

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Sunday, 8 March 2026

VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT DEPLOYING IN MERNDA

Incidents like this shock our community and it's why the Allan Labor Government is taking a no tolerance approach against violent crime through a combination of early intervention and serious consequences.

It starts with coordinated prevention to address the drivers of harm through the Violence Reduction Unit - bringing together Victoria Police, youth organisations and schools to identify young people at risk and stop crime before it starts.

This strong coordinated prevention approach worked in Scotland and London to prevent youth crime - and we know it will work here to do the same.

Right now the VRU is working with Victoria Police and the Department of Education to deploy a coordinated response in Mernda - providing community support and reassurance so that young people feel safe coming and going from school.

The VRU deployed this response model successfully following the death of a young man in Fitzroy in January, working across government and with youth services and the community to understand what factors led to the incident, and prevent further harm.

We know young people who cause serious harm need to face serious consequences through our new Adult Time for Violent Crime laws.

When young people are tried in the adult court, jail is more likely and sentences can be longer.

We will continue backing the largest police force in the country, Victoria Police, and investing in prevention programs to stop the drivers of crime, so that families can feel safe in their communities.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"My thoughts are with the family of the man who was brutally stabbed in Mernda - our hearts break for them."

"We created the Violence Reduction Unit for this reason, to work with the community in the aftermath of violence and prevent further trauma."

"I want to thank Victoria Police for their rapid response to apprehend the accused and their ongoing work to keep the Mernda community safe."

Quotes attributable to the CEO of the Violence Reduction Unit Andrea Davidson

"Every serious incident of violence reinforces why Victoria is investing in prevention, earlier intervention and community-led approaches to preventing harm before it occurs."

"Our focus must remain on preventing young people from becoming involved in serious violence in the first place - because violence is never inevitable."

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