

Media Release

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



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FREE KINDER KITS FOR 70,000 KIDS TO KICKSTART EDUCATION

The Allan Labor Government is giving a free Kinder Kit to every child starting three-year-old kindergarten – full of books, toys and stationery to help children get their best start in life.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn today visited Early Learning Victoria Muyan, where she unveiled this year's Kinder Kits, which about 70,000 children starting three-year-old kinder this year will receive.

Families have enough to worry about, and the cost of early learning materials shouldn't be one of them. Kinder Kits ensure that all children can enjoy the benefits of Free Kinder, with engaging activities that set them up for a lifetime of learning.

When children and families open their kits, they can get creative with playdough, draw with crayons, play with stacking blocks, plant alfalfa seeds and practice reading with stories from Australian authors. This year's Kinder Kits double as a backpack which can be opened into a felt playing surface for imaginative play.

Other fun, educational items for kids include timber story rollers, a colouring book, a jumping frog game, a card game exploring maths concepts, and felt stickers that can be used to create stories on the backpack's lining.

Early Learning Victoria Muyan is one of four government-owned and operated childcare centres to open this year – offering long day care as well as three and four-year-old kindergarten programs. The centres are low fee, making childcare more affordable and helping parents to return to work or study – and Free Kinder is on offer.

Since 2022, the Labor Government has given 227,000 families Kinder Kits, which are one of the ways we're bringing families together by encouraging an interest in their child's learning. They can be used anywhere whether it's at home, the park or brought along to visits with friends and family.

Every item in the kits is recommended by education experts to support learning through play. More than 50 Victorian businesses have contributed to the kits since 2022 – with products made, designed or printed in Victoria, written by a Victorian author, or produced by a Victorian business.

Kinder Kits are part of Victoria's *Best Start, Best Life* reforms, which are transforming early childhood education, saving families money and supporting parents and carers to return to work or study if they choose.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

"Victorian families are feeling the pinch, and every little bit helps. That's why we're supporting kids of get the best start to life with these free Kinder Kits and saving families up to \$2,600 a year with Free Kinder."

"With the cost of living rising, many parents are forced to make tough choices about where their money goes. The Kinder Kits ensure that every child, no matter their background, has access to fun, engaging, and educational tools that support their development."