

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MLC
Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep
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FREE KINDERGARTEN FOR THOUSANDS OF VICTORIAN CHILDREN

As families begin to make choices about their child's education for 2023, the Andrews Labor Government is encouraging every Victorian family to enrol their child into newly Free Kinder.

Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt today announced the Free Kinder funding, which will enable children to dream even bigger through increased access to quality childhood education and help slash the cost of living for Victorian families

For families, Free Kinder will mean more choice, more flexibility, and more money saved with the Labor Government investing \$270 million to provide Free Kinder in 2023 to approximately 140,000 eligible children.

All early childhood education and care providers that deliver a funded kindergarten program in Victoria will be eligible to receive Free Kinder funding from 2023, saving families up to \$2,500 per child, every year.

Free Kinder funding will be available in both standalone kindergarten and long day care settings for children enrolled in a funded kindergarten program.

A 15-hour per week program will be available to four-year-old children and a 5-to-15-hour program will be available to three-year-old children per week.

The Labor Government is also investing \$9 billion over the next decade to transition Four-Year-Old Kindergarten to Pre-Prep with 30 hours of play-based learning by 2032 and build 50 government-owned childcare centres to ensure children thrive and women are supported to return to work.

An additional 5,000 teachers and educators are needed over the decade to support this significant reform.

Free Kinder is part of the Labor Government's ongoing reform to early years education in Victoria, to support every child to get the best start for the best life.

Enrolments for 2023 kinder are currently open. Find out more at vic.gov.au/kinder

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt

"We know families are struggling with the cost of living and free kinder will help make sure no child misses out on the vital years of early education."

"This is such an exciting time for families and the young learners who are able to attend free kindergarten for the first time."