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MEDIA RELEASE

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Coalition Calls for Urgent Action to Strengthen Child Care Safety

The identification and publication of details relating to alleged child sexual offences in child care settings in Sydney by a male child care worker are sickening.

Crimes of this nature are evil.

Since offences were similarly identified in Melbourne last year, the Coalition has continued to offer its urgent support for measures to keep children safe. And we do so again today.

The Coalition led a Senate Inquiry into the Quality and Safety of Australia's Early Childhood Education and Care System which delivered its report on 31 March 2026 with immediate priorities for the Albanese Government to prevent future child sexual exploitation in child care settings.

The Australian Federal Police gave evidence to the Inquiry that child sex offenders deliberately target childcare centres, seeking access to very young, often non-verbal children.

In too many cases, perpetrators are not identified by the child care centres which employ them, but rather through police webs which capture the online distribution of child sexual abuse material.

The Coalition calls on the Government to act immediately on gaps identified by the Inquiry, including:

- To set and meet deadlines relating to Working With Children's Checks. Almost one year ago (15 August 2025) Labor promised that by the end of 2025 there would be 'banned in one, banned in all' rules in place.
- Outcomes of the trial of CCTV in child care settings, and mandatory adoption of CCTV if appropriate.

- Proper consideration of technological tools used elsewhere, including facial recognition which can support more rapid victim identification.
- Amending the Fair Work Act to ensure employers on reasonable grounds can suspend or terminate employment where there are potential risks to children.
- Enacting the Coalition's Crimes Amendment (Mandatory Minimum Sentences for Child Sexual Abuse) Bill 2025 which introduces mandatory minimum sentences of five years' imprisonment for serious Commonwealth child sexual abuse offences.
- The efficacy of the new National Educators Register, including the integration of the register with police and child protection databases, and the identification of 'red flags' for concerning behavioural patterns is within the register.
- The efficacy of new mandatory staff child safety training, after it was revealed at Senate Estimates in June that the online training could readily be skipped through.

Parents deserve to know that every action is being undertaken with urgency to prevent perpetrators slipping through the cracks.

Members of the community can find out more about Operation Moonbi, as well as a list of impacted centres at <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/community-information/operation-moonbi>

Quotes attributable to Shadow Minister for Education and Acting Shadow Minister for Choice in Childcare and Early Learning, Julian Leeser MP:

"What has happened in Sydney is sickening, and it will shake every parent in this country. Families send their children into care trusting they will be protected, not exposed to further risk."

"Every day this drags on is another day a predator could slip through a gap the Inquiry has already identified. The Government needs to act with urgency."

"The community can find out more about the locations which were attended by this individual on the Operation Moonbi webpage."

ENDS

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