

**Best Start
Best Life**

Promoting 2027 kindergarten enrolments

Communicating with families
about your 2027 programs

Victoria-wide
(Pre-Prep for Priority Cohorts
Only)



Introduction

Starting kindergarten is an exciting time for families and children across the state. It is important that families are supported to understand what their children can access.

2027 snapshot

- **Free Kinder** continues to be available
- **Three-Year-Old Kindergarten** continues to be delivered, with services offering programs between 5 and 15 hours
- A further 12 local government areas (LGAs) will start to deliver **Pre-Prep** in 2027, following the 6 LGAs in 2025 and 12 LGAs in 2026
- Across Victoria, children who start Three-Year-Old Kindergarten in 2027 who have (or have a parent or guardian who has) a Commonwealth concession card, or who come from a multiple birth (triplets or more) will *also* have access to between 16 and 25 hours of **Pre-Prep** in 2028.



How to use this communications resource kit

This resource kit is for funded services across Victoria that will only be offering Pre-Prep to **priority cohorts** in 2027.

For funded services in the 30 LGAs offering Pre-Prep to all children in 2027, please refer to the 2025, 2026 and 2027 roll-out resource kit.

More details on the roll-out can be found at vic.gov.au/pre-prep-roll-out-schedule.

- Funded services can use the communications materials within this kit to communicate with families enrolling in their 2027 programs and mark the start of the 2026 kindergarten year.
- Either use the content as is, or tailor it to your circumstances and communities
- It can be used by service directors and managers, as well as teachers and educators in sessional (standalone) kindergartens and long day care centres
- It can also be shared with anyone else at your service who communicates with families, including committee members or parent representatives who may share information through chat groups.

You can also refer to the [Kindergarten Sector Guide](#) for key information about the Best Start, Best Life reforms, and the support available for children to access and participate in programs.

What this kit includes

<p><u>Newsletter article</u> <u>pg. 5 – 7</u></p>	<p><u>Social media content</u> <u>pg. 8 - 12</u></p>	<p><u>Key points</u> <u>pg. 13 – 21</u></p>	<p><u>Further resources</u> <u>pg. 22 – 25</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edit and personalise the template article with details about your service, and share it with families enrolling at your service for 2027. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share these social media tiles and posts on your social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) to promote enrolments opening for 2027 at your service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use these key points to personalise your content or to support you with conversations you have with families and the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use these additional resources to support your promotional efforts and conversations further.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Template article • Infographics about the benefits of 2 years of kinder and more hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample posts and tiles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's time to enrol in kindergarten • Here's what you'll get at our service • Kinder starts at 3 • Koorie Kids Shine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Kinder • Three-Year-Old Kindergarten • Pre-Prep • Priority cohorts • Registration and enrolment • Early Start Kindergarten • Koorie Kids Shine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downloadable digital materials • Printed materials • Additional websites and links

Newsletter/website/app articles

Edit and personalise the article template with details about your service, and share it with families who may enrol with you for your 2027 programs.

The *Key points* section of this pack has further messaging you can add to these articles.

Template article

Enrol your child in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and Pre-Prep

It's time to enrol your children in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten programs for 2027.

Our service will be offering the following programs in 2027.

- Three-Year-Old Kindergarten – [insert number] hours per week
- Four-Year-Old Kindergarten – [insert number] hours per week.

Your child may also be eligible for more hours in their four-year-old kinder year through Pre-Prep. Feel free to contact us if you would like more information on Pre-Prep.

Two years of early learning before school is shown to lift children's outcomes across all learning domains. The years your child spends in early childhood education can help them thrive and develop skills to succeed in school and later in life.

Free Kinder is also available at our service and is available to everyone. Free Kinder can only be accessed at one service at a time.

If these articles are public, you should **not** openly advertise the number of hours children from **priority cohorts** can access through Pre-Prep. These hours and timetables should be discussed with families privately, to protect the privacy of these children.

