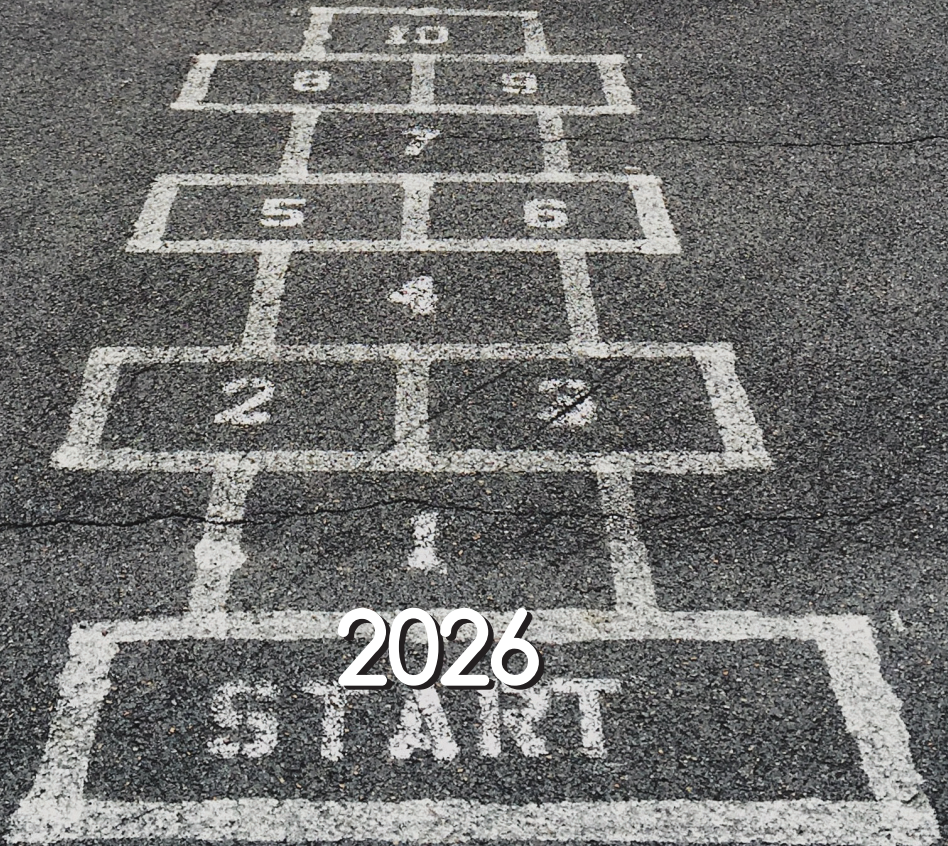


RESOURCE BOOKLETS

Education





GPV/KCV acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners of our great land and offers respect to Elders, past and present.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that the Aboriginal culture existed in Australia before European settlement and consisted of many community groups. Further, we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this land as the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that laws and policies of the past have inflicted grief and suffering on our fellow Australians and regrets the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.

GPV/KCV believes that a society that is inclusive of all is crucial to individual and community wellbeing and will behave with respect towards all irrespective of their race, religion, sexuality, gender or socio-economic background.

GPV/KCV acknowledges 13th of February as National Apology Day, the anniversary of then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, delivering the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples in 2008. GPV/KCV will take steps that promote a happier and healthier future for Indigenous Australians, particularly the children and young people.

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www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org

Key words which influence GPV/KCV approaches are: Truthfulness, Confidentiality, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Constancy, Gratitude, Commitment, Compassion

Kinship Carers Victoria

acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.

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Early Start Kindergarten

Early Start Kindergarten gives eligible children 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten a week for two years before starting school.

FREE KINDER

Free Kinder is available for all three- and four-year-old children at participating Victorian services in standalone (sessional) kindergartens and long day care centres.

Early Start Kindergarten will continue to provide 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten per week to all eligible children in all areas across Victoria. Children enrolled in Early Start Kindergarten are also eligible for Pre-Prep (more hours of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten) the following year, no matter where they live in the state.

HOW TO APPLY

Early Start Kindergarten is available in all kindergarten programs delivered by a qualified teacher. Enrol your child by contacting a kindergarten near by and asking to access an Early Start Kindergarten grant or your local council for assistance. Applications for Early Start Kindergarten funding are made by the service on your behalf and the grant is paid directly to the service.

