

The future of Kindergarten and Childcare in Wyndham

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT



PROJECT BACKGROUND

Wyndham is one of the fastest-growing and most diverse local government areas in Victoria and is currently home to 11,441 three and four-year-old children. This is expected to increase by 50% to 17,207 three and four-year-old children by 2040.

In Wyndham, Council provides kindergarten programs directly and supports other providers such as Childcare centres to deliver kindergarten programs for the community.

Big changes are coming to kindergartens in Victoria as part of the [Best Start, Best Life Reform](#).

Last year, the Victorian Government announced that it will:

- Offer free kindergarten programs for all three and four-year-old children at participating services from the start of 2023,
- Transition Four-Year-Old Kindergarten to 'Prep-Prep' over the next decade and increase the number of hours from 15 hours to 30 hours per week; and
- Establish 50 high-quality and affordable early learning centres across Victoria, including one in Wyndham.

These changes will no doubt benefit all families and children in Wyndham!

The purpose of engagement was to:

- Understand how these changes may affect the way Wyndham families use kindergarten and childcare services, now and into the future.
- Understand which parts of the Best Start, Best Life Reform that the Wyndham community know about.
- Understand how families travel to kindergarten and childcare, and how far they are willing to travel.
- Understand what is important to families when using a kindergarten or childcare centre.



METHODOLOGY:

The below table outlines the various methods and techniques used to engage with the community.

Community engagement activities / tools	
Method / technique	Stakeholders engaged
Project page on The Loop	<p>3,472 total visitors to the page</p> <p>3,868 page views</p> <p>13 project 'followers'</p>
Online survey	1,092 surveys completed
Face to Face Support	<p>102 people supported to complete the survey in person</p> <p>7 Rhyme Time sessions were attended</p> <p>2 Story Time sessions were attended</p> <p>3 Bilingual Story Time sessions were attended</p> <p>2 Baby Time sessions were attended</p> <p>2 Community Playgroups were attended</p> <p>1 Immunisation session was attended</p>
Posters and Postcards	<p>5 Libraries had postcards available for families</p> <p>16 Community centres displayed posters/postcards</p> <p>34 Kindergartens displayed posters/postcards</p> <p>21 Maternal and Child Health (MCH) centres displayed posters/postcards</p> <p>Supported Playgroups</p> <p>Shopping Centre Playgroups</p> <p>Faith based community group that meets at Arndell Park & Julia Gillard Community Centre</p>
SMS	10,578 SMSs were sent to families who had a child aged between 2 and 4 years old on Wyndham's Maternal and Child Health database.
Email with advertising poster attached	<p>An email was sent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Wyndham partner-run kindergartens • All Childcare Centres in Wyndham who participated in Wyndham City's early years sector engagement survey • VICSEG New Futures • VACCA • Brotherhood of St Laurence • Community Playgroups • CALD, Bilingual and culturally diverse Playgroups

Communications / marketing activities

Method / technique

Stakeholders engaged

Online promotion (Facebook - Ad)



Link Clicks: 277

Reached: 6,433

Impressions: 19,454

Engagement: 23

Online promotion
(Facebook – Organic x 2)

Post 1

1 March 2022

Link Clicks: 45

Reached: 2,319

Engagement: 100

Post 2

28 March 2022

Link Clicks: 51

Reached: 2,135

Engagement: 58

Dedicated Webpage on Wyndham City's website



Page Views: 281

Average time on page: 2 minutes & 8 seconds

Bounce Rate: 51.22%

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK:

High-Level Summary of Survey Responses.

Planning for the Future of Kindergarten and Childcare in Wyndham

Who Responded?

