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Childcare Worker's Prior Flag Ignored, Faces Abuse Charges

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A 26-year-old man employed at out-of-school-hours care centres in Sydney faces 10 charges of child sexual abuse, sparking renewed scrutiny of childcare oversight. As reported by ABC News on August 2, 2025, the accused, David James, was flagged to authorities in June 2024 after a colleague at a Primary Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHCare) centre allegedly witnessed him inappropriately touching a child under 10.

Despite alerts sent to the New South Wales Police, the Office of the Children's Guardian, and the NSW Early Childhood Education Care Regulatory Authority, James' Working with

Children Check remained valid, allowing him to continue working at other childcare centres.

James was employed by Junior Adventures Group (JAG), the operator of Primary OSHCare and other brands including Helping Hands. Following the 2024 incident, JAG suspended him from one position but continued paying his part-time wages. Due to the lack of a unified alert system, other childcare providers were unaware of the allegations and employed him in casual roles.

The case follows a separate high-profile incident involving Joshua Dale Brown, who was charged with over 70 counts of abuse across 24 centres. Both cases have exposed significant flaws in regulatory systems designed to protect children from harm.

NSW Greens MP Abigail Boyd has renewed calls for a parliamentary inquiry, arguing that relaxed regulations and corporate expansion in childcare have undermined safety standards. She pointed to undertrained staff and high child-to-carer ratios as structural weaknesses that require urgent attention.

In response, the NSW Early Childhood Education Care Regulatory Authority confirmed ongoing reforms aimed at improving transparency and safety across the sector. However, child safety advocates and organizations such as Bravehearts argue that current state-based systems are insufficient. They continue to call for the immediate establishment of a national childcare worker register to prevent individuals flagged in one jurisdiction from slipping through the cracks.

This case raises serious human rights concerns, particularly regarding the state's duty to protect children from harm. The systemic failures in oversight, despite prior warnings, have reignited national debate over how best to ensure the safety of vulnerable children in institutional settings.