

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Friday, 29 July 2022

NEW EARLY PARENTING CENTRE ON THE WAY FOR BENDIGO

New mums and dads will soon have better access to early parenting support in a purpose-built facility, with construction now underway for a new multi-million-dollar Early Parenting Centre in Bendigo.

Premier Daniel Andrews, Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan and Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards today turned the first sod on the new Early Parenting Centre on Havlin Street East, Kennington – marking the start of construction.

Designed to support families with children up to four-years-of-age, the new centre will have 10 residential family units, four day-stay places, a kitchen and dining area, playrooms, multi-purpose rooms and outdoor play areas.

The new 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 parents who attend early parenting centres reporting problems with their child's sleep. This can lead to post-natal depression, isolation and stress for parents and affect a child's behavioural, mental and physical development.

The final designs which were also revealed today have been carefully considered to create a safe and serene environment where families can feel at home.

The project's architects, Brand Architects, consulted childcare experts, local community groups and traditional owners as part of the design process to ensure it reflects the community it serves.

Natural light, rooms suitable for various family arrangements and a place that feels like home were some of the priorities incorporated in the final designs. The colour palette was developed to mirror the landscape in the Loddon Mallee and surrounds, featuring colours inspired by the native flora and environment of the area.

The Bendigo Early Parenting Centre is being delivered as part of the Andrews Labor Government's \$148 million investment to expand and upgrade the early parenting service network. Construction is expected to finish in early 2024.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Being a new parent can be the most rewarding experience – but it can also be really tough. We're giving new parents the helping hand they need, close to home, by investing in new and refurbished Early Parenting Centres across Victoria."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"This new centre will deliver flexible, targeted services to help parents with sleep and settling issues, supporting hundreds of local families a year."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"Facilities like this are great for new parents, they give you the certainty that when things go wrong, or you wonder if you're doing something right – you won't have to leave Bendigo to get the support you need."

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