



# Inquiry into the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector in Victoria

## Victorian State Submission

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# The Institutional Courage to Support Courageous Conversations:

## *preventing child sexual abuse in early childhood education and care*

*“I teach Body Safety to children aged from 3 to 5. Recently, I visited a kindergarten on the outskirts of Melbourne. The setting was a mix of green pastures, busy truck-filled roads, and the constant hum of nearby construction. Inside, the atmosphere was vibrant, children smiled widely, colourful artwork lit up the walls, toys lay scattered across the floor, and a small chair sat in front of a worn-out mat, ready for me to deliver the Superstars program.*

*During this session, one child stood out to me and because she exhibited several atypical behaviours that were enough for me to give her a little extra of my time. When talking about the names for private body parts, another child shared that she often followed and watched other children go to the bathroom. Later, during our finger puppet help-seeking activity, she courageously told me, ‘My mum and dad make me feel happy, but my brother makes me feel sad.’ That was enough for me to speak to a centre educator, who also had documented concerns for this child. Together we made a report to child protection. This also took great courage on the educator’s part.” - Body Safety Australia Program Facilitator\**

Body Safety Australia welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Select Committee. We urge the Victorian Government to demonstrate leadership and courage, mirroring that of the children it seeks to protect, by implementing a sustainable, long-term vision for preventing harm and ensuring child safety in early childhood education and care.

Child sexual abuse and exploitation is a form of gender-based violence. Not in that the victims are predominately girls and women, because children of all genders are vulnerable to sexual abuse victimisation, but in that the perpetrators of institutional sexual abuse are nearly always men (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses Child Sexual Abuse 2017). To achieve success in preventing perpetrators of child sexual abuse from harming children in early childhood education and care settings, the Victorian Government must now seek the advice of the primary prevention sector, specifically those dedicated to eradicating sexual violence.

Since the release of the Betrayal of Trust Report, Body Safety Australia has played a crucial role in abuse prevention by supporting educational settings, particularly early childhood education and care through awareness raising, capacity building, responding and advocacy.

Body Safety Australia is not an early childhood education and care provider and does not purport to speak for the tireless and dedicated professionals who teach and care for

children every day. Just as early childhood education and care professionals are not experts in child sexual abuse prevention. To truly uphold and protect children's rights and prevent harm from happening, both areas of specialist knowledge must work hand in hand.

Both sectors agree that in discussing child safety solutions, an absence of harm represents the very minimum standard we should accept. Potential solutions considered for implementation should also ensure continued commitment to the Australian Early Years Learning Framework where children's curiosity, joy, connection, and purposeful risk-taking are valued alongside their right to safe and secure environments. There is a strong evidence base underpinning quality early childhood education and care and any measures introduced to enhance child safety must never compromise this.

For example, the introduction of surveillance equipment in early childhood education and care to prevent harm must not undermine a child right's approach that safeguards a child's right to image autonomy (Carson, D. The Spoke 2018). This underscores the need for an approach that encompasses intersecting capabilities; drawing on both early childhood pedagogy and expertise in child sexual abuse prevention, to ensure children's rights and wellbeing remain at the forefront of reforms.

**Body Safety Australia recommends that the Victorian Government demonstrate leadership and courage by committing to invest in evidence-based child sexual abuse primary prevention programs that:**

- Implement age-appropriate curricula designed to prevent abuse
- Adopt a responsive whole-of-community approach to drive cultural and structural change
- Provide ongoing evidence-based professional development to the early childhood workforce and the support to attend professional development sessions
- Foster communities of practice, and support cross-sector collaboration and coordination between the early childhood education workforce and the primary prevention sector
- Ensure sustainability through a long-term vision, strategic approach, and adequate funding for both sectors
- Embed continuous improvement through rigorous evaluation and ongoing development

## Introduction

*It is never a child's responsibility to protect themselves from abuse. Imagine a small child, two, three years old, being expected to protect themselves from an adult who intends to harm them. – Carson*

At Body Safety Australia, we know that when children receive age-appropriate education on child sexual abuse prevention, they are less likely to experience abuse (Mathews et al., 2023). However, our work extends beyond engaging with children alone because we know that it is adults' responsibility to protect children while creating environments where children can be empowered to know their rights and seek help if needed. The evidence for whole of community or socio-ecological approaches is found both in the primary prevention sector (Our Watch, Change the Story 2021) and child development (Bronfenbrenner, U. The ecological of human development 1979). It is this approach that has the capacity to drive broader cultural and structural change.

