

# 2021 Education State Forum



Starting soon...



# Opening Plenary



**Georgina Nicholson**

Wurundjeri Elder

**Jenny Atta**

Secretary, Department of Education  
and Training



Education  
and Training

**Ingrid Stitt**

Minister for Early Childhood

## Overview of the day

01	Opening Plenary
02	Plenary discussion: Workforce Introduction
03	Workforce Strategy workshops
04	Workforce Strategy reflections
05	<b>Lunch</b>
06	Plenary on Priority Issues
07	Priority issue: Participation – Access, Equity and Inclusion
08	Priority issue: Three-Year-Old-Kinder roll-out
09	Closing Plenary

# Plenary discussion: Workforce Introduction





**Kylie White**

Deputy Secretary, Policy, Strategy  
and Performance

# Consultation on next steps in Victoria's early childhood workforce strategy



## Key themes

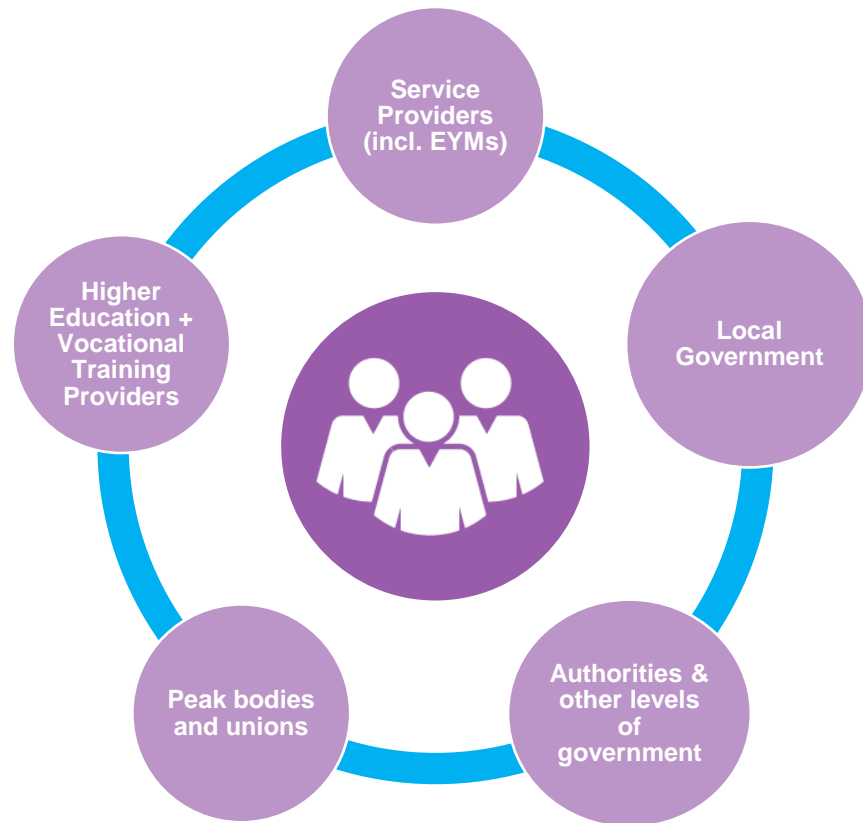


# A wide range of stakeholders provided feedback and shared ideas

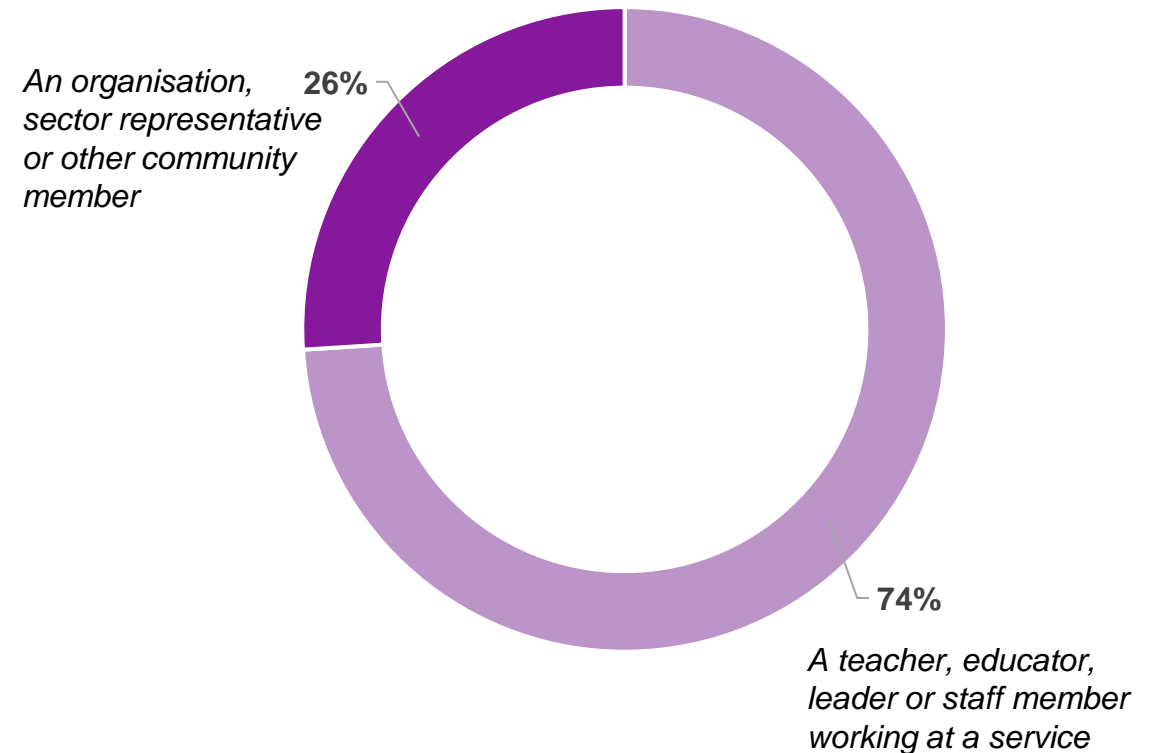
Between April and June 2021, we met with a range of stakeholders to discuss ways to improve the attraction, retention and quality of the early childhood workforce.

A survey on Engage Victoria was used to gather views from the broader public about workforce challenges.




## Over 40 meetings held with key sector stakeholders






## 90 respondents via Engage Victoria Survey



# Six key themes emerged about our collective priorities

Theme	Feedback on priorities	Examples of Government and sector responses
 <p><b>1. Expanding pathways to build quality educator supply</b></p>	<p>Opportunities to expand and strengthen earn and learn pathways into the educator workforce.</p> <p>Traineeships should target diverse cohorts and provide quality supports for sustainable jobs and immediate workforce supply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the use of traineeships for school leavers and career changers</li> </ul>
 <p><b>2. Support for upskilling to provide greater opportunities and grow teacher supply</b></p>	<p>Upskilling is an expanding and promising pathway to build the teacher workforce.</p> <p>Opportunities to scale up where appropriate employment-based and accelerated ITE programs with flexibility and wrap-around supports to improve retention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarships and refreshed incentives program</li> <li>• More high quality accelerated courses and employers delivering upskilling supports</li> </ul>
 <p><b>3. Collective responsibility for shifting community perceptions about ECEC</b></p>	<p>Negative perceptions continue to hinder attraction and retention, particularly in certain settings.</p> <p>All parts of the sector from employers to peak bodies have a role to play in raising the status and promoting respect for the profession and promoting themselves as employers of choice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Start, Best Life Campaign</li> <li>• Sector-led campaigns and promotion (e.g. Big Roles In Little Lives)</li> </ul>

