



Koorie Early Childhood Education Program (KECEP) - Victoria

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Victorian Koorie Early Childhood Education program (KECEP)

- Sits within the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Works collaboratively with peak Aboriginal organisations - eg VAEAI
- State Coordinator oversees the program
- DEECD Aboriginal Early Years Advisory Group connecting community and government

Victorian Koorie Early Childhood Education Program (KECEP)

- KECEP consists of three components:
 - State Coordinator
 - Koorie Early Childhood Field Officers (KECFOs)
 - Koorie Preschool Assistants (KPSAs)

Koorie Early Childhood Education program State Coordinator

- Links with Regions providing policy advice and information about program
- Key role in linking policy directions for the program across Early Years Service Branch, VAEAI and DEST
- Supports policy direction

Koorie Early Childhood Field Officers (KECFO's)

- Link with kindergarten programs and other Early Years services to encourage the delivery of programs that embrace Koorie culture and aim to:
 - Increase and enhance participation
 - Promote the value of kindergarten
 - Promote cultural awareness and provide access to resources
 - Liaise between Koorie families and mainstream kindergarten programs
 - Support the KPSA program
 - Provide information and support about Koorie Early Childhood Education to early childhood service providers

Koorie Preschool Assistants (KPSA)

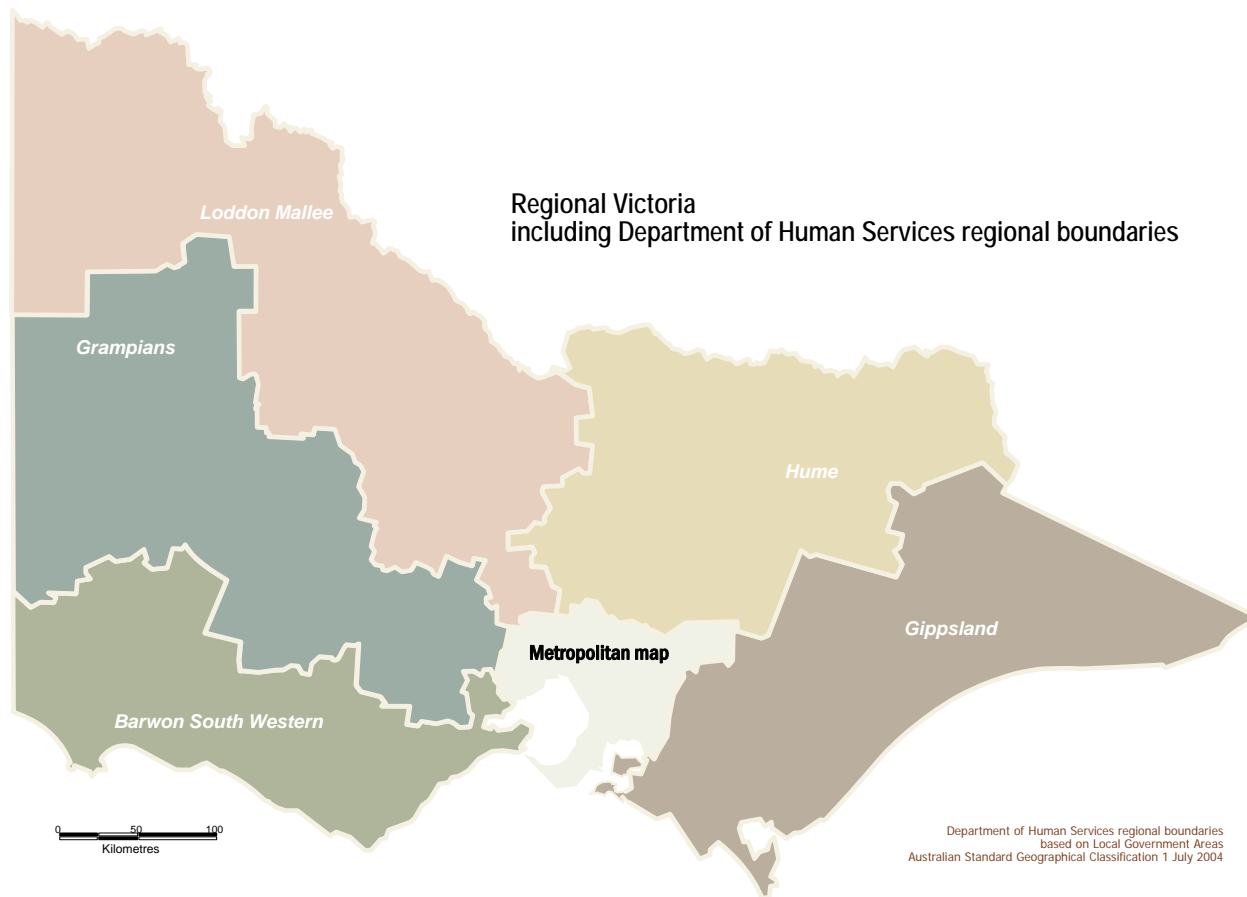
- Auspiced by community based organisations
- Work within kindergarten programs and Koorie communities to:
 - Enhance access and participation
 - Promote and assist in the delivery of inclusive programs
 - Provide information and support to Koorie families and communities
 - Support children's attendance
 - Encourage family involvement and participation
 - Assist in the development of kindergarten programs that embrace Koorie culture