Infographics

Consider including infographics or images such as these with your articles to further reinforce the benefits children will receive at your service.

Video can also be found in the [Kindergarten Sector Guide](#).

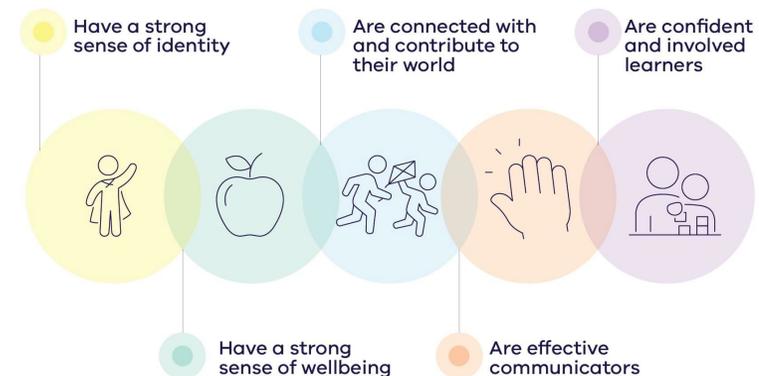
More hours of play-based learning in Pre-Prep can lead to:



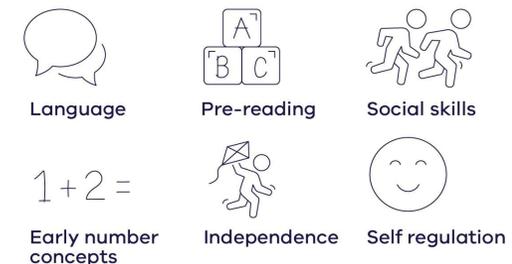
In children's early years, play is the best way for them to learn and grow

