

Advice for **families:** Free Kinder in sessional services.



Free kindergarten is available for all children enrolled in funded programs at services participating in Free Kinder. This fact sheet is for families with children enrolled in a kinder program at a participating sessional service.

Savings for families.

Children enrolled in sessional (standalone) kinder services receive a free program:

- For 3-year-old children, Free Kinder means a free kinder program between 5 and 15 hours per week
- For 4-year-old children, Free Kinder means a free kinder program of 15 hours per week
- For children eligible for more hours of 4-Year-Old Kinder (Pre-Prep), Free Kinder still applies. This means a free kinder program of between 16 and 30 hours per week.



Eligibility.

Free Kinder is for everyone. You do not need to be an Australian citizen to be eligible to access Free Kinder. Your child can receive 1 year of Free Kinder in a 3-Year-Old Kinder program and 1 year in a 4-Year-Old Kinder program.

Your child can only receive Free Kinder at 1 service at a time. Your kinder service will ask you to sign a form to confirm that your child is receiving their funded kinder program at their service.

Sessional kindergarten services that offer additional hours.

Some sessional kindergarten services participating in Free Kinder offer extra kindergarten hours or care hours for a fee. These extra hours are optional. If you don't want the extra hours, your child can attend up to the maximum free program hours free of charge.

For information on fees or hours provided, please ask your kindergarten service.

Other allowable charges.

You may be charged the following:

- a registration fee when you enrol your child for kinder. This fee is allowable as it is not related to the delivery of the kinder program.
- an enrolment deposit, but this is refunded if your child starts attending the service
- or one-off incursions (e.g. an external provider attends the service to deliver a one-off activity/presentation).

Children from a refugee background, children known to child protection, Aboriginal children and those holding Commonwealth concession cards will not be charged for excursions or incursions.

Some services may request payment for one-off excursions or incursions at the beginning of the year. In these cases, services must refund any surplus funds that have not been used for the cost recovery of excursions or incursions at the end of the year.

Your service may ask you for a voluntary donation or to participate in fundraising. You can choose if you want to donate or take part in fundraising. You will not be charged:

- for regular excursions (e.g., Bush Kinder) or regular incursions (e.g., fortnightly music or weekly sports programs) that are a core part of the kinder program
- compulsory out-of-pocket fees or levies, e.g. maintenance fees, membership fees.

If your child changes kinder services during the year.

If your child moves to a different sessional (standalone) service that is participating in Free Kinder during the kinder year, the service that you are moving from will stop receiving the Free Kinder payment and your new sessional service will receive the Free Kinder funding so you can continue to receive a free program.

If your child moves from a sessional kinder program to a kinder program in a long day care service during their kinder year, the service will stop receiving the Free Kinder payment and your new service will receive the Free Kinder funding so they can pass the savings on to you.

Information about Free Kinder in long day care services is available at vic.gov.au/kinder