This socio-ecological approach is founded on the evidence that when parents, carers, and educators receive training focused on identifying and intercepting grooming behaviours and reporting abuse, children are safer (Walsh et al., 2019). Importantly, this education builds the confidence required to take proactive steps, such as intervening in grooming, reporting concerns (against colleagues) and helping prevent harm before it occurs (Mathews et al., 2023). This is the power of our work at Body Safety Australia, underscoring why child sexual abuse primary prevention is key to reducing instances of harm.

Building children's understanding of their human rights and ability to seek appropriate help is essential. But it is the adults in these environments - their educators, parents, care givers, extended family, cultural, sporting, faith and recreational leaders that play the most critical role. Caring adults' ability to provide guidance, model safe relationships, and protect children from harm is what creates generational change. Empowering the entire community is fundamental to creating environments capable of implementing meaningful and enduring prevention strategies.

Body Safety Australia's abuse prevention program *Superstars* is one of the evidence-based offerings on the School Readiness Funding Menu. In 2024, we delivered 517 Superstars sessions to kindergarten children, 192 workshops for their parents and carers, and 99 professional development workshops for the early childhood educators from. We support communities right across the state, from Kalkallo to Narre Warren, Mornington, Melton, Malvern, St Kilda, Warrnambool, Murrayville, Ballarat and Tallangatta.

Sadly, sexual abuse remains prevalent in Australia, with more than one in three women and almost one in five men reporting such harm during childhood (ACMS, 2023). Young children are especially vulnerable. Predators rightly believe they are more likely to be able

to escape detection or conviction of younger children due to them being preverbal or have limited language skills, being physically dependent, and trusting of caregivers. When children do disclosure, their developmental stage often prevents them providing a sequential account of events, leading to perceptions of children as ‘unreliable witnesses.’ Childhood sexual abuse can be perpetrated by either ‘opportunistic or situational offenders’, those who tend to act impulsively to abuse children and who are likely to have adult sexual and romantic relationships, and ‘persistent’ perpetrators, those who deliberately seek out opportunities to sexually abuse children. (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2017.) It is the latter that seeks to exploit the structural weaknesses of institutions to offend against children. The early childhood education and care sector has demonstrated significant vulnerabilities, highlighted in recent inquiries. Governments and all caring adults should prioritise reducing these risks and implementing proactive measures to prevent abuse before it occurs.

*A couple of years ago I started calling it the ‘unintended consequences of the Royal Commission’. Institutions were implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission. As a result, predators found it harder to gain access to children. So, they started looking for the weak links, those spaces that hadn’t been able to respond as effectively. And they found them, dating apps, kids’ social media and gaming accounts, NDIS recipients, OHSC and early childhood education and care settings. We haven’t reduced the number of child sex offenders, we’ve only achieved concentrating them in fewer, more vulnerable settings. – Carson*

### **Courage to deliver abuse prevention education**

Body Safety Australia recognises that grooming is a critical yet often overlooked issue in public discourse. In 2025, this is more critical than ever before. Widespread reporting of alleged grooming and abuse taking place in Victorian early childhood services has sparked national conversations around how to protect young children from harm. To access children, perpetrators target management, colleagues, parents and carers to build trust. Long before they groom children, they are grooming the community responsible for protecting children. Too often recruitment processes fail to identify potential predators, individual educators fail to recognise that grooming and subsequent abuse is occurring, and if they do, they often fail to understand the complex reporting process or have the courage to speak up and report (Diamond & Carson 2025). This is where primary prevention education is integral.

Our Body Safety Superstars program is a prevention program delivered to all children. Like all primary prevention initiatives, there are sometimes children who participate who have already been victimised. In these cases, the child may find the words and courage to disclose to our program. When that happens, we work closely with educators and

centre directors to ensure that appropriate action is taken. For example, in term 3 2025, our staff documented 20 signs of concerning atypical behaviour in children, resulting in six calls to The Orange Door, and 12 reports to child protection. We also identified two cases of reportable conduct within centres (Diamond & Carson 2025).

