

What is Inclusive and Participatory Practice?

Home and community life...

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Your child is fully included and participates meaningfully in home and community life, with additional supports as needed.

Your child learns through play and interacting with other children in everyday natural settings, such as home, child care, kindergarten and community activities. Inclusion means more than just being present in these settings, it means creating environments where your child can develop relationships, engage meaningfully and participate in activities.

It is the role of the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) practitioner to ensure that all those people working with your child are supported and have the additional skills to include your child meaningfully within their settings.

Research has demonstrated that children with disability are more interactive in inclusive settings than in segregated settings providing greater opportunities for children to develop friendships (Antia et al., 2011; Case-Smith & Holland, 2009).

"I was very worried when Arjun started child care. Would he be looked after? Would the other children play with him? Our key worker supported Arjun in child care and worked with his educators to make sure that he could take part in activities and routines. To our surprise Arjun settled into child care well and has made some friends already. We are so happy for him."

A Key Worker is the nominated ECI practitioner who is the main point of contact for your family and helps coordinate the delivery of early childhood intervention services for your child.

An ECI practitioner is a professional who works with your child and family to deliver early childhood intervention. This could be a key worker, therapist or other specialist.

Your ECI practitioner should:

- assist your family to access early childhood services and community programs;
- assist your family, the early childhood educator or any other important person make adaptations to the environment, resources, routines and program;
- build and strengthen the skills of all important persons to meet the needs of your child inclusively;
- use relevant technologies as required to improve participation and engagement;
- build and strengthen the skills of your child to build relationships with others, engage and participate meaningfully; and
- foster positive social relationships between your child, other children and adults.

Friendships and positive social relationships developed in the early years have been shown to be important for a child's success and happiness in later life.

*Antia, S. D., Jones, P., Luckner, J., Kreimeyer, K. H., & Reed, S. (2011). Social outcomes of students who are deaf and hard of hearing in general education classrooms. *Exceptional Children*, 77(4), 489-504.*



This information sheet is part of a set of resources for families on the principles of 'Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention'.

Early Childhood Intervention Australia (WA/NT Alliance) (2017)
Choosing Quality Early Childhood Intervention Services and Supports for Your Child: www.ecia.org.au

Carers Victoria and ECIA Victorian Chapter (2013)
Making a Start: Building supports for your child and family: www.eciavic.org.au