# Six key themes emerged about our collective priorities

Theme	Feedback on priorities	Examples of Government and sector responses
 <p><b>4. Building leadership and addressing workforce wellbeing and workload to improve retention</b></p>	<p>COVID-19 and the pace of reform has had an impact on the wellbeing and workload of the workforce.</p> <p>In addition to improving pay and conditions, greater investment in service leadership and mentoring would help address these issues and improve workforce satisfaction and retention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership programs, networks and wellbeing supports</li> <li>• Sector-led improvements in pay and conditions</li> </ul>
 <p><b>5. Quality of training and professional development is a priority</b></p>	<p>Strong desire to prioritise quality alongside supply. Graduates must be job-ready and equipped with the necessary skills and supports for the demands of an early childhood career.</p> <p>There needs to be a stronger focus on quality placements and a continuum of professional development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early career support</li> <li>• New and existing partnerships to improve placement experiences</li> </ul>
 <p><b>6. Stronger partnerships and information sharing</b></p>	<p>Opportunity to build and strengthen partnerships across the sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• between training providers and services to build the workforce pipeline and communicate information about available courses</li> <li>• across service providers to network and showcase the best practice and innovation</li> <li>• with government to improve information about available supports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Childhood Jobs website</li> <li>• Enhancing communications around existing government supports</li> <li>• Place-based partnerships</li> </ul>

# CHIME LIVE PLATFORM

Click on agenda and then join next session

2021 Education State Forum

Agenda

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Welcome

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Evaluations

Wednesday Aug 11

Thursday Aug 12

THE EDUCATION STATE

VICTORIA State Government

Session times below are displayed in your local device time zone.

2021 Education State Forum - Day 1

Open Day One Program

Download to calendar

09:00

Early Childhood Education - delivering on our shared commitment

09:40

Discussion: Workforce introduction

Introduction, Strategy, and expectations for the workforce workshop

10:00

Workforce strategy workshops

Attraction & Retention/Quality

Click here to join this session

Meeting ID: 943 9147 9368

Passcode: 135790

# Workforce Strategy workshops



# Potential new entrants to early childhood careers: Renaë as an early childhood teacher, Callum as an educator



## **Renaë is:**

- Female, 45 years old
- Recently moved to regional Victoria and is seeking a new service-oriented role to secure work in her local community
- Keen to find a long-term sustainable career
- Ready for a career change now her two children are older and she has a little more flexibility to work longer hours
- Currently working in office administration, with a career background in science



## **Callum is:**

- Male, 24 years old
- Lives in North-Western Melbourne
- Has tried his hand at a few different practical careers, but hasn't yet found his place
- Recently met a male educator working in early childhood education and is inspired to give it a go
- Currently working as a building labourer



# Renae's ideal early childhood teaching career



## Studying:

Renae explores options for courses and professions to join in her local town, choosing Early Childhood Teaching via a Masters

**Data:** By 2029, 4,000 new teachers will be needed in Victoria

## Finding work:

Renae needs to work while studying and finds a support role at a local service. Renae secures a teaching role on graduation at a nearby service

**Data:** Career changers have high initial departure rates, although older workers are less likely to leave the EC sector and more likely to change services in their first year

## First teaching role:

Renae feels supported by her workplace and networks to flourish as an early career teacher

**Data:** 30% of funded kinder staff drop out of the profession by the start of Year 2, 50% by the end of Year 4. On average, retention is lower for new entrants in long day care settings

## Experienced teacher, leader, mentor:

Renae easily and confidently secures a local educational leadership role

**Data:** Varying quality of, and access to, professional development support is a factor contributing to workforce retention rates

## Senior sector leader, advocate:

Renae can pursue a clear career pathway into senior leadership via expert teaching opportunities (e.g. mentoring, pedagogical leader for large organisation)

**Data:** Workplaces lack career progression opportunities or structures for career planning, particularly compared to school teachers

# Callum's ideal early childhood educator career



**Studying:**  
Callum explores study options and career pathways in ECEC, choosing a Cert III

**Data:** By 2029, more than 2,000 new educators will be needed in Victoria

**First educator role:**  
Callum feels supported by his workplace and networks to flourish as an early career educator

**Data:** In 2019, 98.6% of the funded kindergarten workforce was female

**Experienced educator, further study:**  
Callum chooses to study a Diploma part-time while continuing to work in his service

**Data:** Educators report they are hesitant to add study to their workload, and find navigating study options confusing

**Lead educator:**  
Callum easily and confidently secures a room leader role in his service, and sees a clear pathway into teaching if desired

**Data:** Many educators do not see themselves as ready for university, and, if motivated, tend to become school teachers instead

# Breakout groups: Generate an ECE workforce toolkit

## Round 1 – Attraction

During this part of the session, you work in small groups of 6-7 people to generate advice for the whole sector on **how to attract more people to early childhood education careers**.

