A young person’s postcode should not predict education opportunities or achievement.

Australia’s disadvantaged children start school behind, fall further behind at school and are less likely to finish Year 12.

- 58% of disadvantaged students go to school in disadvantaged communities¹
- By age 15 the poorest students are almost three years behind²
- Around half of long-term unemployed people (49%) have not finished Year 12 or above.³

We can and must do better.

“There are outstanding programs, approaches, and people in non-profit organisations, schools and government working today to make a positive impact on the learning outcomes for disadvantaged children. We call these successes ‘Bright Spots.’”

– Suzie Riddell, Executive Director, Education, SVA

SVA focuses on enhancing educational outcomes and increasing employment participation as the keys to overcoming disadvantage. We do this by improving the flow of resources and capital to schools, working with experienced and talented people and building an evidence base to showcase the change that is possible.

The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection will work directly with Bright Spots Schools and their leaders. Connecting bright spots schools, their leaders and communities, resources, and philanthropists, will help create a bright system by:

**Improving resource and capital flow**

The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection will provide a mechanism to support schools and programs with both resources and a small amount of directed funding. Over time a moderate contribution, transparently managed and administered, will assist low SES schools identified as achieving exceptional results for disadvantaged students, to maintain and sustain change. Sustainability and efficiency are the focus.

**Attracting experienced talent**

The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection will work with passionate school leaders to support their professional growth and networking, so that outstanding programs can be further developed and shared with others. These are leaders challenging the status quo, driving innovation and taking action to pioneer programs and approaches that enhance educational outcomes for students in disadvantaged communities.

**Building the evidence base**

Evidence of success is clear in Bright Spots Schools. Research will identify those programs that are working, and the essential elements that should be the focus of further action. The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection will work with schools to track and share results, and to showcase and replicate success so that bright spots can become a bright educational system for all Australian children.

The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection will:

- **Maintain and sustain** change
- **Showcase and replicate** the change, and
- **Connect and engage** schools with their communities

**Support the SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection**

You can help change the face of Australian education. SVA believes one sector alone cannot drive the change necessary to create a brighter education system. Contact SVA to engage and support bright spots to become a bright system.

**Funders**

- Contribute to a strong evidence base to show what works
- Lead the change and make an impact in disadvantaged communities
- Change the lives of disadvantaged students – for the long term.

**Educators**

- Help bright spots schools grow, maintain and sustain success
- Build the evidence base for sustained system wide change
- Spread the impact of programs proven in bright spots schools
- Advocate for lead thinking to showcase successful program evidence in low SES Schools.

**Communities**

- Provide resources to build networks that support schools, leaders and students
- Change the education and life outcomes for local students
- Open up opportunities beyond the school gate.

**Governments**

- Identify solutions to difficult education challenges
- Celebrate success in tough schools and showcase innovation
- Consolidate the evidence and research for proven approaches.

¹ OECD Report: Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools (Feb 2012)
² OECD PISA 2009
³ ABS Job Search Experience Survey 2010
“Health is important. Housing is important. But nothing is going to uplift the disadvantaged like education. Just nothing.”
– Bob Bryan, Chairman, Bryan Foundation

“To get a lift across the system our best bet is to access what Bright Spots are doing, learn from them and spread the practice.”
– Tony Mackay, Chair, Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection will focus on three strategically aligned streams of activity:

**Powerhouse Schools**
- Innovation and quality projects
- Core Goal: Developing leadership capacity and innovation.
- Adding eight to ten schools p.a.
- Focus on community partnerships
- Evaluation and support for programs

**Thought Leadership**
- Catalyst for new learning and knowledge exchange
- Core Goal: Support and develop systemic capacity.
- Provide leadership and development
- High calibre thought leadership experiences
- Build connections
- Events include SVA Education Dialogue

**Rising Stars**
- Promising practice projects
- Core Goal: Seed innovation and develop pipeline for Powerhouse Schools.
- Ten schools p.a.
- Small seed grants
- Case studies of change
- Potential to join ‘Powerhouse Schools’
- Targeting innovation

**Details you need to know**
- Social Ventures Australia works with innovative partners to invest in social change.
- We help to create better education and employment outcomes for disadvantaged Australians by bringing the best of business to the social sector, and by working with partners to strategically invest capital and expertise. SVA Consulting shares evidence and knowledge to build social sector capacity, while SVA Impact Investing introduces new capital and innovative financial models to help solve entrenched problems.
- The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection is a key initiative in the SVA Education portfolio and a significant contributor to the SVA Education Strategic Plan, overseen by the SVA Executive Director of Education, SVA CEO and Board.
- An external partner will evaluate the SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection and outcomes. Progress indicators mapped against outcomes will be used to inform practice, ensure high quality delivery and track results.
- The new, government supported national philanthropic fund ‘Schools Plus’ will open up access by public schools to donations with deductible gift recipient (DGR) tax status, providing a mechanism to connect philanthropy and schools in a structured way. The SVA Bright Spots Schools Connection will work with this new national initiative.
- SVA is an incorporated company limited by guarantee in 2002 and is endorsed as a tax exempt charity. SVA is a deductible gift recipient (DGR).