PRE-PREP

Four-Year-Old Kindergarten is becoming Pre-Prep in Victoria, offering children more hours to learn and socialise through play. Pre-Prep will be delivered through standalone (sessional) kindergartens and long day care centres. In 2026, 16-25 hours of Pre-Prep will be available statewide for Victorian children:

- who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- from a refugee or asylum seeker background
- who have had contact with Child Protection

THREE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN

Three-Year-Old Kindergarten continues, with programs increasing to 15 hours a week across the state by 2029, providing Victorian children with two years of quality early learning before school.

KOORIE KIDS SHINE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families can learn about the benefits of kindergarten, including how services create culturally safe places for Koorie children and families, and how to enrol in free or low-cost kindergarten for three-and four-year-old children through Koorie Kids Shine kinder for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Children can access 15 hours per week of free or low-cost kindergarten. From 2026, four-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can access up to 25 hours per week of Pre-Prep.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/koorie-kids-shine>

More information available :

<https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten>

More information

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Three-year-old-kindergarten-flyer-300426.pdf>

Early Start Kindergarten for children who have had contact with Child Protection in Victoria

All children who have had contact with Child Protection and are aged three years by April 30 in the year they will be attending are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten (ESK). ESK provides eligible children with 15 hours of free kindergarten delivered by a qualified registered teacher (VIT).

A kindergarten only requires verbal advice that a child has had contact with Child Protection for the child to be eligible for ESK, and this advice can be provided by a child protection practitioner, parent or carer.

Eligible children should be enrolled in ESK, even where Free Kindergarten is available. This ensures they have priority of access to the service and can be supported to access the additional hours of kindergarten offered through Pre-Prep from 2026.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Early-start-kinder-for-CP-children-flyer-300426.pdf>

LOOKOUT Education Support Centres

LOOKOUT Education Support Centres are designed to boost the capability of early childhood services, schools, carers, child protection practitioners and out-of-home care services to improve educational outcomes for children and young people living in out-of-home care.

SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN AND STUDENTS IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE

Research indicates that children and young people living in out-of-home care are at greater risk of poorer educational outcomes than those in the broader community.

SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

LOOKOUT centres assist children and young people in schools through:

- professional development with staff to support students' educational and socio-emotional needs
- advice to schools to support individual students
- reviewing enrolment decisions that aren't in a student's best interests
- facilitating opportunities for students to participate fully in school life (including camps, excursions and extracurricular activities).

ELIGIBILITY

LOOKOUT centres support is available to statutory kinship carers only.

CONTACTS

South Western Victoria Region

lookout.swv@education.vic.gov.au

South Eastern Victoria Region

lookout.sev@education.vic.gov.au

North Western Victoria Region

lookout.nwv@education.vic.gov.au

North Eastern Victoria Region

lookout.nev@education.vic.gov.au

MORE INFORMATION

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/LOOKOUT-centres-flyer-19.9.24.pdf>

Youth Access initiative

A program helping young people with care or youth justice experience, and those in Education First Youth Foyers, to access vocational education and training, with tuition fees waived under Skills First.

WHAT IS THE YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE?

Young people on child protection orders, youth justice orders and those residing in Victorian Education First Youth Foyers are among the most disadvantaged in our community. They often face complex challenges that make it harder to access education and training.

The Youth Access Initiative aims to improve young people's awareness, access and involvement in vocational education and training. It is part of the Skills First initiative, which helps disadvantaged learners succeed in their education and training.

The initiative supports this by reducing training costs and waiving student tuition fees for eligible young people.

To be eligible for the Youth Access Initiative, you must:

- be aged 24 years or under, and
- have been or are currently on a Child Protection Order or a Youth Justice Order (but are not currently in custody), or
- a young person who has participated or is participating in the Children's Court Youth Diversion Service, or
- be a young person who is a part of the Refugee Minor Program, or
- be a resident of an Education First Youth Foyer, and
- be an Australian citizen, an Australian permanent resident or a New Zealand citizen

MORE INFORMATION

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Youth-Access-Initiative-flyer-120526.pdf>
[uploads/2026/05/Early-start-kinder-for-CP-children-flyer-300426.pdf](https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Early-start-kinder-for-CP-children-flyer-300426.pdf)

Access to Early Learning Professional

Helping children from families with complex needs to participate in a quality three-year-old kindergarten program.

Access to Early Learning (AEL) is an early intervention program that helps young children to take part in early childhood education and care programs.