### Activity Instructions:

- Discuss three questions together in your group:
  - **Thinking about Renae and Callum before they make the decision to take up an early childhood career, how could we best attract them to the sector?**
  - **How can we encourage more people, and new types of people, to enter the workforce?**
  - **What advice would you give the sector?**
- DET note-takers will record your group's advice in SLIDO and key themes will be shared with the broader group.

**Activity Duration:** 15 minutes

Note: Instructions and questions will be posted to your break-out room chat.



# Breakout groups: Generate an ECE workforce toolkit

## Round 2 – Retention/Quality

During this part of the session, you will work again in small groups to generate advice for the whole sector on **how to retain people in the workforce, including a focus on quality**.

### Activity Instructions:

- Discuss four questions together in your group:
  - **We know the initial few years are vital in keeping people in the profession. What is working well (or emerging) here to retain staff?**
  - **What can the sector put in place – separately and together – to help Renae or Callum attain their ideal careers?**
  - **What advice would you give the sector?**
  - **What do you and sector stakeholders need from each other to help make this happen?**
- DET note-takers will record your group's advice in SLIDO and key themes will be shared with the broader group.

**Activity Duration:** 25 minutes

Note: Instructions and questions will be posted to your break-out room chat.



# Workforce Strategy reflections



**Kim Little**

Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood  
Education



Education  
and Training



# Plenary on priority issues





# Priority issue: Participation – access, equity, inclusion



# Mathew Lundgren

Executive Director, Early Learning  
Division

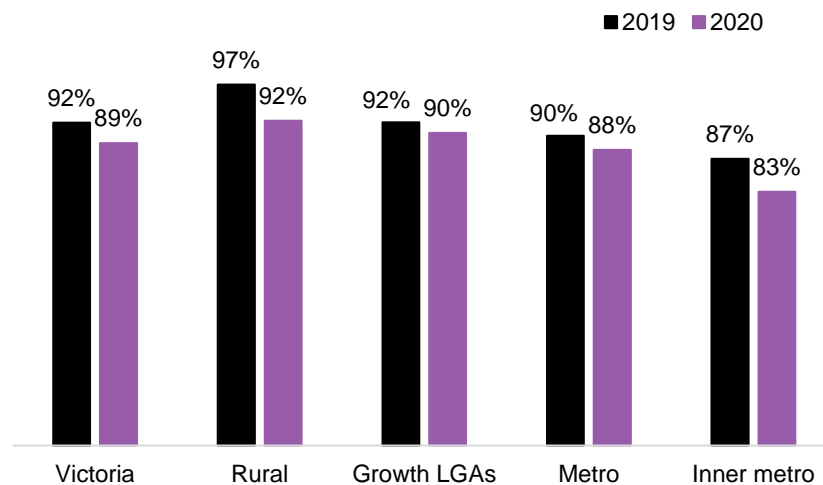
# Kindergarten participation is strong in Victoria, with some variation across locations

## Enrolments have steadily increased

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Kindergarten participation rate	93.4%	92.1%	91.8%	89.1%
First year enrolments	75,246	74,766	75,604	75,774

- Enrolments at the start of 2020 were consistent with 2019 but between May and August there were fewer new enrolments compared to this period in 2019.
- This decline in new enrolments is due to a combination of COVID-19 related factors including and increased likelihood of families keeping children at home and a fall in interstate and overseas migration.

