

# 3. Extended before and after-preschool care in a rural area

## Flexible Initiatives Trial – Stream 1A scenarios

### Community need

In a rural-remote setting where lengthy commutes are the norm, the pressing need for extended before and after preschool care was clear to Little Finders Community Preschool. The preschool surveyed its current families and found 15% of its population required extended hours care and 5% of families struggled with the lack of transport options.



### The proposal

Little Finders Community Preschool proposes to use a Flexible Initiatives Trial grant to offer before and after-preschool care with extended hours. The proposal will help ensure local parents have the support they need to manage work and family obligations as well as ensuring a smooth transition between preschool and home for children.

### The plan

The preschool plans to hire additional educators specifically for extended hours, together with some new temporary staff to support with administration and training. They factor in all costs in the trial budget, including an increase in rental costs resulting from the extended hours use of the preschool facility and include transportation costs to support families that do not have transportation.

## The budget

Item	Trial cost *GST excl
<b>Staff</b> 2 x full-time diploma educators for 2 hours per day (hours of the program initiative – ongoing cost)	\$36,040
<b>Admin</b> 0.25 x full-time equivalent of a director as backfill (temporary cost)	\$20,280
<b>Fee subsidy</b> 2 hours per day for 2 days (based on daily rate of \$60/day), assuming 5% of total children utilising the extended hours (one-off cost)	\$360
<b>Training</b> Upskilling of staff 0.5 of a full-time director as backfill for 1 week (temporary cost)	\$780
<b>Transport</b> Hire minibus + driver for 3 hours per day for 3 days a week for 40 weeks at \$90 per hour	\$32,400
1 x additional supervisor and 1 x Cert III educator for 2 hours per day for 3 days a week for 40 weeks	\$19,410
<b>Rent</b> Increase in rent of \$119 per week (ongoing cost)	\$6,188
<b>Total cost (excluding GST)</b>	\$118,458

## Grant application

The Little Finders team submits a grant application outlining the above information. The application is assessed and is successful. They sign a funding agreement.

## Implementation

Little Finders is successful in recruiting 2 dedicated, professional educators to support extending their hours from 9am–3pm to 8am–4pm. They engage the local bus hire company and are able to offer pick up and drop off for 6 families (up to 9 children) 3 days a week.

Using their new software, the preschool captures data on utilisation rates, and other data, including sign in/sign out time to record the usage of the extended hours and evaluate participation. They also gather family feedback. This information allows Little Finders to adapt and refine their program, continually enhancing its impact.

## Outcomes

Little Finders' proposal both accommodates parents' schedules and provides flexible care and education to children. By ensuring extended hours support both working parents and children's development, they create an environment where everyone thrives.



### Learn more

Scan the QR code to find out all about the Flexible Initiatives Trial