



2022 Education State Forum



Best start for all Victorians



Overview of the day

Time	Session
8.50am	Official opening
9.30am	Workshop one: Best Start, Best Life
11.00am	Morning tea
11.30am	Workshop two: Workforce
12.45pm	Lunch

Overview of the day

Time	Session
1.45pm	Workshop three A: Participation (Main room)
1.45pm	Workshop three B: Quality Kindergarten (Governor's wing)
3.50pm	Closing plenary
4.30pm	Networking

Ingrid Stitt

Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep

Jenny Atta
Secretary
Department of Education and Training

**Best Start
Best Life**



Best Start, Best Life



Kim Little

Deputy Secretary Early Childhood Education
Department of Education and Training

Best Start, Best Life

Announcement outline

- Ambitious, 10 year reform to early childhood education and care in Victoria
- Clear policy commitment to improve:
 - Early learning outcomes for Victorian children
 - Workforce participation for parents and carers, especially women
 - Choice and access for families
- Joint statement with NSW on shared commitment to expand to a full year of play-based early learning in the year before school



Best Start, Best Life

Three major new initiatives

1 Making funded kindergarten programs free at participating services across the State

2 Delivering a new year of universal Pre-Prep for four-year-olds

3 Establishing 50 government-owned and affordable early learning centres

Best Start, Best Life

1

Free kinder

- Free kinder will be available for three-year-old and four-year-old children across Victoria
 - Commences in 2023
 - Saving of up to \$2,500 per child each year
 - Available for all funded kindergarten programs:
 - Sessional kindergartens and long day care centres
 - Three-year-old enrolments (5-15 hours)
 - Four-year-old enrolments (15 hours)

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2

Delivering a new year of universal Pre-Prep for four-year-olds

- Over the next decade, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten will transition to Pre-Prep
 - Increasing to a 30-hour a week program for in the year before school
 - Teacher-led play-based learning – doubling the opportunity to develop social, emotional and cognitive skills
 - Progressive, staged roll-out, based on the approach taken for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten
 - Delivered through sessional kindergartens and long day care centres
 - Significant program to build infrastructure and workforce capacity over the next decade

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3

Establishing 50 government-owned and affordable early learning centres

- Establishment of 50 government-owned and affordable integrated early learning centres
 - In locations of significant unmet demand
 - Co-located or integrated where possible, with schools, hospitals, TAFEs or other community services
 - Locations to be worked through with a rigorous process based on market information and consultation with sector partners

Best Start
Best Life

Best Start Best Life

Bronwen FitzGerald, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Expansion, Department of Education and Training

Emma King, CEO, Victorian Council of Social Service

Elizabeth Death, CEO, ELACCA

John Merritt, Chair, WorkSafe Victoria

Table discussion

Themes:

Infrastructure and provision planning

Significant infrastructure will be required to support the roll-out of Pre-Prep, on top of the investment to build infrastructure capacity for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten. The department will continue to work with the sector to build this capacity and is keen to understand the perspectives of our partners.

Family Engagement

Communicating clearly with families about the educational and social benefits of play-based learning before school is fundamental to increasing participation. This includes engaging with underrepresented cohorts, who we know are less likely than the overall population to enrol their children in a funded kindergarten program.

Change management and service planning

To ensure children can access a place, providers will need support to plan and implement programs that make best use of their facilities and staff, are attractive to families, and maintain high quality programs.

Sector partnerships

Strong partnerships are critical to delivering big reforms – to share information, gather feedback and resolve differences. Working with peak bodies, unions, local councils, service providers, and teachers and educators is essential to delivering successful change, and working through the complexities, challenges, and opportunities that arise in reforms of this size.

Each group is asked to consider:

- What does success look like in 2032 (i.e., when all reforms have been rolled out)?
- For their selected theme (one of the four above), each group is asked to reflect on the roll out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten to inform the transition to Pre-Prep, and consider the questions below:
 - What has worked well?
 - What ideas do you have for innovation?

