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| Children's Education and Care Assurance Alert |
|  *The Children’s Education and Care Assurance Update links professionals, providers and educators with news, resources and information that supports quality outcomes for children in ACT education and care services*19 March 2021**National Quality Framework Review Information Session**ACT providers, service leaders, educators and families are invited to have your say on the National Quality Framework (NQF) Review.**Learn more** To learn more about the NQF Review, and how to have your say, including how you get your community involved visit ​<https://www.nqfreview.com.au/>​. All feedback is valued, and the purpose of this consultation process is to seek a broad range of community views on the impacts the proposed options will have on the way the NQF operates across Australia.**NQF Review community resources** Below are some links to communication materials you can share with your service and families to support the consultation phase:[Poster for sector](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/31686) [Poster for families/carers](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/31691)[Poster for sector and families/carers](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/31696)**A focus on child protection obligations in the ACT** The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that nominated supervisors and all staff members understand their responsibilities under the relevant child protection law the existence and application of the current child protection law and any obligations that they may have under that law. See [regulation 84](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653#sec.84). Service policies and procedures must reflect current law and regulations in place in relation to providing a child safe environment. **Child protection: mandatory reporting**The [*Children and Young People Act 2008*](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2008-19) External Link includes a legal obligation that individuals working in education and care services must report any suspected child abuse or neglect.[Keeping Children and Young People Safe](https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/1132080/Keeping-children-and-young-people-safe.pdf) External Linkis a guide to assist members of the public in making decisions about reporting concerns of child abuse or neglect in the ACT.All staff working in education and care are encouraged to complete the Community Services Directorate’s free Keeping Children and Young People Safe [Online Training](https://csdpubliclearning.articulate-online.com/p/1683794862/story_html5.html) External Link.**Child protection: Reportable Conduct Scheme**The [Reportable Conduct Scheme](https://www.ombudsman.act.gov.au/improving-the-act/reportable-conduct) External Linkaims to improve child protection within organisations in the ACT.Reportable conduct covers allegations or convictions of child abuse or misconduct towards children. Organisations must report allegations of reportable conduct by an employee or volunteer. This includes ill-treatment of a child (such as emotional abuse or use of force) neglect, psychological harm, misconduct of a sexual nature, sexual or physical offences and convictions where a child is a victim or is present and inappropriate discipline or not protecting children from harm.Organisations must have policies and procedures to prevent and respond to child abuse.The ACT’s Ombudsman provides support and practice [guidelines](https://www.ombudsman.act.gov.au/improving-the-act/reportable-conduct/reportable-conduct-resource-kit)External Link  to help organisations meet their reportable conduct obligations. If organisations suspect criminal conduct, they must also report the conduct to [ACT Policing](https://police.act.gov.au/) External Link.More information about the reportable Conduct Scheme can be found on the [ACT Ombudsman’s website](https://www.ombudsman.act.gov.au/improving-the-act/reportable-conduct) External Link.**Child protection: regulating restrictive practices**[Senior Practitioner Act 2018](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2018-27) External Link regulates the use of restrictive practices by a range of entities, including approved providers.The Senior Practitioner works with the regulated communities to drive cultural change across all sectors where restrictive practices may be an issue. The legislation protects the rights of individuals in settings including children in education and care services. The role of the Senior Practitioner is to reduce and eliminate the use of restrictive practices and to ensure that where restricted practices are used they are reported and included in an approved Positive Behaviour Support Plan which is used in a consistent manner between settings.More information about the Senior Practitioner and restrictive practices can be found in [ACT Senior Practitioner Fact Sheet](https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/quality-complaints-and-regulation/office-of-the-senior-practitioner/act-senior-practitioner-fact-sheet) External Link in this free [Online Training](https://csdpubliclearning.articulate-online.com/ContentRegistration.aspx?DocumentID=0b038499-5573-47eb-8729-77c7ce960eb6&Cust=16837&ReturnUrl=/p/1683705575) package and on the [Community Services Directorate’s website](https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/quality-complaints-and-regulation/office-of-the-senior-practitioner) External Link. **Child protection: Working with Vulnerable People checking**The [*Working with Vulnerable People (background Checking) Act 2011*](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-44/default.asp) External Link requires all individuals working and volunteering in education and care services to have a background check and to be registered.Providers and educators are required to maintain up to date records of Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Registration cards. This includes the obligation upon individuals to carry their WWVP card at all times while engaged in educating and caring for children in an education and care setting. For more information visit the [Access Canberra’s website](https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1804/~/working-with-vulnerable-people-%28wwvp%29-registration#!tabs-4) External Link.Self-assessment Tool cover with ACECQA Logo**Reflecting and planning for continuous improvement** While 2020 was a very challenging year, times of change often provide important opportunities to review, reflect and plan for continuous improvement. [ACECQA’s Self-assessment Tool](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/assessment/quality-improvement-plans#SAT) can assist services to identify their strengths, compliance and opportunities for continuous improvement. This tool can guide services through the process of self-assessment which can, where needed, inform their Quality Improvement Plan. **CECA communication channels** To keep up to date with information from CECA all providers, service leaders and educators are encouraged to connect with CECA’s communication channels. Subscribe to receive all CECA email communications with a request in writing here, follow CECA’s [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CECAACT/) page and [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/childrens-education-and-care-assurance-ceca-17807695356) platform. Visit the Education Directorate website regularly for new content. CECA’s webpage includes CECA [Alerts, Notifications, Updates and Talking Quality editions](https://www.education.act.gov.au/early-childhood/resources-and-contacts). For enquires in relation to this notification please call CECA on (02) 6207 1114 or email CECA@act.gov.auThis email has been authorised by the ACT Regulatory Authority (CECA). CECA are responsible for administering the National Quality Framework within the ACT. |

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