OCCUPATIONAL   
VIOLENCE:   
ACT Education   
National Forum

COMMUNIQUE

On Thursday 21 March 2019, the ACT Education Directorate hosted a national forum to address the issue of occupational violence in schools. The purpose of the forum was to share work safety learnings across jurisdictions and collectively identify best practice strategies to support safe and inclusive school communities for our staff and students.

The forum brought together every state and territory, including education department senior executives, regulators, and representatives from the Australian Education Union ACT, ACT Parents and Citizens Association, Australian Primary Principals Association, and Australian Secondary Principals Association, to share work health and safety insights and practice.

The forum highlighted that occupational violence in schools is a national and international issue, impacting education systems around the world. The safety of staff and students in our schools is paramount and occupational violence is a complex issue. There was a shared commitment from participants to discuss and tackle this complex societal issue.

Keynote speaker Clare Amies, Chief Executive Worksafe Victoria, highlighted the shared responsibility that education systems, regulators and communities must play in addressing occupational violence. Ms Amies was joined by the ACT Public Advocate and Children and Young People Commissioner Jodie Griffith-Cook in a plenary session focused on ensuring staff safety while providing inclusive education for every child and young person in our schools.

In addition to sharing learnings with other jurisdictions, the ACT Education Directorate is also working with the ACT Parents and Citizens Association to co-design community-driven responses to build safe communities for learning in our schools. The Directorate also continues to implement its *Occupational Violence Policy* and *Management Plan,* developed in close collaboration with the AEU*.*

The forum confirmed that the ACT Education Directorate’s response to occupational violence is sound, comprehensive and aligned to national best practice. The forum also shared a range of insights that will further enhance jurisdiction responses to occupational violence and that the ACT Education Directorate will use to continue to strengthen our ongoing commitment to safe and supportive schools.

States and Territories thanked the ACT for hosting the first discussion of what is hoped will be an ongoing conversation to strengthen our preventative and response systems to address occupational violence in our schools.