




Early Childhood Australia
Professional Learning

CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND SAFEGUARDING

A Guide to ECA's
Quality-Assured Resources





In response to recent challenges faced by the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector, Early Childhood Australia (ECA) established the **Rapid Response Taskforce**—a group of experts in child sexual abuse prevention and safeguarding. The Taskforce has worked quickly and collaboratively to develop, collate and share resources that are relevant, research-informed and practical for services across Australia.

This guide brings together the **best of ECA's resources**—new, contextualised and highly regarded—alongside carefully curated materials from partner organisations. It is designed to help all early childhood professionals strengthen safeguarding practices, embed a child safe culture, and ensure that children's rights are always respected and upheld.

When you engage with these resources, you:

- ensure your knowledge is current and based on evidence
- strengthen daily professional practice
- build confidence in responding to children's needs
- contribute to a sector-wide culture that puts children first.

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'Children's safety and wellbeing lie at the heart of our work as early childhood education professionals. When we work together to ensure their right to safety is upheld, children's learning will flourish. This is more than a checklist and compliance—it is sophisticated work that requires knowledge, skills, and a deep commitment to ethical and respectful practice. We know this—at our best, we practice this—it is time to make sure this is experienced by all children and their families.'

—Catharine Hydon (Hydon Consulting), ECA Rapid Response Taskforce member

New resources

The Rapid Response Taskforce has released a series of **new resources** to meet the immediate needs of the sector. These practical tools can be used independently, as team discussion starters, or within staff training.

Downloadable resources



ECA Explains ... Dynamic supervision

A concise, accessible fact sheet that highlights strategies to ensure supervision is active, responsive and child-focused. Perfect for refresher training and staff meetings.

Strengthen child safety in your early childhood setting: A message for service leaders

A supportive guide for service leaders that acknowledges the challenges facing the sector while offering practical, values-based strategies to rebuild trust, strengthen professionalism, and keep children's safety at the centre. A useful resource for team discussions and leadership reflection.

ECA Explains ... Child sexual abuse

This fact sheet strengthens staff knowledge of the signs, impacts and prevention of abuse. It provides language and prompts for talking with colleagues and developing safeguarding policies.

Being a professional in challenging times

A practical guide that supports educators and leaders to uphold professionalism, protect their identity, and stand strong against discrimination in difficult times. Perfect for fostering reflection, team dialogue and reassurance for families.

'These resources gave our team clarity and confidence during a really difficult time. They're practical, reassuring, and grounded in ethics.'

Webinar

Children's Safety and Safeguarding in Early Childhood Settings

This panel-style webinar recording provides information and guidance around child safety and abuse prevention, drawing on the collective knowledge of key experts from the Rapid Response Taskforce.



Self-paced online courses



Learn to be safe—Early years (Act for Kids collaboration)

ECA has partnered with Act for Kids to bring a new course to the ECA Learning Hub. This protective behaviours course helps both children and adults recognise unsafe situations. With practical strategies, it supports children to make safe choices and builds educator confidence in guiding protective behaviours.



Putting children first: Child safe organisations

This course introduces early childhood professionals to the concept of child safe organisations and the 10 National Principles. It highlights everyone's role in creating safe environments where children's rights are respected, risks are reduced, and harm is identified and addressed. Suitable for all staff in education and care settings.



Inappropriate discipline

This course helps educators understand the difference between inappropriate discipline and positive behaviour guidance. Linked to the *National Quality Framework*, it outlines legal responsibilities, child safe practices, and strategies that respect children's dignity while supporting their social and emotional development. An assessment is included, and annual completion is recommended.

High-impact resources

Some resources remain consistently popular because they meet the core needs of the sector. If you haven't engaged with them yet, these are excellent starting points:



Children's Safety and Safeguarding in Early Childhood Settings (webinar)

A free, on-demand recording featuring insights from experts.

Putting children first: Child safe organisations (online course + companion book)

Practical tools for embedding the National Principles in your daily work.

Being the champion for children who are impacted by trauma and adversity (online course)

Guidance for educators on supporting children who have experienced trauma.

The Circle of Security: Roadmap to Building Supportive Relationships (book)

A powerful resource for understanding children's behaviour through a relationship lens.