1092 Responses



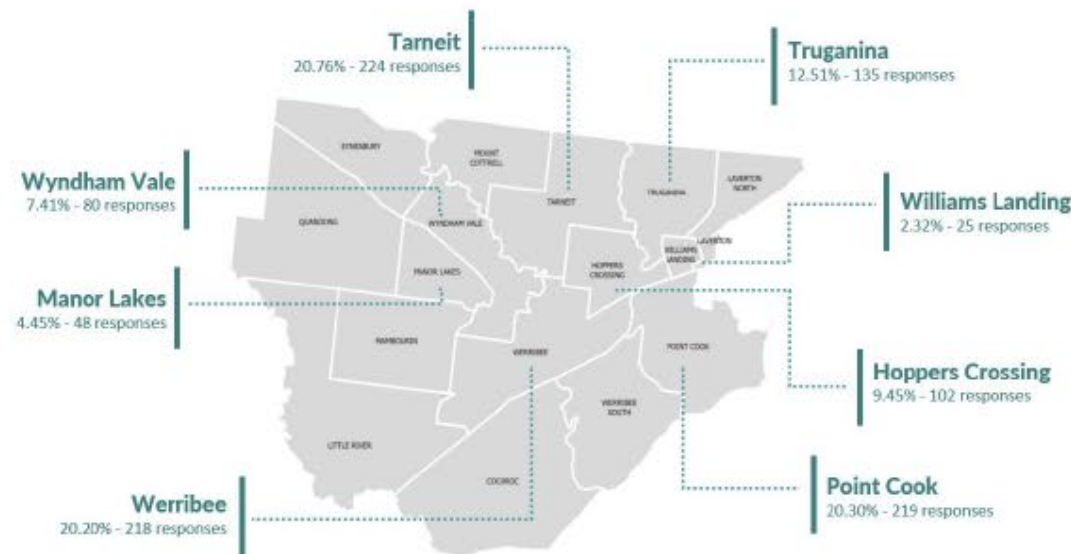
91%

990 people completed the survey online



9%

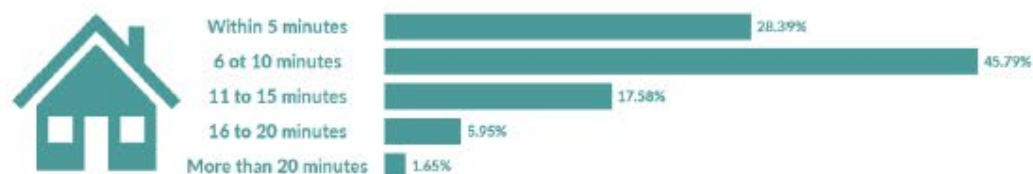
102 people completed the survey in person



How do families travel to Kindergarten and Childcare?



How far from home are families willing to travel?



Who knows about the changes to Kindergarten?

The amount of people who knew Kindergarten was now free



The amount of people who knew 3-year-old Kindergarten will increase to 15 hours per week by 2029



The amount of people who knew 4-year-old Kindergarten will increase to 30 hours per week by 2032 and be renamed to Pre-Prep



Preferred hours and days for a 15 hour per week program

	3-Year-Old Kindergarten	4-Year-Old Kindergarten
Childcare	22.25%	19.14%
Sessional Kindergarten	77.75%	80.86%
2 days of 7.5 hours per week	51.12%	57.98%
3 days of 5 hours per week	42.40%	35.56%
5 days of 3 hours per week	6.48%	6.46%

The 5 most important things when using a kindergarten or childcare centre

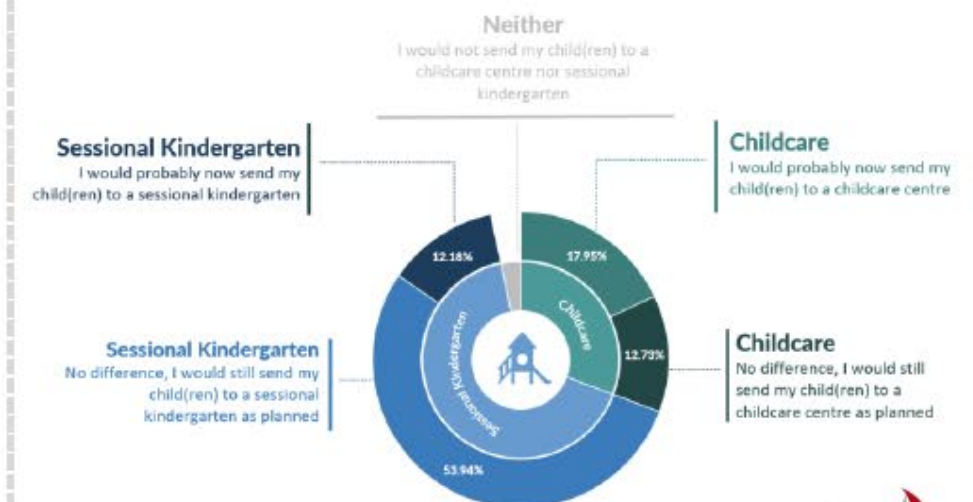


Which service families would send their child(ren) to depending on the number of hours offered

