



## MORE SUPPORT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION SERVICES

The Brumby Government recognises that the sooner children with a disability are supported, the greater their chance of reaching their potential and leading fulfilling lives.

As a result, the Government is boosting its investment in early childhood intervention services by increasing the quality of life for young children with a disability.

The Government has a clear plan for Victoria's future, and is responding to the increased pressure on early intervention services particularly from the growing prevalence of autism.

This Budget provides an extra \$29 million over four years to improve services and cut waiting lists.

This investment will provide children with disabilities with greater independence, and help mainstream and community services, such as kindergartens, to be more inclusive and supportive.

### **\$29 million funding package over four years comprises:**

- \$23.9 million for Extra Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) places to deliver direct support for around 1000 more children. This involves special education, therapy and counselling as well as support in kindergarten and childcare and transition to school.
- \$3.3 million for an additional 150 Kindergarten Inclusion Support Service (KISS) packages will be provided to help children with very high and complex needs to participate in a mainstream kindergarten program. This could involve providing additional support staff, specialised assistance for kindergarten staff, modifications to the kindergarten or for specialised equipment.
- \$1.8 million for the development of an ECIS workforce strategy that involves up-skilling the workforce, recruiting and retaining workers across the state with a particular focus on rural areas, supporting specialised post-graduate training and mentoring programs.