

Family violence funding must be restored: Staley

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MEMBER for Ripon Louise Staley has criticised the Andrews Government for scrapping family violence funding for the popular Act@Work Program.

The Act@Work program was designed to help tackle issues of sexism in the workplace and to change attitudes towards violence against women generally.

It was operated by Women's Health Grampians and was supported by a number of local workplaces including AME Systems (Vic) and Ararat Rural City Council. Ms Staley met with representatives from council on Friday.

The Andrews Government has not continued funding for the program, and it will cease to operate in December.

Ms Staley said the State Government cannot afford to be taking any backwards steps in regards to violence against women.

"Act@Work is a crucial program that helps to tackle sexism and violence against women in the workplace, an environment that is often very challenging for," Ms Staley said.

"With soaring rates of family violence we cannot afford to show any tolerance for this sort of behaviour, we need to support programs like Act@Work to tackle these issues where they manifest".

"Women facing abuse, are often hesitant in seeking help if we take away this service more and more women will be swept under the rug, and this obscene violence will continue".



SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM:
The Ararat Rural City Council has been a big supporter of the Women's Health Grampians initiative. Pictured in 2014 are Council's CEO Andrew Evans and Act@Work project worker Michelle Hunt.

Shadow Minister for Police, Crime Prevention and Community Safety Ed O'Donohue said the Act@Work program had been getting fantastic results and was helping to change the workplace culture for the better.



“The State Government needs to be stronger on Violence against women; Daniel Andrews needs to show leadership and ensure that imperative programs like this are protected,” he said.