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ECEC Child Safety Reforms Getting implementation right for better outcomes

A suite of reforms in the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector take effect today as part of the [federal government response](#) to revelations of unacceptable practices and devastating safety issues in early childhood services.

The IEU acknowledges the dedication and expertise of the overwhelming majority of teachers and educators working in the early childhood sector. Committed and professional early childhood workers are under enormous pressure and suffering significant mental and emotional strain as a result of the careless or criminal actions of a few.

Failures to meet supervision or safety standards, or inappropriate vetting or employment practices, must be promptly addressed and rigorously enforced through mechanisms such as the National Early Childhood Worker Register and the mandatory Child Safety Training modules, which commence operation today.

IEU members also urged an essential review of child supervision rules and an inquiry into the prevalence of “across the service” or “under the roof” miscalculations, whether accidental or to increase profits. IEU members can be proud of their role in advocating for the closure of loopholes in these practices across the sector.

While IEU members have signalled their support for wide-ranging child safety reforms, successful implementation poses some significant challenges. The IEU has consistently raised workload issues in relation to duplication of documentation associated with the national Early Childhood Worker Register and highlighted concerns about access to child safety training, particularly in a sector still struggling to employ teachers to backfill or provide release to those attending professional learning.

Consistency and clarity of communications will also be a critical factor in the success of these measures. IEU members dedicate themselves to high quality education and care and wish to fulfill their obligations. However, they are also extremely time-poor, and rely on clear and concise communications from federal and state authorities that eliminate confusion and increase the likelihood of compliance without unnecessary duplication of workloads.

The early childhood sector and the IEU are committed to the success of the child safety reforms and will continue to engage with federal and state authorities responsible for their execution. As the rollout of these reforms gets underway, the union will seek member feedback on emerging implementation issues that negatively affect the intended outcomes of the child safety measures and convey these concerns to the relevant authorities.