

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Early Childhood & Pre-Prep
Minister for Environment



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NEW KINDERS ONE STEP CLOSER THANKS TO PLANNING GRANTS

The Andrews Labor Government is bringing 19 more kinders to life in growing areas of Victoria, with a new round of grants to support planning for vital kindergarten building projects.

Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt today announced 15 local councils and kindergarten service providers will share in \$2.5 million of Building Blocks Planning grants of up to \$150,000 each for planning, design and pre-construction work on kindergarten building projects.

The cities of Boroondara, Darebin, Monash, Greater Shepparton and Warrnambool together with Baw Baw, Murrindindi, South Gippsland, Surf Coast and Wellington shires have been awarded funding to support crucial pre-construction works to help these projects come to life.

Other planning grant recipients are Goodstart Early Learning, Newhaven College, San Remo Pre-School, Yarralea Children's Centre and Yavneh College.

Planning funding supports a wide range of essential pre-construction activity like project management, architecture and design planning, soil testing, environmental sustainability assessments and feasibility studies.

Helping prepare for and construct new Early Childhood infrastructure is a key part of the Labor Government's rollout of free three- and four-year-old kinder in local areas state-wide to ensure all Victorian children get the best start to life.

Through our nation-leading \$14 billion *Best Start, Best Life* reforms, the Labor Government is transforming early childhood education to help children thrive, save families money and support parents – especially women – to return to work or study if they choose.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* has made it easier for local councils and kindergarten service providers to apply for grants in the Building Blocks Capacity Building and Planning streams, so they can better plan for and meet demand for kindergarten as Victoria grows.

Applications for Building Blocks Planning grants of up to \$150,000 are now accepted year-round – making it quicker and easier for eligible organisations to apply for funding that supports planning for new and expanded kinders.

The Building Blocks grants program also offers significantly increased Capacity Building grants of up to \$4.5 million for new integrated children's centres, \$4 million for new early learning centres and \$1 million for expansion projects – helping to build the new and expanded kinders Victoria's littlest learners need, right across the state.

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

"We're delivering unprecedented investment in early childhood services across Victoria to expand access to early education and help our children learn, grow and thrive."

"These grants will help eligible organisations plan projects that increase access to kindergarten for local families – providing the funding needed to help get these projects off the ground."