

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Education

Minister for Mental Health



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RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS REACHES MORE SCHOOLS

More non-government schools have now signed up to the Andrews Labor Government's Respectful Relationships program – supporting all Victorian educators to embed respect and gender equality in their school communities.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced a further 78 Catholic and independent schools across Victoria will implement the Respectful Relationships program across their whole schools after applying through an expression of interest process.

The program has already been implemented in all government schools, and this new intake means 384 non-government schools have chosen to implement Respectful Relationships, bringing the total up to 1,951 schools across Victoria now delivering this vital education program.

The Respectful Relationships program acquits a key recommendation of the Labor Government's Royal Commission into Family Violence, helping schools promote respect, positive attitudes, and behaviours in all aspects of their culture – in the classroom, the playground, the staff room and the broader school community.

The Government has invested \$82 million into the program to support schools to implement the initiative, which also teaches children how to build healthy relationships, resilience, and confidence – producing compassionate, respectful young adults from Victorian schools

From Term 2 this year, the teaching of consent in a sensitive and age-appropriate way is mandatory in all government schools.

The Victorian Curriculum requires schools to teach the focus areas of relationships, sexuality and safety. Mandating the teaching of consent is bringing focus to this critical issue.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

“Respectful Relationships doesn't just provide vital consent education – it teaches young people how to build healthy relationships and confidence – and we're thrilled to see more non-government schools implementing the program.”

“We know that attitudes on gender equality are formed young – and this key recommendation from the Royal Commission into Family Violence will ensure all Victorian kids develop good attitudes towards inclusion and diversity.”