We have faced criticism from those who say that the children are too young, that by teaching them the names of genitals we are ruining their innocence, that it's only ever a parents' role to teach about bodies, that parents from some cultural or faith groups will be unsupportive. Yet, seeing the program in action, nearly all detractors comment on how age-appropriate and non-frightening it is for children to learn body safety.

Primary prevention efforts and education programs work, and in recent years have contributed to lowering rates of institutional child sexual abuse in Australia (Mathews et al., 2023). Ensuring safety in early childhood education and care requires a strong focus on preventing child sexual abuse. However, prevention must be conceptualised much earlier than current national debates suggest. Below are recommended preventative interventions, beginning with the recruitment process to prevent offenders from entering the sector, followed by strategies for detecting grooming within the workplace. These measures extend to community-wide approaches, including working with parents and carers and preventing the creation of child sexual exploitation material in early childhood education and care settings.

### **Courageous recruiting**

Preventing child sex offenders from gaining employment in early childhood education settings relies on both strengthening systemic and structural issues while building the capacity of organisations and leaders to practice child safe recruitment.

We draw attention to sector wide vulnerabilities including low qualification requirements, and poor pay and working conditions that lead to high job vacancies and high turnover of staff. Additionally, for-profit models that sacrifice investment in quality and an across the sector understanding of parents, not children, as the key stakeholder leads to significant compromises in child rights and safety.

Body Safety Australia supports the Victorian Government's commitment to a national Working with Children Check and centralised information sharing through a new Shared Intelligence and Risk Assessment Capability.

However, it is important to emphasise that these reforms alone will not prevent offenders from gaining employment in the early childhood education and care sector. Particularly if the sector lacks the necessary tools, such as robust recruitment practices combined with the ability to identify potential predators and grooming behaviours. In addition, educating hiring managers and interviewers on identifying grooming behaviours would ensure compliance with Victorian Child Safe Standard 6. This is where an organisation

must, at a minimum, ensure that recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.

Child Safe recruiting is much more than checking for a valid WWCC. To effectively interview and reference check, the hiring manager must first understand grooming behaviour, be trained in asking behavioural questions of both the candidate and referee and be confident in asking inquisitive follow up questions. This skill is one that is decreasing and must be specifically taught as recruitment processes become increasingly automated.

Disappointingly, the Rapid Review failed to name primary prevention initiatives as a recommendation, yet it is the primary prevention sector that understands the complexities of recruitment and can train centre directors on Child Safe recruiting. Courageous recruitment involves implementing child-safe screening practices to ensure that only suitable individuals are employed in roles with direct contact with children. These practices can only be effective when staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify grooming behaviours and ask the right questions designed to screen out those seeking to harm children.

### **Courageous learning**

Ideally, potential offenders should be identified during pre-employment screening. If they are not detected at that stage, the next critical opportunity to disrupt harmful behaviour lies in the vigilance and proactive action of colleagues once employment has commenced. Reporting abuse requires not only the ability to recognise warning signs but also considerable courage, particularly when the report involves a colleague. Currently, 148 childcare workers have been alleged or convicted of child sexual abuse or inappropriate conduct (Adele & Gillett 2025).

The Rapid Review highlighted that an increasing number of new graduates are entering services with limited knowledge of the fundamentals of early education, let alone child safety principles such as recognising sexual abuse or grooming. Body Safety Australia strongly supports the principle of ‘four eyes on the child’ outlined in Chapter 6, if that results in increased ratios and an end to misuse of the ‘under the roof ratios’. However, eyes are only as good as what they are trained to see. Just as lifeguards are trained to understand how silent drowning can be, so too should educators be trained to see how grooming can look similar to appropriate relationship building with children.

We support the recommendations outlined in Chapter 8 of the Review, which aim to strengthen the workforce and child safety through training. To achieve these outcomes, the Victorian Government must commit to in person training which is evidence-based and effective.

Our experience in primary prevention education highlights that online modules alone are insufficient; despite completing annual mandatory reporting online training, many educators cannot identify signs of abuse, do not understand reporting processes, and sometimes actively downplay indicators of harm.

