

# Media Release

**The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP**  
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council  
Minister for Children  
Minister for Disability



Friday, 6 February 2026

## MORE BUSH KINDER PLACES TO GROW LITTLE LEARNERS

Hundreds more Victorian children will soon be given the chance to learn, explore and play in nature, with the Allan Labor Government expanding the highly popular Bush Kinder program.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn today announced that another 150 kindergartens will now run Bush Kinder, supported by more than \$900,000 in funding to make outdoor early learning accessible right across Victoria.

The 2026 expansion will see new Bush Kinder programs established in 55 local government areas, including 30 regional communities – giving more children the chance to learn in nature close to home.

The Labor Government is investing \$3.6 million to expand Bush Kinder programs in up to 600 kindergarten services. Since the grants started, 300 services have already received funding to establish or improve their programs.

Bush Kinder takes learning beyond the classroom and into parks, bushland and beaches, where children can climb, explore and discover the natural world – building confidence, curiosity and a love of the outdoors.

These supervised programs give children safe opportunities to learn through play, supporting their physical and cognitive development while encouraging independence and problem-solving.

Families across Victoria are struggling with the cost of living right now. Our investment in Free Kinder is also saving families up to \$2,700 per child, every single year – real help to save families time and money.

Our nation-leading \$14 billion *Best Start, Best Life* reforms are transforming early childhood education and making sure children can get the very best start in life, no matter where they live.

The Labor Government is building and expanding hundreds of kindergartens across the state, supporting the delivery of 15 hours of three-year-old kindergarten each week by 2029 and up to 30 hours of Pre-Prep each week by 2036.

To find out which kindergartens are receiving a bush kinder grant, visit [vic.gov.au/bush-kinder](https://vic.gov.au/bush-kinder).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

*“Every child, from regional communities to our smallest suburbs, deserves the chance to learn in nature, to climb, explore and discover.”*

*“Bush Kinder gives them that freedom – and we’re proud to help 150 more kinders take learning outdoors.”*

*“Only a Labor Government would deliver Free Kinder for busy families across Victoria.”*