

Media Release

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Minister for Workplace Safety

Minister for Early Childhood



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GIVING MORE KIDS THE CHANCE TO EXPLORE ANOTHER LANGUAGE

Thousands of kids at Victorian kindergartens will explore different languages and cultures through the expanded roll-out of the Andrews Labor Government's Early Childhood Language Program.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today visited Tarneit Central Kindergarten to announce another 47 kindergarten services as part of the program, giving about 2,000 more children the chance to learn another language each year.

The Early Childhood Language Program is delivered by qualified language teachers in partnership with kindergarten staff who incorporate languages into everyday learning experiences – including play, stories, art, music, singing and dancing – to give children meaningful opportunities to use the language.

Among the most popular languages are Auslan, Victorian Aboriginal languages and Chinese.

The program has helped children through a range of long-term benefits including better pre-reading and pre-writing skills, improved cognitive flexibility and deeper connections with different cultures.

The Australian-first program funded by the Labor Government has been running since 2019 and will next year reach a total of 8,000 children at 220 kindergarten services, providing employment opportunities for 150 language teachers across 25 different languages.

A further 10 kindergarten services will be offered a place in a new trial of the program where they will use an existing educator or teacher who is bilingual and can deliver a language program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

"I'm excited to announce the expansion of our Australian-first Early Childhood Language Program to even more kindergartens across Victoria from next year, giving more opportunities to kids and creating more jobs."

"We know that it's fun to explore different languages and cultures – but this program is also providing Victorian kids with long-term benefits including important foundational skills and a strong sense of community."