# Disability Inclusion in Kindergartens Research Project

We are researching a new way to help children. This includes those with complex medical needs, disabilities, or developmental delays. This research aims to improve their support and participation.

This approach will find changes to help these children. It will help them get the most from kindergarten programs.

This approach will identify changes to help these children succeed in kindergarten programs. We are also testing new ways to support kindergartens in meeting their needs. The findings will provide guidance on strengthening inclusion support in kindergartens over time.

**Research Goals:**

* Enable children to take part more actively in learning.
* Support staff in delivering inclusive education.
* Identify and respond to children’s needs.
* Better understand children’s functional needs.

## Disability Inclusion Needs Survey

In 2024, the department ran a survey on Victorian kindergartens. The survey looked at the support needs of children with additional needs. The results showed:

* Social and emotional support needs are most common. With physical support needs least common.
* More boys than girls need support.
* Support needs grow as children age.
* Children in regional areas have higher support needs than those in metropolitan areas.

The survey is being repeated in 2025 to gather further information.

## Kindergarten Inclusion Support Profile (KIS Profile)

In 2024, the Department of Education tested the KIS Profile. To assess children’s strengths and needs. It identifies support and adjustments needed for their participation in kindergarten. Experts, teachers, families, and allied health professionals helped develop the profile. Over 60 kindergartens and more than 100 children tested the profile. Providing valuable feedback for improvement.

## Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

Research shows that the best inclusion models use an MTSS approach. It provides a system to support children with additional needs. This research explores how MTSS can help educators and services improve inclusive education.

## Next Steps

The Disability Inclusion Research in Kindergartens project begins its second year in 2025. This will also be its final year.

.. Key activities will include:

* Developing guidance and support to improve inclusion for children with additional needs.
* Testing a new MTSS alongside the KIS Profile with 150 kindergarten services.
* Inviting kindergarten teachers and leaders to complete a second Disability Inclusion Needs survey. This will focus on kindergartens across Victoria. To gather more data on children’s support needs.