



Early Intervention - The Inclusion Policy

Version 1.2
26 October 2021

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1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline Down South Therapy's (DST) approach and commitment to ensuring that each participant accesses supports that engage their natural environments and enable inclusive and meaningful participation in their family and community life.

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
- Children and Community Services Act 2004

Related Policies:

2.01 Community Participation and Inclusion Policy

5.03 Support Planning

7.01 Early Childhood Supports Policy

7.02 The Child

7.03 The Family Policy

7.05 Collaboration Policy

7.06 Capacity Building Policy

1.1. Inclusion – Outcomes and Quality Indicators

Outcome

Each participant accesses supports that engage their natural environments and enable inclusive and meaningful participation in their family and community life.

Quality Indicators

- Assessment of each child's development focuses on the child's functions in their everyday routines and activities in their natural learning environments.
- A child's inclusive, meaningful and active participation in their family life, community life and natural environments is promoted.
- Links with each family's community and other support agencies are enabled and built upon.
- Each child's inclusion through participation in daily routines in their natural learning environments is promoted.

1.2. Definitions

Inclusion and Participatory Practice

As defined in the ECIA National Guidelines – Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention 2016, Inclusion and Participatory Practice *“recognises that every child regardless of their needs has the right to participate fully in their family and community life and to have the same choices, opportunities and experiences as other children. All children need to feel accepted and to have a real sense of belonging.*

Children with disability and/or developmental delay may require additional support to enable them to participate meaningfully in their families, community and early childhood settings”

Engaging the Child in Natural Environments

As defined in the ECIA National Guidelines – Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention 2016, engaging the child in natural environments “*promotes children’s inclusion through participation in daily routines, at home, in the community, and in early childhood settings.*”.

1.3. Providing Inclusive and Meaningful Participation Procedures

The following procedures are implemented to ensure that Down South Therapy meets its policy objective of ensuring that each participant accesses supports that engage their natural environments and enable inclusive and meaningful participation in their family and community life.

At DST:

- Staff are provided with training in person/family centred practices and are familiar with the concepts of community inclusion.
- Clients and their families/carers (when appropriate) have been involved from the outset in designing the individual service plan and have been provided with information about the opportunities for inclusion in their local community.
- DST collaborates closely with the broader community and promotes opportunities for members to become involved in a wide range of community activities.
- DST works proactively with community-based groups and services to improve the access of their programs and activities.
- DST therapy services are delivered in the child’s natural environment ie homes, schools, Early Childhood Centres, and in the child’s local community.
- All plans and programs are created with the family’s strengths and routines in mind so that they can be easily integrated into the child’s everyday routine.
- All plans and programs are designed in collaboration with the family and key stakeholders of the child where appropriate.
- Therapists gain a thorough understanding of the family’s community and support agencies and encourage them to strengthen and maintain those supports.
- All plans and programs are designed around participating in the family’s routines and in natural learning environments.
- Each family is given the choice of creating an Individual Service Plan for their child, with the plan remaining flexible and being reviewed every quarter.
- DST staff participate in collaborative meetings as required and as directed by the family.
- All goals are meaningful and outcome based and formed in collaboration with the family and other stakeholders.

This policy is used in conjunction with DST Policy 2.01 Community Participation and Inclusion.

1.4. 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