

CHILDCARE NEEDS IN THE LIMESTONE COAST

Across the Limestone Coast, the future of our workforce relies on more than skills and opportunity, access to quality childcare is needed. As families strive to fully participate in the region's economy, gaps in childcare continue to limit both individual potential and regional growth.



Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast (RDALC) is developing an overview of childcare needs across the region to help strengthen workforce participation and support the long-term resilience of local communities. The project will build a case for investment in regional childcare, highlighting the economic and social benefits and supporting meaningful community involvement in planning.

This work will assist Australian and State Governments, as well as private providers, in determining where future investment is most needed and in understanding the potential for innovative, place-based approaches. The study builds on the important work already done in the region.

Why RDALC?

At RDALC, we put the region first to get results. We drive regional development by supporting businesses, fostering investment, and growing local leaders.

Through strong advocacy, we connect communities, industries, and organisations with all levels of government to secure funding, skills, and infrastructure that enable lasting economic growth.

The Project

1. **A comprehensive supply and demand study** for the Limestone Coast to identify current and future childcare needs and areas of unmet demand.
2. **A regional cost-benefit analysis** to demonstrate the economic and social benefits of targeted investment in childcare.
3. **A pilot program** in one township to trial methods and develop a toolkit for effective community participation in childcare planning with potential for regional and state-wide use.



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Focus of the project

The focus of this project is on childcare provision (from birth to school age). Additional insights from government and non-government preschools, and others working in the early childhood sector, will help build an understanding of family needs, workforce dynamics, and local context.

The project will engage with childcare providers, preschools, community organisations, local councils, industry representatives, and government agencies to ensure the findings reflect regional needs and support practical, sustainable solutions.

This RDALC project is complementary to the planning for the roll-out of 3-year-old preschool (the Flying Start reforms) led by the Office for Early Childhood Development and Department for Education. The planning and advocacy already undertaken by Councils and community will also be incorporated.

Project Delivery

Commencing in November 2025, the project is being delivered with funding from the Office for Early Childhood Development, providing a data-driven analysis of childcare demand and supply by June 2026.

Keen to be involved?

Community members, stakeholders, and service providers are encouraged to share insights and provide input to inform regional Early Childhood Education and Care planning.

Please contact Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast on (08) 8723 1057 or email info@rdalc.org.au.



An Australian Government Initiative



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Government of South Australia

Office for Early Childhood
Development