

Advice for families: Free Kinder in long day care

Kinder is available for all children enrolled in funded kindergarten programs at services participating in Free Kinder. This fact sheet is for families with children enrolled in participating long day care services.

Savings for families

Families with children enrolled in Three- and Four-Year-Old kindergarten or Pre-Prep programs at participating long day care centres will receive an annual Free Kinder fee offset.

- For Three-year-old children, this means from \$700.33 for 5 hours to \$2,101 for 15 hours.
- For Four-year-old children, this means \$2,101 for children enrolled in a 15-hour kindergarten program.
- For children eligible for Pre-Prep in 2025, Free Kinder still applies. This means a free kindergarten program of between 16 and 30 hours per week.

The funded kindergarten program is the time that the qualified early childhood teacher is in the room delivering the kindergarten program.

Eligibility

Free Kinder is for everyone. You do not need to be an Australian citizen to receive Free Kinder. You also do not need to be eligible for the Australian Government Child Care Subsidy (CCS) to receive Free Kinder.

Your child can receive one year of Free Kinder in a Three- Year-Old Kindergarten program and one year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program or Pre-Prep.

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

How to access Free Kinder savings

Your long day care service will receive the Victorian Government Free Kinder funding on your behalf.

Your service will pass on the savings as a direct reduction to your out-of-pocket fees after the Commonwealth's Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is applied.

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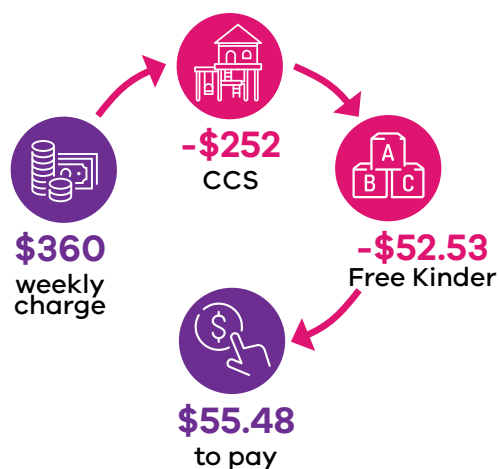
How the savings are applied to your out-of-pocket fees

The Free Kinder savings will be applied to your fees regularly across the year (e.g. weekly or fortnightly) and you should be able to see the amount clearly labelled on your invoice as 'Victorian Government Free Kinder offset'.

Each kindergarten service can choose how often they will apply the Free Kinder saving and for the number of weeks across the year. Kindergarten services will also advise when the Free Kinder offset will commence and end. For information on how the saving will be applied to your fees, please talk directly to your kindergarten service.

Example

- A child attends their Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program 3 days a week.
- The kindergarten service charges \$360 for the 3 days.
- The family receives a Child Care Subsidy (CCS) of \$252.
- In 2025, the service applies \$2101 Free Kinder offset weekly over 40 weeks of the year (\$52.53 per week).
- The family pays \$55.48 a week after the CCS and Free Kinder offset has been applied.



If your child changes kindergarten services during the year

If your child moves to a different long day care service during their kindergarten year, the service that you are moving from will stop receiving the Free Kinder payment and your new long day care service will start to receive the Free Kinder payment so they can continue to pass the savings on to you.

If your child moves to a sessional kindergarten service that is participating in Free Kinder during the year, your funded kindergarten program will be free.

More information about Free Kinder in sessional services is available at vic.gov.au/kinder

