



Child safety reforms

Strengthening child safety in early childhood education and care

Australian governments are committed to ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of children in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, including centre-based and family day care (FDC) services.

Following extensive consultation Education Ministers have agreed to a [comprehensive package of reforms](#) outlined in a [Decision Regulation Impact Statement](#) (DRIS).

Education Ministers also announced additional national actions to strengthen child safety and quality and agreed to amendments to the National Law to make the safety, rights and best interests of children the paramount consideration for all decision makers in the ECEC system.

Key reforms outlined in the DRIS:



Ensure the safe use of digital devices in services



Mandate child safety training



'Inappropriate conduct' as an offence



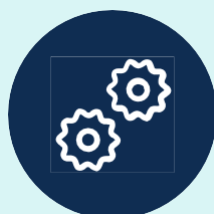
Information sharing with current approved providers



Broadened range of regulatory responses for misconduct



Must hold an approved/valid Working with Children Check



Mandate Working with Children Check status changes to approved provider and Regulatory Authorities



Remove ability to apply for service waivers related to reg 115 – premises designed to facilitate supervision



Allow the effective identification, monitoring and regulation of 'related providers'



Extend the limitation period for offences to enable prosecution to be undertaken



Expand the powers of Regulatory Authorities to gather and share information

Additional measures for FDC:



Require assessments of FDC residences to include areas near the residence that may be accessible to children



Enable Authorised Officers to access areas beyond the FDC service premises for a specific purpose or instance.

These reforms reflect both government and community expectations, reinforcing a culture of child safety above all else, and aligning with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

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National actions

Education Ministers also announced a range of additional national actions for early childhood education and care services to further strengthen child safety and quality measures.



National CCTV rapid assessment



Threefold blanket increase for all penalty amounts



A suite of changes to increase transparency for families (i.e. compliance actions and regulator visits)



Review of educator-to-child ratio practices (i.e. under the roof practices)



Staged approach to develop a national educator register

Why these reforms matter

Changes are designed to reduce risks and strengthen safeguards across the ECEC sector. Expected benefits include:

- Reduce the risk of harm through stricter regulations and better oversight.
- Clearer standards for behaviour, reporting, and regulatory responses.
- Enhance trust and confidence in the ECEC sector by aligning with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

NQF regulatory changes from 1 September 2025



1 Sept 2025: New policy and procedures required for safe use of digital technologies and online environments.

- 24-hour notification for physical/sexual abuse incidents and allegations (down from 7 days).
- Use of vaping devices and substances banned in service environments.



1 Jan 2026: Refinements to the National Quality Standard to strengthen focus on child safety.

- Support is available with two new NQF Child Safety Guides.

The reforms will be implemented in stages to allow adequate preparation and support.

Legislative amendments for the majority of the reforms are expected to be finalised by the end of 2025.