AEL is a targeted program for three-year-old children from families with complex needs. It aims to make sure that these three-year-old children get the full benefits of attending a quality kindergarten program. Families referred to AEL have complex needs that can affect children regularly attending kindergarten programs.

Facilitators also work with families in their homes to explore learning activities they can do with their children.

AEL facilitators:

- help children to access 15 hours per week of quality Three-Year-Old Kindergarten programs for free or at low cost
- help families to find ways to support children to attend kindergarten regularly
- visit families at home to help parents and carers with activities to build on what their child is learning at kindergarten
- provide mentoring and professional learning for kindergarten program educators.

MORE INFORMATION AND HOW TO APPLY

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Access-to-early-learning-flyer-300426.pdf>

For eligibility and program guidelines and other information about the support, please visit the website here:

Access to Early Learning | vic.gov.au (www.vic.gov.au)

State Schools' Relief (SSR)

Ensuring that every young person is able to participate with the same pride and dignity as their peers.

State Schools' Relief is a not-for-profit organisation that improves the lives of tens of thousands of disadvantaged Victorian students, and their families, each year. SSR's simple and practical service ensures that all students can attend school in warmth and comfort with a greater sense of belonging and improved self-esteem, which in turn enhances their educational engagement.

SSR provides government school students with new uniforms, footwear and educational resources, including learning devices. SSR works side by side with all Victorian primary, secondary, specialist and language schools to ensure that any students facing hardship have the necessary items they require for school.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are a parent, carer or guardian and need assistance with your child's government education, please speak with the school principal, assistant principal or welfare/wellbeing. The school can then place an application for assistance directly with SSR on the student's behalf.

Should you have questions regarding applications for SSR assistance, please contact your child's school directly.

Email: contact@ssr.net.au | Phone: (03) 8769 8400, 8.30am – 4.30pm

MORE INFORMATION

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/State-Schools-Relief-flyer-100225.pdf>



Raising expectations

Everyone's path to TAFE or uni is different. Raising Expectations is here to help care leavers find theirs.

Raising Expectations supports young people in care and care leavers to access and succeed at TAFE and university. It is a collaboration between the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Federation University Australia, La Trobe University and Swinburne University of Technology. The Victorian Department of Education and Training is the program's funding partner.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Raising Expectations partner universities understand the unique needs of care leaver students and offer tailored support to assist them to access their chosen course or program and to support and services that will help them to succeed.

Partner universities each offer financial, academic and personal supports to care leaver students.

800+ FEE-FREE TAFE COURSES FOR CARE LEAVERS

A Victorian Government initiative, the Skills First Youth Access Initiative gives eligible care leavers aged 24 and under access to over 800 TAFE courses without paying tuition fees.

To find out more about accessing TAFE, contact or visit the Skills First Youth Access Initiative website.

Email: hello@raisingexpectations.com.au

<https://www.raisingexpectations.com.au/about>

School Focused Youth Service (SFYS)

The School Focused Youth Service (SFYS) program is available to students in years 5 to 12 across select government, Catholic and independent schools each year. It aims to address student disengagement and chronic student absenteeism. The SFYS program is delivered by 34 local agencies around the state, which are funded to work with selected schools each year to deliver:

- targeted short-term interventions for students who are vulnerable to, or showing signs of, disengaging from school
- capacity building for schools and families to better support identified students at risk of disengagement and chronic absenteeism.

CONTACT US

Wellbeing Health and Engagement Division

sfys@education.vic.gov.au

Program for Students with Disabilities

There are many programs and resources available to help schools meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities.

The Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) gives government schools extra funding to help them support students with disability and high needs.

Schools use the funding in different ways, depending on the needs of each child.

This can include:

- specialist staff, such as occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech pathologists
- specialist equipment like assistive technology
- training for teachers so they know more about your child's disability or additional needs
- specialist teachers, education support staff such as teacher aides.

WHO IS THE PSD FUNDING FOR?

PSD funding is available for schools who are supporting children with disability and high needs. There are seven categories of eligibility criteria.

- Severe behaviour disorder
- Intellectual disability
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Severe language difficulties with critical educational needs

For more information about the PSD eligibility criteria speak to your child's school or visit the website <https://www.vic.gov.au/program-students-disabilities-psd>

DISABILITY INCLUSION

Visit Disability Inclusion: extra support for children with disability for more information.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/program-students-disabilities-psd>

Supported Playgroups

Giving you the opportunity to develop your parenting skills and confidence to support your child's wellbeing and development.