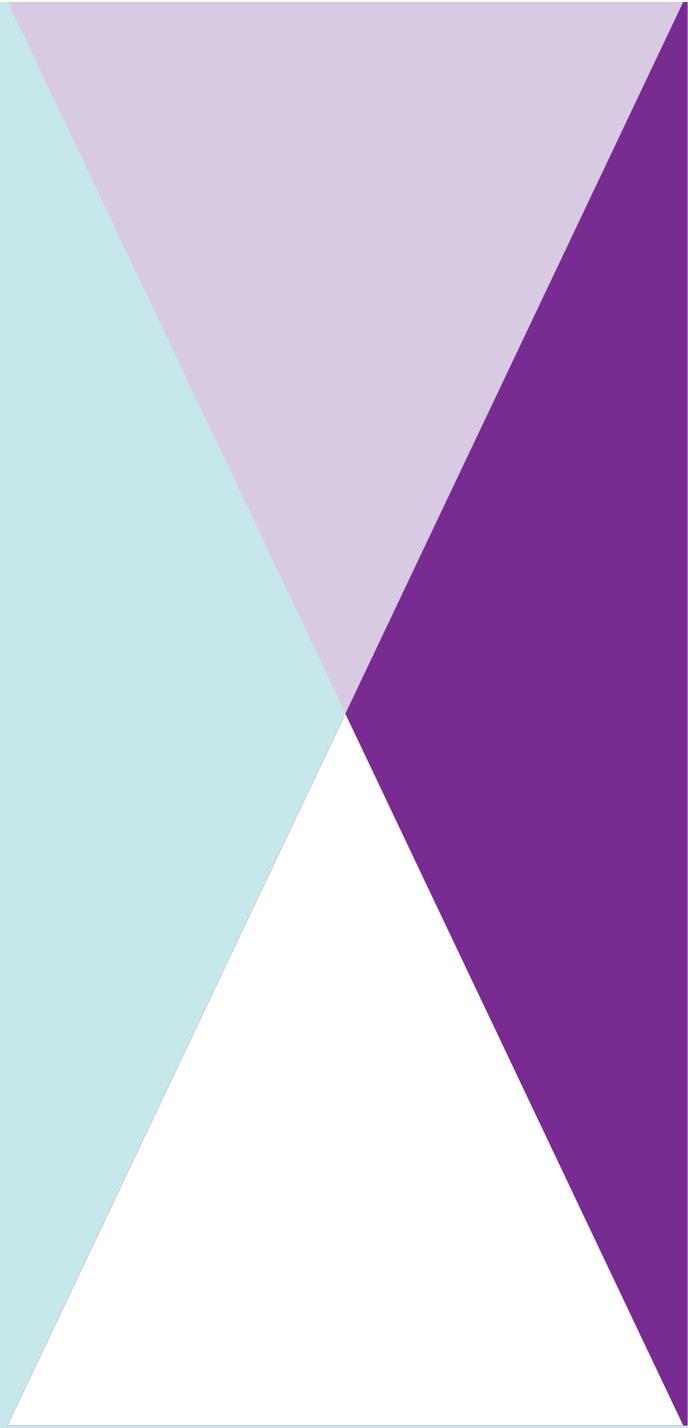


Victorian early childhood programs are designed so children:



Children who attend for 2 years have better development in:





Social media content

You can share the following social media tiles and posts on your social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) to promote the opening of 2027 enrolments at your service with your community.

Social media content

It's time to enrol in kindergarten in 2027!

It's time to enrol in our kindergarten programs for next year.

Kindergarten provides children with opportunities to explore, discover and play.

Play is the best way for children to learn and develop new skills, while also setting them up for a lifelong love of learning.

Contact us or your local council for more details about the registration and enrolment process today.

#kindervic #beststartbestlife #freekinder
#kindertick



Social media content

Here's what you'll get at our service

In 2027, we're excited to offer [number] hours of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and [number] hours of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten each week, giving children access to the benefits of 2 years of quality early childhood education.

Some children may also be eligible for more hours through Pre-Prep.

Contact us today to discuss your eligibility, or find further details at vic.gov.au/pre-prep.

#kindervic #beststartbestlife #freekinder #kindertick

**More hours,
more learning,
more play**

**Best Start
Best Life**

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Social media content

Kinder starts at 3

If your child turns 3 by 30 April next year, it's now time to enrol them in a Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program for 2027.

Two years of early learning before school is shown to lift children's outcomes across all learning domains.

Ask us about our kindergarten programs today!

#kindervic #beststartbestlife #freekinder
#kindertick



Kinder starts at 3

**Best Start
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Social media content

More Koorie Kids Shine content can be found in the Koorie Kids Shine [communications toolkit](#) and on the [Victorian Kindergarten Resources Portal](#).

Kinder helps Koorie Kids Shine

At kinder, Koorie kids will learn to express themselves in a safe, inclusive and caring environment.

They'll make friends and become more confident in learning and trying new things.

Koorie kids are also eligible for more hours of kindergarten in their four-year-old kinder year through Pre-Prep.

Speak to us for more information and enrol your child today. www.vic.gov.au/koorie-kids-shine

#kindervic #beststartbestlife #freekinder
#kindertick #kooriekidsshine



**More hours to learn
and grow for four-year-olds
in a safe and inclusive
environment from 2026**



Key points

You can use the information on the following pages to assist your conversations with families and the community.

Remember that free telephone, video and on-site interpreters are available for all department funded kindergarten services and eligible support services.

Free Kinder

- Free Kinder is available at our service for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten and Pre-Prep programs.
- Free Kinder is for everyone – you don't need to be a permanent resident or Australian citizen to access a free kindergarten program.
- Free Kinder can only be accessed at one service at a time.

Sessional kindergartens

- Free Kinder provides you with a free program. Our service is offering Free Kinder for all our kindergarten programs.

