



PAT CRONIN
FOUNDATION

2025 IMPACT REPORT



Be Wise

LET'S END THE COWARD PUNCH





Contents

Our mission



- Mission One Million
- Our Impact up close
- By the numbers

Stories that matter



- What schools are saying
- Survey results
- Parents in the classroom

Advocacy



- Leading the debate over AFL stance on 'sickening' assault
- Our push to fix failed Coward Punch laws

Inspiring others



- 72,000 footballers join us
- Feat for Pat - a marathon a week

Impact Partners



- Five new corporate sponsors
- Your chance to create safer communities

NINE YEARS ON ...

It's been nine years since we lost Pat to a Coward Punch.

For those who loved him, the grief remains. Every birthday, every Christmas, every family moment - there's a space where Pat should be.

We haven't moved on, but we've found a way to move forward.

Through the Be Wise Education Program - an evidence-based initiative for Prep to Year 12 - we

honour Pat's memory by equipping young Australians with the skills to avoid violence and build safer communities.

Face-to-face presentations are a powerful part of this program, bringing his story directly into classrooms.

In doing so, we also hope to end the Coward Punch.

As of the end of 2025, more than 350,000 young Australians have participated in the program.



"Every student, in every school needs to hear this. Learning to manage anger and aggression is essential in today's society."

Danielle Stephens
Head of Junior Secondary | Toowoomba State High
Mt Lofty, April 2025



"The Foundation is incredibly well regarded in empowering students to work through situations that help them avoid violence."

Aaron Smith
Principal | Pakenham Secondary College
Pakenham, June 2025



"The Foundation uses a range of presenters, each bringing their own life experiences, which really helps bring the messages to life. It's a great program that every school/student should have access to."

Sarah Krahe
Acting Wellbeing Leader | East Loddon P-12 College
August 2025





MISSION ONE MILLION

2025 has marked a powerful turning point for the Pat Cronin Foundation, with the launch of our most ambitious initiative yet – Mission One Million.

This nationwide campaign aims to reach one million Australians with our life-saving education.

From humble beginnings in 2016, we are on a clear trajectory towards real change. While education remains at the heart of everything we do, our aim is to build conversations that extend far beyond the classroom.

Every conversation, every lesson, and every step forward brings us closer to a safer Australia – and towards ending the Coward Punch. In this report we showcase some of the highlights - and what teachers, parents (and students) are saying about the work we do.

Matt and Robyn Cronin
Directors | PAT CRONIN FOUNDATION

HEARD PATS STORY?

60%

OF VICTORIAN HIGH
SCHOOLS HAVE
PARTNERED WITH US



WE'RE CHANGING ATTITUDES TO SOCIAL VIOLENCE



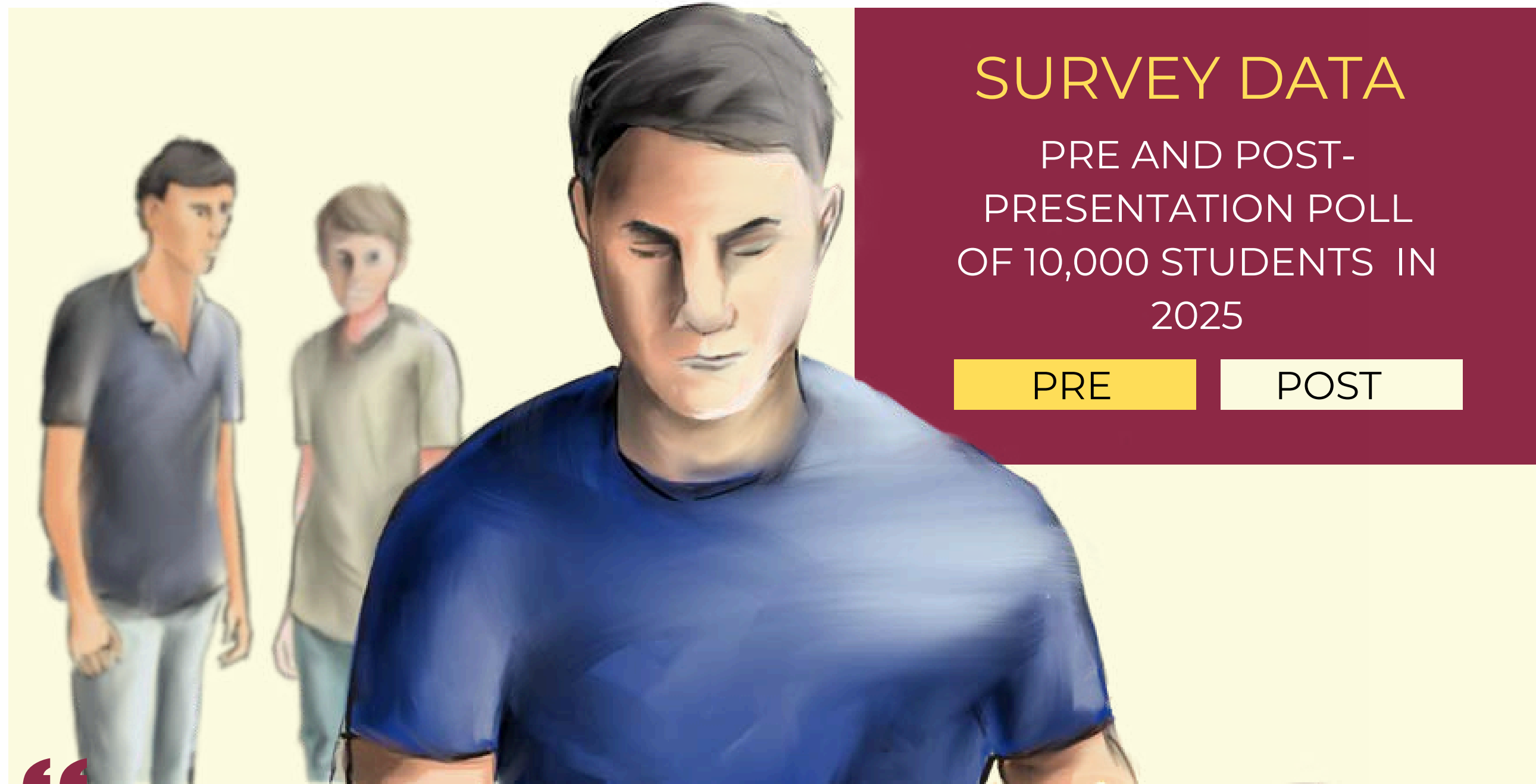
More than 10,000 Australians are hospitalised each year to violent assault in public spaces, according to a range of national studies.

We have four hour-long sessions designed to change young people's perceptions of social violence and to tackle this alarming toll.

The Foundation's cornerstone presentation, "Violence is Never OK", shares Pat's story and uses real-life scenarios to help young people understand the impact of a single, violent act while equipping them with skills to manage anger before it escalates into aggression.

In addition, the "Rethinking Anger" presentation dives into the underlying causes of conflict and offers strategies to de-escalate situations, preventing violence altogether.

