

KINDERGARTEN KIDS LOVE TO LEARN

What is kindergarten?

Kindergarten is an educational program for children before they start school.

Kindergarten programs are taught by degree-qualified teachers. At kindergarten your child will develop important skills to help prepare them for school.

Why is a kindergarten program important for my child?

Children who go to kindergarten develop skills that are the foundation for all future learning, such as reading, learning to count and recognise numbers and how to solve problems. Your child will learn through play, which research shows is the best way to teach young children. At kindergarten your child will make new friends and build confidence and independence.

Who provides kindergarten programs?

Kindergarten programs are available in most long day care centres and also at standalone kindergarten services.

How do I choose the best kindergarten for my child?

It's good to check if the service provides a government-funded kindergarten – look for the 'Funded Kindergarten' certificate displayed at the service.

The government assesses the quality of all kindergarten and long day care services under a system called the National Quality Framework and gives each service a quality rating. All services must display their rating. You can ask the service to show you, or tell you what rating they have received.

The best way to make sure the service is right for your family is to visit a long day care service or kindergarten, have a look around and talk to the teachers to understand what the kindergarten program can offer your child.

What if my child cannot speak English yet?

Kindergarten teachers include all children in the program, so children who do not speak English will have the same opportunities to play and learn as others.

Some kindergartens may also have bilingual educators who can offer additional help for children who speak little or no English.

How much does kindergarten cost?

The government provides funding for all children to attend 15 hours of kindergarten a week in the year before school. Most services charge a fee in addition to the government funding.

Some families may be able to get a subsidy to help with the cost of the additional fees, for example families with health care cards or humanitarian visas. Speak to the kindergarten service for more information.

How do I enrol my child in kindergarten?

If you know which kindergarten service you would like your child to go to you can contact them to enrol. Many local councils have Kindergarten Central Enrolment Schemes so you can contact your local council to enrol in a kindergarten program in your area or ask your local maternal and child health nurse.

Most kindergartens enrol children mid-year for the following year. Many kindergartens have waiting lists so it's a good idea to enrol your child as soon as possible to have the best chance of getting a place in the one you prefer.

FIND OUT MORE

Websites

Get advice on finding the right kindergarten for your family:

www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/childcare-kindergarten/Pages/default.aspx

Search for a kindergarten in your area:

www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice/Home.aspx

Telephone

North eastern Victoria	1300 333 231
North western Victoria	1300 338 691
South eastern Victoria	1300 338 738
South western Victoria	1300 333 232

To get help in your language:

- Call the National Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450
- Ask them to call the number for your region (see above)
- They will stay on the phone call and translate.