The Greens will fight for better support for our students

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The Greens will make sure that every student, no matter which school they go to, can get the help they need.

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The ACT Greens are committed to increasing funding to youth mental services, so that every student, no matter which school they go to, can get the help they need.

We are committed to a two prong approach to providing the mental health support that young people need, and educational and learning support for young people with learning difficulties.

### > Investing in student mental health

To support children and young people with mental health issues the ACT Greens will commit to:

- » fund a comprehensive evaluation of the existing services available across government and non-government support service;
- » provide \$4m over the next four years to fund counselling services in the community specifically for children and young people;
- » implement a streamlined referral process that can be utilized by all Canberra schools;
- » ensure resource materials are made easily available in all schools to ensure that students, teachers and principals are fully aware of services available;

» work with experts in the field such and ACT Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health services and Headspace ACT to develop a school system-wide referral process (including for non-government schools).

With more awareness of mental health, particularly depression and anxiety, young people are seeking help and finding all too often that services are not in the right place or available at the right time. The Greens believe that just like physical health, mental health is critical to our overall wellbeing.

That is why we will dramatically increase mental health funding available to young people, and support more appropriate interventions for schools and colleges students many of whom will reach out for help for the first time.

### > Meeting students' learning needs in the classroom

Evidence shows that a large percentage of our students will struggle with some aspects of learning, and we know that each and every student has different needs in the classroom.

Right now, too many students are finding themselves accessing out of school assessments and tutoring, to “catch up” or overcome their learning difficulties.

ACT’s public school teachers and principals have been working in 2016 to implement the recently released Great Teaching By Design in their day to day practice.

The ACT Greens will increase support to implement the Great Teaching by Design Strategy by funding dedicated senior educators with expertise in pedagogy, learning difficulties, and literacy and numeracy programming, who will:

- » use a coaching and mentoring model to provide hands-on training and support across the school,
- » assist with programming and review the teaching strategies that are in place across schools;
- » help schools implement evidence-based teaching practices in classrooms; and
- » ensure the ‘Response to Intervention’ model is used consistently, specifically for children with learning difficulties, across classrooms and schools, including targeted individual support where required.

The ACT Greens will also fund additional school psychologists in 2017 to build the assessment capacity for children with learning difficulties to ensure that families don’t need to spend thousands of dollars undertaking tests privately.