

# Media Release

**The Hon Ben Carroll MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for WorkSafe and TAC



Sunday, 5 January 2025

## FUN AND FREE ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES THIS SUMMER

The Allan Labor Government is giving busy families more fun and free activities to do this summer – from wildlife experiences to galleries and other chances to explore the great outdoors.

Deputy Premier Ben Carroll and Acting Minister for Environment Ros Spence welcomed some lively new residents to Melbourne Zoo today —a family of eight male ring-tailed lemurs ready to greet visitors for the summer holidays.

These playful primates are set to captivate visitors of all ages and are another great reason to take advantage of free entry for kids under 16 to Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary and Kyabram Fauna Park on weekends, public holidays and school holidays.

The new lemur family includes 11-year-old patriarch Hendrick and his seven energetic sons who range from one to three years old. Ring-tailed lemurs are native to Madagascar and are known for their striking eyes and striped tails, which they use for both communication and balance.

Kids Go Free is making Victoria’s zoos more accessible to more Victorian families, giving kids across the state the opportunity to connect with nature and learn about the importance of protecting wildlife.

For families wanting to explore the bush, the Labor Government’s \$9 million investment means free camping is now available at every national park and in state forests, offering lots of ways for the whole family to connect with nature – from swimming in our beaches or rivers to hiking or fishing.

Since the announcement of free camping at Parks Victoria’s 131 paid camping grounds, more than 165,000 nights have been booked – that’s 85,500 more than the same time last year.

This January, families can also unleash their creativity with the NGV Kids on Tour launching its largest-ever program – with free workshops and activities at 150 venues like art galleries, libraries, community hubs, and hospitals across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The NGV Kids Summer Festival is held until 17 January at Fed Square and offers a jam-packed schedule of free events for families to enjoy events, workshops and activities led by Victorian artists and creatives.

The popular week-long festival will kick off with a special launch day at Fed Square on the 11 January, featuring live dog shows, face-painting and free entry to the Cats & Dogs exhibition for kids. More than 14,000 children got involved in the festival last summer.

At NGV International, art-making activities throughout the festival will be inspired by the bright polka-dotted work of Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama. Another interactive children’s exhibition is Kusama for Kids: The Obliteration Room and there are lots of colourful artworks on display for free on the ground floor of the gallery until 21 April.

For more information on art workshops visit, [ngv.vic.gov.au](http://ngv.vic.gov.au) or to book a free campsite visit, [parks.vic.gov.au](http://parks.vic.gov.au).

### Quote attributable to Deputy Premier Ben Carroll

*“There is something for everyone in Victoria this summer – whether it’s a visit to Victoria’s world-class zoos and galleries or exploring our free campsites, there are lots of low-cost options for the whole family to enjoy.”*

**Media contact:** Zoe McLaughlin 0474 593 035 | [zoe.mclaughlin@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:zoe.mclaughlin@minstaff.vic.gov.au)

**Quote attributable to Acting Minister for Environment Ros Spence**

*“These holidays are the perfect time to take your kids to the zoo for free and help them to connect with wildlife and learn about conservation, while creating lasting memories with their friends and families.”*