



Early Intervention - Early Childhood Supports Policy

Version 1.2
26 October 2021

Contents

Early Childhood Supports Policy.....	3
1.1. Purpose	3
1.2. Scope.....	3
1.1. Early Childhood Supports – Outcomes	3
1.2. Early Childhood Supports – Early Intervention	4
1.3. Early Intervention 7 Key Best Practice Principles	4
1.4. DST Early Intervention Procedures.....	4
1.5. Review of the Policy.....	4

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out Down South Therapy's (DST) approach to providing Early Childhood Supports. DST is committed to providing specialised therapy supports and services, aligned with principles of best practice, for infants and young children with disability and/or developmental delay, and their families, in order to promote development, wellbeing and community participation.

1.2. Scope

This policy relates to all Down South Therapy activities and applies to all employees, contractors, students, advocates, Directors and others who may act on behalf of Down South Therapy.

This Policy reflects requirements in:

- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021
- NDIS Act 2013
- ECIA National Guidelines – Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention 2016
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1990
- UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities 2006

Related Policies:

- 5.01 Service Access and Exit
- 5.03 Support Planning
- 7.02 The Child Policy
- 7.03 The Family Policy
- 7.04 Inclusion Policy
- 7.05 Collaboration Policy
- 7.06 Capacity Building Policy
- 7.07 Evidence – Informed Practice Policy
- 7.08 Outcome Based Approach Policy

1.1. Early Childhood Supports – Outcomes

DST subscribes to achieving the following outcomes for all Early Childhood Intervention clients:

1. *The Child* - Each child participant accesses supports that promote and respect their legal and human rights, support their development of functional skills, and enable them to participate meaningfully and be included in everyday activities with their peers.
2. *The Family* - Each family receives family-centred supports that are culturally inclusive, responsive, and focus on their strengths.
3. *Inclusion* - Each participant accesses supports that engage their natural environments and enable inclusive and meaningful participation in their family and community life.
4. *Collaboration* - Each participant receives coordinated supports from a collaborative team comprising their family, the provider and other relevant providers, to facilitate their development and address the family's needs and priorities.
5. *Capacity Building* - Each participant receives supports that build the knowledge, skills and abilities of the family and other collaborating providers in order to support the child's learning and development.
6. *Evidence* - Each participant receives evidence-informed supports from providers with quality standards and validated practice.
7. *Outcome Based Approach* - Each participant receives supports that are outcome-based and goal-focused.

1.2. Early Childhood Supports – Early Intervention

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) is the process of providing specialised support and services for infants and young children with disability and/or developmental delay, and their families, in order to promote development, well-being and community participation (ecia.org.au).

ECI practitioners work in partnership with parents/caregivers, families and other significant stakeholders to enhance their knowledge, skills and supports to meet the needs of the child, optimise the child’s learning and development, and the child’s ability to participate in family and community life.

DST acknowledges Reimagine Australia, formally Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA), as the peak body for early childhood intervention in Australia and subscribes to the best practices outlined in the ECIA National Guidelines – Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention 2016.

1.3. Early Intervention 7 Key Best Practice Principles

DST supports and designs service delivery that are inclusive of the following 7 Key Best Practice Principles as outlined by ECIA and endorsed by the NDIA:

1. Infants and toddlers learn best through everyday experiences and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts
2. All families, with the necessary supports and resources, can enhance their children’s learning and development.
3. The primary role of the service provider in early intervention is to work with and support the family members and caregivers in a child’s life.
4. The early intervention process, from initial contacts through to transition, must be dynamic and individualised to reflect the child’s and family members’ preferences, learning styles and cultural beliefs
5. Individual Family Service Plan outcomes must be functional and based on children’s and families’ needs and priorities
6. The family’s priorities, needs and interests are addressed most appropriately by a primary provider who represents and receives team and community support.
7. Interventions with young children and family members must be based on explicit principles, validated practices, best available research and relevant laws and regulations

1.4. DST Early Intervention Procedures

DST works collaboratively with the child, family and other stake holders to ensure that the best family centred outcomes for the child are achieved.

All families/caregivers of early intervention clients are assisted to decide the most appropriate choice of therapy models (transdisciplinary or key worker model) to suit their family needs and have ability to review their decision periodically.

All families/caregivers of early intervention clients are given the choice to participate in building their Individual Service Plan.

Please refer to the related policies list for relevant processes and procedures.

1.5. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or

funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy will be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly