



Select Committee on the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector in Victoria

Hearing Date: 10 March 2026

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: Body Safety Australia

Received date: 1 April 2026

1. **Melina BATH, p. 54**

Question Asked:

The rapid review – you offered to provide government the wisdom of your experience and research. If you are comfortable, can you take it on notice and provide that to the committee?

Deanne CARSON: Sure.

Response:

Body Safety Australia developed, evaluated and has delivered sexual violence primary prevention education in early childhood and school settings since 2015, and our practice has shown that this work requires a very specific and specialised skillset.

Our research and development team draw on a multi-discipline and cross sector approach. At the time of founding the organisation, there was no evidence-based, whole of community approach to sexual violence prevention education. We were effectively, building the evidence-base that is now embedded in the EYLF.

The practice evidence we have built over a decade of working with over 100,000 children and their adults has reaffirmed that this approach continues to be critical when delivering primary prevention education as it sits at the intersections of child development, education, gender-based violence prevention, disability inclusion and support, criminology, psychology and sexology. All of these disciplines are necessary and not one can do the work without being informed by and working in collaboration with the others.

In delivering primary prevention education to the diverse communities in this State, our team undertakes extensive training on supporting communities most at risk of being targeted by child sex offenders in a way that recognises and upholds the strengths of those diverse communities. Our ongoing professional learning encompasses supporting the following cohorts

- Children with disabilities and neurodivergent children

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- LGBTIQ+
- Migrant and refugee
- Regional and rural
- Children in out of home care
- Those with experiences of trauma

In addition to this, our programs have been reviewed by young people on our Youth Advisory Council to ensure they are relevant and representative of their experiences.

Our programs draw on frameworks such as [Change the Story](#), [the Early Years Learning Framework](#), [eSafety developmental continuum](#) [The National Plan to end Violence Towards Women and Children](#), The Australian Curriculum, alongside contemporary research in primary prevention and child development. This evidence base is strengthened by our own evaluation data.

Our programs have been externally evaluated, and all these evaluations are being replicated in 2026. (see attached) We have also attached our Theory of Change and the responses from the webinar we hosted for the Early Childhood Education and Care sector a week after the arrest of Joshua Dale Brown was made public.

We offer this practice wisdom to the Committee as evidence of what effective primary prevention in early childhood requires, and as guidance for strengthening policy, practice and workforce capability across the sector.

As founding CEO of the organisation, I have sat in multiple advisory groups such as the eSafety Child Safety Advisory Group, Parent Advisory Group, eSafety consultation on Australia’s social media age restrictions, and eSafety’s development continuum as part of their expert advisory group. Advisory involvement with Monash University’s Respectful Relationships Education initiatives and DSS Consent Can’t Wait campaign.

In 2025 we attempted to share our extensive knowledge and experience to support both Federal and State Governments with their response. The following is a record of our communication with various Ministers and MPs.

MP Correspondence

3 July 2025	Minister Blandthorn	request for audience
3 July 2025	Premier Allan	request for audience
3 July 2025	Minister Hutchins	request for audience

Minister Blandthorn did not respond.

Both Premier Allan and Minister Hutchins' offices responded saying our request had been referred to Minister Blandthorn's office.

31 July 2025	Minister Blandthorn	request for audience, mentioning Premier Allan and Minister Hutchins referral
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Minister Blandthorn did not respond.

14 August 2025	Premier Allan	request an audience and inform the Premier that I had not received a response from Minister Blandthorn.
14 August 2025	Minister Blandthorn	once more requesting an audience and support as our organisation suffered under the response to the case

Received a response from DPC on 2 September informing me that the Premier requested my correspondence be referred to Minister Blandthorn for consideration

15 October 2025	Premier Allan	<i>requesting an audience with both the Premier and Minister Blandthorn.</i>
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Premier Allan did not respond.

2. Melina BATH, p. 55

Question Asked:

Deanne CARSON: Our team come from a range of different backgrounds. They come from either early childhood education or primary or secondary teaching –

Melina BATH: But they have got a qualification, generally?

Deanne CARSON: Some are still studying as well.

Melina BATH: Okay. So just on that interaction, I would be interested to see if there is any information you could provide here on notice.

Response:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide further information regarding the qualifications held by Body Safety Australia's education team. Our educators hold a wide range of qualifications across early childhood education, teaching, social science, psychology, sexology, community services, allied health, law and family violence. Several team members are also currently completing further study.

Due to the critical multi-disciplinary approach necessary to do this work effectively, our organisation prioritises regular peer learning opportunities.

Below is a summary of the qualifications held across our education team:

Leadership

- Bachelor of Arts (Psychology)
- Master of Sexology
- Churchill Fellow
- Certificate IV in TESOL
- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (including LLN)
- International English Teacher Certificate in TESOL
- Diploma of Community Services (Children's Services)
- Bachelor of Arts (Humanities)

Education & Teaching

- Bachelor of Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) / Bachelor of Arts (with Distinction)
- Diploma in Education
- Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood)
- Bachelor of Education
- Bachelor of Arts (Sex and Gender Studies, Politics, Children's Literature)
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
- Bachelor of Arts (English, Theatre Studies, Creative Writing)
- Bachelor of Arts (Sociology and Gender Studies)

Social Science, Psychology & Criminology

- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Arts and Science (Psychology and Criminology)
- Bachelor's Degree in Social Science (Psychology)
- Undergraduate Certificate in Public Health
- Criminology specialisation (Image-Based Sexual Abuse)

Law

- Juris Doctor (Doctor of Law)

Health & Allied Health

- Master of Occupational Therapy
- Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy
- Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)

Languages & Interpreting

- Diploma of Interpreting (Auslan–English)
- Diploma of Auslan

Counselling, Family Violence & Community Work

- Graduate Certificate in Counselling
- Graduate Certificate in Domestic and Family Violence
- Associate Diploma in Social Science (Mother Craft Nursing, Sociology)

Lived experience and representation

Our team represent the many diverse communities we represent.

The Child Safe Standards ask that we prioritise the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally diverse, disability and LGBTIQ+ people.

Our team represent the following:

- LGBTIQ+ people
- people with disability
- culturally diverse people
- Aboriginal people
- people with lived experience of child sexual abuse and/or family violence

One team member began with the organisation as a Youth Advisory Council member and was hired under our year-long Youth Mentorship Program. She is now a fully trained facilitator.

We would be happy to provide the Inquiry any further information they may need and would like to extend to an invitation to all involved in this Inquiry to observe a Body Safety Australia Abuse Prevention Program.

Attachments:

1. Body Safety Australia Program Evaluation Table
2. 2016 Executive Summary – Engaging and Educating the Community to Prevent Childhood Sexual Abuse
3. 2023 Body Safety Report CERSH
4. Naked Truths Program Evaluation Report_17 March 2026
5. Responding Together Webinar Data Summary
6. See it, Say it Evaluation Report
7. Superstars theory of change
8. UNSW Research – Identifying and understanding child sexual offending behaviour and attitudes among Australian men