

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Tuesday, 10 October 2023

NEW EARLY PARENTING CENTRE DELIVERED FOR THE WEST

New mums and dads in Wyndham and across the western suburbs will get the specialised support they need to care for their new babies, close to home – with the first of 12 new and upgraded Early Parenting Centres now complete.

Premier Jacinta Allan, Minister for Health Infrastructure Mary-Anne and Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn Thomas today toured the new multi-million-dollar Wyndham Early Parenting Centre in Werribee, set to open to parents this month.

Designed to feel like a home away from home, the centre supports families with children up to four years of age, giving them the advice and care they need – like 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 half of Victorian parents who use 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 new centre features ten 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 residential family units are designed with flexibility in mind and support different family structures. Families can bring multiple children or accommodate an older sibling, grandparent, or other carer during their stay.

The purpose-built centre also includes kitchen and dining areas, playrooms and outdoor play areas, delivered in partnership with the Tweddle Child and Family Health Service.

The 12 new and upgraded Early Parenting Centres are part of the Labor Government's \$148 million investment to expand our early parenting service network – and an \$18.9 million investment in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24* to deliver on our election commitments for a new centre in Northcote and an Aboriginal-led centre in Frankston.

Building on this work, this year's Budget also invested to increase the time newborns spend with maternal nurses, help mums struggling with breastfeeding and support new dads.

Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"Being a new parent is an incredible experience, but it can also be really hard in those first months and years – this new centre will help hundreds of families across Wyndham with sleep and settling issues, close to home."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Infrastructure Mary-Anne Thomas

"This is a significant milestone, the first of 12 new and upgraded Early Parenting Centres to open its doors as part of our \$148 million investment to build and upgrade centres across Victoria."

Quote attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

"A child's first 1,000 days of life are critical – and we're delivering more centres like this across Victoria, to make sure every family gets the best possible start."

Media contact: Lily King 0432 279 396 | lily.king@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quote attributable to Member for Werribee Tim Pallas

“We’re giving families in Werribee and across Wyndham a place where they can get the support and advice they need to care for their babies, close to home.”