Workforce

Bringing innovation to early childhood workforce attraction and retention supports

Sarah Logan

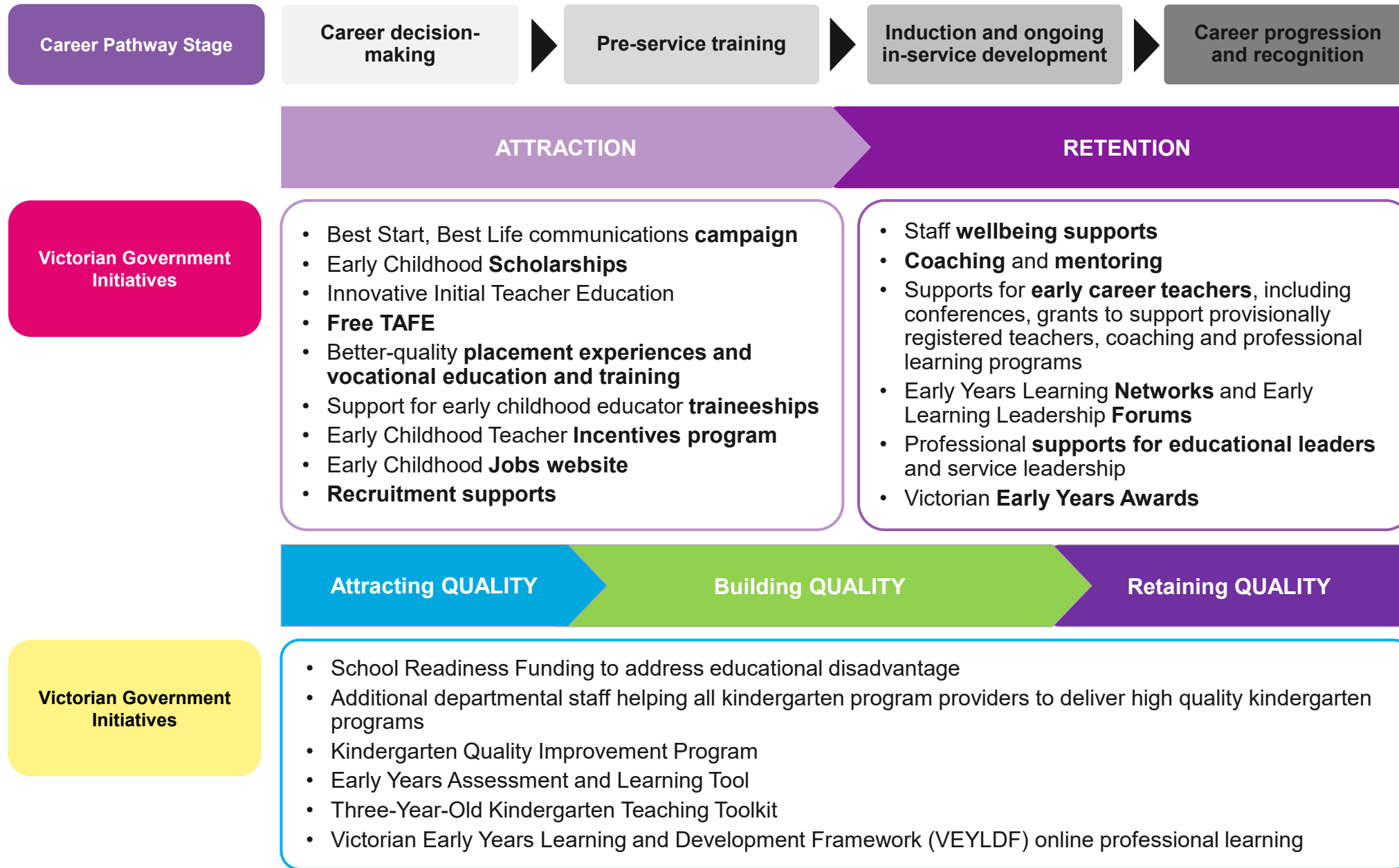
Acting Director, Local Planning,
Kindergarten Reform Implementation,
Department of Education and Training

World class early childhood education and care

- The Victorian Government is already investing **\$5 billion to introduce universal Three-Year-Old Kindergarten (3YOK) across Victoria**. This roll-out will continue as planned.
- **Tens of thousands of Victorian children** are now accessing a 3YOK program, with more than **2,700 services** offering funded kindergarten programs across the state.
- The roll-out and partnership approach taken for 3YOK will inform the model for the introduction of **Pre-Prep from 2025, building to 30 hours available across the state by 2032**.
- **Strong engagement and meaningful consultation** with key stakeholders is and continues to be critical to the success of these reforms.
- **6,000 new early childhood teachers and educators** will be needed for the roll-out of 3YOK with a further 5,000 teachers and educators needed for Pre-Prep.