*I was talking to a four-year-old about private body parts when he blurted 'that's what my grandpa does to me'. The room educator looked startled. When the child had finished telling me what he wanted to and went to play with the Lego, she said, 'he always makes up stories. His grandpa is lovely; he picks him up every Friday and they go for ice-cream or hot chocolate'. I nodded. 'We're going to report it,' I said. 'Do you know who to report to or what to do?' I knew she had completed her online mandatory reporting modules only two months earlier, but in that moment, she had no idea. – Carson*

This is far less evident in centres where staff have strong relationships with each other, the children and families, are empowered and supported, and receive thorough, ongoing in-person professional development. Evaluation of our 'See It, Say It', a reportable conduct and courageous conversations professional development workshop, shows that the greatest barrier is not only lack of willingness or knowledge of reporting processes, but the personal and cultural obstacles that obstruct reporting; fear of repercussions for self or others, fear of getting it wrong, belief that they must have all the evidence before they report.

*In training the kinder teacher said, 'Oh, we used to have a wonderful male educator here! He was so good with the children.' Many of the staff agreed with her but then one said, 'remember that time when I said something to him about how he would sit on the floor to read stories and have the children straddle his legs, facing him? I wasn't accusing him of anything, just explaining that it's not how we do things. It doesn't look good if a parent walks in. But he became so angry with me! He said I was picking on him for being male. I don't want to discriminate, so I didn't raise it again.' – Carson*

We assert that the ability to discuss the complexity of gender in early childhood education can only be conducted in safe in-person environments where educators have the opportunity to ask questions relevant to their communities and cultures. The failure to look to the primary prevention sector when discussing the gendered nature of child sexual abuse perpetration has led to discrimination against male educators. In our parent and professional development sessions we explore the hard questions about the beneficial qualities of male early childhood educators, and conversely the behaviours of men who gain early childhood education qualifications in order to abuse children.

To overcome this, our in-person training creates opportunities for educators to connect, reflect, ask questions, and engage in peer learning, fostering motivation and deeper understanding. We use pointed reflections and case studies that unpack intersections of power imbalances while exploring practical scenarios, such as who to report to, how to

find support, and the steps involved in responding to allegations. This immersive approach ensures educators leave with the confidence and clarity needed to act decisively when a child's safety is at stake.

### **Institutional courage**

Communities of Practice (CoPs) are essential for strengthening the early childhood education and care workforce. Almost 40% of long day care staff have less than three years' experience, (Bryant, L 2024). Combine this with a sector-wide high reliance on agency workers and frequent movement between employers (Adele & Gillett 2025), the risk of losing the benefits of investment in professional development is significant. CoPs that span workplaces and community demographics help retain and share knowledge. They have proven effective in building confidence among less experienced or unsupported staff by enabling them to learn not only from experts but also gain courage from peers facing similar challenges.

When the Child Safe Standards were first introduced in 2016, the Commission for Children and Young People hosted regular child safety standards (CSS) CoPs. In November 2025, our CEO, Deanne Carson, spoke about grooming at the Commission's final CoP. With the change in regulator, we urge the Victorian Government to reinstate sector specific and cross-sector Communities of Practice at the earliest possible time. CoPs should draw on professional knowledge from early childhood education and care, primary prevention, law enforcement, digital safety, child psychology, law, and peak bodies representing the cultural, faith, community and disability groups that represent the children we seek to protect.

This requires a committed investment by the Victorian government.

### **Courageous parents and carers**

Parents are often an overlooked resource when investing in child safety in early childhood education and care. We support the Recommendation 18 of the Rapid Review to work with experts to promote evidence-based advice for parents on prevention education, signs of grooming and how to raise concerns.

To ensure that children are protected in early childhood education and care, Body Safety Australia prioritises working with parents and carers who are then empowered to incorporate child safety principles in their parenting. Our two-hour Superstars and Digital Safety workshops cover understanding childhood sexual abuse, identifying and challenging grooming, behavioural and physical signs of abuse, teaching body safety to their children and wider community, and how to hear and respond to a child's disclosure of harm in a trauma healing manner. Over the last ten years of delivering in person and online workshops for parents, we have seen a significant decrease in parent engagement. Strategies such as flexible workshop times, providing food, childcare, interpreters or even

transportation in some communities are helpful. We have resisted moving to pre-recorded parent sessions due to the number of times our facilitators are approached at the end of a session by a parent who is courageous enough to share for the first time their concerns for their child or that they themselves were abused as children. These sessions are often the first step an adult takes in connecting with services.

