

CHAPTER 7: Promoting respect

“As a community we need to build a culture of respect in Victoria – one based on respect for ourselves, respect for the people around us, and respect for our community that leads to better behaviour and a stronger society.”

JOHN BRUMBY, PREMIER OF VICTORIA

Victoria is a diverse and welcoming place. Most people behave respectfully and treat each other fairly. However, disrespectful behaviour of all kinds undermines us all. It changes our neighbourhoods and attitudes. It damages our reputation. Respect for ourselves, others and our community is the key to a healthy, friendly and productive community.

We have an enviable lifestyle here in Victoria and a strong sense of community. We need to protect and build on this. Government does have a role, but so do we all. Respect is everyone’s responsibility – regardless of your age, background or circumstance.

To Victorian Labor, respect is partnered with personal responsibility. It means that people care for themselves, their neighbourhoods and our community as a whole. It extends to respecting the environment in which we live. People need to have regard for one another and consider how their behaviour impacts on others. There is only so much a government can do.

Labor will act to address serious issues, such as alcohol-related violence and bullying, as well as promoting understanding of diversity and involvement in the community.

We are committed to tougher laws and strengthening enforcement – but this can only be part of the solution attitudes need to change. We need a wide community discussion about why issues such as alcohol related violence are occurring and what we can do to tackle the causes. We need to work together to support and create the type of communities we want to live in.

Achieving a shift in community attitudes will not be a quick process, it will take time and effort but with a concentrated effort across the community it will happen.

Victorian Labor has developed a framework for this community conversation, called the *Respect Agenda*, which will focus on six key issues.

- Stemming alcohol fuelled violence in public places;
- Reducing bullying - including online bullying;
- Encouraging healthy relationships with a particular focus on preventing violence against women;
- Celebrating the difference and diversity that makes Victoria great;
- Promoting parenting skills, and
- Encouraging community participation and civic responsibility, such as volunteering.

PROMOTING RESPECT

Families have a powerful effect in the development of self-respect in children and young people. When parents and carers lead by example, it helps children and young people build self-respect.

The job of raising children is complex and many parents feel under a great deal of pressure. Labor recognises the critical role that parents play and already provides a range of information, resources and services to support parents and carers.



RESPECT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

7.1 Labor recognises that young people are our future and deserve every chance to reach their full potential.

Young people should be encouraged to have respect for themselves and their communities. In turn, communities should be encouraged to respect young people and recognise the positive contributions they make.

Labor will take a whole of community approach to build respectful relationships so young people feel valued in the community and have a sense of belonging.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

7.2 Labor will support leadership programs and other personal development programs for young people and engage them in mature discussion of important issues.

Schools need to emphasise respect and engage students on issues relevant to young people including life skills needed in making the transition to adulthood and employment. These include personal and sexual relationships, drug and alcohol education, suicide prevention, anti-racism, body image, anti-bullying, finances and consumer rights.

Schools should also be included in the planning and implementation of community programs about issues affecting young people.

REACHING INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL

7.3 Labor recognises the need to support the physical, emotional, artistic, intellectual and personal potential of all young Victorians.

Labor believes our young people should be supported to become respectful, active, creative and informed citizens. It will provide leadership and highlight the personal and social development opportunities to achieve this.

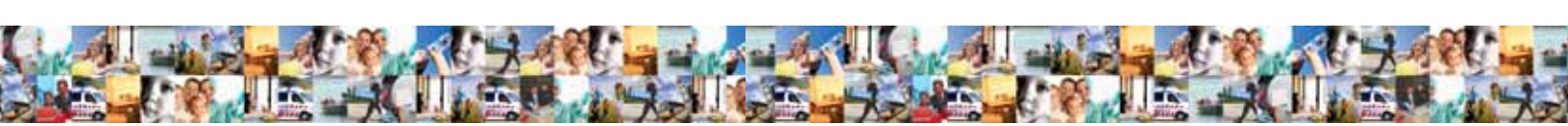
Labor will:

- Encourage young people to volunteer and actively participate in community projects and support their connections with local communities to establish stronger support;
- Develop peer support and mentoring programs, particularly for the most disadvantaged groups of young people in our community;
- Give young people access to the decision making processes that impact their lives and provide them opportunities have their say in their local communities, and
- Increase student participation in the management and conservation of the school's environment.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

7.4 Labor believes that having a positive body image can have a significant impact on many areas of young people's lives.

A healthy self-esteem helps young people face and overcome many of the challenges of life. A positive body image is bound up with this and helps young people to be their best – at school, in sport and with family and friends.



Providing young people with the skills and knowledge to be resilient helps them value individuality, accept difference, address the limitations that our culture can place on young people and expand their options.

Labor will:

- Provide resources to help young people better understand body image;
- Promote active lifestyles, health eating and positive body image using programs working with young people, and
- Support policies and programs to promote positive body image amongst young people.

