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## Victoria Police Identify Four Additional Childcare Centres Linked to Alleged Offender Joshua Brown

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– Categories: Human Rights



Victoria Police have added four more childcare centres to the list of facilities where Joshua Dale Brown, a 26-year-old man accused of more than 70 child sex offences, was employed, intensifying concerns about oversight and safeguarding in the childcare sector. The expanded investigation, led by the Sexual Crimes Squad, now links Brown to 23 centres across Melbourne and regional Victoria, prompting urgent health screenings for an additional 800 children.

The newly identified centres are Kids Academy Waratah Estate in Mickleham, Milestones Early Learning Tarneit, Milestones Early Learning Braybrook, and Milestones Early Learning Greensborough. These were revealed on 15 July 2025, following a review of Brown's employment between January 2017 and May 2025. Brown faces serious charges, including sexual penetration of a child under 12 and contaminating food with bodily fluids, primarily connected to eight young victims at Creative Garden Early Learning Centre in Point Cook.

Acting Crime Command Commander Janet Stevenson told *ABC News* that this investigation remains the highest priority but verifying employment records is complex due to decentralised systems. Police have had to rely on search warrants, handwritten rosters, interviews, and more than 270 Crime Stoppers tips to piece together Brown's employment history. This highlights significant gaps in how the childcare sector records and shares staff information.

The Victorian Department of Health is contacting approximately 830 families linked to the four newly identified centres. It is recommending testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for nearly 800 children who may have had contact with Brown. This follows earlier notifications to over 2,600 families, with 1,200 children already advised to undergo testing.

A parent from Papilio Early Learning in Essendon, speaking anonymously to *The Age*, expressed distress, saying it feels like a black cloud hanging over them. Many families have shared similar concerns, citing slow communication and a lack of clarity from providers.

The Labor government has proposed reforms, including introducing a childcare worker register and banning personal electronic devices within childcare facilities. However, the response has drawn criticism from the opposition. Shadow Education Minister Jess Wilson said these measures are too little, too late for a system that is clearly broken. Parents deserve better safeguards.

Affinity Education Group, which operates ten of the implicated centres, issued a public apology and confirmed it is cooperating fully with authorities. A spokesperson told *ABC News* they are deeply sorry for the distress caused and continue to work closely with Victoria Police and relevant agencies.

As the investigation continues and more updates are expected, parents and child safety advocates are calling for a comprehensive overhaul of the sector. The case has exposed systemic failures in regulation and information-sharing, reinforcing the urgent need for stronger protections to ensure the safety of all children in care.