Victoria's Early Childhood Workforce Strategy



Workforce

Deborah Harry, Area Executive Director, Southern Metropolitan

Andrew Hume, CEO, Early Childhood Management Services

Cara Nightingale, Vice President, Early Childhood, Australian Education Union Victoria

Emma Orchard, Manager, Child and Family Services, Macedon Ranges

Table discussion

To promote reflection and innovative thinking on attraction and retention in the sector to inform future support development and/or refinement of existing supports.

Thinking about your experience of the roll out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten:

- What have you done or seen others do that worked well to attract and retain teachers and educators?
- What do you want to do more of, or differently, in your role?
- What could alternative approaches and/or innovation in attraction and retention support look like for:
 - Teachers
 - Educators
 - Educational leaders?

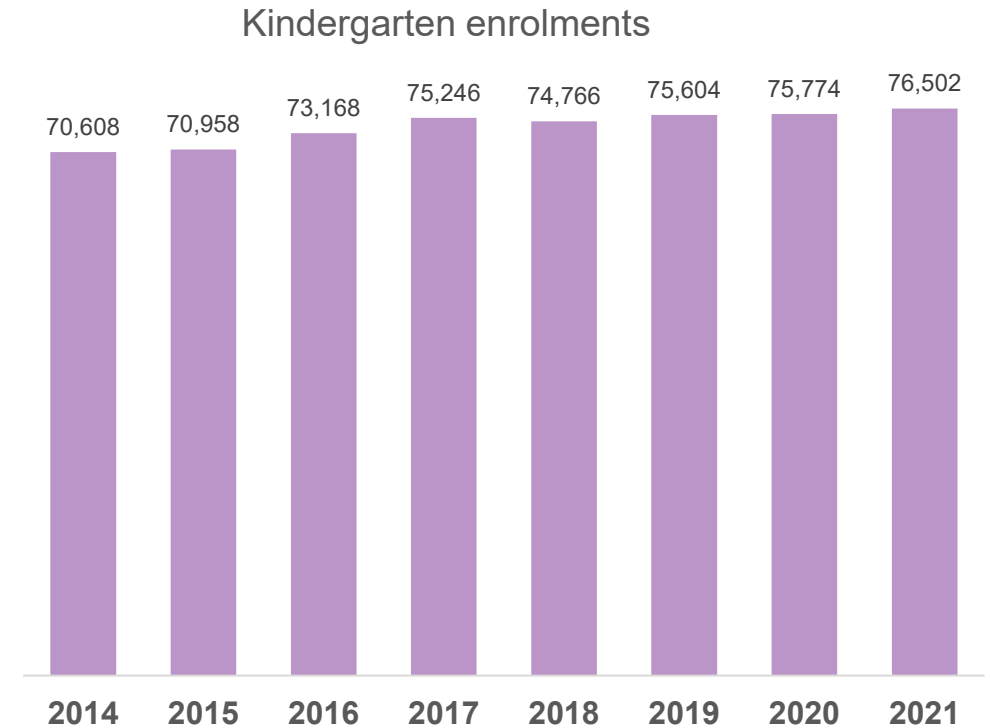
Participation

Mathew Lundgren

Executive Director Early Learning,
