ACT Government

Key messages to support communications with ECEC staff and families

Overview

- The ACT Government will release around 2,460 documents about incidents occurring in Canberra's early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector over the past 5 years.
- Provision of these documents is in response to a Legislative Assembly motion ordering their release.
- The documents cover incidents reported by the sector, direct complaints, and the investigations and actions that followed.
- These issues range from minor injuries to major breaches of the National Law and harm to children.
- Some of the incidents covered in the documents are confronting. They provide detail of incidents involving children – including accidents resulting in serious injuries, children going missing, harm to children by educators, and in some cases harm to children from other children.
- Privilege claims and redactions have been made to protect the identity of children, parents, and educators, particularly those who may have raised concerns about their employers or colleagues.
- We have an active ECEC regulator and a positive reporting culture in the ACT.
- All notifications made to CECA are assessed. All alleged breaches of the National Law are triaged and, when appropriate, investigated with the best interests of children at the centre of decision making.
- In the ACT we have a 'see something, say something' culture and it is imperative that we maintain trust in the confidentiality afforded to those courageous individuals who raise concerns.

About CECA and our regulatory environment

- Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA) is the regulatory authority for early childhood education and care services across the ACT.
- CECA administers the National Quality Framework. This framework covers ECEC services that provide regular education and care to children under 13 years, including:
    - long day care services
    - outside school hours care services
    - preschools
    - family day care services.
- Under the *National Law* anyone can make a complaint to CECA. CECA assesses all notifications and complaints and applies a risk-based approach and focusses on harm, hazard and governance.

- CECA takes child safety very seriously. CECA has close working relationships with the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team in ACT Policing, the Working With Vulnerable People team, the Reportable Conduct Team and other organisations in this space.

Wellbeing supports

- The ACT Government is aware the release of this material may impact the health and wellbeing of children, families and educators involved in specific serious incidents.
- Community supports are available if you need to talk with someone. Visit the ACT Government website Getting help for your mental health - ACT Government