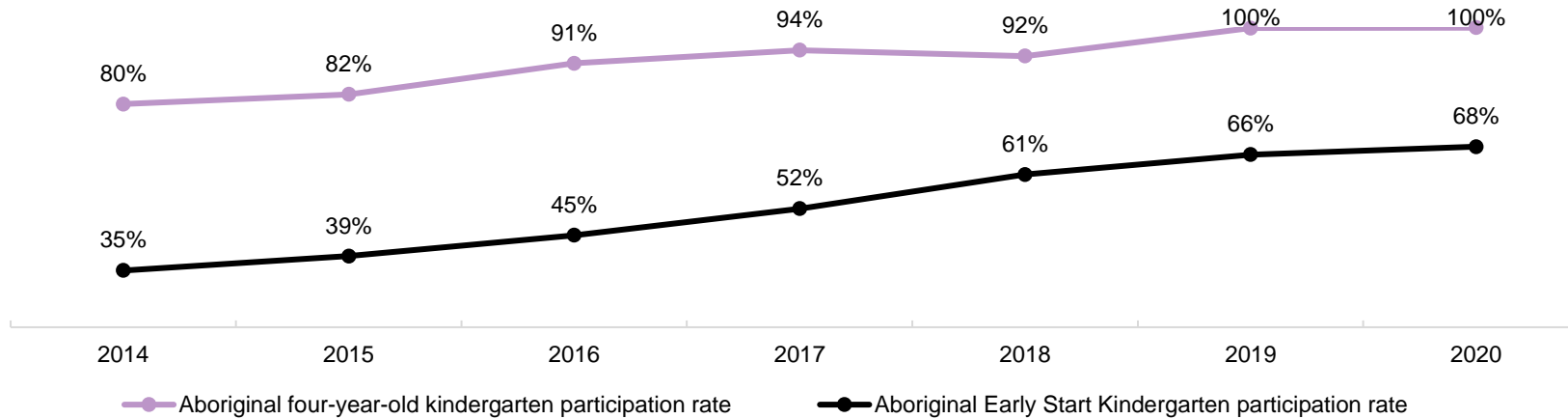
## The participation rate varies by location



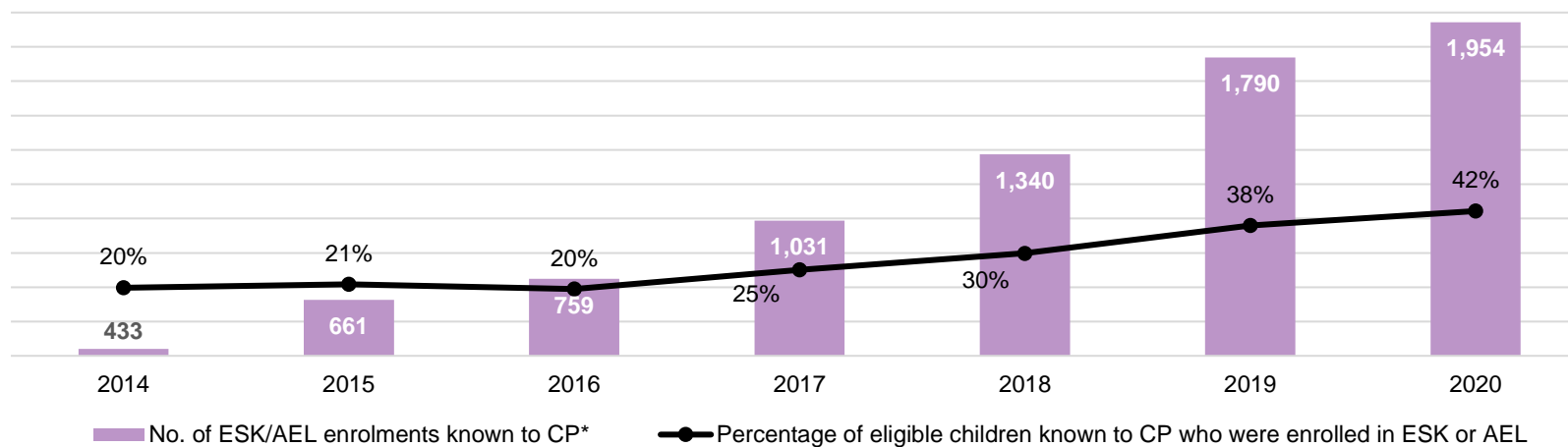
- The metro participation rate is consistently lower than the rural rate across a number of years.
- Participation in inner metropolitan LGAs is lower than in other areas of Victoria.
- Lower participation is associated with:
  - higher numbers of migrant families from non-English speaking backgrounds.
  - high level of transience in rental and public housing.
- Participation patterns in 2020 largely consistent with 2019
  - But impact of COVID-19 greater in rural and inner metro LGAs with stronger participation decline.

