



Sid Sidebottom MP ... for a fair go in Braddon

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MORE FUNDS FOR YOUNG SPORTING CHAMPIONS TO CHASE THEIR DREAMS

Budding sports stars in the North-West and West will have greater chance to chase their sporting dreams with a doubling of the Australian Government's Local Sporting Champion's fund.

Member for Braddon Sid Sidebottom said up to \$25,000 would now be available for younger athletes wanting to compete in state and national events.

The Australian Government has doubled the number of Local Sporting Champions grants available in 2010-11, with an increase in the 2010-11 Budget to \$3.17 million, giving every electorate throughout the nation more chances to support local youth sports stars.

This means 26 individual grants and four team grants for young people in our electorate.

Mr Sidebottom said the program had been hugely popular for young athletes in Braddon since it was launched in 2008.

"We need to invest in our sporting champions and for some time I've been arguing for more money to increase the benefits," Mr Sidebottom said.

"Some of our kids in could be our next Olympians, Paralympians, tennis stars, football or netball professionals."

To be eligible for individual grants of \$500 and \$3000 for teams, Australians aged between 12-18 years must have to travel more than 250km to compete in endorsed state or national sporting competitions, or national school sport competitions. The grants can be used to meet travel costs, accommodation, uniforms or equipment. Grants are also open to young coaches, umpires and referees.

The program will continue to be administered by the Australian Sports Commission, the Government's primary national sports administration, funding and advisory agency.

Each funding round, a list of applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be provided to a local committee established by Mr Sidebottom for consideration.

Keeping children active was a key recommendation by the National Preventative Health Taskforce last year.

The taskforce outlined:

- About 25 per cent of Australian children are overweight or obese, up from an estimated 5 per cent in the 1960s

- Overweight and obese children and adolescents face the same health conditions as adults and may be particularly sensitive to the effects on their self-esteem
- It is predicted the life expectancy for children alive now will fall by two years by the time they are 20 years old if current obesity trends continue. This represents a loss of five to 10 years in life expectancy gains.

The Government has responded to the Independent Sport Panel's report, *The Future of Sport in Australia*, by providing the biggest single increase in sports funding of \$195 million over four years.

More details of the Local Sporting Champions program is available at www.ausport.gov.au

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