



**The Hon Ingrid Stitt MP**

Minister for Early Childhood

**The Hon James Merlino MP**

Minister for Education

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## **HELPING FAMILIES JUGGLING IT ALL**

This year, parents have had to juggle work and childcare and kids learning from home. Even now with kids back at school and kinder, we know that balancing act isn't easy.

It's why the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* will deliver a \$773.8 million investment in early childhood education, including \$169.6 million to help cover the cost of kinder for up to 100,000 Victorian families.

The Andrews Labor Government will also increase the availability of before and after school care – reducing the burden for parents and making it easier for women to return to work.

Under this investment, subsidies will be offered to early childhood services providing funded kindergarten programs – meaning free kinder for four-year-olds and eligible three-year-olds attending a participating sessional kinder.

Families with children enrolled in kinder programs at a long day care centre will also benefit from a saving of around \$2,000 in fees.

And for those families that have kids attending unfunded three-year-old programs in sessional kindergartens, there will also be reduced fees.

The Budget also invests an extra \$302 million to continue the roll-out of our landmark three-year-old kinder reform, which started in six regional local government areas this year and expands to a further 15 areas in 2021 – and then to the rest of the state in 2022.

A further \$38.5 million will be invested in the Building Blocks grants program, which offers early childhood providers funding towards building, expanding, improving and creating more inclusive early learning facilities.

This additional boost is expected to create up to 1,500 additional kindergarten places, build more inclusive facilities for young Victorians of all abilities and provide services with IT grants.

An extra \$30 million will go towards the Refurbishment and Minor Works grant program, which will support the delivery of minor capital works projects at Victoria's kinders. This new program will create more than 180 jobs in construction and associated industries, while giving our kids the best start in life.

It's part of the Labor Government's \$5 billion investment over the decade to provide up to 15 hours of funded kindergarten each week for three-year-old children – creating more than 6,000 early childhood teacher and educator jobs across the state.

A new \$81.6 million initiative will establish up to 400 new outside school hours care services at government schools, increasing the availability of before and after school care options for families. Grants of up to \$75,000 will be available to start these new programs, which will be available to both government and non-government students.

The Budget also includes almost \$6.2 million for early intervention specialist support to help parents and kids struggling as a result of the pandemic.

This includes a new \$1.5 million family group program to help vulnerable kids transition to school and \$3.8 million for outreach and wraparound services to support vulnerable children, including those in public housing communities, to participate in early learning.

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt**

*“It’s been a difficult year for many families, balancing learning and working from home. This support will reduce the burden on parents and better support kids – at their kinder program, and as they move into school.”*

*“This investment will create jobs and help more Victorians – particularly women – return to the workforce as we rebuild from the pandemic.”*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino**

*“Hundreds of schools will be able to establish before and after school care programs for students, giving parents more flexibility as they manage that daily juggle.”*