# There have been successful efforts to increase participation for key groups of children

Aboriginal participation has increased over a number of years



Participation of children known to Child Protection in Early Start Kindergarten increased over a number of years



\* Figures include children who are both Aboriginal and known to Child Protection: 2014: 49, 2015: 47, 2016: 73, 2017: 114, 2018: 144, 2019: 171, 2020: 258.

# Some children are still missing out on kindergarten each year

The reasons for non-participation can be complex, but further examination of the data indicates some emerging issues

## Children experiencing vulnerability are less likely to enrol in kindergarten



- **25 per cent** of children not participating live in disadvantaged areas (SEIFA quintile 1) compared to **19 per cent** of children participating and living in areas with higher socio economic conditions.<sup>1</sup>
- While improvements have occurred, some children are still missing out with an estimated **42 per cent** of eligible children known to Child Protection and **68 per cent** of Aboriginal children accessing Early Start Kindergarten in 2020.
- In 2020, **49 per cent** of children in Out-of-Home Care accessed Early Start Kindergarten and **79 per cent** participated in four-year-old kindergarten.

## Children from Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families are less likely to enrol in kindergarten



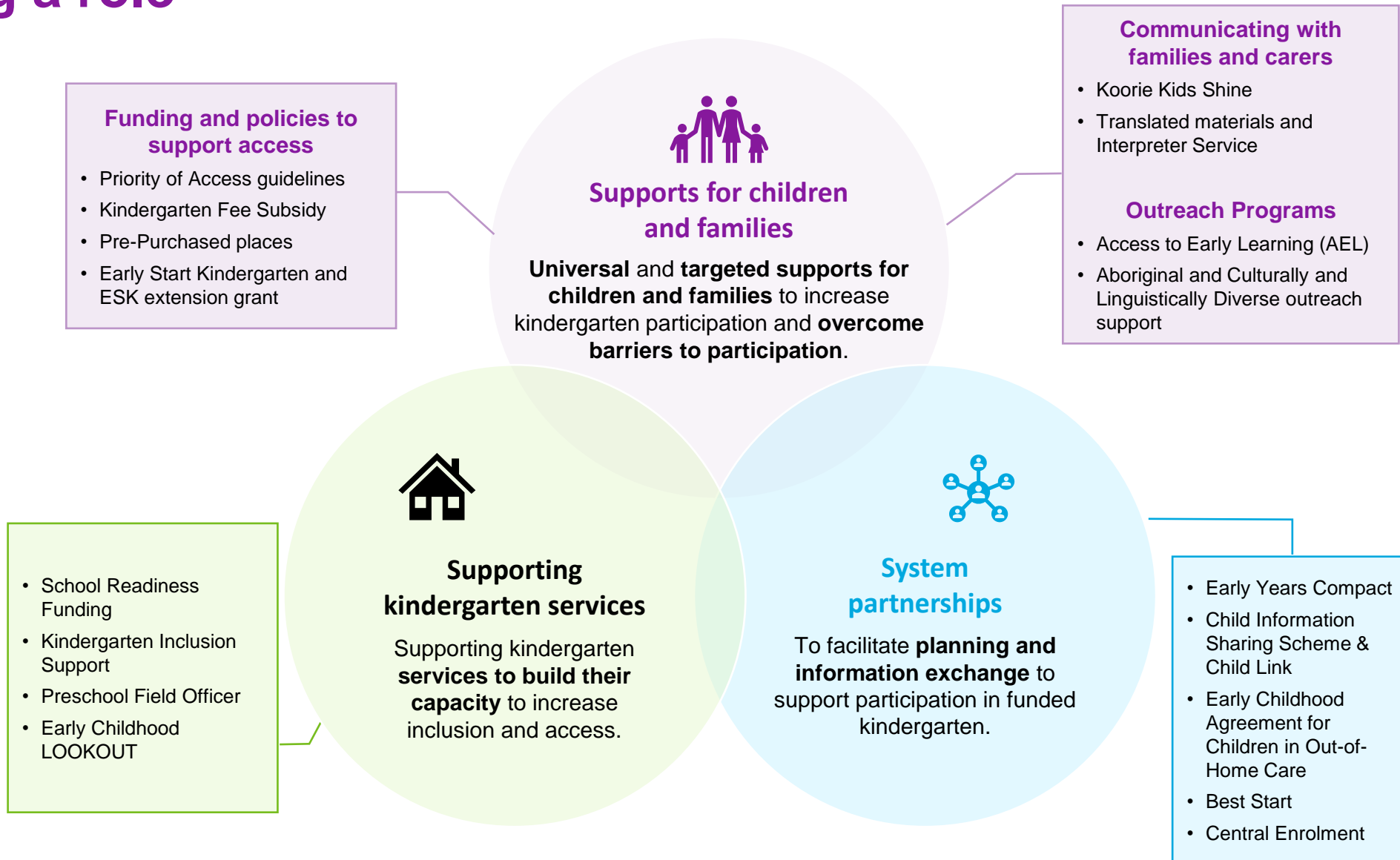
- Children from CALD backgrounds are over-represented in those not participating in kindergarten.
- Approximately **40 per cent** of children not participating are from CALD backgrounds, compared to the **22 per cent** of children participating that are CALD.<sup>2</sup>

