

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Women



Thursday, 18 September 2025

RESPECT BALLARAT DRIVING GRASSROOTS CHANGE

The Allan Labor Government is backing the Ballarat community to lead the nation in the delivery of *Respect Ballarat* – aiming to stop violence before it starts.

Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Natalie Hutchins today joined Respect Victoria and the Ballarat Foundation to launch *Respect Ballarat* – backed by \$1 million in funding that will shortly open for applications.

Co-designed with local organisations and communities, Respect Ballarat - formerly known as the Ballarat saturation model - will support projects in schools, sporting clubs, early childhood services, new parenting spaces and workplaces to promote respect and equality.

The model will prioritise work with men, children and young people, new parents and emerging leaders – building a network of local advocates to strengthen community engagement and help change attitudes that drive violence.

Respect Ballarat is part of the Labor Government's \$92.8 million *Strengthening Women's Safety Package* driving action at every stage: responding to victims when violence occurs, delivering a stronger justice response that holds offenders to account and continuing our world-leading prevention response.

The Labor Government is using every available touch point to reach every corner of the community in Ballarat as we trial this new approach to prevention.

The four-year program will bring together all parts of the community including sports clubs, schools, workplaces, health services, councils, emergency services and community organisations in a coordinated approach to preventing family violence.

No community is immune to family violence – it's happening across our nation. We know that after the heartbreaking loss of three women last year, the people of Ballarat are more determined than anyone to put an end to violence.

The Labor Government has invested \$9.8 million over four years to deliver Respect Ballarat.

For more information, visit respectvictoria.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Natalie Hutchins

"We're seeing the Ballarat community come together after significant tragedies to take action to build a place free from violence."

"When communities unite to reinforce these messages, the evidence shows a stronger and lasting impact."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"Our community has been clear – we want to stop violence before it starts. Respect Ballarat gives us the tools to do that in practical, meaningful ways."

Quote attributable to Member for Ripon Martha Haylett

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“This is all about harnessing local voices and leadership to create long lasting change – making sure respect and equality are part of everyday life in our region.”

Quote attributable to Member for Eureka Michaela Settle

“Respect Ballarat is about locals taking the lead – from schools, to sporting clubs and workplaces, we’re building a community where everyone is valued and respected.”

Quotes attributable to Respect Victoria CEO Helen Bolton

“This is the next step in a people-powered journey to end gendered violence in Ballarat. It’s about communities, organisations, government and individuals coming together to take action for a future where everyone in Ballarat is respected, safe and free from violence.”

“Respect Victoria is privileged to have spent the past year with Ballarat communities listening, learning and building evidence to identify the next steps for this place-based approach to preventing gendered violence.”

Quote attributable to CEO of Women’s Health Grampians Jenny Courtney

“Ballarat has shown the country what community-led change looks like. The Saturation Model is not just a response to tragedy — it’s a commitment to long-term, local action that reaches every part of our community.”

Quote attributable to Chair of Ballarat Foundation Ellen Jackson

“The Ballarat Foundation is proud to join Respect Victoria in this landmark initiative to prevent gendered violence in our community. Opening in October, the \$1 million community grants program will back local organisations to deliver practical, prevention-focused projects over the next year. This partnership of funding with local knowledge has the potential to make real and immediate impact.”