Supported Playgroups are a free program for families across Victoria with children from birth to school age.

A qualified facilitator leads these fun sessions where parents develop their skills and confidence to support their child's wellbeing and development.

At Supported Playgroups, parents and children enjoy a range of fun play opportunities and activities together. Parents also find out about local services and support networks in the community. Eligibility criteria applies.

WHO TO CONTACT

To find out more about Supported Playgroup, speak with your local Maternal and Child Health nurse or contact your local council

BULLY STOPPERS PROGRAM

A program that supports students, parents and carers, teachers and principals in working together to make sure schools are safe and supportive places at Department of Education and Training

<https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/supported-playgroups>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/pledge.aspx>

Koorie Engagement Support Officers

Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) are an important support for Aboriginal students in the Victorian state education system.

The role of KESOs is to engage and support Aboriginal students, their families, teachers and school staff.

KESOs are area-based professionals who are members of the local Aboriginal community with an understanding of Aboriginal culture and the history of their community.

KESOs provide advice to schools about culturally inclusive learning environments, coordination of services to support engagement and improved outcomes for Koorie children and young people.

KESOs work with families, communities and service providers to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners to participate in education into early years, primary, secondary and further education.

North-Eastern Victoria

Email: enquiries@education.vic.gov.au /**Phone:** 1800 338 663

North-Western Victoria

Email: enquiries@education.vic.gov.au /**Phone:** 1800 338 663

South-Eastern Victoria

Email: enquiries@education.vic.gov.au /**Phone:** 1800 338 663

South-Western Victoria

Email: enquiries@education.vic.gov.au /**Phone:** 1800 338 663

Navigator program

The Navigator program supports disengaged young people aged 12 to 17 years old to re-engage with education and learning and works with them to get back to school.

- Navigator supports disengaged young people to return to education and learning.
- Students enrolled in or intending to enrol in a Victorian government and non-government schools and education settings are eligible to participate in Navigator.
- Participation in Navigator is by referral.
- Consent from the young person's parent or carer must be sought before the referral is made.
- Anyone can refer a young person to Navigator based on whether they are:
 - o from the young person's current school or education setting
 - o if they are the young person's parent or carer
 - o if they are any other person (i.e. not the young person's parent, carer or from their school or education setting).
- Schools are responsible for supporting the re-engagement of Navigator participants in education.

Navigator is delivered by contracted community service organisations that work closely with local schools and Department area teams. In each area, the program is tailored to its local community and services.

The local area Navigator Coordinator can also assist with making a referral.

Contact : navigator@edumail.vic.gov.au

Victorian Inclusion Agency

<https://www.viac.com.au>

The Victorian Inclusion Agency offers free inclusion support to eligible education and care services, including long day care, family day care and outside school hours care services. This program gives every child a fair chance by ensuring they have the support they need to thrive in early childhood education and school care service.<https://www.viac.com.au/support/families>

CONTACT

Telephone: 1800 177 017,

email at via@cccinc.org.au,

Our mailing address is

PO Box 1730 Preston South VIC 3072.

A Positive Start to School Resource Kit

The Transition: A Positive Start to School Resource Kit (the Kit) includes practical guidance for early childhood professionals working with children and families while they transition to school.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/professionals/Transition-to-School-Resource-Kit.pdf>

Out of Home Care Education Commitment

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/health/PartneringAgreement.pdf>

The Early Childhood Agreement outlines the shared responsibility for ensuring all children up to five years of age in statutory OOHC in Victoria are engaged with Maternal and Child Health services and high-quality early education and care.

The Partnering Agreement aims to ensure that:

- processes are in place to actively support the educational achievement of every child and young person in OOHC
- there is a coordinated approach to supporting the educational, health and social, cultural and emotional needs of children and young people in OOHC
- all parties understand each other's roles and responsibilities and work cooperatively and in the best interests of the child and young person
- strategies are implemented to improve outcomes related to student enrolment, attendance, educational achievement, case planning and retention.

Kindergarten Inclusion Support

Support is available for funded kindergartens to plan and implement a program that is responsive to the individual abilities, interests and needs of children with a disability, developmental delay or complex medical needs.

The Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program (KIS) is designed to contribute to the delivery of quality kindergarten programs in line with the National Quality Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

The support from KIS programs is in addition to the existing resources available to the kindergarten staff and may not fully cover all costs.