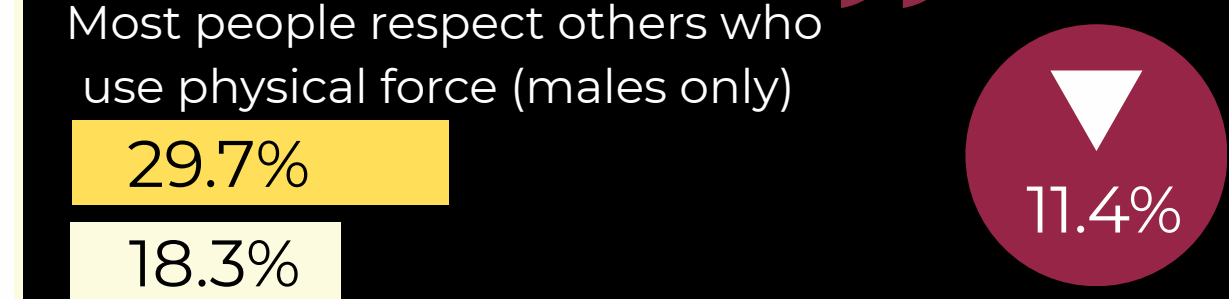
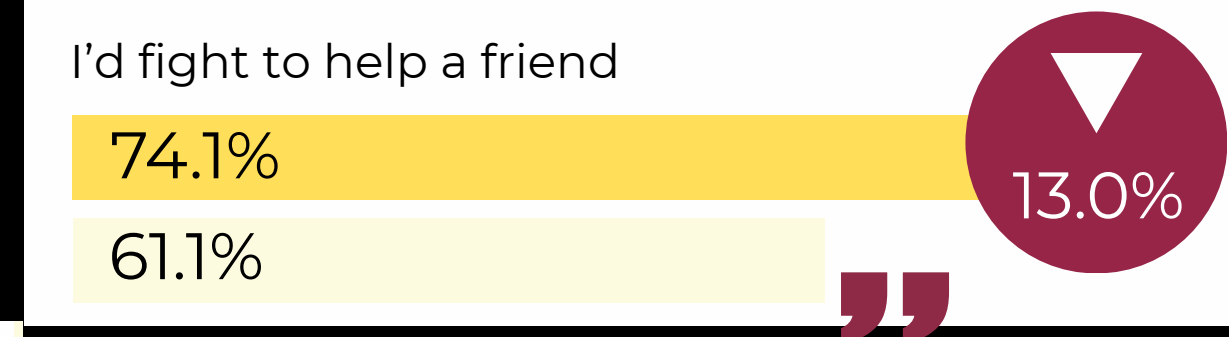
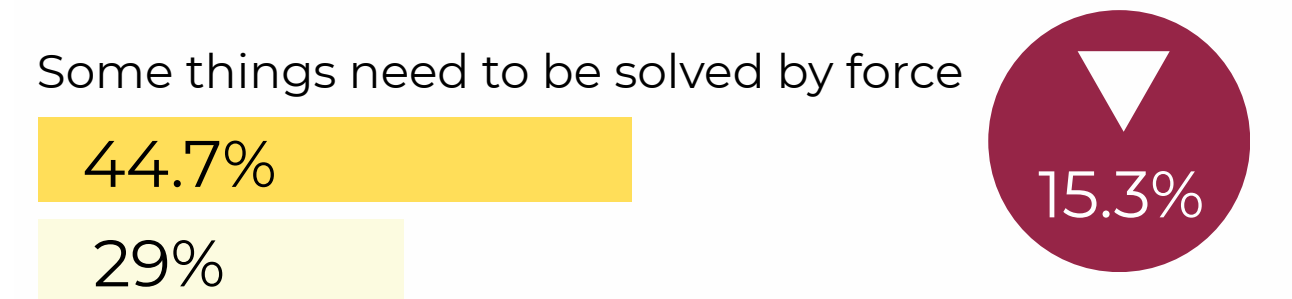
For younger children, the Foundation provides two "Think Carefully, Act Kindly" presentations, in addition to a kit including storybooks, teacher-led activities, and role-playing exercises created to instill positive behaviours and conflict-resolution skills.



SURVEY DATA

PRE AND POST-
PRESENTATION POLL
OF 10,000 STUDENTS IN
2025

PRE POST



OUR IMPACT UP CLOSE

While we deliver presentations in sports clubs and workplace settings, the bulk of our work is in schools throughout Australia. Here are some of the numbers:

2025 IN NUMBERS

64,780
YOUNG LIVES
REACHED



396
PRESENTATIONS



270
SCHOOLS



WHERE WE WORK

Foundation facilitators visited every state and territory in 2025 - including 239 locations in our home base of Victoria alone, encompassing all parts of Melbourne as well as Mildura, Bendigo, Warrnambool, Geelong, Ballarat, Wangaratta, Gippsland, Charlton and Monbulk!



Burnside College Year 6 students Isaac and Bianca, Pat Cronin Foundation facilitator Elaine Hooley, and Burnside College Year 5 student Willow at the...

Students get tips on conflict resolution

More than 500 students at a Caroline Springs school took part in an initiative aimed at curbing violence and promoting conflict resolution and anger management, where the story of Pat Cronin was shared. On Wednesday, May 28, Brookside College students from years 5-8 took part in the Pat Cronin Foundation's Be Wise Education Program. The foundation was formed after the death of Pat Cronin, 19, in 2016, who died after being struck in the back of his head his friend away from a fight. His story forms the heart of the foundation's presentations, which aim to illustrate the devastating impacts of social violence. Sessions in the program explore emotional awareness and triggers, highlight the consequences of choices, and provide practical strategies for defusing confrontational situations. College counsellor Valentina Zevallios said that it was the third year in a row the school has booked the foundation to present to any other school. "The students have responded really well to the program... it perfectly complements our Respectful Relationships Program, each time we notice a change in student attitudes," Ms Zevallios said. Matt Cronin - Pat's father - said the foundation never imagined how the education program would go, about 60 per cent of schools taking evidence-based education in this space.



New program reaches Wangaratta primary school

WANGARATTA West Primary School year six students were among the first in the country to be a part of a newly developed face-to-face presentation of anti-violence education for primary school aged children by the Pat Cronin Foundation. Last week the foundation visited 12 schools in the Hume region, delivering specialised violence-prevention education to more than 2000 students. Presenters were at Wangaratta West Primary School on Thursday, 29 May, speaking to 130 year six students on the foundation's new "Think Carefully, Act Kindly" session. The presentation was developed in response to demand from teachers and aligned to The Australian Curriculum and addressed the psychological, social and economic impacts of violent acts like the coward punch. Wangaratta West Primary School wellbeing leader Ash Graham said the session was a perfect fit for the school. "Kids today are more socially aware than ever, and we believe the foundation's program will give them valuable tools for life," he said. Pat Cronin Foundation director Matt Cronin said the ability to deliver new sessions to the region was an important moment for the charity. "The Hume region will be among the first to experience our new 'Think Carefully, Act Kindly' primary school presentation, and we see it as a crucial step forward," he said. "If we can start these conversations earlier, we stand a much better chance of preventing violence before it ever begins. "Our work in high schools has done well in shifting mindsets - but we need to start even sooner when the building blocks for lifelong behaviours and attitudes are being established." It was one of three talks the foundation brought to the Hume region, the others including its signature "Violence is Never OK" presentation for secondary students and the follow-up "Rethinking Anger" session, which delves deeper into the triggers for anger and teaches strategies for defusing aggression. Nine years after the tragic death of 19-year-old Pat Cronin, his parents Matt and Helen have turned their heartbreak into a mission - already having reached more than 300,000 teenagers nationwide as part of their mission to end the coward punch. The regional outreach also includes schools in Shepparton, Bendigo, Nathalia, and Wodonga, and form part of the Foundation's bold mission to reach one million young people by 2027. To find out more about the foundation's evidence-based Be Wise Education Program, visit <https://www.patcroninfoundation.org.au/education/be-wise-presentations/>



ALL STATES OF AUSTRALIA

Although Melbourne-based, the Foundation partners with schools nationwide. We also have an established home in Queensland, where we've reached more than 12,500 students in two years.