Regions in Victoria

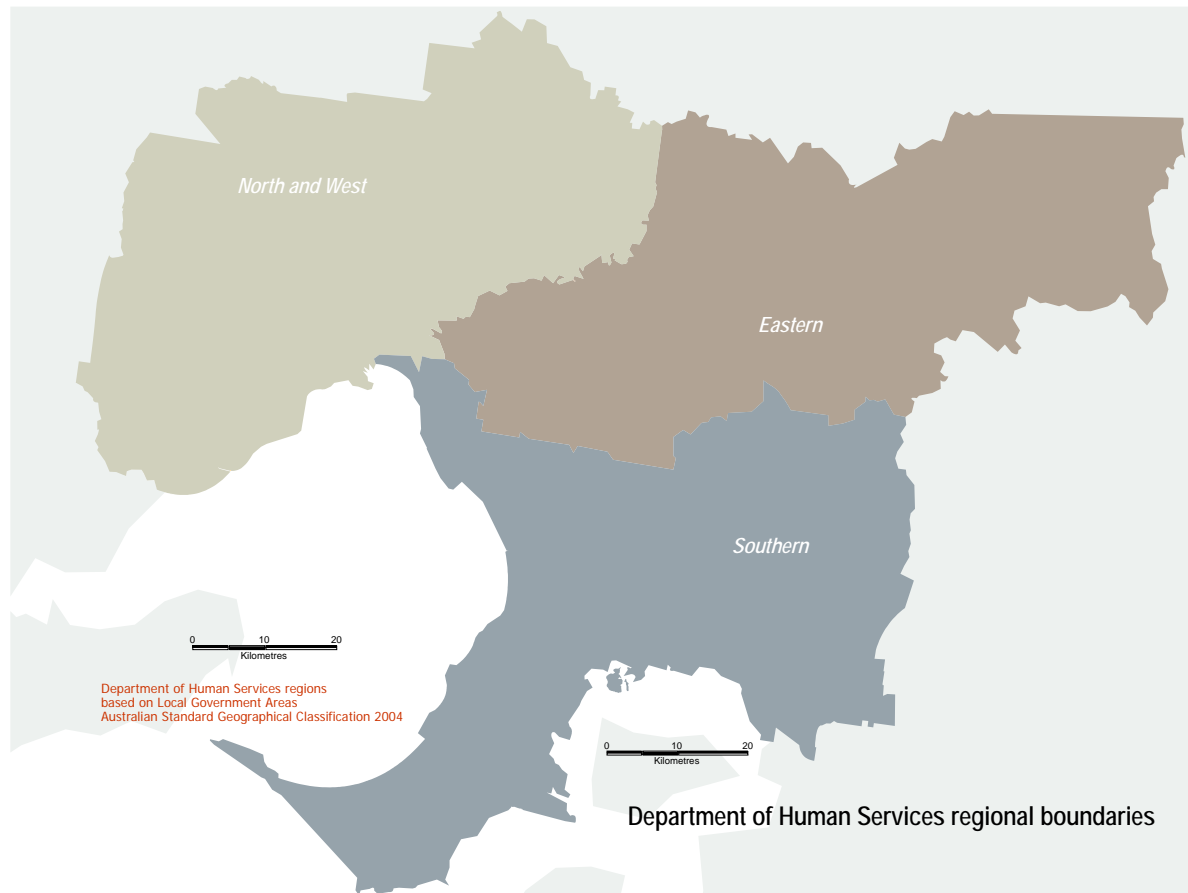
Eight regions across Victoria:

- Barwon South-Western (Geelong & Warrnambool)
- Gippsland (Traralgon & Bairnsdale)
- Grampians (Ballarat & Horsham)
- Hume (Shepparton & Wodonga)
- Loddon Mallee (Bendigo & Mildura)
- Eastern Metropolitan (Box Hill)
- North-West Metropolitan (Fitzroy & Footscray)
- Southern Metropolitan (Dandenong)

Regional Victoria



Melbourne Metropolitan regions



Until 1997.....

