

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Wednesday, 15 June 2022

EARLY PARENTING CENTRE FOR SHEPPARTON ON THE WAY

Parents in the Goulburn Valley and surrounding communities will soon have greater access to early parenting support with a multi-million-dollar Early Parenting Centre to be built in Shepparton.

Minister for Health Martin Foley today announced \$25 million in funding from the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* will be used to secure land and build the state-of-the-art centre.

This brings the total Andrews Labor Government investment to \$148 million which will deliver eight new and two refurbished Early Parenting Centres in major growth areas across the state.

The centre is designed to support families with children up to four years of age to enhance their relationships and achieve their parenting goals.

It will have 10-beds, a kitchen and dining area, and other spaces such as playrooms and multi-purpose rooms, as well as outdoor play areas and landscaping.

Shepparton's new Early Parenting Centre will provide parents and carers with the advice and care they need, including support with sleep and settling, feeding and extra care for babies and toddlers with additional needs.

Sleep and settling is one of the biggest challenges facing new parents, with around one in two Victorian parents who are attending the early parenting centres reporting problems with their child's sleep. This can lead to post-natal depression, isolation and stress for parents, and impact a child's behavioural, mental and physical development.

Delivered by the Victorian Health Building Authority (VHBA) construction is expected to get underway in 2024 and be completed by the end of 2025.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"We know how overwhelming the first few months of parenthood can be, so we're giving parents the support they need where they need it by investing in a new and refurbished Early Parenting Centre in Shepparton."

"Facilities like this are a great resource for new parents, and provide the certainty that when things go wrong or you wonder if you're doing something right, you can get the support or answers you need closer to home."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp

"Shepparton's new Early Parenting Centre will deliver flexible, targeted services to help parents with sleep and settling issues, supporting hundreds of local families a year."