WOMEN & EATING DISORDERS

7.5 Labor will support programs to assist women with eating disorders and establish a state wide framework for consistent specialist care for young people with eating disorders.

Labor will:

- Undertake research to establish the extent of eating disorders among women, and
- Ensure appropriate education and counselling services on body image and self esteem are available for women.

POSITIVE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

7.6 Labor will promote the positive representation of women in the media and advertising and encourage the fashion industry to promote fashion and employ models in many different shapes and sizes.

Labor will:

- Encourage the media and advertising industry to declare when images have been digitally altered;
- Develop regulatory measures to ensure positive representation of women in the media and advertising as well as remove exploitative and discriminatory representations;
- Set an example by positive gender portrayal in government advertising, and
- Incorporate issues about portrayal of women in the educational curriculum at all levels.

RESPECTING DIVERSITY

Diversity is a part of everyday life and respecting people's differences is fundamental to a peaceful and prosperous society. Prejudice and discrimination of all kinds undermines our cohesion and Labor is serious about its role in promoting respect for diversity.

Victoria is the first state to formally protect human rights through the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*. It has also enacted the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* and the *Multicultural Victoria Act 2004*, which set standards and make it clear that hate and prejudice against different groups in the community will not be tolerated.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

7.7 Labor will promote further reforms to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission so it can identify and address examples of systemic discrimination, deliver real outcomes and simplify the processes for individual complaints.

Labor has strengthened Equal Opportunity laws to recognise the diversity of Victorians and the respect that we should all be afforded as members of the community. Labor will implement reforms which simplify procedures for individuals bringing complaints; but which also allow the Commission to tackle wider forms of discrimination against groups in the community by engaging and working with organisations to prevent discrimination and to promote respect. Labor pledges to maintain the integrity and rights contained in Victoria's Equal Opportunity Act in the event of any move to a unitary national system.

ALCOHOL ABUSE & VIOLENCE

We are determined to make our streets safe. Action is being taken to stem alcohol-related violence in public places so everyone can feel safe and enjoy themselves when they are out at night. This includes increased police numbers and new police powers as well as partnerships with community groups to promote responsible alcohol consumption.

It is also about making sure people look after each other when they are drinking. An extensive community education campaign has been encouraging mates to look out for each other and not do stupid things when they're out at night.

ALCOHOL & DRUG USE

7.8 Labor will promote positive messages about health and well being to young people and engage them in discussion about the social and health consequences of drugs and alcohol.

Drug use and alcohol abuse are serious problems for the community. Drug and alcohol education can reduce the risks and improve the health of young Victorians.

Labor will:

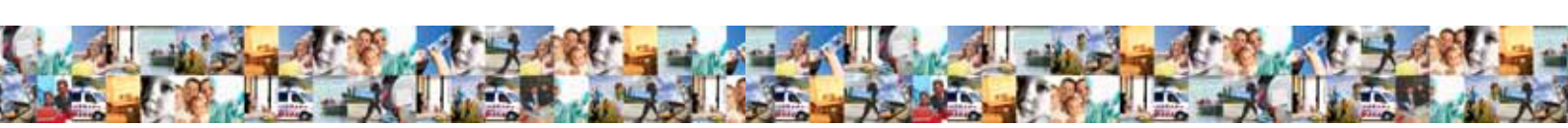
- Give all young people access to youth specific health services such as counselling, mental health, drug and alcohol and other specialist services;
- Undertake more education campaigns to make young people aware of the dangers of binge drinking, and
- Review the effectiveness of previous efforts in this field and seek expert advice about alternative strategies to more effectively tackle drug abuse.

VIBRANT NIGHT LIFE

7.9 Labor will protect Melbourne's reputation as a 24 hour city while cracking down on troubled venues. The police and liquor licensing authorities will get the balance right to ensure that Victorians can enjoy a night out in safety

In particular, Labor will protect the community from alcohol related harm, by:

- Crack down on troubled venues;
- Tighten the regulation of liquor laws;
- Introducing strict probity requirements for new liquor licences;



- Introducing a probation period for new licensees to ensure high standards of integrity in the liquor licensing industry, and
- Introducing policies that encourage responsible alcohol consumption to ensure the safety of young Victorians.

LIVE MUSIC

7.10 Labor will support the development of Victoria's vibrant live music scene and provide assistance to emerging bands to establish themselves commercially.

Labor will work with live music venues to ensure security and local amenity problems can be resolved without harming the viability of venues or the future of Victoria's live music culture.

Labor will:

- Work with the music industry on liquor licensing issues and adopt a more flexible approach to venue security while ensuring venues are safe.
- Develop a comprehensive contemporary music policy and build on the successful *Victoria Rocks!* program to help musicians and emerging bands.

