

Media release



FROM THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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NEW ACTION TO PROTECT CHILDREN WITH ALLERGIC REACTIONS

Victorian children will be better protected and parents can breathe easier today as Brumby Government legislation enforcing safety standards to deal with life-threatening allergies comes into force in schools and children's centres.

Children and Early Childhood Development Minister Maxine Morand and Education Minister Bronwyn Pike made the announcement on the first day of term three at Williamstown North Primary School – a best practice school in dealing with children diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis.

“Victoria is the first Australian state to introduce laws that require all licensed children's services and those schools with a student diagnosed at risk of severe allergies such as anaphylaxis to have a child management policy in place,” Ms Morand said.

“More than 26,000 government school teachers and staff and children's services workers have already received specialist training.

“This training includes ways to minimise the risk of anaphylactic shock, recognition of the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions, and practice in the administration of adrenaline using an EpiPen trainer.”

The management policy also requires schools, kindergartens and child care centres to proactively minimise risk, store medication properly, have a parental alert plan and have comprehensive individual management plans for students or children at risk.

Ms Pike said the Brumby Government has been working with schools and children's services to ensure they complied with the new laws, including the provision of comprehensive resources.

“With about 4000 Victorian children in schools, kindergartens, long day care and occasional care services being diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis it is vital that staff have the necessary skills to administer life-saving treatments” she said.

“Peanut allergy affects about one in 100 children and the rate has more than doubled in the past 30 years. With the incidence of children suffering from severe allergies growing, the Brumby Government is ensuring better planning and training is being provided in our children’s services and schools.

“This will reassure every parent whose child is at risk of anaphylaxis that the Brumby Government is leading the nation in working hard to make their children safer.”

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