Victoria:	Number of presentations: 285 Students Reached: 47,435
Queensland:	Number of presentations: 21 Students Reached: 5176
Tasmania:	Number of presentations: 7 Students Reached: 2000
Western Australia:	Number of presentations: 8 Students Reached: 1975
Northern Territory:	Number of presentations: 12 Students Reached: 1640
ACT:	Number of presentations: 3 Students Reached: 560
New South Wales:	Number of presentations: 11 Students Reached: 1910
South Australia:	Number of presentations: 1 Students Reached: 100

Special lesson to reduce social violence

YEAR 10 students at Camperdown College recently took part in an education program delivered by the Pat Cronin Foundation, aiming to reduce social violence through education.

The Pat Cronin Foundation is an organisation which works to end the coward punch – a punch to the back of the head – through education programs.

The foundation was formed following the death of Pat Cronin in 2016 from a coward punch.

Senior campus assistant principal Sarah Brooks said students engaged well with the presentation, which saw Pat Cronin Foundation presenter Stacey Dvorak speak last Monday.

“Year 10 students were visited by the Pat Cronin Foundation on Monday to raise awareness and discuss the key point that violence is never ok,” she said.

“Stacey (Dvorak) shared her own personal journey along with the story of Pat Cronin who died by a coward punch after a night out with friends.

“The message that you are only one decision away from your best life or a life you don’t want to live was a key theme of the session.”

The presentation was part of the Be Wise education program, which encourages students to reflect on their attitudes and behaviours around anger and aggression to reduce the use of violence in confrontations.

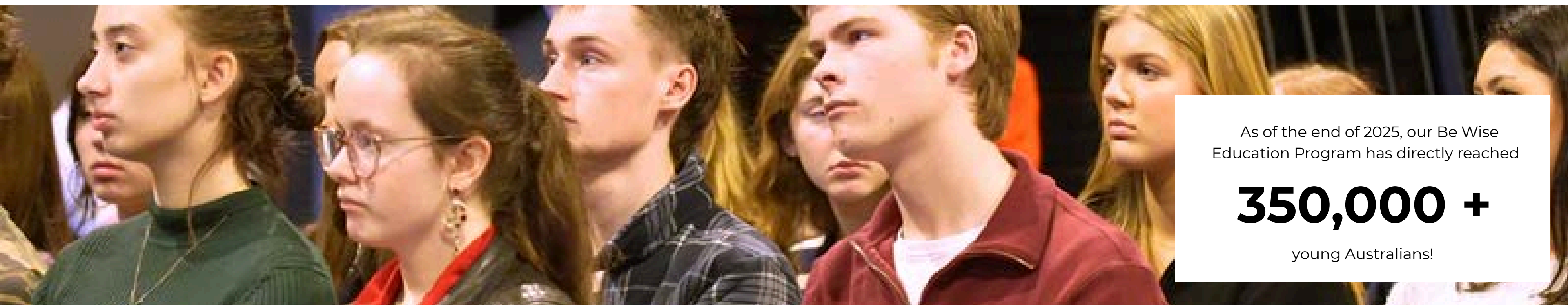


Important message: Camperdown College Year 10 students Fletcher, Lila and Pippa thanked Pat Cronin Foundation presenter Stacey Dvorak for her visit. 2025

RAISING NATIONAL AWARENESS OF OUR MESSAGES

In 2025, our potential audience reach in the media, excluding social platforms, exceeded:

30 MILLION



As of the end of 2025, our Be Wise Education Program has directly reached

350,000 +

young Australians!

WHAT SCHOOLS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR WORK

St Joseph's College at Geelong is just one of hundreds of schools across Australia engaging the Foundation each year because our ability to connect with students.

Foundation facilitator Blaine Healy delivered our signature *Violence is Never OK* presentation to the school on October 23 (pictured right).

Nathanael Smith, director of the College's Westcourt campus, says: "The Foundation's presentations, with their mix of real-life narratives and storytelling resonate with students.

"The Pat Cronin story is a tragic one, and I think the students gain a sense of 'that could be me'.

"The Foundation adds valuable perspectives on the importance of controlling emotions."

Following the session, an opinion piece on the presentation by Year 9 student Billy Blake in the daily *Geelong Advertiser* (far right) reflects these sentiments perfectly.

According to Billy: "The most emotional moment for me was when we saw Blaine and Pat's school photos together.

"It made us think: 'What if Pat was one of our mates?'"



St Joseph's College, Geelong

Geelong Advertiser | Thursday November 27, 2025

Just Pause, Accept and Think ... to save a life

Tragedy of Pat's death an education for us all

Billy Blake

We see our mates everyday, but sometimes we take it for granted how much they mean to us. What if one of your friends was there one day and gone the next because of a cowardly punch?

The impact of senseless violence was a key theme when the Pat Cronin Foundation visited St Joseph's College as part of a mission to give young Australians the tools to end the coward punch, manage anger and defuse conflict.

The tragic story of 19-year-old Pat Cronin, whose life was cut short when he was struck from behind during a night out in 2016, is at the heart of the Foundation's Violence is Never OK presentation delivered to St Joseph's students recently as part of our wellbeing studies incorporating the Man Box unit.

Throughout this unit we have discussed many examples of people avoiding how they feel and this culminating in problems later on in their life. In almost every instance they regret not expressing themselves.

Our visiting speaker from the Foundation, Blaine Healy, was a classmate of Pat's, which made the presentation hit home and connect with us all on a deeper level.

The most emotional moment for me was when we saw Blaine and Pat's school photos together. It made us think: "What if Pat was one of our mates?"

To reiterate the opening



Billy Blake

sentence: What if one of your mates died because someone decided to throw a punch without thinking?

Pat was just like so many of us. He and his brother Lucas played footy their entire lives, while also supporting the Richmond Football Club together.

Pat was studying health science at La Trobe University with the aim of becoming a physiotherapist, and loved to hang out with his mates.

The message Blaine delivered is that violence is never OK.

Blaine encouraged us to Pause, Accept and Think. Pat lives on in this acronym being taught to students.

The motivation behind this acronym is teaching young minds about anger and anger management and reminding us that we always have a choice -- a choice to lash out, or restrain your anger, or to Pause, Accept and Think.

Billy Blake is in year 9 at St Joseph's College, Geelong
More more information, visit the website at: patcroninfoundation.org.au



St Joseph's College students with Pat Cronin Foundation facilitator Blaine Healy.

“The most emotional moment for me was when we saw Blaine and Pat's school photos together. It made us think: 'What if Pat was one of our mates?'”



'VITAL MESSAGES FOR YOUNG MEN'



Foundation facilitator Martine McKee visited St Patrick's College at Ballarat in October.

Head of Senior School Matt Miller had this to say about the presentation: "These are vital messages for young men, particularly for 16 to 17-year-olds who are entering the 'risk-taking' journey of their adolescence.

"Pat's story is particularly emotionally charged.

"It allows boys to clearly see the impact on his family, the local community and across Australia."