Department of Education and Training

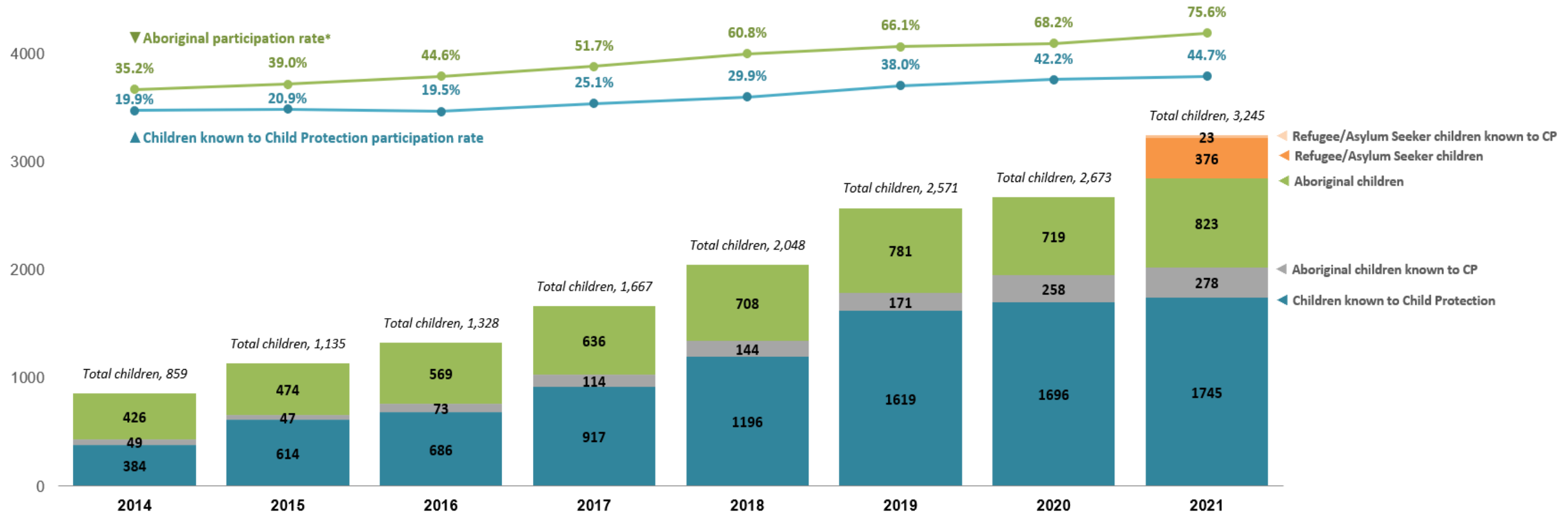
Kindergarten Participation in Victoria

- Participation in kindergarten across Victoria has continued to strengthen. Even during the pandemic there have been gains in participation for key cohorts of children
- The combined efforts of educators, services, system partners and the continued expansion of targeted supports has driven this improvement
- There remain, however, additional challenges for some children to access kindergarten and further room to improve participation
- Looking ahead, a greater focus will be given to establishing processes that provide a clearer picture of kindergarten attendance and the factors influencing this
- This data will be critical in guiding and measuring the impact of our efforts in proactively supporting enrolment and attendance



Early Start Kindergarten for three-year-old children

The number of children enrolled in ESK/AEL and the proportion of eligible children enrolled has grown steadily since 2014