Long day care services

- Free Kinder provides you with an annual fee offset. Our service is offering Free Kinder for all our kindergarten programs.
- If you are eligible for the Commonwealth Childcare Subsidy (CCS), this will be applied first, and then the Free Kinder offset. You only need to pay the remaining amount after CCS and the Free Kinder offset have been applied.

Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

- Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program hours will vary from service to service, providing families with between 5 and 15 hours each week. Our service will offer [insert number] hours per week in 2027.
- Starting a quality kindergarten program at an earlier age leads to positive effects on child development.
- Kindergarten is a safe place for children to build skills, become more independent, and make friends.
- Use the [Starting Age Calculator](#) on the Department of Education's website to enter your child's birth date to find out what year they can start Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and Pre-Prep.

Pre-Prep

- Four-Year-Old Kindergarten is becoming Pre-Prep, with programs increasing from 15 to between 16 and 30 hours each week.
- We will advise you if your child is eligible for Pre-Prep. The Pre-Prep program will be for [insert number] hours per week in 2027.
- Pre-Prep offers a longer program in the year before school, which means there will be more time for children to deepen their learning and development.
- Pre-Prep is a play-based learning program led by qualified teachers. Like Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, Pre-Prep will follow the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.
- For more information about Pre-Prep, go to vic.gov.au/pre-prep.

Pre-Prep priority cohorts

- From 2026, Pre-Prep is available statewide to:
 - children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
 - children from a refugee or asylum seeker background
 - children who have had contact with Child Protection or are in out of home care
 - children who were supported by Early Start Kindergarten or the Access to Early Learning program for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten
- Children who enrol in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten in 2027 who have (or have a parent or guardian who has) a Commonwealth concession card, or who come from a multiple birth (triplets or more) will also be eligible for Pre-Prep in 2028.
- If you think your child meets one of the eligibility criteria for Pre-Prep, talk to us about what the program may look like for your child.

For additional talking points about Pre-Prep, including those that relate to the priority cohorts, please refer to the [*Conversations with families about Pre-Prep*](#) resource.

Registration and enrolment

For services who use CRES

- Our service is part of the Central Registration and Enrolment System (CRES), which is managed by the local council. This system makes registering your child easy and fair. You can use one form to register your interest in several kindergarten programs.
- You can contact [insert council] for support with the registration and enrolment process. You may need to provide documents such as a concession card or proof of residence (e.g., utilities bill).
- Register for a first-round offer by [insert date]. You can still register after that, but registering in the first round gives you the best chance of getting a place in your preferred kinder program.
- The council will send you updates by email or text message when your child is offered a kindergarten place. They will also advise how many weeks you have to respond to your offer. If you are unhappy with your offer, you can decline it and ask for another offer in the next round.
- Once you accept your place, if it is at our service, we will help you enrol your child and prepare you for day one.
- If you are enrolling in our program, we will contact you for additional information about your child, such as [include relevant details, such as dietary requirements, medical conditions etc]

Registration and enrolment

For all services

- Enrolments at our service are open from/until [insert date].
- When enrolling with us, we will need information and documents such as:
 - your child's name, address, and details of any additional needs
 - information about yourself and any other parents, carers or guardians in your child's life
 - details of people who can collect your child
 - your child's birth certificate or other identity documents
 - your child's medical health and immunisation status
 - details of any parenting orders or legal matters to do with the care or safety of your child.
- Our service also follows the Department of Education's Priority of Access criteria when enrolling children if there are ever more applications than places. As part of the enrolment process, we will ask you some questions that will help us determine priority of access, such as whether you or your child have a health care card.
- Any information we receive from you will be kept private.

The registration and enrolment process is important in identifying eligible children from priority cohort groups.