OUR MESSAGES REACH

25,000

UNIQUE USERS THROUGH FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM



We are incredibly grateful to the Foundation for their impactful work and for helping to educate the next generation on how to 'Be Wise'.

Hampton Park Secondary College, Victoria

Mazenod College
June 27 · 🌐

Few stories leave a room as silent as the one shared by Martine from the Pat Cronin Foundation, who visited Mazenod to speak with our Year 12 students today.

She shared the heartbreaking story of Pat, who tragically lost his life in 2016 at just 19 years old, the victim of a Coward Punch, while bravely assisting a friend under attack.

Martine's powerful presentation encouraged students to reflect on how they respond to anger, and the devastating consequences that can result from a single reckless decision. She emphasized the importance of developing self-awareness and practical strategies to defuse conflict and care for those around them.

In a world where disturbing content is so readily accessible online, it's more important than ever to expose young people to the real and lasting human cost of violence. Presentations like today's not only educate—they also empower our students to promote non-violent communication.

#MazenodCollege #PatCroninFoundation #EndTheCowardPunch #BeWise



Bellbird Park State Secondary College
September 12 · 🌐

On Monday, our Year 9 and 10 students were fortunate to hear from the Pat Cronin Foundation.

The presentation delivered a powerful message about making safe choices, showing respect, and standing up against violence. Our students were deeply engaged and left with meaningful lessons on kindness, responsibility, and supporting one another.

A heartfelt thank you to the Pat Cronin Foundation for the incredible work you continue to do in schools and communities. 🧡

#BellbirdPark #PatCroninFoundation #Respect #Kindness #Year9 #Year10





‘VERY, VERY REAL AND RELATABLE’

In one pocket of the greater Melbourne region - the Cardinia region on Melbourne's southeast fringe - the Foundation reached 1300 students in six schools in 2025.


There's a reason our presentations are highly valued.

According to Michelle Roberts, Wellbeing/Homeroom Coordinator for Years 10-12 at Pakenham's Lakeside College, the presentations "often have a profound impact on students because they are very, very real and relatable".

"These messages are so important for students of this age. The Foundation's presentations help prepare them for the next phase of their lives as they start to go out and socialise," she says.

"In fact, a presentation from the Foundation is the one of the last pastoral care lessons they have before they embark on Schoolies Week."

Pictured: Lakeside's Head of Senior School Amanda Trewin and Foundation facilitator Martine McKee with students.

 **Warragul Drouin Gazette**
August 20 · 🌐

The importance of resolving conflict and avoiding violence was front and centre for Warragul Regional College year nine students last Monday as they learnt the story of Pat Cronin, a Victorian teenager who lost his life to a coward punch.

Read the full story here 📄
<https://www.thegazette.com.au/pats-story-shows-that...>

Pat Cronin Foundation
Warragul Regional College



"It's important that they understand the impact of violence - not only to the victims but to the wider community. And this is exactly what this presentation does."

- Warragul Regional College year nine sub-school leader Lachlan Miller



REGIONAL TOURS

A week-long tour of Gippsland in southeast Victoria was just one of 16 regional excursions involving 72 presentations throughout the state in 2025.

Around 200 students at Warragul were among 1800 in the region taking part in the *Violence is Never OK* presentation. Teacher Lachlan Miller emphasised the importance of the messages for all teenagers.

"We try to ensure that all of our students see this presentation twice - in Grade 7 and again in Grade 9," he said.

"After the presentation we discuss its messages in our wellbeing program." Year 9 students Elsie Henshall and Willow Nicholls told the local Warragul Drouin Gazette that attending the presentation opened their eyes to how quickly a violent situation could escalate.

"I learnt what to do in a violent situation and how to respond," said Elsie. Willow said an important take away was the power of walking away before a situation became violent.

OVER 10,000
STUDENTS IN REGIONAL
VICTORIA REACHED IN 2025



PARENTS JOIN CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM

Parents stepped into the classroom as a Victorian primary school launched a pioneering initiative with the Foundation this year to teach children as young as five how to manage their emotions.

Heidelberg Primary School, in Melbourne's northeast, is partnering with us to deliver specialised education to all of its 500 students.

Unlike most wellbeing initiatives, parents will be front and centre in the school's rollout of our newly developed *Think Carefully, Act Kindly* resource kit.

Heidelberg has been the first to extend the model by actively involving parents – a move Assistant Principal Monique Rankin believes is essential.

"We're encouraging parents to sit in on their presentations alongside their children because we see this is a whole-of-community initiative, with these crucial skills needing to be discussed at home," she says.

OUR NEW
PRIMARY SCHOOL
PROGRAM HAS
REACHED

3000

CHILDREN



THE FEEDBACK



"By exploring Pat's story at an age-appropriate level, students also get a real-world understanding of the consequences of violence."

Monique Rankin
Assistant Principal | Heidelberg
Primary School, September 2025



"Keep going with what you guys are doing. It's a great initiative and it should be in all schools."

Jill Lim
Parent | Heidelberg Primary
School, September 2025



"I would 100 per cent recommend that all parents attend this presentation to ensure they are aligned with their children on these issues."

Katie Lavigne
Parent | Heidelberg Primary
School, September 2025



"I think it's important to talk about emotions and these matters, especially when kids are young and forming their own pathways through life."

Jim Blaney
Parent | Heidelberg Primary
School, September 2025

QUEENSLAND EXPANSION: 12,500 STUDENTS AND COUNTING

Newsreel Australia
September 3 -

Ipswich teenagers will be the next to hear an anti-violence message as a foundation, forged from grief, expands into Queensland.... See more



NEWSREEL.COM.AU

Spreading a message that violence is never OK - Newsreel



'LIFE SKILLS YOUNG PEOPLE NEED'

The Foundation is steadily strengthening its presence in Queensland, expanding beyond the state's southeast into regional centres such as Toowoomba and Townsville in 2025.

These photos capture moments from our visits to schools across the "Sunshine State".

According to Erin Reilly, the head of Wellbeing at Heatley Secondary College in Townsville:

"These are life skills young people need to navigate the world."

"With arguments often starting on social media and spilling over into real world, young people need the tools to de-escalate conflict before it turns physical."





STANDING UP FOR WHAT'S RIGHT

Foundation director Matt Cronin has always been - and remains - a passionate supporter of the Richmond Tigers.

However, as he made clear in a guest editorial for Melbourne's *Herald Sun* following the club's decision to impose only a four-match suspension on star player Noah Balta, who was awaiting sentencing for assault, his loyalty doesn't cloud his sense of right and wrong. Balta had pleaded guilty to assaulting a man at Mulwala Water Ski Club on December 30 - an act that sparked widespread outrage.

The Foundation played a leading role in the public storm after the incident.

Matt called on the AFL to adopt a firmer stance against "cowardly acts of violence," stressing that AFL players must be held to the highest standards as role models.

Using the moment to create something positive, the Foundation met with the AFL.

Head of AFL Victoria Greg Madigan subsequently emailed every league in the state, urging them to book a Foundation presentation.



Our coward punch laws are a joke

Convictions are rare, say victims' families

EXCLUSIVE
Robyn Riley
Olivia Jenkins

Devastated families of victims killed in coward-punch attacks are demanding Victoria's laws be tightened, as new research reveals only one offender has been sentenced under the legislation.

The research by Monash University and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine found it was "extremely difficult" in Victoria for the prosecution to prove three crucial points of the coward-punch laws introduced in 2014.

