

**PROPOSED ECIA (VC) OUTCOME STATEMENT
– Discussion Paper Draft 2, February 2005**

This is an active document.

YOUR INPUT IS INVITED

Please forward any feedback to ECIA(VC) by March 31.

As a discussion paper, consider the material with regard to your work and experience with families. Also consider the material with regard to the next forum, which will look at the step of MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION of services according to these proposed outcomes.

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Further Information at [www:eciavic.org.au](http://www.eciavic.org.au)

Paper presented at Forum 1 by Tim Moore

Supplementary Reading to Forums 1 & 2.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background – The Process So Far:

The sequence of ECIA(VC) activities regarding developing outcomes and best practice strategies is illustrated in Table 1.

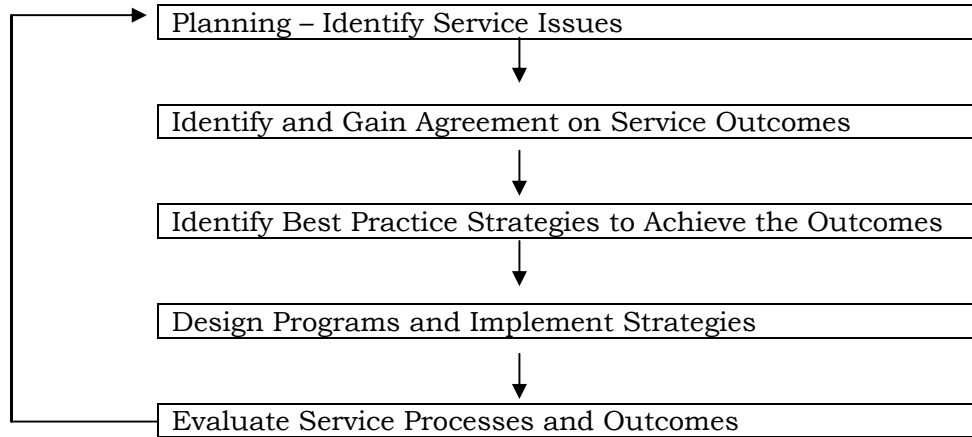


Table 1: ECIA(VC) planned process in developing outcomes and best practice resources.

In 2004, ECIA(VC) conducted two forums with discussion group activities devoted to *defining desired outcomes* for those receiving early childhood intervention (ECI) services. Parents and ECI professionals participated in these forums.

The first forum (in May) looked at defining outcomes of ECI services and an initial draft Outcome Statement was released for feedback in July. The July draft was further developed in the second forum in September.

This second draft paper presents the *refinements in the definition of outcomes and objectives* relating to each outcome.

WHAT NEXT?

The third forum on Measuring Outcomes is on March 9, 2005.

The *ECIA(VC) Outcome Statement* will be distributed in the early childhood intervention and early childhood fields with activities to assist professionals, services and communities in the implementation of plans to adopt the document.

A companion document *ECIA(VC) Practice Strategies and Implementation of the Outcome Statements* will be produced.

A companion Parent/Carer document will also be released.

1.2 ABOUT OUTCOMES:

An Outcome Statement is a clear statement of intention. It is a statement that encompasses service philosophy, goals and delivery.

An outcome is seen as the result of actions and processes, and is written in terms that allow the effectiveness of a service to be measured.

In this way, an Outcome Statement defines the ultimate, measurable standard of a service.

There are a number of reasons for reviewing this topic in Early Childhood Intervention:

- Service systems can become process-oriented and caught up in service provision, losing sight of the over-riding purpose of their activities.
- Definitions of early childhood intervention can be broad and reflect outcomes by implication. More definite statements with explicit links between professional activities and the benefits for children and families are required.
- What may appear to be a simple matter reveals a more complex arena. Service planning must take into account
 - (a) philosophical and theoretical foundations,
 - (b) the range of family situations,
 - (c) the practicalities and demands of individual agency conditions, and
 - (d) the constraints and requirements of funding bodies and management – outcomes are affected accordingly.
- Agreement on outcomes can result in more consistent approaches with benefits for professionals and families. There needs to be a common agreement on the critical results of our services.
- Agreement on outcomes can result in measurement instruments, leading to more effective evaluation and research in the field. Information regarding the efficacy of our services is crucial in ensuring accountability.

Literature Review – Summary *

The early childhood literature considers outcomes for children and families. Historically services were focussed on the child's development, and the prevention of secondary concerns. The general outcome, *children will develop skills*, has been widely accepted in the sector, and is an expectation from families, referral agents and the general community. It is also an outcome that is more easily defined and measured.

Outcomes for families have been presented in terms of (a) *family perceptions of the service (satisfaction, perceived changes)*, and (b) *impact of the service* (promoting their child skills, partnerships with services, advocating for themselves, building a strong support system, feeling more optimistic about the future and experiencing a better quality of life. (Wolery & Bailey, 2002).

* the ECIA(VC) website presents a) examples of other Outcome Statements and b) a more detailed discussion of factors to consider in the context paper presented by Dr Tim Moore at the first forum.

