

Media Release

The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP
Minister for Planning
Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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HELPING TOMORROW'S LITTLE ANGLERS GET HOOKED ON FISHING

The Andrews Labor Government is giving Victoria's next generation of recreational fishers the opportunity to get hooked on fishing, with free Little Angler Kits for kids across Victoria.

Minister for Outdoor Recreation Sonya Kilkenny today announced 60,000 kits will be made available to grade five primary students in more than 1,900 Victorian schools later this year.

The kits will set families up with everything they need to wet a line including a fishing rod and reel, line, tackle box, some tackle and a *Kids' Guide to Fishing* that includes information and links to educational resources to learn the basics such as fishing safety, knots and rigs.

The kits will help youngsters get active, learn about the aquatic environment and have fun in the great outdoors whether they be down the coast, on Port Phillip Bay or by a river in regional Victoria.

The Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) is leading the roll out and has released a tender today for the supply of kits, with schools encouraged to register early interest.

The \$1.5 million project has been made possible by the Labor Government's \$96 million package to improve fishing, boating, piers and aquaculture.

The Little Angler Kits complements several other initiatives led by the VFA to encourage youngsters to connect with nature and enjoy Victoria's spectacular waterways. This includes the stocking of almost 10 million fish last season, more than any other state in the country.

For the June and September school holidays, 80 family fishing lakes across the state share in more than 60,000 catchable-size rainbow trout to provide children the chance to catch their first fish.

Every year, free VicFishKids events provide kids with the opportunity to try fishing with help from experts and Fishcare volunteers. All fishing gear is supplied and every child heads home with a free rod to continue their fishing journey on their next holiday with family and friends.

Fisheries Officers across the state also play a role in encouraging participation by visiting schools to talk about safe and sustainable fishing, a message echoed at the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre in Queenscliff where VFA educators welcome 13,000 school children every year.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Outdoor Recreation Sonya Kilkenny

"We want more young people getting into fishing because we know it brings people together in the great outdoors, boosts local businesses and encourages Victorians to discover new parts of this great state."

"Offering free Little Angler Kits through schools helps the next generation of fishers reel in a hobby they can enjoy for a lifetime."