These are that the perpetrator intended to punch the victim, that they knew the victim was not expecting the punch, and that the punch was the direct cause of a victim's death.

The only killer to be sentenced under Victoria's one-punch laws was Joseph Esmail, who was given a 10-year non-parole period for the manslaughter of heart surgeon Patrick Pritzwald-Stegmann - who died after Esmail punched him in the head at Box Hill Hospital in 2017.

Senior author Monash University Associate Professor Jennifer Schumann said the team was surprised by the "low proportion of cases where the perpetrator was convicted using the coward-punch specific legislation".

Matt Cronin, the father of 19-year-old Patrick Cronin, who died after being punched in the head while trying to pull his friend out of a pub brawl in 2016, said the current laws



Matt Cronin, the father of coward punch victim Pat Cronin and (below) fellow victims Jaiden Walker and David Cassai.



were "totally ineffective". "Change the law - get rid of those clauses and just say, 'Did you hit someone in the head and did they die?' And if they did, then that's 10 years minimum," he said.

Mr Cronin's killer, Andrew William Lee, was sentenced to eight years' jail after pleading guilty to manslaughter in a plea bargain.

Since the laws were introduced in Victoria, the researchers said more than half of offenders were charged with manslaughter in fatal incidents of coward punch.

While offenders are charged with manslaughter, the one-punch laws come into play at a later stage in court, once an offender is found guilty of or has pleaded guilty to manslaughter, then raising the possibility of a mandatory 10-year minimum jail term.

Other one-punch victims include David Cassai who died after he was struck in the head on New Year's Eve in 2012.

In 2017, Richard Andrew Vincec fatally punched 22-year-old Jaiden Walker after leaving Cherry Bar in AC/DC Lane in Melbourne's CBD.

Luke Francis, 29, died after Tyson Armstrong, also 29, fatally punched him in a food court in March 2022.

Mr Cronin said: "My heart just breaks for (other) families because I know what's going to be the outcome. It'll be a cookie-cutter eight years with five year minimum".

She said the law would be

more effective if it was enacted more often, but believed prosecutors shied away from pushing for the 10-year sentence.

"Prosecutors prefer the manslaughter charge, mandatory minimum laws are not liked by the judiciary," she said.

Mr Francis' mother Michelle Harris said: "The one-punch laws in Victoria absolutely need to be reviewed. Our case should have been a clear, open-and-shut case of a coward punch, but

was instead charged as manslaughter. Even our judge, who did the best he could for us, asked the prosecution why this was not a coward-punch case - they said it was 'too hard to prove' despite clear CCTV footage from multiple angles showing what happened."

It is understood that several of the victims' families have met with attorneys-general in recent years about tightening the laws, but no changes have been made.

EDITORIAL, PAGE 24



Home era over for workers

EXCLUSIVE One-punch victims' families demand fix to 'flawed' law loophole after only single conviction in decade

COWARDS' WAY OUT

CANDIDATE'S BIKINI-GATE
STYLE MONDIA, A WOULD-BE DEPUTY MAYOR'S TALE DODGE DRAMA, PG 7

HIGH LIFE FOR KEVIN 787
SENSE BILL FOR PRESIDENT FLYER HURD'S GLOBAL JAGTNY, PAGE 5

TEEN HERO AT DOUBLE
SCHOLARSHIP RESCUES FUTURE FROM TWO CARIBBEAN ARRESTS, PG 1

Loopholes produce only one 'coward' conviction in a decade

LAW LACKS PUNCH



Coward punch victims (from left) Jaiden Walker, David Cassai, Patrick Cronin and Patrick Pritzwald-Stegmann; and (right) grieving parents Matt Cronin, Catherine Politi and Jon Walker.

EXCLUSIVE
Aneeka Simons

Victims' families and advocates are calling for an urgent overhaul of the state's "flawed" coward punch laws after just one conviction in a decade.

The violence prevention group said the requirement of intent proved major losses in criminal cases, resulting in lesser charges and sentences for coward killers, and that all meetings about the issue with the state government to date had been "fruitless".

Prosecutors in the case of Mr Cronin and Jaiden Walker - killed in 2017 - did not pursue jail time under the coward punch legislation due to concerns loopholes would apply both cases.

Mr Cronin's father, Matt Cronin, the father of 19-year-old Patrick Cronin who was killed in a coward punch attack in 2016, said the laws had loopholes that enabled offenders to avoid the 10-year minimum non-parole period for fatal attacks.

"Because of loopholes, these laws aren't doing what they are supposed to, which is to ensure that cowards who attack unsuspecting victims are held to account with longer jail terms," Mr Cronin said.

The law requires prosecutors to prove four key elements, including that the punch was deliberate. It was

Punch 'Can Kill' fought for the laws and said subsequent years of lobbying to fix loopholes had fallen on deaf ears.

"That this law is flawed and is failing to do what was intended is a real slap in the face to victims and keeping behind the back is and causing their hearts to be crushed," she said. "Victims have had enough of being second and their voices not being heard. The law needs to be fixed so that the law is fair to victims and keeping behind the back is and causing their hearts to be crushed," she said.

More than 170 Australians have been killed by coward punches since 2008 according to figures released by the Pat Cronin Foundation.

A government spokeswoman said coward punch laws were being monitored to "ensure they operate effectively and as intended".

"Our thoughts remain with the Cronin family and anyone who has lost a loved one as a result of these senseless attacks that have tragic and enduring impacts," the spokeswoman said.

Since these laws were introduced, the average sentence for manslaughter cases involving one punch has increased from six years to nine years imprisonment and average non-parole periods increased from four years to six years.

These laws aren't doing what they are supposed to

Matt Cronin
Pat Cronin's father

maximum jail term. The coward punch law came into effect following the one-punch attack that killed David Cassai on New Year's Eve, 2012.

His mother Catherine Politi, co-founder of STOP, One Punch Can Kill, said: "It's time to press and reflect and to call on government to do more to stop this scourge in our communities."

Green said: "On this 10th anniversary, it's time to press and reflect and to call on government to do more to stop this scourge in our communities."

OUR CAMPAIGN TO FIX FAILED LAWS

It was the legislation that promised to send a "very clear message" to perpetrators of violence that they would send a "long time in jail".

Eleven years on, and it's clear that Victoria's much-vaunted Coward Punch laws are not working.

The laws - introduced by the Napthine Government in 2014 - have only been been invoked once.

In fact, they were described as a "joke" in a major media report, *left*, coinciding with research by Monash University and The Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine - which found it was "extremely difficult" for the prosecutors to prove several crucial points under the legislation.

The Foundation - a frequent critic of the laws - has met with three successive state Attorneys-General to have the laws fixed - unfortunately to no avail.

We will continue however to press for a much needed overhaul.

'IT TAKES A VILLAGE'

We rely heavily on community and corporate support to fund our education programs - underscoring the old adage that "it takes a village" to raise a child.

