

Media Release

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Minister for Families & Children

Minister for Youth Affairs



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BOOSTING ABORIGINAL MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

The Andrews Labor Government is improving access and participation in Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services for Aboriginal families.

Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos opened grants for the Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Initiative today.

Victorian data shows Aboriginal children traditionally have lower participation rates in MCH services. The gap increases from 4.8 per cent at the initial home visit to an 18 per cent difference at the 18-month consultation.

Over the past year, the Labor Government has been working with Aboriginal organisations, the MCH sector and local government to design strategies and approaches to provide high quality, culturally safe and responsive services for all Aboriginal families for piloting.

The MCH service received \$81.1 million in the *Victorian Budget 2017/18* in a package of reforms including expanding the Enhanced MCH Service for parents and families needing the most support. This ensures Victoria maintains a world-class MCH Service to support its increasing population.

Local councils and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations can apply for grants to trial different ways of delivering the universal Maternal and Child Health Service for Aboriginal children and families by visiting: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/amchigrants.aspx>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos

"We know the enormous benefits of our world-class Maternal Child Health Service – this is about ensuring all families take advantage of it."

"We are hoping to create better ways of responding to the needs of Aboriginal families and children, to make sure they are ready for kinder and ready for school."

"The early years can shape a child's entire life – that's why our Maternal Child Health support is so critical for first time parents."