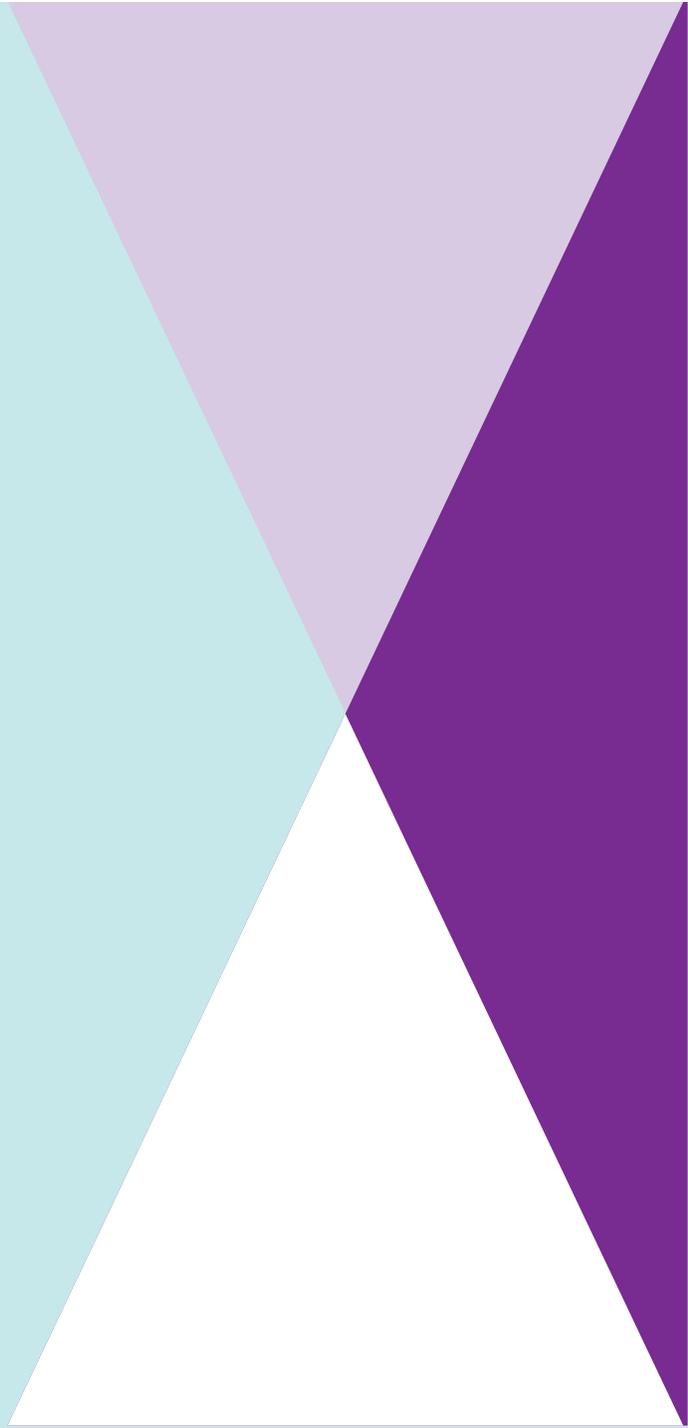
Please let families know if they are or will be eligible for additional hours.

Early Start Kindergarten

- Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified teacher.
- To be eligible for ESK, children must be aged 3 by 30 April in the year they start kindergarten, and either:
 - be from a refugee or asylum seeker background
 - identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or
 - be from a family that has had contact with Child Protection or are in out-of-home-care.
- ESK eligible children can access a 3-year-old group, 4-year-old group, a mixed-age group or a combination of groups to achieve 15 hours per week.
- It is important that our service enrolls eligible children in ESK, even if Free Kinder or funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is available. This ensures eligible children have priority of access, and can enrol without up-to-date immunisation information (while they undertake catch-up immunisations) under No Jab, No Play legislation.
- Children who attend Three-Year-Old Kindergarten through ESK are automatically eligible for Pre-Prep the following year.

