

# Media Release

**Ingrid Stitt MP**

Minister for Workplace Safety  
Minister for Early Childhood



Friday, 9 April 2021

## FREE KINDER SAVING VICTORIAN FAMILIES THOUSANDS

Almost 100,000 families across Victoria are benefitting from free kinder this year thanks to the Andrews Labor Government, saving parents thousands of dollars and helping women back into work as we recover from the pandemic.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today announced close to 98 per cent of all funded kindergarten services have signed up to the Free Kinder initiative.

Under the Free Kinder initiative, the Labor Government has stepped in to cover the fees usually paid by parents, giving families one less thing to worry about.

This means families with children in funded three- and four-year sessional kinder in 2021 are learning for free. There is also significant fee relief for unfunded three-year-old sessional kinder.

The Free Kinder initiative is available to families attending stand-alone kindergartens as well as kinder programs in long daycare.

The *Victorian Budget 2020/21* delivered \$169.6 million to make kinder free this year helping families on average save around \$2000 per child.

The Free Kinder initiative ensures more kids are getting a great early childhood education and makes it easier for parents – particularly women – to return to the workforce.

This investment builds on the Labor Government's work to deliver kinder for three-year-olds, reaching every part of the state by 2022.

In an Australian first, the Labor Government has invested almost \$5 billion to deliver 15 hours of funded kindergarten programs for three-year-old children in Victoria by 2029. The Three-Year-Old Kindergarten reform has already been rolled out to 21 local government areas and will expand across the rest of the state in 2022.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

*"Free kinder not only saves families thousands of dollars – it gets more kids into kinder, provides important support for early childhood services and the profession, and helps more parents, especially women, into the workforce."*

*"We're giving families one less thing to worry about and ensure children don't miss out on accessing a kinder education as Victoria recovers from the impacts of the pandemic."*

*"Making Victoria the Education State means giving all kids access to quality early years learning services."*

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