

Tips for Starting Kinder in Victoria



VACCA
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VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL
CHILD CARE AGENCY

How to enrol your child into kindergarten in Victoria

1. To find a kindergarten close to you and to check if they will meet your child's needs, go to the website:
Find A Kinder - findakinder.educationapps.vic.gov.au
2. If your child has attended long day care at a child care centre, staff will provide advice on kindergarten enrolment.
3. You will be asked for your child's birth certificate and immunisation certificate to enrol at a kindergarten. If you don't have them you can still enrol your child. There is a 16-week period to provide the immunisation certificate (see your local Aboriginal Health Service, or Maternal Child Health Nurse for help to support you to register or get a copy of your certificates).
4. Enquire with your kindergarten or child care provider about how to access a reduction in kindergarten or childcare fees. Register with Centrelink to receive the Child Care Subsidy and other assistance you may be entitled to.

Questions to ask and information to share at enrolment

1. Do they provide snacks?
2. Do they offer Early Start Kinder (see more about ESK below).
3. Look for the Kinder Tick – The Victorian government's tick for funded and approved kindergartens.
4. Ask for a tour and get a feel for the kinder and see if it is culturally safe.
5. Let them know if your child has any allergies.
6. Let them know if the child is in out-of-home care.

Early Start Kindergarten – ESK

Research shows that two years of kindergarten provides the best outcomes for children before they start school.

1. Early Start Kindergarten provides 2 years of 15 hours a week free or low cost kindergarten

with a qualified teacher.

2. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten.
3. Children are eligible if they turn 3 years of age by April of the year you want them to attend.

Things to take to kindergarten

1. A backpack or bag.
2. In the bag you should pack:
 - a change of clothes in case of an accident
 - a hat for summer and a beanie for winter.
3. A snack and a bottle of water if the kindergarten doesn't provide food.
4. Remember to label all belongings.
5. Get involved. Ask if you can volunteer.

Other supports

1. **Koorie Engagement Support Officers:** KESO's work across kindergartens and schools. They provide cultural support for you and your child. To contact a KESO in your area, please visit: www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/marrungregional.aspx
2. **LOOKOUT Centre:** The Centre's Early Childhood Learning Advisors and Koorie Cultural Advisors provide support and guidance for children in out-of-home care. To contact the centre in your region please visit: www.fcav.org.au/news/lookout-centres
3. **Koorie Kids Shine webpage:** Visit this page for more information about the positive outcomes for sending your child to kindergarten. www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/child-care-kindergarten/Pages/kindergarten-aboriginal.aspx

If you require further information, please contact your nearest VACCA office.

See our website for a full list of our locations and contact details: www.vacca.org