

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Kindergarten Participation Update

Insights and resources for councils supporting CALD children and their families engage in kindergarten

November 2024

In this edition

Welcome to the first edition of MAV's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Kindergarten Participation quarterly updates. The CALD Outreach Initiative supports the inclusion of children from CALD backgrounds in kindergarten and Pre-Prep through CALD Outreach Worker positions at funded local councils and a partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

MAV supports all Victorian councils in enabling CALD families to access, participate in, and attend kindergarten. Victorian councils can access this support by contacting MAV or accessing resources available on the [MAV](#) and [Department of Education's](#) websites.

To learn more about this update or share items for future editions, please contact Ghulam (G) Hussain, MAV's CALD Outreach Policy Adviser via ghussain@mav.asn.au.



Update on CALD Outreach Initiative

The Victorian Government has funded 25 councils to deliver the CALD Outreach Initiative from 1 January 2025 to June 2027. We are pleased to welcome new councils and those continuing to expand the impact of this exciting initiative.

[Click here to read the announcement.](#)

The Department of Education, in partnership with MAV and Brotherhood of St Laurence, conducted an evaluation of the CALD Outreach initiative in 2023. The evaluation highlighted the continuing need for the initiative, progress toward stated objectives, positive interaction with other early childhood supports, and challenges in delivery, such as complexity of child and family needs, variable cross-cultural skills of kindergarten staff, and high demand for CALD Outreach Worker support. The Department of Education is committed to responding to the evaluation findings and recommendations in the next phase of the initiative.

[List of Participating Councils](#)

Items of interest

Supporting CALD families in Early Years

In October, The Centre of Excellence in Child and Family Welfare delivered a webinar as part of their Early Start, Bright Future Project. G from MAV presented information on the types of support available to CALD families through the CALD Outreach Initiative at this webinar.

[Click here for the summary of the webinar](#)

Child Information Sharing Scheme - Capability Hub

MAV have launched our CISS capability hub, designed for council employees, parents, and guardians. Through the hub you can:

- Source current CISS information (in some 20 various languages)
- Update or reinforce CISS knowledge
- Source registered training
- Prepare and find practical supports for an upcoming difficult conversation
- Understand your role if you work with children alongside professionals who are Information Sharing Entities

[Click here to access the hub.](#)

CALD engagement via the Early Childhood Tertiary Partnerships program

The Victorian Government has partnered with tertiary education providers to create the Early Childhood Tertiary Partnerships (ECTP) program, aimed at building a diverse workforce in early childhood education. Calling out the tertiary providers working with CALD families to make it easier to navigate for the audience such as Victoria University, TAFE , and VICSEG New Futures at this stage. Linking in that scholarships may be available and to visit click [here](#)

Early Start Kindergarten information for professionals

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher. See the [ESK information for professionals](#) webpage for useful information regarding the eligibility criteria and exemptions.

Central Registration/Enrolment Scheme (CRES)

The MAV has created a webpage that houses the link to the kinder landing page for each council participating in CRES.

[Click here to access the webpage](#)

Resources

- [Our Yarning – Free Digital Library](#) culturally relevant education resources created by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- [Support for newly arrived Palestinians](#) – Victorian Government Update
- [Find a Kinder](#) – Department of Education
- [Kinder quick guide for parents](#) – Department of Education
- [Kindergarten funding guide](#) – Department of Education
- [Centre of Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Resource Library](#)

Events

FECCA Conference, 2024

In October Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) held their 2024 conference in Brisbane. The theme of the conference was *Our Experiences, Our Future*, highlighting the strengths and challenges faced by CALD communities across Australia. Our Policy Adviser, Ghulam Hussain, attended on behalf of MAV and caught up with CALD Outreach Workers from Geelong and Bendigo.

Snapshots from FECCA 2024 Conference



Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care



Hon Julian Hill MP, Assistant Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs



From L to R: Ta Mwe (Greater Bendigo Council),
Ghulam Hussain (MAV)
Catherine Foreman (Greater Geelong Council)

For further information about this update or how the MAV can support your council to engage CALD families in kindergarten visit our website or contact Ghulam Hussain, CALD Outreach Policy Adviser via ghussain@mav.asn.au.

CALD Outreach Initiative

Case Study

Focus on: *Supporting successful registration and enrolment of CALD children starting in Three- and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten*

Brimbank City Council

About Council

Brimbank City Council is the second largest municipality in Melbourne, located in the Western Region about 20 kms from the central business district. It is a culturally diverse municipality with about 43% of the population being born overseas and 37% being under 24 years of age.

Source: [Know Your Council](#)

Almost 50% of Brimbank's population was born overseas, and over 55% speak a language other than English at home.

More than 160 different languages are spoken in our community. The top 10 languages spoken are Vietnamese, Punjabi, Filipino/Tagalog, Greek, Maltese, Italian, Macedonian, Arabic, Cantonese, and Croatian. Newer languages that are growing fast include Hakka, Harari, Persian, and Telugu.

Source: [Brimbank City Council](#)

Objective

To promote and deliver 'Kindergarten Open Day'-Information sessions for families and communities regarding kindergarten programs.

Challenges





The council identified that some CALD families have limited understanding of kindergarten. Due to language barriers, CALD families were unaware of the eligibility criteria, registration and enrollment processes and start date for kindergarten.

Actions

- In March 2024, the CALD outreach worker from Brimbank City Council led Kindergarten Readiness month for families and communities across Brimbank to promote kindergarten and the new EnrolNow registration system.
- The CALD outreach worker partnered with other services to facilitate nine drop-in face-to-face sessions and one online session for families and communities.
- The CALD outreach worker supported over 100 families to navigate and register their child for kindergarten via the EnrolNow registration system.
- Interpreter services were utilized as required to ensure effective communication.
- The council has improved the website for each individual councils so that families are able to access the timetable online.



Results

	<i>By promoting kindergarten and assisting families to navigate the EnrolNow registration system, there was a significant increase in the number of children registering and enrolling in kindergarten in 2023 compared to 2022 especially in Early Start Kindergarten. A total of 117 families and 130 children attended the sessions.</i>
	<i>CALD families became more aware of the kindergarten services and playgroups in the local area.</i>
	<i>By guiding families through the online registration process, the outreach worker contributed to improving digital literacy, enabling CALD families to use online systems for future interactions.</i>
	<i>The nine face-to-face sessions and one online session ran at local library and community hubs, fostered stronger relationships between the kindergarten services and the CALD families</i>

About the CALD Outreach Initiative

The CALD Outreach initiative aims to address barriers and challenges that families of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds experience in accessing and participating in early childhood education through funding councils to employ outreach workers. The overarching objectives of the initiative are to:

- Support successful registration and enrolment of CALD children starting in Three- and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten
- Maximise CALD children's attendance in Three- and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten
- Engage CALD children and their families in other early childhood supports in their local area, such as community playgroups and Maternal and Child Health
- Support CALD children to transition from kindergarten to school.

[To find out more click here.](#)