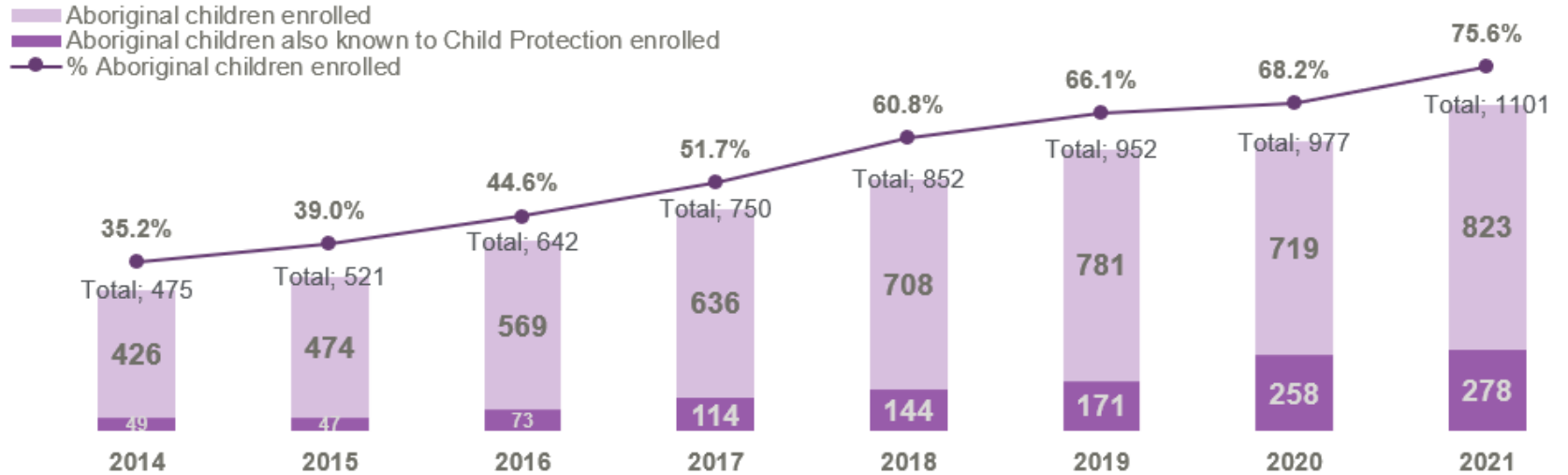


- 89 per cent were enrolled in services with a rating of **Meeting NQS** or above in 2021
- 94 per cent were enrolled for **15 hours or more** in 2021, up from 82 per cent in 2018

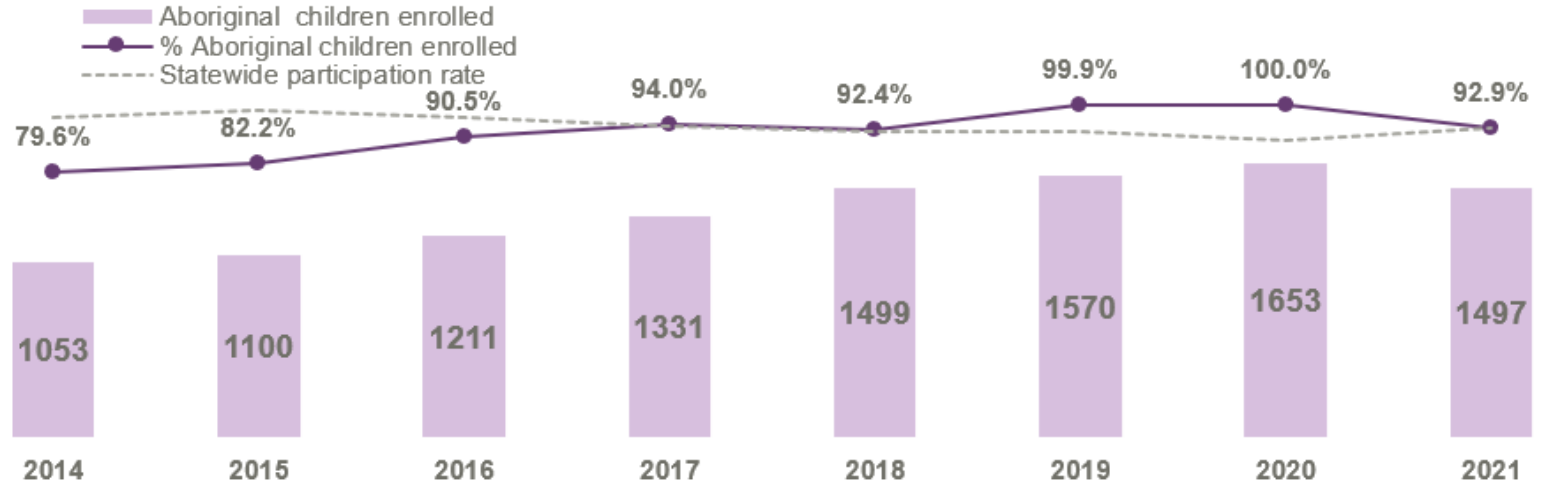
Kindergarten participation for Aboriginal children

- The number and proportion of Aboriginal children accessing ESK has continued to grow steadily
- The number and proportion of Aboriginal children accessing Four-Year-Old Kindergarten dipped in 2021 – a number factors, are have contributed, including changes to population estimates
- ABS Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander estimated resident population is used to calculate the Early Start Kindergarten and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten participation rates for Aboriginal children

