



Media release

The Hon Ted Baillieu MP

Premier
Minister for the Arts

Tuesday 12 April 2011

Coalition Govt to *Stamp Out Bullying* with new \$14.5 million plan

Premier Ted Baillieu has announced a new \$14.5 million *Stamp Out Bullying* plan including \$10.5 million for cyber-bullying programs in Victorian schools.

Under the Coalition Government's \$14.5 million plan, \$4 million will be invested in reviewing and updating bullying policies and programs in Victorian schools over the next four years.

The plan also includes a \$10.5 million investment in the *eSmart* cyber-bullying program developed by the Alannah and Madeline Foundation across Government and needy Catholic schools.

"Bullying and cyber-bullying are two of the biggest issues facing Victorian schools and the Coalition will make a major new investment to stamp out bullying," Mr Baillieu said.

"The Coalition has recognised that Victorian students are at risk of bullying and especially cyber-bullying, and through our \$14.5 million *Stamp Out Bullying* plan we are taking real action to protect Victorians and make schools safer."

Under the Coalition's *Stamp Out Bullying* plan:

- \$4 million will be invested to review, update and expand the suite of anti-bullying plans and strategies operating in Victorian schools – better integrating the range of programs in schools;
- \$10.5m will be invested to roll out the *eSmart* anti cyber-bullying program in Victorian schools;
- schools will establish committees in their schools from existing staff to oversee and develop cyber-bullying policies and programs; and
- teachers in each school will be given professional development and training to develop and run effective cyber-bullying programs.

The *eSmart* program will be rolled out under an existing agreement between the Alannah and Madeline Foundation and the Coalition Government as part of the Coalition Government's broader plan to *Stamp Out Bullying* in Victorian schools.

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“Bullying and cyber-bullying are a threat to Victorian families and it is time for a comprehensive response to these threats, particularly in our schools,” Minister for Education Martin Dixon said today.

“For too long we have seen ad hoc responses but the Coalition Government’s plan to *Stamp Out Bullying* is a comprehensive strategy that will help protect Victorian students and families.”

The *Stamp Out Bullying* plan builds on major announcements already made by the Coalition Government including:

- new legislation to crack down on workplace and other forms of bullying;
- greater powers for principals to suspend and expel students and search for dangerous weapons; and
- the establishment of a further 150 Primary Welfare Officer positions over the next four years.

The *Stamp Out Bullying* plan will also incorporate and update a number of existing anti-bullying strategies and programs in Victorian schools including:

- Learning On Line;
- SuperClubsPLUS;
- Safe Schools are Effective Schools; and
- Student Engagement Policy Guidelines and the Building Respectful and Safe Schools resource, where schools are required to have a bullying prevention and cybersafety strategies incorporated within their Student Engagement Policy.

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