

Early Years Infrastructure

South Gippsland Shire Council is seeking additional investment in early years infrastructure, workforce, and ongoing maintenance in South Gippsland.

South Gippsland Shire Council supports the rollout of three-year-old kindergarten and expanded pre-prep programs, and welcomes recent infrastructure investments in Leongatha, Korumburra, and Meeniyian.

However, further investment is needed in infrastructure, workforce, and ongoing maintenance—particularly in rural areas—to ensure the effective delivery of these programs.

Demand for early years services is increasing due to population growth and strong program uptake. Many centres operate in ageing facilities that limit their capacity to meet current and future needs.

Council's *Children and Families Plan* identifies several townships—such as Tarwin Lower, Venus Bay, Mirboo North, and Nyora—as having little or no access to childcare. Families often travel over 30 km one way to access services. These smaller communities rarely attract private providers and are often ineligible under existing funding models, despite clear demand.

Council is seeking additional government support to upgrade early years infrastructure and ensure all children in South Gippsland have equitable access to high-quality early education—regardless of where they live.

Request Victorian Government

Council calls on the Victorian Government to:

- Provide funding to replace ageing Early Childhood Education and Care Centres that have reached end of life and require extensive maintenance.
- Provide funding to support the ongoing maintenance of buildings from which Victorian Government early years programs are delivered.
- Establish Early Years Learning Centres in Tarwin Lower/Venus Bay, Nyora and Mirboo North to ensure equitable access for children in these geographically isolated communities.

Request Australian Government

Council calls on the Australian Government to:

- Fund long day care infrastructure in rural areas where the demand for service is high, but not high enough to be profitable for private child care providers.

