

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Sunday, 5 December 2021

SETTING VICTORIAN KIDS UP FOR THE BEST START TO 2022

The Andrews Labor Government will help Victorian kids enjoy the best camps, sporting programs and cultural experiences Victoria has to offer, re-engaging them in the extracurricular activities they loved before the pandemic.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Education James Merlino today announced the \$112.9 million *Positive Start in 2022* initiative, which will help make up for the disruption the global pandemic has caused for primary and secondary school students, and give Victorian kids the best possible start to 2022.

Victorians did an incredible job of looking after each other during the pandemic, staying home to slow the spread of coronavirus. But that also meant schools had to cancel sports, camps and all of the other extra activities kids love.

Positive Start in 2022 will help get students back out and about around the state, and support their physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

An investment of \$84.3 million will deliver additional camps to benefit 81,200 students during school holidays and 2022 school terms – making sure students don't miss out on vital outdoor education and socialising.

The program will focus on students from government and low-fee non-government schools who have been most affected by COVID-19 school closures – as well as students and schools that might otherwise be unable to participate in an outdoor education or camp program.

A further \$12.4 million will provide access to a broad range of arts, sporting and cultural experiences for students at every government and low-fee non-government school in Victoria.

From Sovereign Hill to the NGV, Melbourne Zoo and sporting workshops with the AFL, the program will provide more than 325,000 fully subsidised places for students across the various programs – boosting kids' motivation and helping them rebuild their connections with friends, teachers and communities.

An investment of \$16.3 million will deliver more than 690,000 swimming and water safety lessons for students at government and Catholic primary schools – making sure students aren't left behind without the vital skills they need to stay safe around water.

This funding will supplement the \$55.2 million in support the Labor Government has already provided for school swimming from 2022-24, providing extra lessons to make sure students can catch up on the practical skills they may have missed during the pandemic.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Victorian students and school communities did an amazing job helping our state slow the spread of coronavirus – and now we're giving back, making sure 2022 is full of adventure and fun for every child across the state."

Quote attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"We know the pandemic has been challenging for many kids, missing out on the things that make our Education State so great – and this program makes up for lost time with exciting experiences for everyone."

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