Inappropriate discipline (online course)

Understand the difference between inappropriate discipline and positive behaviour guidance.

These resources can be explored individually or integrated into service-wide professional learning plans.

Knowledge builds confidence. Confidence builds safety.

Understanding and guiding behaviour: The 6Rs Framework

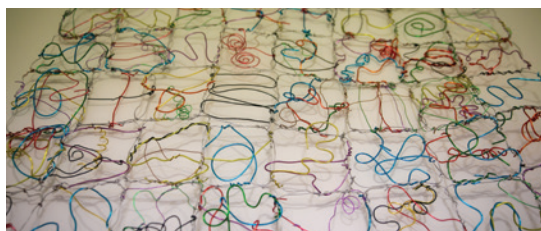


Presenter: Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett

The 6Rs Framework empowers you with a practical and clear plan for supporting children through times of challenge or stress. This comprehensive four-part online program will enhance your understanding of what influences children's behaviour so you can respond in the best way possible to help children reach their potential.

Resources for educators

The Rapid Response Taskforce has released a series of **new resources** to meet the immediate needs of the sector. These practical tools can be used independently, as team discussion starters, or within staff training.



Responding to harmful sexual behaviours: Birth to five

Presenter: Samantha Dellamarta

In this course, you will explore ways to mitigate harmful sexual behaviours that may occur in a long day care setting. You will learn how to recognise the signs and indicators of harmful sexual behaviours and understand how to respond and report.

Putting children first: Child safe organisations

Presenter: ECA Learning Hub

This course introduces ECEC professionals to the essential concept of child safe organisations. Drawing on the findings of major national inquiries, including the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, it explores why all organisations working with children must actively commit to safeguarding children's rights and wellbeing.



ECA Explains ... series

This free series of fact sheets was developed by the Rapid Response Taskforce to provide ECEC professionals with clear and accessible information on topics related to child safety and safeguarding in early childhood settings. These practical tools can be used independently, as team discussion starters, or within staff training.



Asserting a Culture of Child Safety: Offering Children the Protection and Care That They Deserve

This book is a step-by-step guide to championing children's safety and wellbeing. As a practical tool, it will give clarification and confidence about what to do to create a culture of child safety at your education and care organisation.



Children's Safety and Safeguarding in Early Childhood Settings

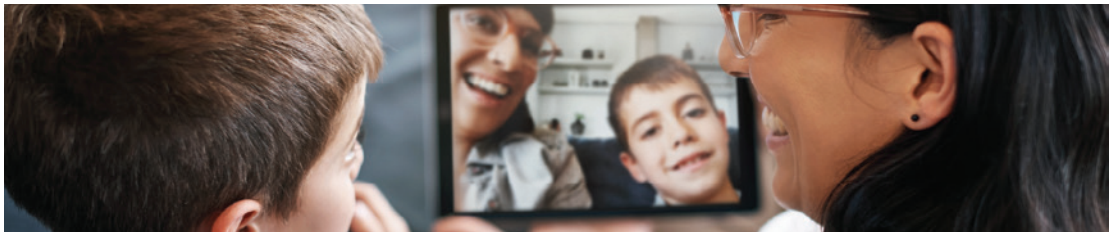
Panellists: Samantha Page, Catharine Hydon, Dr Katrina Lines, Nicole Talarico, Kate McGill and Jo Warneke

This webinar provides those who work with children the advice and tools they need to identify and prevent child abuse in their settings.

Responding to harmful sexual behaviours: OSHC

Presenter: Samantha Dellamarta

In this course, you will learn about harmful sexual behaviours that may occur in an outside school hours care setting. You will learn how to prevent, identify and respond to harmful sexual behaviours that may occur between the children and young people in your care.



eSafety Early Years Program

The eSafety professional learning courses are unique professional learning opportunities developed by the eSafety Commissioner and Early Childhood Australia.

The program is part of the eSafety Early Years Program, which provides online safety advice and tips within a positive framework for prior-to-school-aged children, their parents, carers and educators in an Australian context.

Developed in partnership by:   

These resources are designed to be flexible—educators can use them for self-directed learning, and teams can use them to spark professional conversations that build shared understanding and collective responsibility.

