

# Media Release

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



Tuesday, 19 December 2023

## MORE CAREER PATHWAYS FOR OUR KINDERGARTEN WORKFORCE

Now is the best time to consider becoming an early childhood teacher or educator, with the Allan Labor Government making more training and career pathways available for a rewarding career in early childhood.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn today launched two new programs supporting employment pathways for new early childhood teachers and educators as well as passionate workers already in the workforce looking to take the next step in their career.

The new Early Childhood Tertiary Partnerships (ECTP) program will support up to 2,000 Victorians to complete a Certificate III, Diploma or early childhood teacher qualification through 11 programs at universities, TAFEs and other tertiary education providers across Victoria.

Participants will have access to a range of tailored supports like financial assistance, academic and placement mentoring, relocation supports for regional placements, culturally responsive professional resources, and employment matching – helping them to deliver the best education for local families across the state.

ECTP expands on the Labor Government's Early Childhood Innovative Initial Teacher Education program, which is already helping 1,700 diploma-qualified educators to become qualified teachers through study programs and financial supports – boosting the supply of high-quality early childhood teachers in Victoria.

The program builds on this success, encouraging greater diversity in the early childhood workforce by supporting Aboriginal Victorians, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability and men to take up tertiary education opportunities and join the early childhood workforce.

To increase the number of diploma-qualified educators working in our kindergartens, the new Certificate III Upskill Support Program will provide up to 400 educators with \$7,000 in financial support to complete a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care to take their learning further.

The program will ease cost-of-living pressures for current educators returning to study, particularly during unpaid placements, and support the transition from study to employment in a diploma-level position.

Becoming diploma-qualified offers opportunities for educators with a Certificate III qualification, deepening their knowledge of early childhood education so they can play an even greater role in guiding children's learning and development. Applications for the first round of CUSP are now open and close on 21 January 2024.

The Labor Government's *Best Start, Best Life Workforce Strategy* sets out initiatives to grow, develop and support our early childhood workforce through almost \$370 million in investment, making sure families and children across the state have access to world-class education delivered by passionate teachers and educators.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

*"These new initiatives build on a range of workforce attraction and retention programs already in place for the early childhood education sector, including scholarships, financial incentives, coaching and mentoring."*

*"Our new tertiary partnerships program will give thousands of Victorians the support they need to have a career in early childhood education, with the Certificate III Upskill Support Program another great way we're helping early childhood educators to build their careers while working in a job they love."*

**Media contact:** Nelson Barber 0473 163 333 | [nelson.barber@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:nelson.barber@minstaff.vic.gov.au)