Early Start Kindergarten / Access to Early Learning for Three-Year-Old children

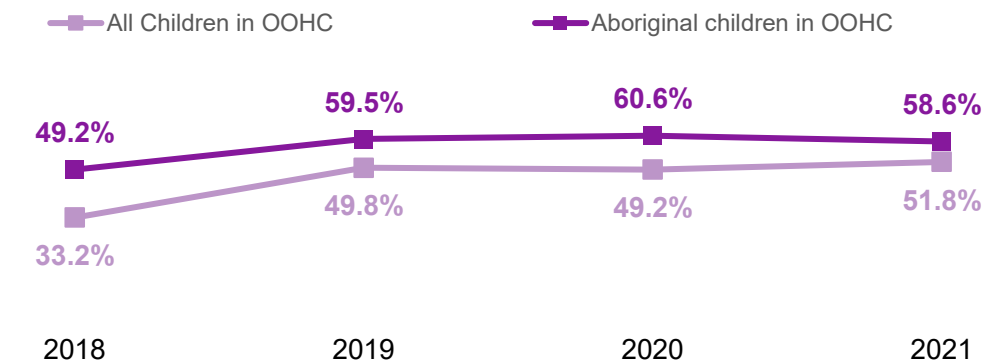


Four-Year-Old Kindergarten

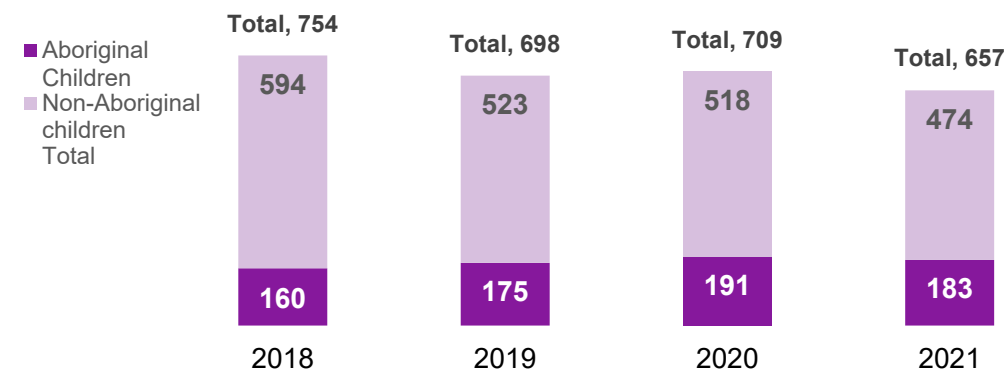


Kindergarten participation for Children in Out-of-Home Care (OoHC)

Percentage** of three-year-old children in OoHC in **Early Start Kindergarten**



Number of children in OoHC enrolled in **Four-year-old Kindergarten**



Attendance data is currently very limited

- At present, the only consistent collection of kindergarten attendance data is through the annual, one week Census.
- In 2021, the Early Start Kindergarten Attendance Tracker was introduced, to collect child level attendance data on a termly basis.
- Last years onsite attendance was impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.
- Term 1, 2022 data indicates that Aboriginal children and children known to child protection are attending over 77% of enrolled ESK hours.
- For context, the majority (over 94%) of children enrolled in ESK access 15 hour kindergarten programs.
- Work is underway to scope the systematic collection of more regular attendance data from kindergarten services.

Panel

Brad Miller, General Manager, One Tree Community Services

Deb Tsorbaris, CEO, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Leanne Fary, Director, Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative

Professor Sharon Goldfeld, Director, The Centre for Community Child Health, Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Afternoon Tea



Table discussion

Each group is asked to consider:

- **Attendance:** once children and families enter the kindergarten door, what are the next essential ingredients to supporting sustained attendance – at the system level, LGA and community level, the service level, and individual family and cohort levels?
- **Enrolment:** what system supports and local action are needed – or need to strengthen – to drive even higher enrolment, in both years of kinder, for all children?

Quality Kindergarten

Pippa Procter

Director, Early Learning Development Reform

Department of Education and Training

What does the research tell us about quality?



