

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Health Infrastructure

Minister for Ambulance Services



Thursday, 29 February 2024

SUPPORTING NEW MUMS AND DADS FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS

The Allan Labor Government is making sure all Victorian families get the health information they need, no matter their first language – from Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu to Arabic, Mandarin and Vietnamese.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today met with a local Vietnamese parent group at Sunshine to launch a suite of 72 new in-language resources designed specifically for culturally and linguistically diverse families across Victoria.

Comprising of 48 videos and 24 written booklets, the new resources contain critical health information including infant feeding to active play and nutrition.

Developed by Deakin University's evidenced-based INFANT Feeding, Active play and NutriTion (INFANT) program in partnership with the Labor Government and local families, the resources will be made available to health services across the state so they can share the right information with parents and carers in their preferred language.

The resources are particularly important for diverse communities like Melbourne's west where 44 per cent of locals speak a first language that is not English.

It is the first time this type of information has been made available in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Mandarin, and Vietnamese and reflects the diversity of Victoria's population.

Research has shown the main influences on a child's health in their first year of life are family, home, and health services and these resources will mean more Victorians can access the information they need during this critical time.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* also included an \$86 million package to support mums, dads and babies, with investments in maternal and child health and early parenting centre services.

INFANT First Time Parent Groups are available in 41 Local Government Areas across Victoria – parents and carers can contact their local Maternal and Child Health services to see if INFANT is being run in their area.

The resources are also accessible via the INFANT website at infantprogram.org.

Quote attributable to Minister for Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"These resources have been developed by local communities for local communities – because as a parent you want trusted information that's easy to understand and the language you speak shouldn't be a barrier."

Quote attributable to Member for Laverton Sarah Connolly

"These resources are an important addition to maternal child health services in the west – recognising our diversity and reflecting the needs of our growing population by supporting parents and children with in-language resources."