



JAMES MERLINO MP

STATE MEMBER FOR MONBULK



office: 1635 Burwood Hwy, Belgrave 3160 p: 9754 5401 e: james.merlino@parliament.vic.gov.au
jamesmerlino.com.au JamesMerlinoMP JamesMerlinoMP

State of Affairs

August 2015

Family violence a crime that knows no boundaries

Family violence is the biggest law and order challenge in our community. It's a crime that affects thousands of Victorians, from all walks of life, with the women and children in our community paying the greatest toll.

There is no doubt our system is broken, and for too long our communities have turned their backs to the terror and violence that takes place in our homes.

That's why it's time for solutions. We need a system that protects the vulnerable, punishes the guilty and saves lives.

The Andrews Labor Government has led the nation in addressing family violence, establishing Australia's First Royal Commission into Family Violence.

In recent weeks, our government has announced two additional initiatives to help tackle this critical issue in our schools, and in our workplaces.

I was proud – as Education Minister, and as your local MP – to announce that the Labor Government will introduce respectful relationships education into the school curriculum from next year to support students to learn how to build healthy relationships and to prevent family violence.

Respectful relationships education will focus on challenging negative attitudes such as prejudice, discrimination and harassment, that can lead to violence, often against women.

Gender inequality is one of the underlying causes of family violence. We need to address discrimination and teach equality as part of preventing family violence.

From 2016, it will be included in the curriculum so that every Victorian school teaches students these important skills and lessons.

Our government also introduced new provisions to support family violence victims in the workplace. Under these new changes, nurses, teachers and other Victorian public sector employees will be entitled to family violence leave.



JAMES MERLINO MP

STATE MEMBER FOR MONBULK



office: 1635 Burwood Hwy, Belgrave 3160 p: 9754 5401 e: james.merlino@parliament.vic.gov.au
jamesmerlino.com.au  JamesMerlinoMP  JamesMerlinoMP

State of Affairs

Financial independence through employment helps victims and survivors leave violent relationships, while also providing a support network, a sense of belonging and access to additional practical supports like counselling.

These new provisions will ensure family violence victims are supported to attend things like medical appointments and legal proceedings, giving them the financial independence and wellbeing they need during what are extremely difficult and stressful times.

We know that we don't have all the answers or solutions to what are very complex problems. But we do know there are clear gaps in our system that need addressing, and through these two new initiatives, we are working hard to tackle this scourge on our community.