*When we deliver parent workshops, it's nearly always mums who attend. But when we deliver in the same centre every year, we begin to see more dads. They say that their partners attended the previous year and they've realised that it takes dads talking to other men to change cultural norms around children's rights to be free from sexual abuse and exploitation. – Carson*

Whole of community primary prevention education for parents and carers builds confidence, fosters courageous conversations, and builds community networks. Body Safety Australia has specialist knowledge and experience in working with parents from diverse communities including Aboriginal, migrant and refugee, faith-based, disability, LGBTQIA+, children in out of home or kinship care and in metropolitan, regional and rural communities. We have strong community partnerships and proven experience adapting programs to meet the needs and promote the strengths of diverse communities.

We call on the Victorian Government to work with Body Safety Australia in developing and delivering a range of resources for parents and carers.

### **Courageous conversations and digital technology**

Courage is essential for adults to adapt to technological advances, and primary prevention of digital technology-related harms is critical to ensuring children's online safety. However, low levels of technology literacy persist in early childhood education and care, and the rapid technological advancements leave educators feeling overwhelmed by the chasm between their own childhood experiences and the experiences of the children they care for. This leaves children vulnerable to new forms of harm.

While digital technology offers many benefits for children and educators, it has also facilitated the creation of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and child sexual exploitation material (CSEM). Without addressing gaps in digital, technological, and safety literacy, the early childhood education and care sector will remain ill-equipped to detect and prevent the creation of CSAM or CSEM.

Over the last ten years we have seen cultural shifts in the use of digital technology in early childhood education and care including the rapid uptake of digital documentation platforms like Storypark and Xplor allowing parents to advocate for frequent photo taking of their child throughout the day. This 'parent as stakeholder' decision-making has led to an erosion of children's rights to digital autonomy. Simultaneously and conversely, most

early childhood settings were staunch in providing environments free from screen-based entertainment for children.

Recently the peak body, Early Childhood Australia updated their Statement on Young Children and Digital Technologies which promotes the ways in which digital technologies can be incorporated into services. This coincided with many centres reflecting on the child's rights and safety, and paring back their use of internet connected technologies as a result. There is now a greater than ever polarisation of technology use in early childhood settings, with some embracing tech and screens with little critical thought and others moving to remove digital documentation platforms and only take photos with a child's consent that are then printed for viewing by parents at the end of the day.

Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) has become hotly debated as a response to child abuse in early childhood education and care settings. Some argue that it is a deterrent, others that it will facilitate convictions when children are abused. Body Safety Australia is strongly opposed to the use of CCTV in early childhood settings. We do not believe that it is a deterrent to those who intend to harm children or that it will facilitate convictions. In fact, we know that abusers can evade detection and deliberately abuse children out of range of the cameras. We are concerned that the presence of CCTV will create a false sense of security, diminishing the imperative for supervision by confident, caring and highly trained educators. We are concerned that the footage will be used to create CSAM or CSEM, either by a staff member with access to the footage, or through hacking, as has already been seen. Lastly, as child rights' advocates, we continue to assert that children have the right to play, eat, sleep, toilet and bathe without surveillance.

*We've got to ask ourselves, if our answer to abuse prevention is the erasure of children's right to privacy and dignity, then surely, it's the wrong solution. We're not trying to prevent graffiti by installing CCTV in public spaces. Imagine equating putting cameras in children's toilets and sleeping rooms to prevent child sexual abuse with putting CCTV in an alleyway to prevent graffiti. – Carson*

Concerningly, CSAM is difficult to detect and like child sexual abuse, has long-lasting, far-reaching consequences for children. Therefore, the risks associated with CCTV footage, such as the potential to misuse footage to create CSAM, outweighs its purported safety benefits.

We also posit that the recent ban on personal devices for staff is more security theatre. In a time where cameras can be disguised in sunglasses or lapel pins, the ban on phones and watches for a workforce comprised of conscientious and caring professionals, seems a mean-spirited punishment that further disempowers those who work hardest for children. With a predominately female workforce, many staff also have caring duties in their personal lives and this ban has placed undue hardship on them as they become uncontactable by their children's schools or by aging parents. This is particularly true for

the large number of educators who work casually or through an agency and may not have a regular place of work where they can be contacted.