## Some families are using alternative services such as long day care without funded kindergarten and family day care



- Approximately 15 per cent of long day care services do not offer a funded kindergarten program.
- Analysis by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2017 showed approximately **1,800** children enrolled in family day care and not attending a funded kindergarten program.<sup>3</sup>

# Improving participation is a sector wide responsibility, with all levels playing a role



# Breakout group discussions

In small groups, consider how we collectively improve access and inclusion over the next 12 months, noting the supports currently in place:

- How would you know that you were doing well in access and inclusion? What are the markers of improvement and success?
- What are one or two actions you could implement as an individual/organisation to improve access and inclusion?

DET staff will be in each breakout room and will record your group's advice in Slido. Key themes will be shared with the broader group.

**Activity duration:** 15 minutes

Note: Instructions and questions will be posted to your break-out room chat.

# Priority issue: Three-Year-Old-Kinder roll out





# Bronwen FitzGerald

Executive Director, Kinder Reform  
and Implementation

## Panel discussion

- **Miryam Franjic** is the Children's Services Manager at Glenelg Shire Council. Miryam and her team have led significant change within Glenelg Shire Services through engagement and consultation with staff, community and key workforce partners. Miryam and the team have worked hard to support as many children as possible to access two years of funded kindergarten in 2021.
- **Karen Mills** has worked in the early childhood sector for more than 22 years, including holding centre manager and area/operations manager roles in various private and not-for-profit services and organisations. Karen is currently the General Manager of Kensington Community Children's Co-operative, and has been in the role since February 2020.
- **Cathie Koelewyn** is the co-owner and director of Eastwood Early Learning Centre and Kindergarten in Bairnsdale, East Gippsland. Ahead of the Three-Year-Old Kindergarten roll-out in her area, Cathie oversaw a major renovation at Eastwood. The centre now includes outdoor spaces for learning and two additional rooms, which enabled Eastwood to offer 15 hours a week of a funded three-year-old kindergarten program in 2020.
- **Georgie Hill** is the Manager of Service Planning, Partnering and Reform at Wyndham City. The Service Planning, Partnering and Reform department is focused on leading Council's social policy agenda, effectively planning for integrated life-stage and community services and planning for social infrastructure across the municipality to meet the current and future needs of Wyndham residents.

# Breakout group discussions

In small groups, discuss:

- Following today's session, what are the next steps you are going to take in your organisation?
- What might you now do differently?

DET staff will be in each breakout room and will record your group's advice in Slido. Key themes will be shared with the broader group.

**Activity duration:** 15 minutes

Note: Instructions and questions will be posted to your break-out room chat.

# Closing Plenary



**Kim Little**

Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood  
Education



Education  
and Training

# Evaluation survey

Please go to [www.sli.do](http://www.sli.do) and enter #EVAL11AUG

Thank you!