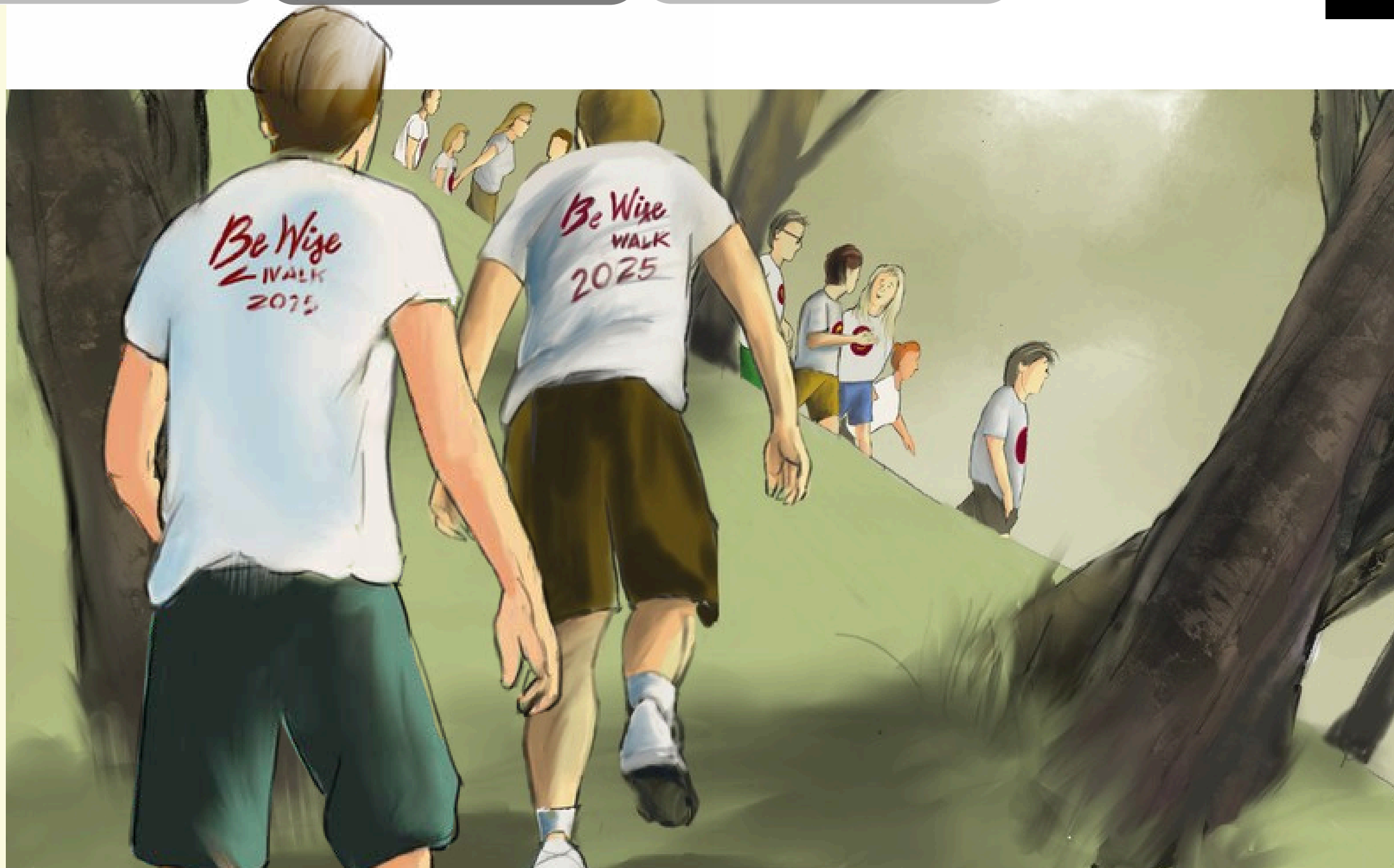
While our **Be Wise Ball**, in May, and the **Be Wise Walk**, in November, remain valuable community vehicles for raising awareness, our largest activation in 2025 was the **Pat Cronin Foundation Round** - galvanising the support of 72,000 footballers and netballers.

This year, we also welcomed five new corporate sponsors, ran a highly successful **Toyota RAV Raffle**, and were humbled by Melbourne's **Ben Duffy**, who committed to running a marathon every week to raise \$26,000 for the Foundation.

Ben's extraordinary effort embodies the spirit of the Be Wise message, showing how one person's determination can make a lasting difference in the lives of others.



Geared for success: Foundation director Matt chats with Nicholas Ley, the winner of our Toyota Rav 4 Raffle, which sold over 15,000 tickets - raising vital funds.



\$150,000

WAS RAISED THROUGH THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMS IN 2025

\$80,000

WAS COLLECTED THROUGH THE BE WISE WALK

EVERY
\$10

RAISED EDUCATES A YOUNG AUSTRALIAN IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION



AT A GLANCE

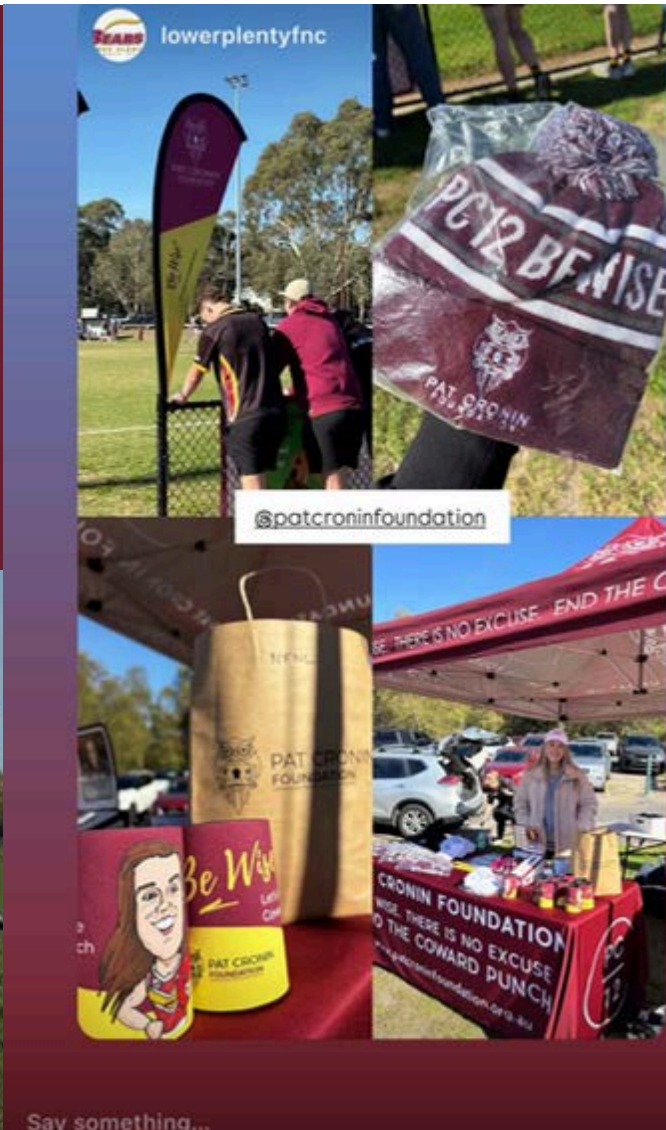
Number of players: 72,000

Leagues: Seven

Teams: 3038

Venues: 120

Supporters: 250,000



Extensive coverage: The 2025 Pat Cronin Foundation Round achieved a media reach well in excess of three million readers and viewers - across television, radio, podcasts, newspapers and socials.

THE PAT CRONIN FOUNDATION ROUND

Sealing its place on the Melbourne sporting calendar with a 30 per cent bigger footprint in 2025, Pat Cronin Foundation Round brought together more than 72,000 footballers and netballers in a stand against all forms of violence.

