

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Workplace Safety
Minister for Early Childhood



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GROWING KINDERGARTENS FOR GROWING COMMUNITIES

The Andrews Labor Government is expanding kindergartens across Victoria, helping more families in growing communities access crucial early childhood services to give their children the best start in life.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today announced the Labor Government will invest \$14.7 million in an extra nine Building Blocks Capacity grants, building and expanding kindergarten services to create an extra 356 places across the state.

The grants will improve access to local early childhood services by supporting new kindergartens to be built in some of the state's fastest-growing areas, and supporting existing services to create extra infrastructure capacity for more kids to enrol in funded kindergarten.

Projects funded in this round include the new Merrifield South Integrated Child, Family and Community Centre in Hume, a new modular kindergarten facility at Foster Primary School in South Gippsland, and the expansion of Narre Warren North Kindergarten in Casey to add extra capacity.

These announcements bring the total funding the Labor Government has provided under the 2021 Building Blocks Capacity grants rounds to \$52.3 million – supporting 34 projects that will create more than 1,800 kindergarten places in areas of demand.

In an Australian-first, the Government has invested almost \$5 billion to deliver a full 15 hours of Three-Year-Old Kinder to children across the state over this decade, with the roll-out beginning in selected areas in 2020 and expanding in 2022 to support five hours of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten statewide.

As part of this roll-out, the government is co-investing \$1.68 billion with the early childhood sector to build and expand kindergarten facilities across the state.

The Labor Government is also ensuring that every new Victorian primary school set to open from 2021 will have a kindergarten on-site or next door, reducing the burden on parents by helping them ditch the 'dreaded double drop-off'.

To find out more about the grants, visit schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/Pages/Building-Blocks-Grants-Capacity.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

"We want every Victorian child to have access to fantastic early years education, close to home – because we know how vital it is in setting our kids up for the rest of their lives."

"We're expanding and opening new kinders in Victoria's fastest-growing areas, making sure every family has a great local kinder nearby to start their kids' education journeys well."