The KIS program:

- provides assistance to complement early childhood teacher knowledge and skills, while acknowledging their expertise in supporting children's learning and development
- supports early childhood teachers to build their capacity to develop and implement an inclusive program
- supports early childhood teachers to contribute to positive outcomes for children, as defined in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- responds to the child's abilities and strengths, as well as their needs, by supporting the kindergarten to enhance their learning and development.

CONTACTS

For more information about the KIS disability and complex medical needs program, contact the regional advisory group convenor for your area:

South western Victoria region

Gateways Support Services, Geelong West – (03) 5221 2984

Uniting Lentara, Broadmeadows – (03) 9351 3600

Pinarc Disability Support, Ballarat – (03) 5329 1300

Uniting Wimmera, Horsham – (03) 5382 6789

South eastern Victoria region

Uniting Gippsland, Leongatha – (03) 5662 5150

Latrobe City Council, Morwell – (03) 5128 5645

Yooralla, Cranbourne – (03) 5990 9640

North western Victoria region

Noah's Ark Inc, East Bendigo – 0433 884 052

Uniting Lentara, Broadmeadows – (03) 9351 3600

Mallee Family Care, Mildura – (03) 5023 5966

North eastern Victoria region

SCOPE, Benalla – (03) 5762 7121

Uniting Connections, Ringwood – (03) 8870 4017

Individual Education Plans Guide

WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN? (IEP)

An IEP describes the adjustments, goals and strategies designed to meet the educational needs of individual students. An IEP is essential in guiding the educational planning and monitoring of a student's unique learning needs.

WHICH STUDENTS REQUIRE AN IEP?

IEPs are required for:

- students in statutory out-of-home care (OOHC)
- Koorie students (as required by Marrung — Victorian Aboriginal Education Plan 2016 – 2026)
- students supported under individualised disability funding programs including the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) and Disability Inclusion
- students in youth justice (custody and community)
- students in re-engagement programs under contract arrangements with another school or provider
- students undertaking Flexible Learning Options (FLOs).

WHY IS AN IEP IMPORTANT?

An individual education plan is important because it:

- supports the school and classroom teacher to develop a meaningful learning program for individual students and to track progress against SMART goals
- provides an opportunity to share information between school, student, family and other support professionals
- helps schools to determine resources required to achieve the student's learning goals
- promotes student confidence and engagement through involvement in the process.

An IEP also serves to establish the process by which teachers and schools are meeting their legal obligations and accountabilities for students with additional learning needs under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

IEPs should state the specific interests, needs and goals of each student and provide a plan about how and when these will be achieved, what support will be provided, and who is responsible. IEPs should be reviewed regularly with both the student and their family.

Children in out-of-home care can also access support from LOOKOUT Centre staff in developing an IEP. (See page 6.)

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/individual-education-plans-ieps/resources>

Marrung - Self Determination in Education Reform

The Marrung strategy ensures that all Koorie Victorians achieve their learning aspirations.

School staff and corporate teams are encouraged to reflect on their current practices to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities in achieving self-determination in education.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/aboriginal/What-can-schools-do-now.pdf>

Free Swimming Lessons

Free curriculum-based quality swimming and water safety education for students in government schools.

The Swimming in Schools initiative provides funding to support the delivery of quality swimming and water safety education so Victorian Government primary, specialist and English Language Schools and Catholic primary school students have the opportunity to:

- learn how to swim
- develop lifelong skills in water safety to reduce their risk of drowning and injury.

By the end of primary school, it is anticipated that students should be able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills identified in the Swimming and water safety resources via HPE Victorian Curriculum F-10.

The Victorian Water Safety Certificate (VWSC) is a government initiative which describes specific competencies students should be able to achieve by the time they leave primary school. The competencies of the VWSC are part of the achievement standards in the curriculum at level 6.

<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Free-Swimming-Lessons-flyer-180526.pdf>

Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) is a Victorian Government program that gives eligible families \$400 per year for primary and secondary school students to pay for school camps, sports and outdoor education

WHAT THE FUND COVERS

- School camps and overnight trips
- Swimming and school sport programs
- Outdoor education classes
- Excursions and incursions

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

- Parents or carers who hold a valid means-tested concession card (like a Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card)
- Temporary foster parents and refugee or asylum seeker families

If you want to apply, contact your school office to get an application form or visit:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>



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