Professionalism and identity in early childhood education and care: Who we are and what we do



Presenter: Catharine Hydon

This self-paced online course asks you to reflect on the idea of professional identity from two different angles—'who you are' and 'what you do'. Explore ideas about professionalism and your identity in relation to children, families, colleagues and the community.

Available on the ECA Digital Library



Subscribe today!



The Circle of Security: Roadmap to Building Supportive Relationships

The Circle of Security is a way of thinking about emotions and behaviour that enables early childhood professionals to look beyond a child's immediate behaviour and think about how to meet their genuine relationship needs.

Children's Rights Book 1

This first book unpacks the key documents that protect children's rights and explores ways you can make these rights visible in your service.

Safe and Secure: Group-Based Transitions

This book outlines research-based strategies for morning transitions that support educators to connect deeply with children in group settings, support their connections with other children, and develop trusting partnerships with families and with each other.

Children's Rights Book 2

This second book helps put your enhanced knowledge into action with simple strategies that explain how you can foster and maintain a child rights-focused service.

As an educator, you are at the frontline of children's safety every day. Make the most of ECA's courses, resources and fact sheets to strengthen your knowledge, build confidence in responding to children's needs, and reflect on your own practice. Small, consistent steps in your daily work make a big difference in creating safe and supportive environments.

Resources for service leaders and managers

Leaders and managers play a pivotal role in embedding a culture of child safety across their service. Resources such as ***Strengthen child safety in your early childhood setting*** and ***Being a professional in challenging times*** can be used to guide team reflections and provide strategies for responding to sector-wide challenges. Service-wide refresher courses, including ***Inappropriate discipline*** and ***Putting children first: Child safe organisations***, ensure every educator is confident in their legal responsibilities and everyday safeguarding practices.

For resources on recognising grooming and strengthening prevention strategies, visit the ECA website for links to trusted materials and training opportunities. By introducing these resources through staff meetings, induction programs or ongoing professional learning plans, leaders can support their teams to reflect, learn and act consistently in the best interests of children.



As a leader or manager, you have the opportunity to shape a strong culture of child safety within your service. Use ECA's resources to guide reflective team discussions, embed refresher training into professional learning cycles, and model best practice in everyday decisions. Creating space for shared learning ensures your team feels confident, consistent, and united in keeping children safe.

As an Approved Provider, you set the tone for safeguarding across your network. Ensure every educator has access to core courses through individual enrolment or an organisational subscription and build these into onboarding and annual training plans. Embedding consistent learning not only supports compliance but strengthens a culture where children's safety is everyone's responsibility.



Consistency across a network builds trust and safety.



Resources for Approved Providers

Approved Providers play a vital role in governance and ensuring consistent safeguarding across services. By making sure every team member has access to key courses—whether individually or through an organisational subscription—providers can embed safeguarding knowledge across their networks. Courses like ***Inappropriate discipline*** and ***Learn to be safe—Early years*** can be built into staff onboarding and revisited annually as part of ongoing training plans, reinforcing shared responsibility and confidence.

Practical tools such as ***ECA Explains ... Child sexual abuse*** and ***Dynamic supervision*** further support policy development and training priorities, while curated resources and practice examples from trusted organisations provide system-wide guidance and inspiration.



Reflection questions

- How do my current safeguarding practices align with the principles in these resources?
- How confident am I in recognising potential risks to children's safety?
- How can I use ECA's resources to guide my professional growth and service-wide practice?
- What areas of my practice could be strengthened to promote a culture of safety within my service?
- How do I ensure I stay up to date with regulations, best practice, and mandated training relating to children's safety?
- How do I involve children in learning about their own safety?
- How can I model a culture of child safety among teams, families and children?

Dynamic supervision is active, responsive
and child-focused.

Dysregulation and maladaptive behaviours in young children (2-part series)



Presenter: Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett

This course will help you develop a deeper appreciation for the foundational nature of regulation for children's learning, as well as the negative impact of stress on children's emotions and behaviour, and any barriers to their capacity to learn or engage.

Find out more

Share your insights

We want to make sure the resources we provide are as useful and relevant as possible. Take a few minutes to complete our short survey and let us know:

- what safeguarding topics you'd like to learn more about
- what kinds of resources or formats best support your practice.