With all players wearing symbolic yellow armbands - the Foundation's official colour - the annual competition spanned 120 venues from May 2-4.

The competition also connected with an estimated crowd of 250,000 family members and supporters – a critical aspect in the wake of concerns around growing tensions on the sidelines of community sport.

The addition of two new leagues - including Australia's largest junior football league - Yarra Juniors, brought new depth to the event, garnering extensive media coverage.



"We all know that sport can bring out big emotions - the highs, the lows, and the heat of the moment - but teaching young players how to manage those emotions is just as important as teaching them the game itself. The Round is about reinforcing the life lessons young athletes learn both on and off the field, especially around managing anger, conflict, and making wise decisions."

Tom King
General Manager
Bendigo Football Netball League
May 2025

THE ROUND'S MEDIA REACH

The Round reached millions of viewers, readers and listeners across traditional media outlets - both national and local (even excluding online coverage). This was augmented by several million more through social media, podcasts and our league partners' websites.

Leader > Local Footy

Club and players to support the Pat Cronin Foundation round this weekend

Clubs and players from across the state will come together to say no to violence on and off the field and support a foundation started after a footy player died from a coward punch nine years ago. More here.



All players will wear yellow armbands throughout the Round. Picture: Supplied.

NEWSPAPERS:
840,000
(EXCLUDING DIGITAL)

TELEVISION:
850,000

RADIO:
320,000

SOCIAL MEDIA
2 MILLION +
ORGANIC
REACH



Big plans: We're working on expanding the size of the Round yet again in 2026, with the aim of enlisting even more players.





600 SUPPORTERS HELP US RAISE \$80,000

Rain failed to dampen the spirits of more than 600 participants in the 2025 Be Wise Walk - our 10th annual event.

Demonstrating the power of community, this year's walk raised an incredible \$80,000. Starting and finishing at Lower Plenty Football/Netball Club, it featured a new 5km route to make it more accessible to all.



The Cronin family at the Be Wise Walk for coward-punch victim Pat Cronin (inset).

Walkers honour punch victim Pat

Gerald Lynch

The dad of coward-punch victim Pat Cronin has spoken of the emotions his family have felt on the 10th annual walk in his honour.

More than 600 people took to the footpath on Sunday for the Pat Cronin Foundation's Be Wise Walk.

Despite gloomy grey skies, a strong crowd including foundation ambassador and former Richmond great Matthew Richardson showed out in Lower Plenty to support the cause.

Pat, 19, was killed during a brawl at Diamond Creek's Windy Mile pub in 2016. Foundation founder and

Pat's dad Matt spoke at the 5km walk.

"We don't want anymore violence, we've got to put an end to this," he said.

"Our education program is about helping young people to make wise decisions and to deal with their anger and aggression appropriately." Mr Cronin said the walk

sparked "a real rollercoaster of emotions".

"On one hand, we're incredibly touched that everyone here is thinking of Pat and helping to raise funds to provide young Australians with vital violence-prevention education. At the same time, we can't help but think about how different life

might have been if Pat hadn't been robbed of his future at such a young age."

The foundation offers education and research about coward punches to schools, sporting clubs and workplaces. The walk raised more than \$80,000. Visit patcroninfoundation.org.au to donate



ENGAGING WITH A NATIONAL AUDIENCE

As much as it is a fundraiser, the Be Wise Walk is also a powerful platform for raising awareness of the Foundation, challenging outdated notions of masculinity and engaging everyday Australians.

In 2025 the event received television and radio coverage as well as prominent exposure in the *Herald Sun*, Australia's largest newspaper.

When *Seven News Melbourne* shared a video clip of the day with its 2.3 million Facebook followers, the post quickly attracted hundreds of likes and shares, becoming one of the most commented-upon pieces of content within 24 hours.



Sam Switkowski

SAM TAKES A STAND

Fremantle Dockers star Sam Switkowski joined a field of high-profile participants at this year's walk.

Sam timed a visit back home to Melbourne from Perth so that he could take part in the event.

Sam became firm friends with Pat when they were teammates in a premiership football side at Research Juniors in 2016.

"All the guys from that premiership team, which was skippered by Pat, still have a unique bond," he says.

"I clearly remember the moment I found out that Pat was in hospital and on life support.

"I was on my way to a game in Melbourne when I saw the news on my phone. It was a weird, surreal feeling and our emotions were running high - we all had our fingers crossed hoping for the best over those hours.

"Up until then I had never really considered the effect that just one punch could have on so many lives, and the incident with Pat puts it all into perspective."



I strive to be a great role model as a footballer and a man, to demonstrate that physicality in sport is built on competitiveness and respect, stays on the field, and that toughness and masculinity has nothing to do with physical violence.

-Sam Switkowski

A NIGHT THAT GETS EVERYONE TALKING

3000+

PEOPLE ATTEND OUR
COMMUNITY
FUNDRAISERS
EACH YEAR

The annual black-tie Be Wise Ball is fast becoming one of Melbourne's most anticipated social events of the year. This year's ball - on June 28 - raised \$50,000 as well as awareness of our mission through television and radio coverage, and social media influencers across Tik Tok and Instagram. Potential audience reach amounted to more than 3.25 million.



BEN RUNS 52 MARATHONS IN A YEAR TO RAISE \$30,000

“Captivated” by a Foundation presentation at his school three years ago, Melbourne’s Ben Duffy set out to run a marathon a week (or 2200km in a year) to help fund our work in primary schools.

The 20-year-old’s epic challenge spanned all of 2025, raising \$30,000 along the way as well as capturing attention across the country.

According to Ben: “It has been a bit of an experiment in how far I can push my body.

“It’s incredible though how people have rallied around me on this challenge.”

Ben finished his final run at the Grand Hotel at Warrandyte on Sunday, December 21, to applause from an enthusiastic crowd as well as television cameras.

Foundation director Matt Cronin says it’s empowering to hear the impact we’re having on young men, like Ben.

“For someone his age to do what he’s doing is quite incredible. This is a perfect example of our programs coming full circle.”



Going the extra mile: Ben Duffy speaks to reporters at the completion of an epic fundraising effort for the Foundation.



STEPPING OUT FOR THE CAUSE

The Eltham Leisure Centre and Nillumbik Leisure raised \$14,586 for the Foundation through their Eltham Fun Run and Walk in November.

REAL CHANGE BEGINS AT THE GRASSROOTS



Inspiring people of all ages to come together in powerful, meaningful ways to support our messages is our ultimate aim. In 2025 for example, students of Melbourne's Balwyn High School (left) organised their own version of the Be Wise Walk, raising over \$800. Koonung Secondary College - where we've presented every year since 2019- raised funds through their Athletics Day BBQ (below), while Eltham East Primary (below left) supported us through their Grade 6 Market Day.





LEFT: Foundation director Matt Cronin chats with reporter Andrew McCormack prior to kick-off in the televised Pat's Match at Sandringham.



IMAGE: Field of View Sports Photography

OUR COMMUNITY IS GROWING

Reaching young people in sports clubs is an important part of what we do.

Aside from the Pat Cronin Foundation Round, we collaborated with the community this year through Pat's Match and a President's Lunch sponsored by Vic Rajah Family Lawyers at VFL club Sandringham.

The August 16 match - between the Zebras and rivals Essendon - was telecast on 7Plus.

Foundation director Matt Cronin was given the opportunity to chat with reporter Andrew McCormack on air about our work before kick-off.

