

Great Start Community Playgroup Program Guidelines

Birth to five years is a vital period of development, laying the foundations for future years.

Playgroup welcomes families to come together during this significant time in life. What is more, the parent and child relationship is crucial. During this period, the family unit needs the support of their surrounding community. At Playgroup Victoria, we want to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of Victorian families and communities- this involves key support for community-led playgroups.

Purpose of the Program

To make sure playgroup is a mainstay, Playgroup Victoria have created a perpetual fund to provide an ongoing source of support for new community playgroups. The program will assist playgroups to start strong and have longevity. The program is called the **Great Start Community Playgroup Program**.

Playgroup is all about building positive relationships, finding a sense of belonging and maintaining family wellbeing, for without, everyone misses the opportunity to reach their full potential and above all, the opportunity to connect meaningfully.

Playgroup Victoria's exciting funding and support program creates opportunities for new playgroups to have a great start. This program includes mentoring, resources, guidance and funding for equipment.

This program will provide recipients with monetary support for items such as toys, books, arts and crafts kits. Successful applicants will also receive mentoring and resources from Playgroup Victoria.

Key Dates

Applications for round two will be **open from 9am Monday 25th August 2025**, closing at **5pm Friday 3rd October 2025**.

What Will Successful Great Start Applicants Receive?

- Mentoring from Playgroup Victoria's Support and Development Team
- One on-site visit from a Playgroup Victoria team member for face-to-face support (where practical)
- \$500 to purchase equipment and resources for the playgroup
- A six-month extension on current playgroup registration with Playgroup Victoria
- Access to Playgroup Victoria's resources and online portal
- Online networking and peer support opportunities with other program participants
- Webinar and workshop learning opportunities

Who Can Take Part in the Great Start Program?

All new community playgroups, registered with Playgroup Victoria between 21st April 2025 and 3rd October 2025 are welcome to apply for the *Great Start* program. Up to 25 applicants will be chosen to take part in Round Two of the program. Further application rounds may open at a later date.

Eligibility Criteria:

To be eligible for *Great Start* program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a **new community playgroup**, defined as a playgroup that began within six months prior to the application close date
- Be a **not-for-profit** group
- Be **registered with Playgroup Victoria** at the time of applying. Not a registered playgroup yet? [REGISTER HERE](#)

How Do Playgroups Apply?

To be considered, a playgroup representative must complete all questions in the application form here: <https://playgroupvic.typeform.com/to/JOVr87ny>

FAQ's

How will successful recipients receive their funding? How will recipients report their playgroup purchases, as required?

- Successful applicants will receive funds via Playgroup Victoria allocated financial management system to purchase equipment, toys or resources for the playgroup.
- Spending is restricted to purchasing equipment for the playgroup.
- Successful applicants will be required to supply evidence of their expenditure. We encourage playgroups to keep a report of their receipts.
- Playgroups will have six months to spend the funds, after which, the balance is forfeited.

What does the Playgroup Victoria mentoring entail?

Community playgroups will be provided with individualised mentoring to support their new playgroup. Mentoring will be provided by the Playgroup Victoria Development Team. The mentoring sessions and conversations may take place on the phone, via online video call programs such as Teams, and in person where possible. Playgroup staff will guide you on ways to promote your playgroup, implement best practice, play ideas and tips on how to create an inclusive and welcoming playgroup community.

Is full participation of the program (mentoring and networking opportunities) required for the successful recipient?

Yes. As a successful participant of this program, playgroups and their leaders are expected to actively participate in mentoring sessions and online networking opportunities throughout the duration of the program. Additionally, participants will be required to engage in an evaluation process at the end of the program as well.

What resources will be made available?

- Access to Playgroup Victoria's digital resources, guides and play ideas library
- One-on-one and group mentoring with a member of the Playgroup Victoria team
- Invitation to join exclusive Great Start Facebook group to extend connections with other new playgroups

What is a community playgroup?

A community playgroup is a parent run playgroup. This means that there is no payment made to anyone to facilitate or support the group.

Can supported playgroups apply for the program?

No, supported playgroups are not eligible under this fund.

When is the Program application due and when will I get a response?

Applications for round two will be **open from 9am Monday 25th August 2025**, closing at **5pm Friday 3rd October 2025**. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application as soon as practicable after the closing date.