	3-Year-Old Kindergarten				
	5 hours per week	10 hours per week	Percentage Change	15 hours per week	Percentage Change
Childcare Centre	40.75%	38.37%	↓ 6.21%	29.67%	↓ 29.31%
Sessional Kindergarten	52.56%	56.96%	↑ 7.71%	66.48%	↑ 14.31%
Neither	6.68%	4.67%	↓ 43.11%	3.85%	↓ 21.41%

	4-Year-Old Kindergarten		
	15 hours per week	30 hours per week	Percentage Change
Childcare Centre	29.21%	23.44%	↓ 24.61%
Sessional Kindergarten	67.86%	72.80%	↑ 6.81%
Neither	2.93%	3.75%	↑ 22.01%

Will the introduction of free kindergarten change where you send your child(ren)?

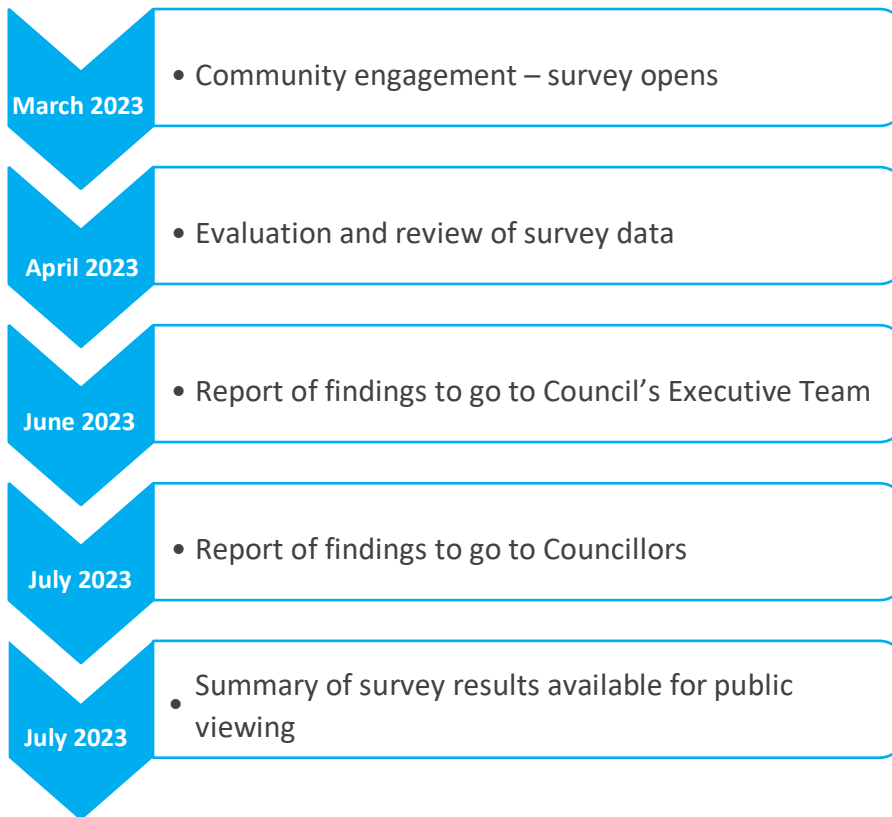


NEXT STEPS:

- The results from this consultation, along with data we have gathered from the Early Years sector in Wyndham, will inform;
 - Service demand projections, and
 - How the community wants to access kindergarten

This will allow Council to make an informed decisions on how it responds to the *Best Start, Best Life* reform.

STAGES OF THE PROJECT



HOW CAN PARTICIPANTS STAY INVOLVED/INFORMED?

Participants can stay informed by visiting the Loop page and selecting to “Follow” the project. Updates will be posted on The Loop and the project timeline will be updated to reflect project status.

Participants can also stay informed with updates available on Council’s Capital Works Dashboard

<https://theloop.wyndham.vic.gov.au/kinder-reform>