



MEDIA RELEASE

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Budget meets election promise

Kindergarten Parents Victoria welcomes the new government's spending initiatives announced in today's State budget.

New funding of \$6 million will provide access to operational grants for small rural early childhood services in Victoria.

"We applaud this commitment to services operating in remote areas of Victoria who struggle to operate their services under the current per capita funding model. This announcement goes some way to providing accessible and affordable kindergarten programs for children in remote communities in Victoria" Emma King, CEO of Kindergarten Parents Victoria said.

KPV also welcomes funding for infrastructure with a new capital grant round announced today. "Investment in infrastructure is vital for services to provide 15 hours of kindergarten to all children in the year before they commence school, and maintain current level of services for 3 year old children. It is critical that all children have opportunity to participate in two years of high quality early childhood education" said Ms King.

Today's budget delivers on the election promises made by the Baillieu Government, but other key issues facing the early childhood sector such as investment in workforce have been ignored.

Ms King said "Investment in the early childhood workforce is needed not only to attract staff, but also to provide genuine professional development to enable staff to lead quality reforms that are being implemented from 2012".

The continuation of kindergarten fee subsidies, while welcome, will not keep pace with either projected population increases or the increased cost of providing 15 hours of kindergarten to all Victorian children in the year before school.

"Today's funding announcement is a step in the right direction but falls short of providing the support required to provide a high quality early childhood service. KPV looks forward to working with the government to address these important issues in the years to come. Access to such a service should be a right, not a privilege said Ms King."

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Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV) is the peak organisation and employer body promoting the voice of parents in quality early childhood education for Victorian children, representing over 1200 early childhood education and care providers serving more than 200,000 Victorian children and families each year.