

# Media Release

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MP**

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Training and Skills

Minister for Higher Education

Minister for Agriculture



Thursday, 30 June 2022

## BOOSTING VICTORIA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WORKFORCE

The Andrews Labor Government will boost TAFE training opportunities for Victoria's future early childhood education and care workforce – supporting the massive decade-long transformation of the sector across the state.

Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney today announced a \$2.9 million investment to recruit and train 140 workers in Geelong and Wyndham, through The Gordon TAFE in collaboration with industry stakeholders.

The *Building Careers Through Smart Skilling* project will deliver training, an industry 'try-before-you-buy' program, mentorships and other wraparound supports – providing local jobseekers with pathways into TAFE courses and meaningful career opportunities while also addressing skills demands.

The training project supports the Labor Government's ambitious overhaul of early childhood education and care through a \$9 billion investment to make kinder free, deliver a new year of universal Pre-Prep for 4-year-olds and establish 50 government operated childcare centres.

In addition to early childhood and care, the *Building Careers Through Smart Skilling* project will provide opportunities to Victorians looking to enter aged care, disability, hospitality, tourism, food and accommodation services.

Victorian TAFE and the Labor Government's signature Free TAFE initiative are providing a pipeline of skilled workers, with enrolments in Early Childhood Education and Care courses more than doubling since they were added to the list, meeting demand from the Labor Government's newly introduced free Three-Year Old Kinder initiative.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has made a record \$3.5 billion investment to rebuild TAFE and support universities and higher education to ensure Victorians have access to high quality education and rewarding career pathways.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney

*"TAFE isn't just the engine room of the early childhood sector but industries right across the state – it provides great opportunities to jobseekers and is setting Victoria up with the skilled workers we need now and into the future."*

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

*"Our littlest Victorians deserve the best start in life – which is why we've made a joint commitment with the New South Wales Government to embark on the greatest transformation of early childhood education in a generation."*

### Quote attributable to The Gordon Building Careers Through Smart Skilling Project Manager Megan Hortle

*"Our intensive learning program focuses on upskilling and cross-skilling the existing workforce while encouraging new workers from our refugee, CALD and Indigenous populations, women and youth to reskill."*