

Question	Answer
<p>Why is the Government investing in early childhood education for 3 year-olds?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International and national evidence tells us that from birth, specially the first 3 years sets the groundwork for children’s social, physical, emotional, language and cognitive development. • The ACT Government is making sure every child, from the age of 3 will be able to access the best early childhood education possible. • We have received advice from an Early Childhood Advisory Council and a targeted consultation process which told us two years of play-based learning before school is supported by the community.
<p>Why is the Government investing in preschool for 3 year-old children and not increasing hours for 4-year-old children?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best evidence suggests that at a minimum 15 hours a week, 600 hours a year of quality early childhood education helps 3 and 4 year-olds have the best start to life. • Offering 3 and 4 year-olds quality early childhood education is a key recommendation of the Lifting our Game report commissioned by States and Territories. The Early Childhood Strategy aligns with the findings of the <i>Lifting our Game</i> report. • We will still provide 15 hours a week, 600 hours a year of free quality early childhood education to 4 year-olds in partnership with the Australian Government.
<p>Are 3 year-old children too young to be put into a preschool setting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All early childhood settings in the ACT (aka childcare) including preschools use the Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework (the Framework). • Play-based learning, communication, language and relationships are a key part of the Framework.

<p>How are children being selected for the 2020 initiative/can I enrol my 3 year-old child in preschool for 2020?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are working with the Community Services Directorate and Health Directorates and community organisations to identify priority children for the first phase beginning in 2020. • Eligible families will be contacted directly to be offered the opportunity to enrol their child. • Families are not able to self-refer. Because only a small number of places are available in the first year it will be the children who are most in need who will be offered a place.
<p>Where will the universal access initiative for 3 year-olds be available?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first phase will offer up to 400 places for priority children in education and care services co-located with Early Childhood Schools and other early childhood settings.
<p>Will the universal access initiative be delivered by a qualified Early Childhood Teacher in the same way that preschool is delivered to 4-year-old?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first phase in 2020 will see the early childhood workforce across services work together to deliver a high-quality preschool program for 3 year-olds. • Further details will be available as we develop the Strategy, the 3 year-old program will meet the requirements under the National Quality Framework.
<p>Can an education and care service nominate to be part of the first phase in 2020?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services will be approached directly. • We are focusing on making sure services and settings can work together for 3 year-olds, this is a new model which will be opt-in.
<p>How many hours are Koori Preschools currently doing? Where are Koori Preschools located?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koori Preschool currently provides 9 hours of preschool to children across four locations and 12 hours at a fifth location in the ACT. From 2020 the existing Koori Preschool program will be expanded to provide 15 hours of early childhood education per week for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children across all locations. • Koori Preschools are run at Kingsford Smith School, Ngunnawal Primary School, Richardson Primary School, Narrabundah Early Childhood School and Wanniasa School. • The Koori Preschool program will be further developed through a co-design process which involves high-level

<p>What does co-design involve?</p>	<p>collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to ensure that those attending the Koori preschool receive high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education.</p>
<p>How will this impact the early childhood education and care sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT’s education and care sector has long advocated for a long term, strategic approach to early childhood education. • Providing two years of quality early childhood education for children prior to school is a key recommendation of the <i>Lifting our Game</i> report. • This initiative is part of the Early Childhood Strategy, which aims to create a joined-up policy context for supporting fair access to early childhood education and care in the ACT, and a seamless experience for children and families when they access early childhood services.
<p>How are you preparing the workforce, so they can effectively support this priority cohort of children?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be providing subsidised training for education and care staff in supporting children with trauma and early identification of families experiencing domestic violence. • Early intervention and support can bring immediate improvements, reduce the lifelong impact of domestic violence and interrupt intergenerational patterns of violence. This investment responds to a recommendation from the Domestic Violence Prevention Council’s Extraordinary Meeting Report.
<p>Does the early childhood sector have the capacity to cater for the increased numbers of children accessing preschool?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sector as a whole has existing capacity to provide places for more children. • The phased implementation of this initiative will ensure that education and care services are ready for the increase in attendance.
<p>How does this compare to what other States and Territories are doing in this space?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States and Territories are continuing to advocate to the Australian Government for long term funding for early childhood education. • Two years of quality early childhood education, prior to starting school, is a key recommendation of the <i>Lifting our</i>

	<p><i>Game</i> report which was commissioned and supported States and Territories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NSW has announced that 600hrs per year of subsidised access to community preschool for three-year-old children from 2019.• Tasmania introduced the <i>Working Together for 3 Year-Olds</i> pilot program in 2019. An evaluation will be undertaken before further roll out in 2020.• Victoria has announced that it will start the phased roll out of a subsidised 15 hr Kindergarten program to 3 year-olds from 2020.
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