

# Media Release

**The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC**  
Minister for Families and Children  
Minister for Early Childhood Education  
Minister for Youth Affairs



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Monday, 24 September, 2018

## IMPROVING CONNECTIONS FOR YOUNG PACIFIC ISLANDERS

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting young people in Pacific Islander communities become more engaged, socially connected and on positive pathways.

Minister for Youth Affairs Jenny Mikakos today announced \$475,000 to expand the Young Pasifika Program, known as 'Le Mana' meaning 'empower', into Brimbank and Dandenong.

This follows the successful pilot of *Le Mana* in the local council areas of Casey and Wyndham.

The pilot has worked with more than 2,070 young people to date since its launch in 2017, including one-on-one work with over 165 Pasifika young people.

Part of the new funding will see the introduction of dedicated programs for young women in Pacific Islander communities, as well as activities to help strengthen Pasifika networks, families and community leaders.

Those who live outside the local areas, but who travel to areas for study, work, social activities or connections with family and the community, are also able to access *Le Mana* and its services.

Funding will also support a full-time youth facilitator, who will work to re-connect young people in Pacific Islander communities with schools, jobs and training opportunities.

*Le Mana* provides in-school support, facilitates networks with local service providers and runs community events, forums and homework clubs for young Pacific Islanders, their families and local community.

Young people attending seven schools in the City of Casey and six schools in the City of Wyndham are currently supported by *Le Mana*, thanks to the Labor Government's original \$600,000 investment in the pilot.

The Centre for Multicultural Youth, in partnership with local government and the United Pasifika Council of Victoria, will oversee the program's expansion into Brimbank and Dandenong.

For more information, visit [cmy.net.au/le-mana-pasifika-project](http://cmy.net.au/le-mana-pasifika-project).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Youth Affairs Jenny Mikakos

*"We've helped support thousands of young Victorians through Le Mana – and we're making it thousands more."*

*"Young people from diverse backgrounds deserve every opportunity to access the services they need to set them up for life, close to home – and this program does just that."*

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Robin Scott

*"The Young Pasifika Program is a capacity building, community-led project that strengthens school connectedness and education outcomes for Pasifika young people in a way that is tailored to them."*

*"Key to projects like the Young Pasifika Program is a model that better connects and strengthens the existing networks and connections of a community – so they can address locally-identified issues themselves."*

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