



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2024-2025**

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE  
DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Asked by: Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Kidsafe ACT

Reference: Uncorrected Hansard Transcript [Page 100]

Hearing Date: 22/07/2024

QTON lodgement date: 22/07/2024

Answer Due Date: 29/07/2024

**MISS NUTTALL:** Beautiful. Feel free to take this on notice, Mr Ventura. I would be really curious to hear more about your education program in particular and what role you would envision that taking in schools. Again, I am mindful of time; please feel free to take that on notice if that is easier.

**Mr Ventura:** Even in a very, very brief nutshell, I think Constable Koala and Healthy Harold, basically something along those lines, so it is a personal vision of mine that every—this is a medium term goal, that every kid participates in a Kidsafe safety session in their school by the time they reach the age of three so that they know things; for example, how to behave around a driveway, why not to swallow a button battery, what happens if they stick a knife in a toaster, all of those kinds of things. So basically something along the lines of Constable Koala and Healthy Harold directed at kids in schools so they can make better safety choices.

Kidsafe ACT: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Kidsafe ACT would like to develop and deliver an education program focused on safety at home, school and play. It would enhance positive safety behavioural choices through guidance and awareness. It would be curriculum-aligned for each year level, be co-designed with Canberra educators and feature best-practice pedagogy.

Although focused on the topic of child accident prevention, it would be similar to fun, participatory educational programs such as Constable Koala and Healthy Harold.

It is our vision that every Canberran child participates in at least one Kidsafe Safety Session before they reach Year 3. This will have a clear, beneficial impact on accident prevention. For instance, they will be aware of the dangers of swallowing button batteries, running out onto a driveway without looking, and jumping off a playground from height; a subsequent desire to avoid serious injuries will encourage them to make safer choices.

Proposed annual cost of this initiative would be \$50,000, in order to cover every preschool, Early Learning Centre (ELC) and Primary School at least once per year, with an aim to run at least 250 sessions every year as some ELCs and schools would require multiple visits.

Deliverables for the project include:

- Initial program scoping and development;
- Recruitment, training and support for Kidsafe Education Officers;
- Every ACT Government ELC and Primary School to be visited at least once per year; and
- Ongoing evaluation and improvements to pedagogy and curriculum alignment.

It is a possibility for the role to be split between students of Early Childhood Education and Primary Teaching at the University of Canberra and Australian Catholic University, so that they can also gain some valuable paid experience in front of a classroom.

An initial call for expressions of interest was made earlier in 2024, and several schools expressed interest in hosting a program at their School. There is clearly demand, and there would be significantly more if it could be offered without cost to the School or ELC.

This project would be developed and tested throughout 2024, with full-scale implementation to occur from 2025 onwards.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature: Francis Ventura      Date: 29 July 2024

By Francis Ventura, CEO of Kidsafe ACT