

Media Release

The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Women



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PROTECTING WANGARATTA WOMEN IN TIMES OF CRISIS

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring women and girls across north east Victoria can get the support, services and safety they need in times of crisis.

Minister for Women and Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams visited Wangaratta today to announce a range of support for women suffering from family violence, natural disasters and the impacts of the pandemic.

Women's Health Goulburn North East has received \$75,000 to work with local councils to ensure prevention of violence is considered in a councils' disaster planning and response.

The funding is delivering training to help council staff identify and respond early to family violence, as well as helping councils tailor emergency management plans to provide for the varying needs of women, men and gender diverse people in disasters.

In addition, Women's Health Goulburn North East are continuing to work tirelessly to keep women connected and improve mental health during the pandemic thanks to \$100,000 to deliver their *Women Gathering* initiative online.

The initiative brings women together to share experiences from major events such as droughts and fires, equipping participants with skills to establish and grow a strong network of local women.

The funding helped develop a toolkit with tools and activities that is being used to assist women to generate strong connections with other women and reduce social isolation.

To ensure women in north east Victoria have greater protection from violence the Labor Government has also invested \$400,000 in Women's Health Goulburn North East to help local organisations – like sports clubs, health services and schools – take local action to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.

This funding is helping deliver awareness-raising campaigns, training on how to be an active bystander against sexist and disrespectful behaviours, and changes in workplace policies and practices that promote gender equality.

Victoria is leading the nation with its work to end family violence, with more than \$3.5 billion invested since the Royal Commission– more than every other state combined, and more than the Commonwealth.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Women and Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams

"We're making sure women can access the support and resources they need to stay safe, while also building the community's ability to understand and stop family violence before it starts."

"Our regional communities are at their strongest and most resilient when women and girls have the support they need to recover and rebuild after all types of crisis, including violence, natural disasters and pandemics."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"We need to reach every corner of the state to put an end to family violence. We're helping North East communities tackle this issue in ways that're tailored to what locals need and trust – from support for the Centre Against Violence, to the Orange Door Network and everything in between."

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