Primary prevention efforts targeting parents and carers are vital to digital safety efforts. Children are more online than ever before, and this increased online presence exposes children to risks such as accidental exposure to harmful content and intentional grooming. Although children in early childhood education and care settings rarely access internet-connected devices, 80% of four-year-olds use the internet at home, and 30% have their own device (eSafety Commissioner 2025). Through parent and carer workshops, we emphasise curiosity about children's online activities, for example, understanding the games and platforms they use, whether they include chat or photo functions, and encourage promoting open communication rather than abstinence, especially if harmful content is encountered.

Educator training on children's digital technology use and exposure outside of their education and care setting is essential. Professional development should include understanding how exposure to age-inappropriate sexual content online may manifest in play, enabling educators to provide appropriate support. It must also support educators in identifying when a child is being groomed by someone online or in the home to create CSAM/CSEM. This is often much more difficult to identify, especially if there is no contact offending and with rapidly evolving technologies, early childhood staff should receive annual training on how best to protect and respond to children being victimised online.

*An educator talked to me about the unusual way a child was dancing. She said it was disturbingly sexualised. The child would also repeat odd phrases that didn't seem to come from any popular children's content. She didn't display any other concerning behaviours. The child lived with Mum. As we talked through the digital safety workshop you could see the educator becoming more worried. Afterwards she shared privately that this information and a few other things she'd noted made her think that maybe mum was livestreaming CSEM of the child for profit. – Carson*

Recent policy changes banning personal devices in children's rooms and installing CCTV will remain ineffective without mandatory digital and technology safety training for all staff, parents, and carers. Notably, the Rapid Review failed to include mandatory online safety training, a critical omission that must be addressed to protect children from harm.

### **Courageous children**

Body Safety Australia's Superstars program is designed to empower and educate children about their right to bodily autonomy while equipping communities to prevent child sexual abuse. While layers of adult oversight and vigilance are essential, there are times when offenders can still slip through the cracks, making it crucial that prevention education is also provided to children. Disclosing abuse requires immense courage, and our suite of

programs aim to build that foundation of confidence and safety, for children and the wider community.

Each Superstars workshop is structured around ten core learning objectives. By the end of the program, students will have explored topics including:

- Understanding and expressing emotions
- Recognising early warning signs
- The fight, flight, freeze response
- Assertive communication
- Identifying safe adults
- Bodily autonomy
- Differentiating private, personal, and public body parts
- Necessary touch
- Secrets versus surprises
- Navigating tricky (grooming) behaviour

Children need programs which use anatomically correct language, including naming genitals, as this reflects best practice in child sexual abuse prevention. While resistance to naming anatomical body parts is common, these concerns can be addressed through education, courageous conversations, and relationship-building with educators, parents, and carers (Diamond & Carson).

Through our primary prevention work, we are planting seeds that will help raise a generation of children who can listen to their bodies, recognise their feelings, respect the rights of others, and speak up when something doesn't feel right. This is how courage is built, and it is a powerful step toward preventing violence, not only in childhood but across a lifetime.

### **In closing**

At Body Safety Australia, we urge the Victorian Government to be courageous. The heartbreaking harms experienced by children that led to this Inquiry must not be diminished in decision making. As outlined in our recommendations at the beginning of this submission, by committing to invest in evidence-based child sexual abuse primary prevention programs, the Victorian Government can best ensure that children are kept safe from harm.

**We recommend that the Government demonstrate leadership by funding programs that:**

- Funding age-appropriate evidence-based body safety programs designed to prevent abuse.
- Adopt a whole-of-community approach to drive cultural and structural change.

- Provide best practice professional development for the early childhood education and care sector that is responsive to changes in legislation and technology, adaptive for different communities and contexts and delivered by specialist primary prevention workforces.
- Establish and commit to ongoing Communities of Practice and support cross-sector collaboration and coordination.
- Ensure sustainability through a long-term vision, strategic approach, and adequate funding.
- Embed continuous improvement through rigorous evaluation and ongoing development.

Body Safety Australia would welcome the opportunity to present evidence to the committee in person. We believe that sharing our insights and expertise directly will strengthen understanding of the critical role primary prevention plays in keeping children safe and ensuring systemic change across early childhood education and care.

\*All examples given have been de-identified and are the amalgamation of many interactions had in the course of our work.

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