

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Workplace Safety
Minister for Early Childhood



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FIRST DAY MILESTONE FOR THREE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN KIDS

Thousands of Victorian children are starting at Three-Year-Old Kindergarten from this week, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government's landmark early childhood education reform.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today visited AG Leech Kindergarten in Maryborough to celebrate local children attending funded universal three-year-old kindergarten programs for the first time.

More than 130 services in 15 local government areas including Alpine, Ararat, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Colac-Otway, Corangamite, East Gippsland, Glenelg, Hepburn, Indigo, Loddon, Murrindindi, Southern Grampians, Towong and West Wimmera will deliver up to 15 hours each week of teacher-led programs for three-year-olds in 2021.

This is part of Labor Government's almost \$5 billion investment over the decade to deliver two years of funded kindergarten programs for all Victorian children. The Labor Government will provide up to 15 hours of funded kindergarten each week for Victorian three-year-old children by 2029.

Around 2,000 additional children are set to benefit in the new roll-out areas in the second year of the reform.

From 2022, three-year-olds across the rest of the state will have access to five hours of a teacher-led kindergarten program. This will increase to a 15-hour program by 2029.

Kindergarten services across the state are preparing to open their enrolments for next year. This includes standalone kindergartens and long day care centres, with places funded in the same way as four-year-old kindergarten programs.

At full roll-out, an estimated 90,000 children each year will be receiving this important educational boost.

The Labor Government is also investing up to \$169.6 million to make kinder free this year, saving families around \$2,000 for every child enrolled in a participating funded kindergarten program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

"This is such an exciting time for families and the young learners who are able to attend funded universal Three-Year-Old Kinder for the first time."

"This is a nation leading reform. It will transform early childhood education for our kids and give them the best possible start in life."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jaala Pulford

"The introduction of funded three-year-old kinder will make a huge difference for families right across this region. It's a wonderful investment in the future of our kids."