Early Start Kindergarten
For all Aboriginal children

Why is kindergarten important?

Kindergarten programs help children with their language, development and self-confidence. Research shows an early start and more time at kindergarten prepares children for success at school and has a positive impact later in life.

What is Early Start Kindergarten?

Early Start Kindergarten provides free or low cost kindergarten to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander three year old children where programs are offered by a qualified teacher.

Some services will be able to offer your child a place in a program for four year olds or a mixed age group.

Applications for Early Start Kindergarten funding are made by the kindergarten service on your behalf and the grant is paid directly to the service.

Is my child eligible?

Your child is eligible if they are aged three by 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten, and your child is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

How do I enrol my child?

You can enrol your child by contacting a kindergarten service near you and asking to access Aboriginal Early Start Kindergarten. Alternatively a Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO) in your nearest Department of Education & Training office can help you apply. See back page for contact details of regional offices.

To find a kindergarten service or child care centre with a funded program in your area visit the [Find a school or early childhood service page](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice) <www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice> or contact your local council. You can find out the phone number for your local council by visiting the [Local Government Victoria page](http://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au) <www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au>.

Should my child go to four year old kindergarten as well?

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are eligible for two years of free or low cost kindergarten before starting school regardless of whether they are enrolled in sessional or integrated long day care services. Four year old kindergarten will build on the strengths your child develops when they are three years old.

Try to enrol your child for four year old kindergarten as early as possible to make sure your child gets a place as places at your preferred kindergarten are not guaranteed.

Where can I find more about
Early Start Kindergarten for Aboriginal children?

For more information about Early Start Kindergarten, visit the [Early Start Kindergarten page](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/pages/earlystart.aspx)  <www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/pages/earlystart.aspx> or contact the Koorie Engagement Support Officers in your nearest Department of Education & Training office. See the following page for contact details of regional offices.

Regional Office Contacts

| Regional Office  | Location  | Switchboard |
| --- | --- | --- |
| North-Eastern Victoria  | Benalla | 03 8392 9500 |
| North-Eastern Victoria  | Glen Waverley | 03 8392 9300 |
| North-Western Victoria | Bendigo | 03 5440 3111 |
| North-Western Victoria | Coburg | 03 9488 9488 |
| North-Western Victoria | Greensborough | 03 8469 9200 |
| South-Eastern Victoria | Dandenong | 03 8765 5600 |
| South-Eastern Victoria | Moe | 03 5127 0400 |
| South-Western Victoria | Ballarat | 03 5337 8444 |
| South-Western Victoria | Geelong | 03 5225 1000 |
| South-Western Victoria | Footscray | 03 8397 0300 |

Published by
Department of Education and Training
Melbourne
February 2018 (Revised)
© State of Victoria