Matt also addressed an audience of club supporters

and officials at the President's Lunch prior to the game. Similarly, we were also honoured to be involved with the Diamond Valley Cricket Association's Summer Smash finals (right) in February for the first time.

According to DVCA vice-president John O'Connor: "As a responsible organisation, we've partnered with the Foundation because sport helps shape young people's values.

"Going forward, we're urging all 31 of our DVCA clubs to book a Pat Cronin Foundation presentation. These sessions offer invaluable life skills - both on and off the field."

OUR NEWEST



"We're proud to be partnering with the Foundation for the next three years. The Be Wise Program is confronting but mostly inspiring. I urge all workplaces to engage with the community to further educate everyone to make better decisions."

Mick Harford
CEO | Blended Services Group
September 2025



"We're really pleased to be on board. If we can help the Foundation gets its messages out, then that's a really great thing."

Nick Kerr
National Sales/Marketing Manager | TigerTurf
September 2025

A THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

Our partners - both corporate and community - are critical to the work we do. We thank the following organisations for their generous support in 2025 and beyond:

CORPORATE:

Barry Plant Real Estate, Le Pine Funerals Invocare, YVE, Tiger Turf (new), Blended Services (new), Raven Scaffolds, Lonsford Insurance (new), Nellikir Australia (new)

COMMUNITY:

Northern Football Netball League, Essendon District Football League, Western Football Netball League, Riddell District Football Netball League, Yarra Junior Football League, Bendigo Football Netball League, Eastern Football Netball League, Diamond Valley Cricket Association

OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS CONTRIBUTED **\$217,500** IN 2025

WE BROUGHT **5** NEW CORPORATE PARTNERS ON BOARD THIS YEAR



Foundation facilitator Peter Kennedy with QANTAS staff ahead of a flight to Townsville, where we delivered the "Violence is Never OK" presentation to 800 high school students.

QANTAS REGIONAL GRANT

The Foundation secured assistance from QANTAS in 2025 as part of the airline's Regional Grants Program. The grant allowed us to reach 1700 students in regional Queensland, as well as Victoria, WA, and NSW. QANTAS also helped raise our national profile through a full-page ad in its in-flight magazine during the peak travel month of January, social media posts and billboard-style ads in its digital lounge screens in capital cities. Some of the stats:



EXPOSURE TO **384,000** MONTHLY READERS OF QANTAS MAGAZINE

AN EXTRA **135,925** VIEWERS OF DIGITAL LOUNGE SCREENS

WE USED THE GRANT TO VISIT **16** HIGH SCHOOLS

THAT'S **10** REGIONAL AREAS IN **4** STATES



"As Australia's largest junior football league, we recognise the role we play in shaping not just athletes, but respectful individuals. We're proud to partner with the Foundation in the Pat Cronin Foundation Round to equip the next generation with vital life skills."

Dominic Milesi
CEO | Yarra Junior Football
League, May 2025

A CAUSE THAT STRIKES A CHORD

Developing and delivering specialist education programs across Australia takes funding, and we welcome support to help us extend our reach and impact.

Pino di Roberto, Managing Director of Lonsford Insurance Brokers, (left) partnered with the Foundation in 2025 after hearing our director Matt speak at an industry event in Melbourne. Inspired by the Foundation's mission, he immediately offered his support.

Throughout this partnership, Pino will fund "Let's End the Coward Punch" armband tape for more than 70,000 players during the Pat Cronin Foundation Round over the next three years.

"This is absolutely a worthwhile cause - there seems to be so much senseless violence in our communities right now," says Pino. "When I listened to Matt speak it struck a chord.

"Education is such an important step in dealing with this problem."



WORKING WITH THE COURTS IN VICTORIA

We worked with Magistrates and Prosecutors across Victoria to offer a Diversion Program to educate offenders.

As a result of this recognition by Courts, legal professionals and ViCPol, we received \$15,000 in diversion payments and \$15,000 in court grants to support of our programs in 2025.

Our partnership with the Pat Cronin Foundation is extremely important to our team. The educational programs are life-changing, and we are very proud to support the 'Be Wise' message and honour Pat's legacy.

Andy Brown
Regional Manager/Le Pine Funerals
November 2025



"The work the Pat Cronin Foundation does has an incredibly meaningful and positive impact on the local communities we live and work in and our long-term partnership has become an inherent part of the Barry Plant story, both now and into the future.

Lisa Pennell
CEO/Barry Plant
November 2025





BUILDING CONNECTIONS ON THE SPEAKING CIRCUIT

In 2025, our participation in the speaking circuit proved to be a powerful way to build meaningful connections, share our mission, and engage new supporters.

Thanks to Foundation Board member Stella Pruscino, National Insurance Brokers Association (NIBA) Victoria selected us as the charity partner for their Gala Lunch in July, raising \$20,000. Following that, we were honoured to be chosen as one of two charity partners for NIBA's National Convention on the Gold Coast in

October, raising \$50,000. To top it off, NIBA's Young People in Insurance committee selected us as their charity for their end-of-year event, raising a further \$7,500. A huge thank you to everyone who supported us along the way. We've made some wonderful new friends who have pledged to support us into the future.



\$95,500
RAISED IN DONATIONS
INSPIRED BY KEYNOTE
ADDRESSES IN 2025

THESE DONATIONS
WILL ALLOW ALMOST
10,000
YOUNG AUSTRALIANS
TO RECEIVE VIOLENCE
PREVENTION EDUCATION



BELOW: Addressing the SAPIA Conference, new corporate partners Tiger Turf (far left), and Matt with former professional tennis pro Mark Edmondson - an attendee at the conference.

CONVERSATIONS THAT INSPIRE OTHERS TO ACT

In September, the Sport and Play Industry Association (SAPIA) Conference brought specialist construction industry leaders together in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales.

The Foundation was invited to address the conference through our association with new partner, artificial turf manufacturer Tiger Turf.

Matt took to the stage as the keynote speaker, sharing his message with an engaged audience.

In a spontaneous moment, one attendee jumped on stage and called for donations.

Explaining that he had two teenage sons, he pledged \$1000 to kickstart the fundraising - and inspired the room to act.

Within a few minutes, \$18,000 had been raised. That generosity continues to make a real impact, with Tiger Turf now helping to fund our primary school program.

Momentum carried on beyond SAPIA. Matt also spoke at the Count Financial Conference, a national event held on Hamilton Island and attended by 200 delegates.

As a leading wealth services provider, Count Financial offered a powerful platform to raise awareness within the corporate sector.

JOIN US: CREATE SAFER COMMUNITIES AND SAVE LIVES

We're excited to announce an expansion of our programs in 2026.

At the start of the year, we're launching two brand-new presentations for primary schools, fully aligned with the Australian Curriculum.

To further reinforce the learning from our Foundation visits, each primary year level will also receive up to three months of twice-weekly lesson plans.

This will provide face-to-face Foundation interaction with students of all ages from Prep to Year 12.

Now more than ever, we're seeking assistance from government and corporate partners to help bring these programs to more schools across the country.

Help us empower the next generation. Your contribution will directly support the development and delivery of these vital programs.



**PAT CRONIN
FOUNDATION**

PO Box 41, Surrey Hills VIC 3127

PHONE: 03 8578 2868

ABN: 99 612 532 788

www.patcroninfoundation.org.au



@patcroninfoundation



@patcroninfoundation



@PatCroninPC12



@patcroninfoundation