REDUCING FAMILY VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

The Victorian government's policy framework *A Right to Respect – Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women 2010-2020* is a 10-year plan that aims to prevent violence before it occurs by challenging its underlying causes. Central to the plan are community partnerships to build a stronger culture of equal and respectful relationships between men and women.

SAFER FAMILIES

7.11 Labor is committed to long-term strategies to reduce family violence and sexual assault so women and children can live with confidence and without fear. We need to continue to get the message out that family violence is completely unacceptable.

Violence is the leading contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15-44, which is why Labor has:

- Created new legislation that enables police to remove perpetrators of family violence from the home in crisis situations;
- Developed specialist Magistrates' Court Divisions and services which offer support to family violence victims;
- Delivered specialist sexual assault lists in the courts and specialist units in Victorian Police and the Office of Public Prosecutions;
- Protected children through its Child Witness Service, and
- Created two "drop in centres" for victims of sexual assault to access police, counselling, legal and support services.



REDUCING FAMILY VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

7.12 Labor will take further measures to reduce family violence and sexual assault in the community – building on its whole of Government *Family Violence Strategy*.

Labor will:

- Lead the creation of a *National Registration Scheme for Family Violence Intervention Orders* to prevent patterns of violence being repeated;
- Act on the *Family Violence Death Review* by the State Coroner to prevent more deaths that result from family violence;
- Monitor the implementation of new Family Violence legislation to ensure more women are coming forward to prevent further violence and ensure that important cultural change in police practices remains ongoing;
- Support awareness campaigns which involve sporting and community groups spreading the message that violence against women is unacceptable, and
- Work with the Commonwealth and all States and Territories to implement the National Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and develop a National Research Agenda and National Centre of Excellence to Reduce Violence Against Women.

BULLYING

The Victorian Government is working to reduce bullying including cyber-bullying, so young people in particular don't experience the harmful consequences of bullying.

Employers have a responsibility to create workplaces where people feel safe and are not intimidated or bullied.

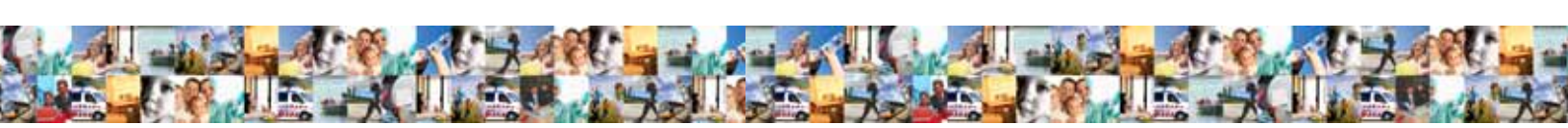
A situation where a student feels unsafe in school because of bullying is not tolerated in Victorian schools. Ongoing action is equipping schools to address bullying, encourage respectful relationships and responsible use of technology.

BULLYING & RESPECT AT SCHOOL

7.13 Labor recognises the importance of promoting respectful and positive behaviours in school students. All students have a right to education free bullying and harassment, including racist, sexist or homophobic bullying and harassment.

Labor will:

- Support strategies and programs which involve students, staff and parents to reduce and manage bullying;
- Establish policy frameworks for safe and respectful school environments based on the latest evidence about promoting respectful relationships and preventing bullying behaviour, and
- Work in partnership with expert agencies to develop and implement violence prevention programs in collaboration with schools and community organisations.



CYBER-BULLYING

7.14 Labor understands that modern technologies have created new domains in which young people learn and interact but that they can be misused.

Technology such as mobile phones, SMS, in-phone cameras, emails and chat rooms can be an effective way to learn and a great way to communicate. Unfortunately some people use this technology to bully others by sending threatening or unwanted messages, spreading nasty rumours and “sexting” inappropriate pictures.

Labor will:

- Assist schools to raise awareness about cyber-bullying and its impact on those being bullied;
- Promote prevention strategies that have proven effective, and
- Actively engage students and young people in the issue of cyber-bullying and provide advice and resources to schools and students.

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

7.15 Labor will encourage cooperative and positive workplace culture and practice, including through a review of the current mechanisms and procedures for investigating complaints of harassment, bullying or discrimination.

Labor will support employers by providing information to increase compliance with workplace obligations under the Fair Work system and to promote best practice.

VOLUNTEERING

Getting involved in the community by volunteering promotes greater understanding and belonging. Respect can also be built in very positive ways through volunteering. Volunteering allows people to contribute to their community. It provides opportunities to meet people who may have different views, backgrounds and circumstances. It can also help people improve skills and get experience and confidence, which lead to stronger self-respect.

Labor will continue this work by implementing its volunteer strategy to support people contributing to their local communities through volunteering, encourage a more diverse range of people to volunteer, make it easier for Victorians to get involved in their communities and recognise people and organisations that are already making a contribution.

SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERING

7.16 Labor recognises the valuable role that volunteers play in our community and will work to promote more volunteering.

Labor will:

- Support people contributing to their local communities through volunteering;
- Encourage a more diverse range of people, especially young people, to volunteer;
- Make it easier for Victorians to get involved in their communities, and
- Recognise people and organisations that are already making a contribution.



ANNUAL DAY OF COMMITMENT

7.17 Labor will encourage employers to release staff for voluntary service in their communities, including through the CFA and SES.

Labor will encourage employers to consider an annual day of leave so that workers can assist a volunteer group in their community.

Many people are unable to provide the time commitment they would like to groups they support and would like to find rewarding ways to put their skills to work in the community. Supporting the 'annual day of commitment' will build more bridges between businesses and not for profit organisations.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Broad participation in the systems of our democracy makes our communities stronger. It also provides an avenue for the range of voices in our community to be heard and responded to.

A STRONGER VOICE FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

7.18 Labor will promote the appropriate representation of all groups in the community. Many of these groups have historically been under-represented and should be given greater opportunity to participate in public policy debates

Labor will give priority to a stronger voice in public affairs for nine key groups at all levels of government:

- Women;
- Aboriginal people;
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- People with disabilities;
- Older people;
- Children, teenagers and young adults;
- People on lower incomes;
- People with different sexual orientation or gender identity, and
- People living in rural and remote areas.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE

7.19 Labor will work towards its target of women being 50 per cent of all new appointments to government boards and committees.

Labor will build on the achievement of a 40% benchmark by:

- Actively seek out women for appointments to achieve the goal of equal representation;
- Expand the register of women who wish to serve on committees and government boards and promote its availability;
- Monitor appointments on an ongoing basis to ensure the 50 per cent goal is achieved across all portfolios and for different levels of appointment;
- Encourage the private sector to set targets for women's participation at all levels of the paid work force, and

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- Support women's leadership development across the community.

YOUNG PEOPLES PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY

7.20 Labor will encourage the engagement of all young people in community life.

Labor recognises that young people have a valuable contribution to make to shaping community life. Labor will promote opportunities for all young Victorians to participate in a way that respects their diverse needs and interests.

Labor will:

- Foster the development of leadership skills and attributes among young people;
- Encourage young people, particularly indigenous, CALD, rural and disadvantaged young people, to volunteer and actively participate in community projects;
- Encourage young people to have their say about their community and get involved in policy and decision making processes;
- Fund organisations running projects encouraging youth participation in community life, and
- Provide opportunities for young people to participate in arts, entertainment, recreation and sport.

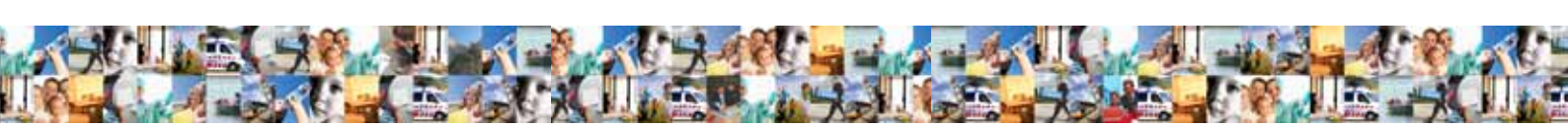
PEER SUPPORT & MENTORING

7.21 Labor recognises young people can greatly benefit from opportunities for positive interaction with their peers and mentors. Involving young people in decision making is an important step towards participation in community life.

Peer support and mentoring happens in variety of ways and settings. A "one size fits all" model does often not work, particularly with the most disadvantaged groups of young people in our community.

Labor will:

- Recognise the value of young people's involvement in peer support and mentoring, including engaging young people in decision-making;
- Encourage unions, employers and community groups to provide work place mentors by trialling industry specific demonstration projects that link pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs with work place mentor schemes, in order to reduce skills shortages and encourage higher rates of apprenticeship completion;
- Support mentoring through regional co-ordination groups and assisting pilot mentoring programs, and
- Support mentoring programs for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.



TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE

SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS WHO RESPECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

7.22 Labor will work hand in hand with volunteer groups such as Landcare and Climate Communities working to coordinate local volunteers to ensure that voluntary environmental action has a big impact

Tackling climate change is a challenge for our whole community, and the actions of individuals and local groups can make a big difference. All across Victoria local sustainability and climate action groups are being established to help transform their communities.

Labor has historically been the party that has best recognised and supported grass roots environment groups – first with the formation of Landcare over two decades ago, and more recently complimented by the creation of Climate Communities.

Labor will:

- Provide strong support for Landcare, to ensure it continues its leading role in addressing environmental conservation and land management issues.
- Grow Climate Communities into a state-wide network of local groups, Councils, businesses and individuals focused on taking action on climate.