



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **BUILDING NEW COMMUNITY PLAYGROUPS ACROSS VICTORIA**

The Andrews Labor Government is helping to get new community playgroups off the ground, giving families in the Altona District more access to valuable support.

Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos announced 50 playgroups have been successful in receiving a 2018 Great Start Community Playgroup grant to help them establish themselves.

It includes here in Melbourne's west where both the Altona Meadows based Play Date Mummys and the Seaholme based Seaholme Beach Playgroup will benefit from items such as toys, books, arts and crafts kits as well as mentoring support and registration with Playgroup Victoria.

The \$50,000 statewide boost will see new community playgroups right across Victoria – from Ballarat to Torquay and from Reservoir to Pakenham – with the program targeted towards regional and growth areas or locations where few groups exist.

Community playgroups provide opportunities for children to learn through play and parents to spend time with their children while meeting other parents in their community and supporting each other.

More than 40,000 children and 30,000 families participate in community playgroups in Victoria each year.

The Labor Government is investing \$200,000 in the Great Start Community Playgroup Fund, which will support more than 200 new community playgroups across the state.

A further \$200,000 has also been provided to Playgroup Victoria to build stronger connections between Maternal and Child Health nurse-run first-time parent groups and community playgroups.

Families are benefiting through the Labor Government's landmark \$202.1 million *Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan* to ensure kids are ready for kinder, ready for school and ready for life.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos**

*"Community playgroups are an opportunity for parents and children to make new friends, learn from each other and hear about local services and supports."*

*"We are helping more parents across Victoria access these valuable community playgroups closer to home."*

### **Quotes attributable to Member for Altona District, Jill Hennessy**

*"Not only are community playgroups valuable for a child's development, but they're also a great way to engage parents and connect them to a supportive social group."*

*"This investment means we can do more for families with young children across the Altona District and support them in these critical early years."*