

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier

Victorian  
Labor

**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Monday, 19 November 2018

## MORE HELP FOR NEW MUMS AND DADS

New mums and dads will get access to the information, support and care they and their baby needs, with new parenting centres, more maternal child health nurses and round-the-clock support to help get their kids to sleep.

Bringing a newborn home for the first time is one of the most precious moments for any parent – but for many families, it can also be extremely stressful.

That's why the Andrews Labor Government has invested more than \$230 million in maternal child health (MCH) services – including expanding the enhanced MCH Service to better support families that need help the most.

But we know there's more to do – that's why a re-elected Andrews Labor government will invest a further \$232 million in a comprehensive package of new parent and early childhood supports to help every Victorian parent.

The investment will build seven new Early Parenting Centres, refurbish two more and deliver a range of critical services, including day stays, longer residential stays and more support at home that will help more than 4,500 Victorian families every year.

These centres play a critical role in making sure new parents are getting the advice they need, including support with sleeping, feeding and extra care for babies with additional needs.

Sleep and settling is one of the biggest challenges facing new parents, with around one in two parents reporting problems with their child's sleep. This can lead to post-natal depression, isolation and stress for parents, and impact a child's behavioural, mental and physical development.

Because the most stressful time for sleep deprived parents is often the middle of the night, Labor will fund a revamped 24-hour phone line with specialists in sleep and settling issues.

Labor will also boost the number of home visits for vulnerable families, with 7,000 families getting more support. Labor's new family package will also provide first aid training to around 26,000 parents per year.

The extra home visits will make a real difference for new parents, giving sleep-deprived mums and dads the assurance and advice they need when nothing seems to be working.

We also want to encourage more employers to offer paternity leave – that's why if re-elected we'll legislate to replace the payroll tax exemption for maternity leave with an exemption for all paid parental leave, to recognise that this is important time that a parent should use to spend with their newborn child.

First time parent groups provide a forum to discuss the joys and challenges of raising a child and often form the basis of life-long friendships.

Labor will boost the number of parent group sessions for first time mums and dads by 40 per cent, with the extra sessions at convenient times for both parents, focussing on sleep and the transition to parenthood.

### Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"Having raised three beautiful kids of our own, Cath and I know how precious and scary those first few months can be. A reassuring voice in the middle of the night – when your baby just won't sleep – will make a real difference."*

*"This package means more nurses, more support and greater peace of mind for mums and dads across Victoria."*

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**Quote attributable to Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos**

*“There are so many expectations on new parents these days. It’s why we’ll make sure they’re getting the support they need, in the moments they need it most.”*