Koorie Kids Shine

- Koorie Kids Shine celebrates culture and promotes the benefits of kindergarten for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who turn 3 years old by 30 April can access 15 hours of kindergarten each week through Early Start Kindergarten, and 4-year-olds can access Pre-Prep.
- Our kindergarten works hard to create a culturally safe place for Koorie children and families, and we include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the learning curriculum and environment.
- At kinder, Koorie kids will learn the skills they need that will help them do well in their future. They will:
 - build their sense of identity
 - explore how they fit into the world around them
 - learn how to communicate with others
 - strengthen their physical, social and emotional wellbeing
 - feel confident in learning and trying new things.



Further resources

Use the following additional resources to support your promotional efforts and conversations further.

Further resources – digital materials

Find digital communication packs, fact sheets, social media tiles, videos and other resources to help your service communicate with families and promote your kindergarten programs on the Communicating about kindergarten to your community webpage.



Best Start Best Life

Know someone with a 2-year-old?

Three-Year-Old Kinder is available across Victoria. Ask your kinder service about Free Kinder.

Go to vic.gov.au/kinder to find out more.

For translated information:



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Best Start Best Life **KINDERGARTEN**

Play-based learning and your child

Young children are naturally motivated to play. Research shows that in children's early years, play is also the best way for them to learn and grow.

What is play-based learning?
Play-based learning supports children to explore and make sense of themselves and their world. It builds on children's natural curiosity. Through hands-on exploration of the world around them, children learn in many ways. For example, playing with sand helps children learn about mathematical skills, such as weight and volume, and playing with dolls and dress-up helps children to learn about families and how to relate to others. This approach to early childhood education supports children to learn and address their development through activities and experiences that they find enjoyable and interesting. Programs that help children to learn through play are supported by educators who will provide children opportunities for:

- **adult-led learning** where the educator plans or introduces a new experience, idea or topic to encourage children to explore, learn and play
- **child-directed play and learning** where the child leads the play and the educator supports, encourages, imagines and experiments
- **guided play and learning** where educators involve themselves in children's spontaneous play and extend their learning as opportunities arise.

Why is play-based learning important?
Play-based learning is now widely understood to be one of the most important ways to support children to develop the skills and understanding they need to live well now and into the future. There is strong evidence that the pathways in children's brains are positively influenced by the experiences that happens during play. Play supports children in all areas of their development, including their understanding of themselves and relationships with others, their connection to the communities they live in, how they communicate effectively with others and how they think about and solve problems. Positive attitudes towards learning, such as persistence, curiosity and imagination are all developed during play. These attitudes set children up for a life-long love of learning.

Play-based learning important approaches at home
Children are learning all the time. There are many opportunities for children to learn at home, including in everyday activities such as getting ready in the morning, preparing meals or doing household jobs, provide great learning opportunities. Consider some of the ideas below:

- at both times, introduce science and maths concepts such as counting, linking, heavy, full, empty, full, and so on, using a simple container in the water
- when hanging out the washing, ask your child to hand you one, two, three, four, and so on, or talk about bigger, longer, smaller, and so on
- at mealtimes, describe ingredients, textures, colours, textures to introduce new words and concepts, such as where the ingredients come from
- when reading books, use the pictures to prompt further conversation or explain the text
- when drawing or making, describe what you are seeing, ask open questions.

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Best Start Best Life

Two years of kinder gives children the best start in life

vic.gov.au/kinder



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Early Start Kindergarten for refugees and asylum seekers

Where can I find more information about Early Start Kindergarten?

- Visit education.vic.gov.au and search for Early Start Kindergarten, or
- phone your regional Department of Education and Training office.

Regional office contacts

Regional Office	Location
North-western Victoria 1300 333 221	Benalla Wodonga Warragul Shepparton Olen Waverley
North-western Victoria 1300 338 691	Ballarat Melburn Swan Hill Colony Geelong
South-eastern Victoria 1300 338 788	Hoe Leongatha Warragul Sale Chesham Frankston Dandenong
South-western Victoria 1300 333 222	Ararat Ballarat Geelong Horsham Warrnambool Fosterbury Mildura

To get help in your language:

- call the National Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450
- ask the interpreter to call the number for your region (see above)
- the interpreter will stay on the phone call and interpret.