Your feedback will help shape the next wave of resources, ensuring they meet the real needs of early childhood professionals across the sector.

'I believe every child has the right to be safe—and I'm passionate about sharing practical, evidence-based tools that help communities protect and support children. We know that not all children are safe, and we have a responsibility to work in partnership—drawing on the unique strengths of this Taskforce—to make a real difference for those children and the adults who care for and protect them.'

—Samantha Melching (Act for Kids),
ECA Rapid Response Taskforce member



Together, we are building a strong, sector-wide culture of safety that upholds the rights and wellbeing of every child.

Stay connected



Visit the ECA Rapid Response Taskforce website to access resources and stay up to date.



Sign up to our mailing list for updates, new resources and advocacy news.

Resource matrix

Not sure where to start? This quick reference guide brings together ECA's safeguarding resources at a glance. Whether you're an educator, service leader or Approved Provider, you'll find courses, publications and tools tailored to your role.

| Title | Link on Taskforce website | Individual purchase (ECA Shop) | ECA Learning Hub subscription | ECA Digital Library | Free |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|------|
| About the National Principles (Child Safe Organisations) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Asserting a Culture of Child Safety: Offering Children the Protection and Care That They Deserve by Nicole Talarico (book) | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Being a professional in challenging times (downloadable resource) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Being the champion for children who are impacted by trauma and adversity (online course) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Children's Rights: Book 1 by Anne Kennedy (ECA Everyday Learning Series) | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Children's Rights: Book 2 by Anne Kennedy (ECA Everyday Learning Series) | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Children's Safety and Safeguarding in Early Childhood Settings (webinar recording) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| The Circle of Security: Roadmap to Building Supportive Relationships by Robyn Dolby (ECA Research in Practice Series) | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Dysregulation and maladaptive behaviours in young children (2-part series, online course) | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| ECA Explains ... Child sexual abuse (downloadable resource) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| ECA Explains ... Dynamic supervision (downloadable resource) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| How to Support Children and Young People Who Display, or Are Victims of Harmful Sexual Behaviours (downloadable resource, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Inappropriate discipline (online course) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |

| Title | Link on Taskforce website | Individual purchase (ECA Shop) | ECA Learning Hub subscription | ECA Digital Library | Free |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|------|
| Indicators and Impacts of Child Sexual Abuse (downloadable resource, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Learn to Be Safe—Children's and Parent's Book (Act for Kids) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Learn to be safe—Early years (ECA + Act for Kids collaboration, online course) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Perpetrators and Grooming (downloadable resource, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Prevention: Keeping Children Safe from Sexual Abuse (downloadable resource, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Professionalism and identity in early childhood education and care: Who we are and what we do (online course) | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Protecting Children and Young People from Sexual Abuse: A Guide for Parents and Carers (downloadable resource, Bravehearts) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Putting children first: Child safe organisations (online course) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Putting Children First: Child Safe Organisations by Kerryann Walsh and Rhiannon Smith (ECA Everyday Learning Series) | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Responding and Taking Action (downloadable resource, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Responding to harmful sexual behaviours: Birth to five (online course) | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Responding to harmful sexual behaviours: OSHC (online course) | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Safe and Secure: Group-Based Transitions by Robyn Dolby and Belinda Frizer (ECA Research in Practice Series) | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Strengthen child safety in your early childhood setting: A message for service leaders (downloadable resource) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Understanding and guiding behaviour: The 6Rs Framework (online course) | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Understanding and Responding to Adults' Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse (downloadable resource, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| What Is Child Sexual Abuse? (downloadable resource, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| What is Grooming? (downloadable resource, Bravehearts) | ✓ | | | | ✓ |



Early Childhood Australia

A voice for young children

Early Childhood Australia is grateful for the generous support of the following partner organisations and colleagues for their breadth and depth of research-informed knowledge and expertise in children's safety and safeguarding.



Act for kids

Bravehearts

EDUCATE + EMPOWER + PROTECT

Dellamarta
consulting



National Centre for Action
on Child Sexual Abuse



HYDON
CONSULTING



Talarico Consulting

Early Years Consultant



Safeguarding
Training Australia