Structure Quality

Facilities, Resources, Ratios,
Qualifications

NQS 2, 3, 4, 7



Process Quality

Interactions, Relationships, Leadership
and Pedagogical skills

NQS 1, 5, 6, 7

Elements to consider when reflecting on process quality

Pedagogical
Leadership

Developing a team
environment with
strong subject
knowledge and
teaching skills

High Quality
Interactions

Strong Philosophy
and Collaborative
Culture

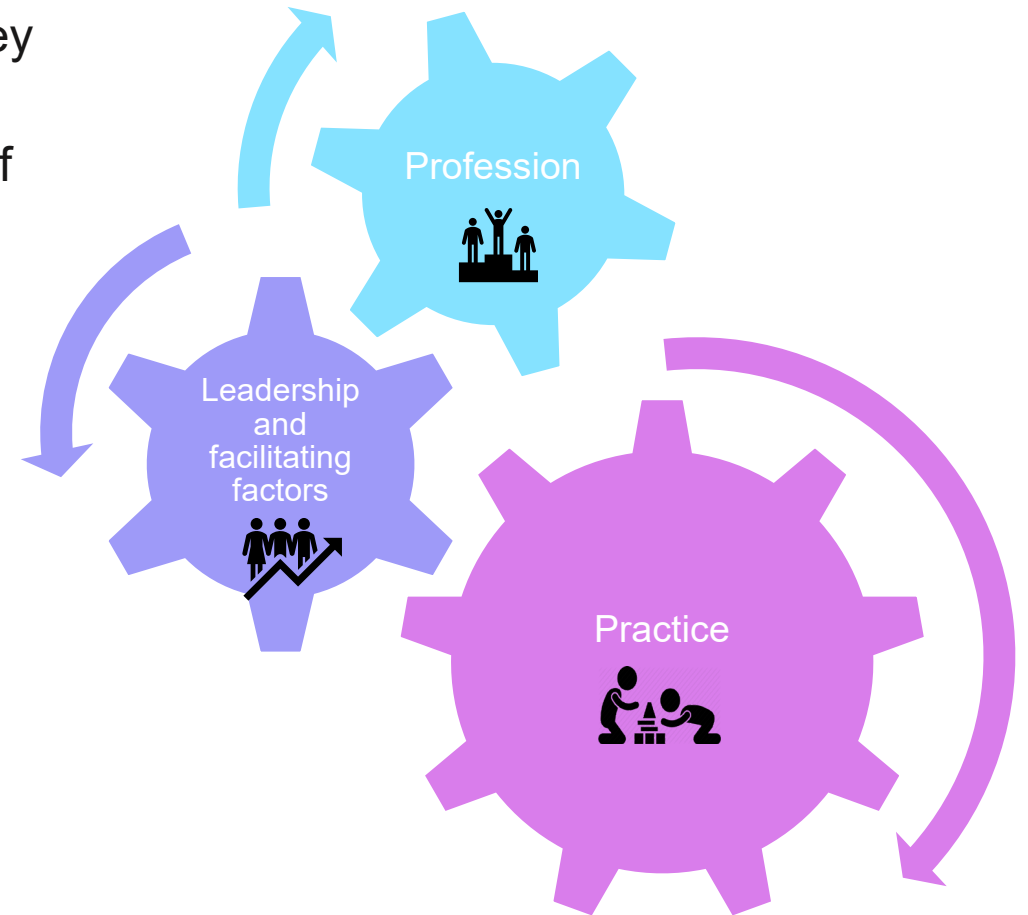
Program and
planning cycles that
are enriched with
evidence and
research

A learning culture
based upon critical
reflection, research
and assessment



Driving quality in Victoria

- Use data, evidence and insights to target supports where they will make the biggest difference for children's learning
- Provide professional supports that deepen understandings of
 - learning outcomes and children's learning trajectories
 - evidence-based pedagogical strategies
 - program planning, especially critical reflection skills
 - assessment
- Promote and facilitate inclusive learning environments
- Strengthen leadership
- Build collaborative partnerships between all professionals working with children
- Recognise and share best practice and innovation
- Connect with research



Quality Kindergarten

Professor Karen Thorpe, Research Fellow, Queensland Brain Institute

Professor Marilyn Flear, Foundation Chair in Early Childhood Education and Development at Monash University

Professor Susanne Garvis, Swinburne University

Q&A



Table discussion

- What sorts of discussions are we going to need to have as a sector about how to maximise the positive impact of more hours of teacher-led play-based learning for all children, including those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable?
- Holding in mind the provocations from the panel and the increased opportunities to advance children's learning through an expanded two-year program what are you currently doing or could you do to:
 - a. For those with a provider/service leadership role:
 - map the professional learning needs of your service's educator team
 - identify the most beneficial professional learning supports for your educator team to meet their identified needs
 - connect and embed research to support continuous growth in quality provision?
 - b. For those in roles other than providers/service leaders:
 - What can we do to better support quality?
 - Are there opportunities to better structure and co-ordinate existing supports to have more impact?

Kim Little

Deputy Secretary Early Childhood Education
Department of Education and Training

Sharing your thoughts

Please use the QR code
to complete the 2022
Education State Forum survey



Thank you