

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services



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WORKS START ON NEW BALLARAT EARLY PARENTING CENTRE

New mums and dads across Ballarat will soon have better access to early parenting support in a state-of-the-art facility, with a site selected and works starting for the new multi-million-dollar Early Parenting Centre in Ballarat.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas, Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison and Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle today turned the first sod and released the first designs of the new centre at 10 Fawcett Rd, Lucas.

The new centre has been carefully designed to create an environment where families can feel safe, comfortable and at home.

Supporting families with children up to four-years-of-age, the new centre will have 10 residential family units and four day-stay places, providing both short-term and longer residential stay programs to improve the health, wellbeing and developmental outcomes of children.

The new centre will provide parents and carers with the support and advice they need, including help 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, stress and can affect a child's behavioural, mental and physical development.

To be operated by Grampians Health, the new facility will be located at the heart of the Ballarat West Growth Zone and only 7 kilometres from the Ballarat CBD. The centre is close to a range of community facilities including parks, playgrounds, schools and a shopping centre.

The Ballarat 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.

Once completed, this investment will provide support to more than 5,000 extra families each year meaning that more families with babies and young children can get the early parenting support they need closer to home.

Delivered by local builders A W Nicholson, construction is expected to be completed in late 2023.

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"Being a new parent can be an incredibly rewarding experience – but it can also be really tough. It's why we're expanding Early Parenting Centres across Victoria to support more than 5,000 extra families every year, so they get the help they need close to home."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"Sleep, settling and feeding can be huge challenges for new parents. The Ballarat Early Parenting Centre will provide families with advice and social support when they need it most, locally."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"The Centre will give new mum and dads comfort in the knowledge that they can get support and help close to home."

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