Professional Boundaries and Safe Touch in Early Childhood Education Fatality File

Boundary Confusion Leads to Safeguarding Review

In a childcare program, an educator frequently allowed children to sit on their lap during group activities. While the intention was comfort, the practice was inconsistent with centre guidelines and varied between staff members.

A concern was raised by a colleague who noticed that some children appeared uncomfortable and that care interactions were not always visible. The organization conducted a review and reinforced clear expectations around safe touch, visibility, and consent.

No harm was found, but the incident highlighted how unclear boundaries can create risk and uncertainty even when intentions are positive.