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Why is kindergarten important?
Kindergarten helps prepare children for success at school and in life. At kindergarten, children use play to learn about language, numbers and patterns. They also learn how to get along with others, share, listen and manage their emotions. Teachers help children become curious, creative, and confident about learning. Research shows that two years of kindergarten are better than one.

What is Early Start Kindergarten?
Early Start Kindergarten gives three-year-old children from a refugee or asylum seeker background 15 hours per week of free or low-cost kindergarten.

Applications for Early Start Kindergarten are made by the kindergarten. The Early Start Kindergarten grant is paid directly to the kindergarten.

Is my child eligible?
Your child is eligible if you or your child:

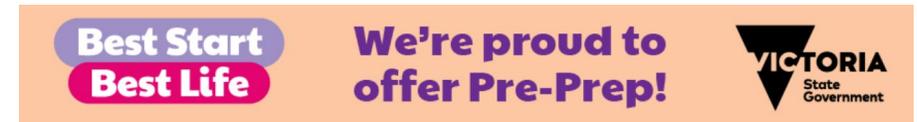
- have a refugee or humanitarian visa, or
- are applying for a refugee or humanitarian visa, or
- have a current or expired ImmiCard.

If none of these apply but you or your child have been a refugee or asylum seeker, or had similar experiences, your child may still be eligible. Contact your local Department of Education and Training office to ask about an exemption. You can also ask any professional who supports you to contact the Department for you.

How do I enrol my child?
Early Start Kindergarten is available in all kindergarten programs with a qualified teacher. You can enrol your child by contacting a kindergarten near you or your council. Tell the kindergarten if you need an interpreter. They can use free telephone interpreting services. If you need help to enrol, ask the Department of Education and Training, or any professional who supports you, such as:

- support worker
- bi-cultural worker
- maternal and child health nurse
- supported playgroup facilitator.

Should my child go to four-year-old kindergarten?
Yes. After Early Start Kindergarten, your child is eligible for free or low cost four-year-old kindergarten. This will help them to keep building on their strengths.

Best Start Best Life

We're proud to offer Pre-Prep!

VICTORIA State Government

Further resources – printed materials

Order printed resources from the Victorian Kindergarten Resources Portal.

You can order materials related to the Best Start, Best Life reforms, Pre-Prep, Early Start Kindergarten, Koorie Kids Shine, Kinder Tick (including signage) and translated resources to help you promote your kindergarten programs.

These materials are paid for by the department and printed and delivered to your service for free.



Further resources – websites

- vic.gov.au/conversations-families-about-pre-prep for a resource to assist services to talk to parents and carers about the additional hours of kindergarten offered through Pre-Prep.
- vic.gov.au/sending-child-kinder for information about Free Kinder, the benefits of kinder, and how to find and enrol in a kinder program. The 'Quick guide for parents' and 'Starting age' calculator are also available from this webpage.
- vic.gov.au/preprep for information about Pre-Prep. This page can also help families determine if their child is eligible for Pre-Prep.
- vic.gov.au/kinder/translations for information about kindergarten in 30 languages.
- vic.gov.au/evidence-behind-2-years-kindergarten for information about the evidence behind 2 years of kindergarten. The 'Two years of early childhood education – what the evidence says fact sheet is available from this webpage.
- vic.gov.au/pre-prep-roll-out-schedule for information about the roll-out of Pre-Prep across Victoria.
- vic.gov.au/supporting-cald-families-engage-kindergarten for resources to support communication with culturally and linguistically diverse families about kindergarten. Information about the CALD Outreach Initiative is available from this webpage.

If you have further questions, or you wish to provide feedback on this kit, please contact bsbl.change.management@education.vic.gov.au