



Policy Name:	Cultural Safety Policy	Policy Number:	ELP-035
Date Approved:	21 st February, 2018	Approved By:	Management Committee
Date Issued:	22 nd February, 2018	Review Date:	21 st February, 2021

1. Aim

Early Links is committed to being a culturally safe organisation and reflection on our practice with people including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and all other cultures.

Cultural safety is an integral part of the way we work at Early Links and is embedded in the principles and practices of all our organisational and program policies.

The purpose of this document is to define cultural safety and outline practices that Early Links will undertake to demonstrate cultural safety.

The supporting systems and procedures will ensure there are guidelines and consistency around how we implement this policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Early Links staff and the children/young people/young people and families/carers supported by Early Links.

3. Policy

3.1 Definition

3.1.1 Cultural Safety

Cultural Safety is “an environment that is spirituality, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.

Cultural safety is a commitment to provide services that promote and respond to the cultural rights, values and expectation of people from diverse cultures.

Cultural safety is more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. “It empowers individuals and enables them to contribute to the achievement of positive outcomes. It encompasses a reflection on individual cultural identity and recognition of the impact of personal culture on professional practice”

3.1.2 Cultural Awareness

- Knowledge about the experiences of cultures different from our own or the dominant culture
- Understanding of cross-cultural communication skills
- Knowledge and understanding of customers, values and beliefs of diverse cultures.

3.1.3 Cultural sensitivity

Cultural sensitivity is practitioner's ability to self-reflect on personal attitudes and experiences and how this may impact on their interactions and practice with people from diverse cultures, especially those different to their own.

3.2 Cultural safe Practice

Early Links is committed to being a culturally safe organisation that promotes and applies cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity in practice to create cultural safety for families, workers, the agency, and service partners.

At Early Links, we will show our commitment to cultural safety through the following strategies:

- The leaders within Early Links will have a clear stance on cultural respect, anti-racism and non-discrimination and inform others about this in relevant statements and situations.
- Our Code of conduct will be clear regarding anti-racism and non-discrimination, how this is demonstrated, and how we will act on breaches.
- Early Links will embrace inclusion as a priority are in strategy, policy and practice documents.
- Early Links will create, use and review partnerships with communities and organisations from diverse cultures.
- Our service will practice Welcome to Country and/or Acknowledgement to Country at all suitable times, and involve traditional owners wherever possible
- Our feedback and complaints processes will diverse beliefs, values, and consider the impact of personal culture on professional practice.
- Practice supervision will include ongoing debriefing and reflection on experiences and interventions relevant to culturally safe, anti-racist and non-discriminatory practice.
- Organisation of training, reflection and other learning forums to ensure culturally safe practice.
- Early Links will recognise and promote good culturally safe practice by staff

3.3 Responses to racist or discriminatory behaviour

Early Links will not accept nor tolerate any acts that are reasonable likely to intimidate or vilify a person or a group of people because of their race, national or ethnic origin, or beliefs and behaviours related to their culture.

Early Links acknowledge we cannot control the experiences families have with other families when both are accessing Early Links. If an act of discrimination were committed by a staff member, student, volunteer or contractor Early Links would take responsibility for addressing the issue with the person. This would be in accordance with policies such as the Bullying Policy and the Staff Performance, Support and Management Policy.

If an act of discrimination was committed by a family member, accessing an Early Links service towards another family, staff member, student, volunteer or contractor the Early Links would:

- Provide this policy to both parties and explain our principles around cultural safety, awareness and sensitivity.
- Provide support to both parties to understand the behaviours that Early Links will not accept nor tolerate.
- Refer any discriminatory acts that may be defined as a breach of law to the police.

4. References

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

Australian Human Rights Commission, Social Justice and Native Title Report, 2013

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/social-justice-and-native-title-report-2013>

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation: Cultural Safety Training Standards and Assessment Process 2011

Disability Inclusion Act 2014

NSW Disability Service Standards

Standard 1 – Rights

Standard 2 – Participation and Inclusion

Standard 3 – Individual Outcomes

Standard 4 – Feedback and Complaints

Robyn Williams (1999) "Cultural safety – what does it mean for our work practice?"

Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health Volume 23, Issue 2, pages 213-214

Mary-Ann Bin-Sallik (2003), "Cultural Safety: Let's Name it!" The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education Vol. 32, pp. 21-28

5. Persons Responsible

All Employees are responsible for:

- Being familiar with this policy and other related policies and procedures.
- Demonstrating their commitment to making Early Links a culturally safe and inclusive environment and organisation.
- Responding to and reporting behaviour of others that is racist or discriminatory or limits the agency's ability to be culturally safe for families, employees and partner agencies.
- Participating in training, supervision, reflection and other learning forums to ensure culturally safe practice.

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Providing supervision that includes facilitating discussion and reflection on practice with families from diverse cultures.
- Identifying learning and training needs to develop individual workers' knowledge, practice and interactions with families and colleagues from diverse cultures.
- Including a focus on cultural safety and individual workers' relevant knowledge and skills in work allocations and reviews.

Managers are responsible for:

- Providing and stating a clear stance on cultural respect, anti-racism and non-discrimination
- Beginning events with a Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country at appropriate times and in partnership with traditional owners where available.
- Following through on relevant breaches of the Early Links Code of Conduct.
- Funding suitable culturally diverse partner organisations to ensure and improve culturally safe practice.
- Organising appropriate training and other learning opportunities to support, develop and sustain staff's culturally safe practice.

Management Committee are responsible for:

- Demonstrating a commitment to cultural Safety
- Consulting with communities and organisations from diverse cultures for relevant decisions by the Committee
- Approval of this policy
- Acting on any breaches of the Early Links Code of Conduct as required.

6. References

Disability Service Standards

Standard 2 – Participation and Inclusion	
Practice Requirement 1	Each person is actively encouraged and supported to participate in their community in ways that are important to them
Practice Requirement 2	Service providers develop connections with the community to promote opportunities for active and meaningful participation.

National Regulations

Regs	155	Interactions with children/young people
	156	Relationships in groups
	157	Access for parents

EYLF

LO1	Children/young people feel safe, secure, and supported
	Children/young people develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
	Children/young people develop knowledgeable and confident self identities
	Children/young people learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

7. Definitions

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 who receive support from an Early Links program.

General Manager – refers to the General Manager who is responsible for supervising Early Links staff members.

Operations Manager – refers to the Operations Manager who is responsible for supervising Early Links staff members.

Program Manager – refers to the Program Manager who is responsible for supervising Early Links staff members.

Staff – refers to employees and volunteers of the organisation.

Visitor – any person who is visiting an Early Links service who is not a staff member, child or family/carer.

Staff – refers to employees and volunteers of the organisation.

Racism – the belief that human races have distinctive characteristics, which determine their respective cultures, usually involving the idea that one’s own race is superior and has the right to dominate others.

Vilification – is defined as any public act that could encourage hatred, serious contempt, or severe ridicule towards people of a particular race

Vilify – to incite hatred against a person or a group of persons

Document review history

<i>Date</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Change</i>

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Policies and Procedures, which support this policy.

Code of Conduct	
Acknowledgement of Country	
Bullying prevention Policy	ELO-042
Conflict of Interest Ethics Policy staff	ELP-036