- Low rates of participation in kindergarten due to:
 - Ambivalence about value of kindergarten
 - Few culturally sensitive programs
 - Families experiencing difficulty paying fees
 - Transport difficulties

Koorie Services Reform Strategy.....

- To enhance the Koorie Early Education Program through:
 - Employment of KECFOs to increase rates of participation in kindergarten programs
 - Employment of KPSAs to work at a regional level to support Koorie children to attend kindergarten

Koorie Kindergarten Kit

July 2005

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in kindergarten



Koorie Early Childhood Education Program

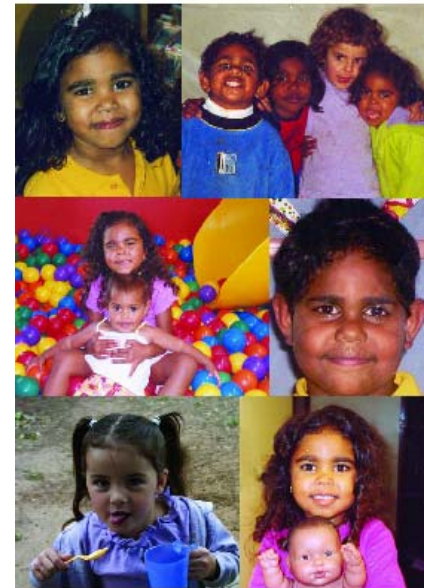
Supporting access to and participation in kindergarten



Department of Human Services
in partnership with
Victorian Aboriginal Education
Association Inc (VAEA)



Koorie Kids
are cool at Kindergarten



Tip sheets

Supporting young children's early literacy development

Encouraging and supporting your child to read at home

Parents can support their children's literacy development at home by:

- talking to children as much as possible
- joining in – playing and talking with children
- asking their children what they did at kindergarten or school
- singing songs
- reading the writing on cereal boxes and other packets in the kitchen
- discussing recipes and talking about how food is prepared
- encouraging children to write their own shopping lists
- encouraging children to fetch items from the supermarket shelf
- writing messages on sticky notes and leaving on refrigerator or wall
- look at the junk mail together
- having lots of books in the home
- joining the local library and borrowing books
- reading and writing with the children
- looking at magazines and comics together
- reading and telling a story every day
- watching television together, such as – 'Playschool' and other children's programs
- writing cards and letters – get children to write their own messages and sign their names
- recognising familiar landmarks
- sending birthday cards and postcards

Department of Human Services



Kindergarten Jargon

- Abilities – Being able to do something
- Activities – Things children do
- Cognitive – Learning
- Cultural identity – Pride in your heritage and background
- Culture – Way of life, values
- Development – On-going growth
- Dramatic play – Pretend play, role playing
- Emotions – The way we feel
- Enhancing – Improving, getting better
- Experimentation – Having a go
- Exploration – Trying different things
- Fine motor – Small movements of the body, for example, holding a pencil
- Gross motor development – Development of large body movements, for example, jumping
- Holistic – As a whole
- Interaction – Working together
- Kindergarten – Pre-school
- Literacy – Listening, speaking, reading and writing
- Numeracy – Maths – numbers
- Participation – Being part of – joining in
- Problem solving skills – Learning how to work through problems
- Social skills – Sharing, talking, being part of a bigger group
- Stimulation – Exciting the interest, being interested
- CSAs – Children's Services Advisors
- DHS – Department of Human Services
- KECEP – Koorie Early Childhood Education Program
- KECFO – Koorie Early Childhood Field Officers
- KPSA – Koorie Preschool Assistants
- PSFO – Preschool Field Officers
- VAEAI – Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.

