

Media Release

The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Children
Minister for Disability



Monday, 8 September 2025

CELEBRATING THE CHAMPIONS OF CHILD SAFETY

The Allan Labor Government is recognising the tireless efforts of Victorians who dedicate their time and skills to keeping children, young people and families safe as National Child Protection Week begins.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn recently joined sector leaders at the annual Victorian Protecting Children Awards, celebrating the finalists and winners making a difference for children and families.

This year a record number of nominations were received across 12 categories – reflecting the strength and dedication of the child protection and family services workforce.

Corey Harrison from the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency received the Minister’s Award for Excellence in Protecting Children for his work ensuring Aboriginal children, young people and families are protected, connected, culturally supported and self-determined.

MacKillop Family Services’ Zoe Stamatopoulos received the CREATE Positive Impacts Award for advocating for self-care, encouraging young people to be themselves, have fun and find hope.

VACCA’s Zee Pepper received the Walda Blow Aboriginal Children and Young People Award for championing inclusivity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB (rainbow mob) children, young people, families and carers.

The Victorian Protecting Children Awards recognise individuals, teams and organisations across Victoria who go above and beyond to support some of our most vulnerable children and families.

For more information about the awards visit dffh.vic.gov.au/victorian-protecting-children-awards.

If you’re passionate about making a positive difference to the lives of children and young people, a career in child protection might be for you. For more information visit vic.gov.au/child-protection-jobs.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

“I’m proud to celebrate the winners and finalists who are making a real, positive difference for children, young people and families across Victoria.”

“These awards celebrate the wonderful workers, carers and community members who go above and beyond to support some of our most at-risk children and young people.”

“Congratulations to all the winners, and thank you to all the finalists and nominees for their crucial work.”