

Policy 4.3	Client Participation and Social Inclusion
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Policy Statement:

Orange and District Early Education Program values and promotes the participation of children with disabilities and developmental delays and their families in the life of their community, through the mission statement and key components of service provision.

The organisation will:

- support children and families to participate in communities and activities of choice respecting their choices and plans regarding employment, education, leisure and their social lives.
- enable children and families to be involved in decisions that affect them and the services they receive.
- encourage and support children and families to be involved in service development, evaluation, planning and organisational management.
- seek child and family 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.

Responsibilities and delegations

This policy applies to	ODEEP staff, volunteers, contractors and families for the purpose of supporting participation and social inclusion.
Specific responsibilities	This policy is developed by the CEO and reviewed by ODEEP staff and Board of Directors. It is communicated and implemented by the CEO and Staff.
Policy approval	ODEEP CEO

Policy context – this policy relates to:

Standards	NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2018
Legislation	NDIS Act 2013 Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW) NSW Disability Services Act 1993 Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Organisation policies	Policy 1 Client Rights and Service Charter Policy 1.7 Social Media Communication Policy 1.3.1 Privacy Policy 4.1 Complaints and Feedback WH&S Policies

Forms, record keeping, other documents	Staff Induction Package Keeping them safe documentation Workplace safety checks Working with Children Checks Resource: Participation and Belonging: Inclusion in Practice (Noah's Ark 2012). Staff Job Descriptions and Appraisal documentation
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Procedures

Information strategies

- ODEEP will provide information and support to families that enable them to identify community-based services and activities through the Individual Family Service Planning and the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention processes.
- ODEEP will assist families to access and participate in the identified community services/activities as requested by the family. This may involve visiting the services /activities with the family, collaborating with the provider/ organiser to overcome any barriers to participation such as transport difficulties or lack of understanding about disability, and to assist them to understand the child's strengths, interest and needs so that they are able to implement helpful strategies to maximise the child's participation.
- Families are encouraged and supported to choose and participate in community activities that reflect their cultural and recreational interest and preferences.
- The intervention focus for the children will be on teaching functional skills which can be generalised to natural environments hence supporting the transitions from home to a small group setting such as playgroup then to larger group settings such as preschool and school.
- ODEEP provides opportunities within the Service to support the development of social networks between families.
- ODEEP encourages the participation of all family members within all facets of the ODEEP program.
- ODEEP actively works to engage and enhance networks and partnerships within the community.
- ODEEP staff participate in ongoing professional development and learning opportunities which up skill them to strengthen family capacity with appropriate key performance indicators being included in staff job descriptions and appraisal systems.
- Guidelines for public material and activities promote the abilities and strengths of children with disabilities/developmental delays and their families.

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.
- input when new services or activities are being developed.
- representation on client committees or groups.
- attending training or information sessions.
- active membership of the organisation.
- standing for the Board or management committee.

Record of policy development		
Version	Date approved	Date for review
Version 1	August 2020	August 2021
Version 2	November 2021	November 2022