Department of Human Services

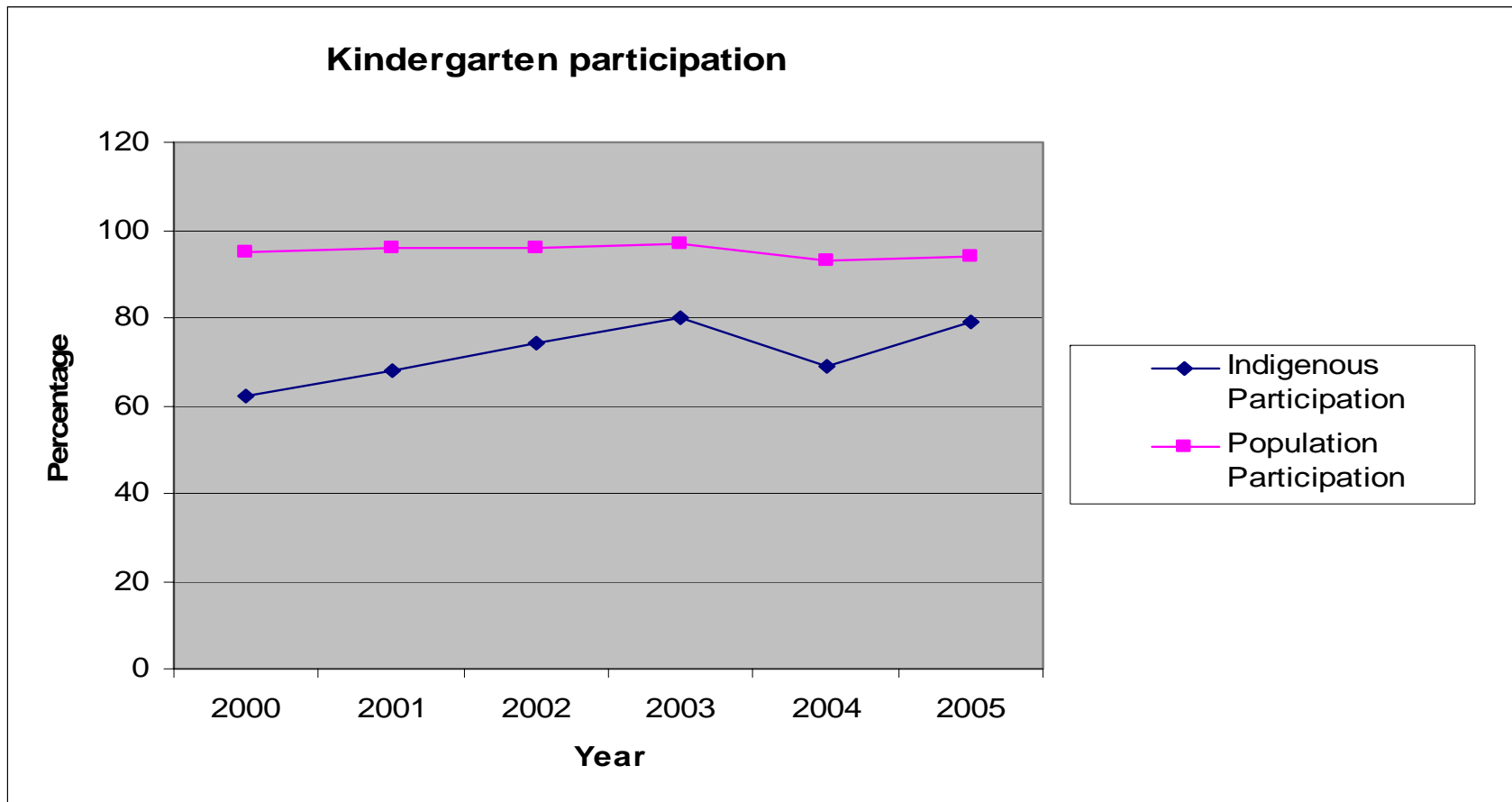
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Kindergarten Participation

- 504 Aboriginal children at 246 locations across Victoria
- 83% attend local kindergarten programs
- 17% attend Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services

Kindergarten Participation



Strategies to increase future participation

- Strengthen workforce **capacity**
- Increase **employment** opportunities
- Promote the **importance of the early years**
- Give families **practical advice** about kindergarten and about **fee subsidy**
- Facilitate **transition pathways** so that children and families are better supported when they move into school
- Foster, promote and support the development of **culturally competent** kindergarten programs
- Provide opportunities for parents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to become **active participants** in their children's learning

Recent changes in Victoria

- Newly created Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Programs moving to new department include:
 - Koorie Early Childhood Education Program
 - In-Home support for Aboriginal families
 - Kindergarten
 - Childcare licensing and regulation
 - Maternal and Child Health
 - Best Start
 - Early childhood intervention services
 - Primary and secondary school nursing
 - School focused youth services

Into the future.....

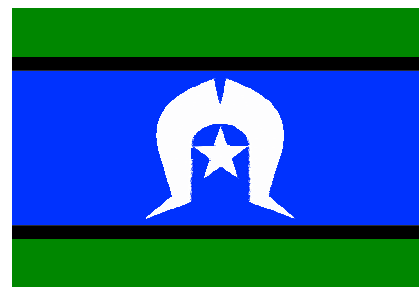
- **Subsidise kindergarten places** for three and four year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with Health Care Cards in kindergarten programs
- **Build service capacity** to increase places available to three-year-olds
- Continue to strengthen the capacity of **all** kindergartens to provide **culturally competent kindergarten programs** that respect and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- Continue to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **parents** to become **active participants** in their children's early learning and development.

What we are trying to achieve



Best outcomes for our young children supported by their meaningful participation in and contribution to.....

High quality early childhood programs nurturing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, pride and identity





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