

ELAA welcomes changed child safety measures announced by the Federal Government

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Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) welcomes the government's newly announced child safety measures, an important step toward creating safer environments for all children in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC).

"These reforms closely align with the recommendations outlined in ELAA's recent submission to the national Child Safety Review, reflecting the voices and experiences of our members across the sector. We are particularly pleased to see a unified endorsement of these changed measures from Education Ministers across all states, signalling national consistency and a stronger focus on embedding child safety in everyday practice," said Dr Karina Davis, CEO of ELAA.

ELAA supports the key changes announced, including strengthened mandatory reporting, a ban on vapes in all services, and clearer policy requirements around the use of digital devices when working children.

In its *PolicyWorks Catalogue* - a key member resource supporting ECEC services to develop and update policies aligned with legislative, regulatory, and funding obligations, ELAA has been consistently positioning the need for change across a range of areas highlighted in the Child Safety Review. One example of this is ELAA's position on the use of digital devices, and it is pleased to see the Review also highlight the need for this change.

While these reforms are a positive step forward, ELAA continues to call for further action, including consistent, mandatory child safety training for all ECEC staff, including those in non-child-facing roles to better support a whole-of-service Child Safety culture. We strongly believe that "*child safety is everyone's responsibility*."

At the same time, we acknowledge the existing challenges our sector is facing — including persistent workforce shortages, the pressure on a low-paid and overstretched workforce, and the unique burden carried by small, independent providers. Any reform must be supported with realistic, resourced implementation strategies to ensure lasting impact.



We look forward to working alongside government and sector colleagues to implement these reforms and to support a broad cultural shift in how child safety is defined and enacted. A truly child-safe environment must go beyond compliance to foster emotionally secure, inclusive, and supportive spaces where every child feels safe and joyful in their learning.

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ELAA is a national peak body for not-for-profit providers of early childhood education and care. Our vision is Excellence and Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care. www.elaa.org.au