STRENGTHENING EARLY NUMERACY LEARNING WITH LET’S COUNT

The Andrews Labor Government is rolling out a program to boost the maths skills of young children.

Visiting Frankston Preschool today, Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos and The Smith Family’s Victorian General Manager Anton Leschen announced that educators across an initial 76 kindergartens will participate in the Let’s Count program, which will benefit from a $600,000 funding boost.

Developed by Charles Sturt University Professor Bob Perry, Monash University Associate Professor Ann Gervasoni and The Smith Family, the evidence-based program will allow educators to better engage children in activities such as counting, measuring, identifying patterns and increasing spatial awareness.

To be rolled out to further catchment areas in 2017 and 2018, the program helps young kids develop skills and a positive attitude towards maths before primary school. It also supports parents and carers to bring maths into the everyday lives of their children, through cooking, shopping and other simple fun activities.

The knowledge and skills that children develop in the early years are crucial to their later progress – and this is especially the case for mathematics.

In 2015, a longitudinal evaluation of the program showed it dramatically improved children’s maths skills, with children who participated performing better across a range of mathematical tasks than children not involved.

Approximately 500 educators in funded kindergartens will participate in the program across Victoria over the next three years. Priority will be given to kindergartens in areas where children and families will benefit most.

More than 14,000 pre-schoolers (aged three to five years old) and 5,500 families will benefit from the program.

The next round taking expressions of interest in the program opens in Term 4. More information can be found at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/letscount.aspx

Quotes attributable to the Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos

“We know some children are lacking foundational maths skills, and when children fall behind early, they often stay behind. Let’s Count will set up young Victorians for success and show them that maths is interesting, useful and even fun.”

“We are making Victoria the Education State – this means giving every child a strong start in life.”

Quotes attributable to Member for Frankston Paul Edbrooke

“There is nothing more important than our kids getting a great start in life, and this program goes to the very heart of that.”

Quotes attributable to The Smith Family’s Victorian General Manager Anton Leschen

“This exciting and very welcome investment by the Victorian Government will mean thousands of Victorian children can be supported to develop their maths skills from an early age. Many parents lack confidence in maths and don’t realise how much fun and how easy it can be to find maths in the everyday.”

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