

# Getting it right from the start (GIRFTS): Effect of an early years' school intervention on student oral language and reading outcomes.

ACTRN12622000146796

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**Status** RECRUITING  
**Sponsor** Murdoch Children's Research Institute  
**Enrollment** 3,700 participants

## Plain Language Summary

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The ability to speak, understand language, and read in the early years of school has a profound impact on a child's entire educational journey and life outcomes. Children who struggle with oral language and literacy in Grades 1 and 2 are at much greater risk of falling behind academically, developing social difficulties, and experiencing mental health challenges in later years. The GIRFTS (Getting It Right From The Start) study is evaluating a system-wide school intervention designed to improve oral language and reading instruction for all students, with extra support for those most at risk.

The program uses a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework: a universal, high-quality approach for all students (Tier 1), plus targeted intensive intervention for students showing the greatest difficulties (Tier 2). Schools — not individual children — are randomly assigned to receive the intervention in stages, with outcomes tracked over time to measure the program's impact.

This study targets disadvantaged schools with Grade 1 cohorts of at least 35 students and evidence of elevated language vulnerability. There are no individual exclusion criteria for students. If successful, this program could demonstrate how the quality of early literacy teaching can be sustainably improved across an entire school system — with benefits that ripple through children's lives for decades.

## Key Eligibility Criteria

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### Inclusion (5)

- School population is at least 200 students
- Grade 1 cohort in 2022 is at least 35 students
- School ICSEA value is 1070 or less
- Schools 2018 AEDC results – language and cognitive domain vulnerability rate of equal or greater than 10%
- First round Expression of Interest offers will be sent to schools with the above named criteria.

### Exclusion (1)

- None.

## Locations (1 total)

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VIC, Australia

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<https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/TrialReview.aspx?ACTRN=ACTRN12622000146796>

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