

Policy: 1.3	<b>Equity, Social Justice and Social Inclusion</b>
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**Policy Statement:**

Equity, social justice and social inclusion principles recognise that power, resources and the ability to have control over what happens to individuals is not always equally shared. These principles act to redress the imbalances.

Equity is about providing people with equal rights and equal opportunities. This means having the right to be acknowledged, to have an equal voice that is heard. It also means having the right to have opportunities for valued contribution, to participate as equal and active citizens and to be free from all forms of prejudice.

Social justice recognises that there are situations where application of the same rules can generate unequal outcomes. Social justice works to achieve equal outcomes by recognising disadvantage and prejudice, and the existence of structural barriers embedded in the social, economic and political system.

Social inclusion is a process whereby equity and social justice can be achieved. Social inclusion incorporates policies and program developments that are designed to reduce barriers. Socially inclusive practices promote development, provide opportunities for meaningful participation and seek to create communities where everyone is acknowledged and valued.

ODEEP has a responsibility to address issues of equity, social justice and social inclusion in its management and programs; to advocate for these principles in the wider community and to challenge unjust and exclusionary behaviours.

<b>Responsibilities and delegations</b>	
This policy applies to	ODEEP staff, volunteers, contractors and families.
Specific responsibilities	This policy is developed by the CEO and reviewed by ODEEP staff and Board. It is communicated and implemented by the CEO and staff.
Policy approval	ODEEP CEO.

<b>Policy context</b> – this policy relates to:	
Standards	NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2018
Legislation	NDIS Act 2013 Joint Statement on Inclusion: “ECE and ECI Position Statement on the Inclusion of Children with a Disability in Early Childhood Education and Care”.

<p>Organisation policies</p>	<p>1.1 Client Rights and Service Charter            1.3 Equity, Social Justice and Social Inclusion            1.6 Privacy            1.7 Advocacy and Information            1.8 Child Protection and Reportable Incidents            2.1 Confidentiality            2.4 Feedback and Complaints            4.2 Family Centred Practice            4.3 Client Participation and Social Inclusion</p>
<p>Forms, record keeping, other documents</p>	<p>ECIA Code of Ethics            NDIS Code of Conduct            ODEEP Family Charter            Feedback Brochure and Client User Forms            NDIS Online “Adopting a Human Rights Based Approach”            Fact Sheet: A Summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child            Noah’s Ark: Inclusion resource            ECIA VIC Website Inclusion page and blog            ODEEP Job Descriptions and Appraisal documents</p>

**Procedures:**

ODEEP is committed to a philosophy of equity, social justice and social inclusion.

ODEEP will:

- recognise and acknowledge where individuals and groups have experienced, and/or are experiencing, disadvantage and prejudice.
- identify barriers to inclusion and equity and implement strategies to reduce these barriers.
- promote equity and inclusion and implement strategies that help to prevent disadvantage and that promote participation.
- respect and value each individual for the person they are now as well as for the person they may become.
- acknowledge and nurture each person’s strengths, interests, skills and capabilities.
- acknowledge the decisions that individuals make.
- provide information that supports informed decision-making.
- provide clients with high quality early childhood intervention services that are accessible, inclusive, and which recognise and address discrimination and prejudice in order to create a sense of belonging for all.
- model inclusive and socially just behaviours.
- enable children and adults to recognise and promote just and inclusive attitudes and behaviours.
- ensure that children and adults have opportunities to contribute meaningfully to decision-making about what happens to them.
- provide staff training and regular opportunities for reflection on practice.
- include in staff job descriptions and appraisals staff responsibilities in social justice and social inclusion.



- advocate for equity, social justice and social inclusion in the wider community by:
  - providing information regarding principles of equity, social justice and social inclusion and any relevant legislation.
  - assisting the family to negotiate a solution.
  - if necessary, external services may be enlisted to reach an agreement that is satisfactory for the family.
  - embrace the diversity of the families in our community.

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- This policy has been developed and/or adapted with assistance from the above service/s – ODEEP appreciates their generosity.

<b>Record of policy development</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date approved</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
Version 2	2 April 2019	July 2021
Version 3	July 2021	July 2022
Version 4	October 2022	October 2023