



Policy Name:	Client Participation and Social Inclusion Policy	Policy Number:	EL0-046
Date Approved:	21 st February, 2018	Approved By:	Management Committee
Date Issued:	22 nd February, 2018	Review Date:	21 st February, 2021

POLICY STATEMENT

Early Links Inclusion Support Service is committed to empowering and supporting clients to fully participate in the community and in this organisation

The organisation will:

- support clients to participate in communities and activities of choice respecting their choices and plans regarding employment, education, leisure and their social lives
- enable clients to be involved in decisions that affect them and the services they receive
- encourage and support clients to be involved in service development, evaluation, planning and organisational management
- seek client input regarding client participation information strategies, assistance and support, service involvement and development.
- develop links with other groups to promote greater opportunities for connections and meaningful participation in the community.

PROCEDURES

Information strategies

Information about participation opportunities is provided to clients through the following mechanisms:

- Individual Goal Setting and planning with the Key Worker and support team
- Family Handbook (in development)
- Client Service Charter (in development)

To ensure clients can easily access these documents they are available in multiple locations. These documents are available on the Early Links Website (in development), at the Early Links Offices and in Early Links Welcome Packs (in development).

Clients are also provided with information about participation opportunities at each stage of service from the initial interview, Individual Family Service Plan meetings, Individual Education Plan development meetings, home visits, .

Assistance and support

Strategies to support and assist client participation are reviewed informally on an ongoing basis, and semi-annually in a formal review with clients and updated as necessary.

In addition the strategies might also include:

- Training workshops for clients – developing self- confidence, skills building
- Developing a toolkit for staff – on how to support client participation
- Covering expenses of participation
- Providing information in a range of media (written, images, verbal, video)
- Provision of a support person

Self reliance and social inclusion

The strategies might include:

- Training workshops for clients – developing employment related skills
- Providing clients with information and support to enroll in courses which would enhance their independence e.g. training in basic budgeting, cooking
- Identifying areas of social interest of clients and encouraging and assisting them to develop their social networks (e.g. joining a local club or attending a local community college course)
- Provide training for staff and volunteers – to understand, respect and support clients in their skill development
- Providing opportunities for clients to take part in social and educational activities
- Encouraging clients with special interests to link up with a group in the local community
- Provide specific social and employment opportunities for people exiting the criminal justice system

Service development and organisational management

Clients are encouraged and supported to become involved in service development and organisational management, if they choose to do so.

These opportunities might include:

- taking part in client surveys and feedback forums including design of surveys and forms
- input when new services or activities are being developed
- representation on client committees or groups
- attending training or conferences
- active membership of the organisation
- standing for the board or management committee.

3. References

Disability Service Standards

Standard 1 – Rights	
Practice Requirement 1	Each person is aware of their rights and can expect to have them respected
Practice Requirement 2	Service providers are to uphold and promote the legal and human rights of each person
Standard 6 - Service Management	
Practice Requirement 1	Each person receives quality services which are effectively and efficiently governed
Practice Requirement 2	Each person receives quality services that are well managed and delivered by skilled staff with the right values, attitudes, goals and experience

NQS

QA4	4.2.1	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
	4.2.3	Interactions convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other's strengths and skills
QA5	5.2.3	The dignity and the rights of every child are maintained at all times
QA6	6.1	Respectful supportive relationships are developed and maintained
QA7	7.1.1	Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to manage the service

National Regulations

Regs	181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
	181-184	Confidentiality and storage of records

All hard copy documents are uncontrolled
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National Quality Standard
Education and Care Services National Regulation
Privacy Act 1988
Australian Privacy Principles
Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012
United Nations Convention of the Rights of a Child
Freedom of Information Act 1989
Child Protection Act 1998
NSW Children and Young Person's (Care and Protection) Act (1998)
Children Legislation Amendment (Wood Inquiry Recommendations) Act (2009)
NSW Disability Service Standard 1

4. Persons Responsible

All employees are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy
- Recording documentation in an accurate and strengths based way
- Maintaining Confidentiality responsibilities as outlined in employment contract
- Ensuring child files are secure to maintain confidentiality (hard copy and soft copy files)

Service Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring confidentiality agreements are upheld by all workers
- Organising for Confidentiality Forms to be signed by volunteers/students and Management Committee members

Management Committee is responsible for:

- Approval of this policy.

5. Definitions

Advocate – a person who speaks, acts or writes with minimal conflict of interest on behalf of the interests of a disadvantaged person, in order to promote, protect and defend the welfare of that person

Management Committee– the governing body of Early Links, comprised of elected or appointed members who jointly oversee the activities and legal responsibilities of the organisation

Family – refers to the parents/caregivers of the children that receive support from Early Links

Early Links – all Early Links Incorporated services and programs

Staff – refers to employees and volunteers of the organisation

Service Manager – person responsible for supervising all staff members

Visitor – any person who is visiting an Early Links service who is not a staff member, client or family

Worker – anyone who is carrying out work, in any capacity, for Early Links. This includes employees, contractors/subcontractors and their employees, labour hire employees engaged to work in the organisation, outworkers, apprentices, trainees, students on work experience and volunteers