1.3 The ECIA(VC) Outcome Statement.

Early childhood intervention services aim to make a positive difference for families with a child with developmental delay or disability. Service providers aim to provide support to enable families to respond to their individual circumstances, and to optimise children's development and ability to function at home and in the community. This document breaks these 'umbrella goals' into measurable outcome statements.

The ECIA(VC) Outcome Statement:

- Lists the outcomes early childhood intervention services are seeking for children, families and communities;
- Is a table of Outcomes and Objectives listed under Function (knowledge and skills) and Participation (involvement with others, attitude, support and coping).

The distinction between function and participation was adapted from the World Health Organisation's *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)*.

- Is designed to apply to any child, family and early childhood service;
- Is based on current outcome literature and evidence of best practice (see companion document on implementation);
- Has been developed through consultation with professionals and parents;
- Is written in an active, results-driven style that enables them to be measured.

In summary this document is a Statement of Intent for parents and professionals to be clear about what they are trying to achieve.

2. ECIA (VC) OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

	FUNCTIONING	PARTICIPATING
OUTCOMES	<p>Children will gain functional, developmental and coping skills that are appropriate to their ability and circumstances.</p> <p>Children will show confidence and enjoyment in their everyday life.</p>	<p>Children will participate meaningfully in home and local community activities.</p> <p>Children will experience and enjoy family life and community activities that are preferred by the family.</p>
OBJECTIVES	<p>Children will develop skills to perform everyday tasks and activities at home, either by themselves or with planned support.</p> <p>Children will develop skills to perform appropriate tasks and activities in community settings, either by themselves or with planned support.</p> <p>Children will show increasing confidence in their abilities and in their response to challenges.</p> <p>Children will enjoy favourite activities and daily experiences.</p>	<p>Children will participate in a full range of home routines and family recreation activities.</p> <p>Children will participate in a range of community activities, both as an individual and with their families, either by themselves or with planned support.</p> <p>Children will enjoy participating in family and community activities, and gain self esteem and confidence.</p>

RATIONALE – These outcomes reflect:

- the theoretical principles of family centred practice, everyday learning environments and routines, and personal resilience.
- the educational, therapeutic and supportive role of professionals.
- children's rights to education, social inclusion and quality of life.

3. ECIA (VC) OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES

	FUNCTIONING	PARTICIPATING
OUTCOMES	<p>Families will be able to nurture and support their child according to their values and preferences.</p> <p>Families will be able to identify and address the needs of their child(ren) and family.</p> <p>Families will be competent and confident in advocating for themselves and their family.</p>	<p>Families will participate in social and community activities to the degree they choose.</p> <p>Families will feel supported by personal networks and local communities, experiencing a good quality of life.</p>
OBJECTIVES	<p>Families will be able to articulate their family needs for information, support and resources.</p> <p>Families know about the range of options and resources available to them, and will be able to think about and meet the needs of the family as a whole.</p> <p>Families are able to recognise and use family strengths and resources with increasing self-reliance.</p> <p>Families are able to help their child develop functional, developmental and coping skills, using everyday routines.</p> <p>Families are able to establish routines that make life more manageable, and are able to address any stress in their lives.</p> <p>Parents recognise the value of their own knowledge and point of view, and express their views in interactions with service providers and people in their life with confidence.</p>	<p>Families will participate meaningfully in a range of social and community activities.</p> <p>Families will enjoy participating in social and community activities.</p> <p>Families will feel supported with formal and informal networks.</p> <p>Families will have strong social support within the community.</p>

RATIONALE: These Outcome Statements reflect:

- Theoretical notions to do with the style of help giving behaviour, a strength based, capacity building approach, and the longer term aim of parents as advocates.
- The professional roles of providing information, resources and support.
- Families' rights to self respect and access to community activities.

4. ECIA (VC) OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITIES

	FUNCTIONING	PARTICIPATING
OUTCOMES	<p>Communities will have a range of service options and facilities, responding to emerging needs of families in supportive ways.</p> <p>Communities will have the knowledge and ability to respond to the needs of all individuals and families.</p>	<p>Communities will value all members.</p> <p>Societies will be inclusive, advocating for access and quality services for all families.</p>
OBJECTIVES	<p>Specialist and mainstream services are part of an integrated network to support families and children.</p> <p>Early childhood service providers will have shared knowledge of the service system, and knowledge of the range of differences in children and families.</p> <p>Early Childhood service providers will work with children in ways that promote their development and participation.</p> <p>Early childhood service providers and other informal community based services will have the ability to provide holistic support, responding to emerging needs of children and families.</p>	<p>Early childhood services will be accepting of children with disabilities and their families.</p> <p>Community facilities will be accepting of children with disabilities and their families.</p> <p>Communities will be accepting of children with disabilities and their families.</p> <p>Services will have a common philosophy and common procedures regarding inclusion.</p>

RATIONALE: These Outcome Statements reflect:

- The theoretical principles of access, transition and inclusion, and the notion of a universal continuum of early childhood services.
- The role of all early childhood professionals in promoting community knowledge of the experiences and needs of all children and families, encouraging community response accordingly.
- Duty of care and the ethics of professionals to continually gain knowledge and be responsive style to the range of children and families in the community.

5. References

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