

Conversation Starters For Families and Carers



Shared conversations are an opportunity to talk and listen with other inclusion team members.



- ▶ They help you to connect and start a working relationship.
- ▶ They help you to learn more about other team members and to understand what is important to them.
- ▶ They allow you to share what is important to you.

Shared conversations support the inclusion team to build strong, ongoing, working relationships.

- ▶ They improve communication, enhance teamwork and keep you on track.
- ▶ They help the team to find common ground to work on together, agree on the path forward and keep connected.
- ▶ They help you to work better together.

Shared Conversations come in many forms.

- ▶ They can be informal, such as a short catch-up at drop-off time, or more formal, such as in a planned meeting with all team members.
- ▶ They can be in-person, online, over the phone and through email interactions.



To connect and start a relationship

- ▶ Hello. My name is... This is (child)...
- ▶ Hi. I'd like you to meet (child)'s sibling.../family member.../friend.../carer...
- ▶ Hi. I haven't met (child)'s other/new educators yet. Can you introduce me?
- ▶ These are the names and contact details of the early childhood intervention professionals who support (child). Have you met them all? When could we meet?
- ▶ Is there anything about (child) you would like to know more about?
- ▶ These are my/our contact details. The best time to have a phone/in-person... conversation with me is...



To help you learn about Early Childhood Intervention Professionals

- ▶ It would be great to hear a little more about yourself and your professional background/scope of practice/approach/experience...
- ▶ Can you tell me about your approach to therapy in natural, everyday environments such as an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) service?
- ▶ What are your thoughts/goals/ideas for (child)?
- ▶ Do you have any priorities for (child's) inclusion in this ECEC service.
- ▶ How will you work with the educators in our child's service?
- ▶ How will you involve (child)'s peers in the activities you plan?
- ▶ Can these activities also be practised at home/with their relatives/at playgroup/in the park/at the library...? Can they involve (child)'s sibling/s?
- ▶ How do you...? Can I clarify...? Tell me more about... What are your expectations ...?

- ▶ Thank you for sharing those assessments and reports. They were very helpful. My understanding is ... Is this your understanding of them? Can I ask you about...?



To help you learn about the Early Childhood Education and Care Services

- ▶ Can you tell me about your service and can I have a look around?
- ▶ Can I have a copy of your service philosophy?
- ▶ What does learning through play look like in your service?
- ▶ Can you tell me about how inclusion happens at your service? Do you have an inclusion policy? Can I have a copy? I would like to meet all the educators and staff who work with (child). How could I do that?
- ▶ What are your thoughts/goals/ideas about the inclusion of (child) at your service?
- ▶ Do you have any priorities for (child's) inclusion at your service?
- ▶ What would best practice look like in your service?
- ▶ How do you...? Can I clarify...? Tell me more about... What are your expectations...?
- ▶ Thank you for sharing those observations and program documentation for (child). They were very helpful. My understanding is ... Is this your understanding of them?
- ▶ I've noticed that (child) likes.../prefers to play.../is friends with.../engages with.../is comfortable.../is challenged by... What are your thoughts or experiences?



To share your Family and Carer perspectives

- ▶ Our child's strengths/interests/identity/skills/ dispositions are...
- ▶ Important relationships for (child) include...
- ▶ (Child) prefers to communicate by...
- ▶ (Child) feels supported when... Our child is comforted by... Our child is challenged by...
- ▶ Our hopes/needs/problems/thoughts/goals/ideas about our child's learning and development are...
- ▶ Our hopes/needs/problems/thoughts/goals/ideas about the inclusion of (child) at the service are...
- ▶ Our priorities for (child's) inclusion at the service are...
- ▶ At the service, I've noticed that (child) likes.../prefers to play.../is friends with.../engages with.../is comfortable.../is challenged by... What are your thoughts or experiences?
- ▶ We would like to share (child)'s assessments and reports. After you've reviewed them, can we check in to ensure we have the same understanding of them?
- ▶ Thanks for sharing your observations and program documentation for (child). They were very helpful. My understanding is ... Is this your understanding of them?



To find common ground with other inclusion team members

- ▶ Can we talk about the hopes, needs, problems, thoughts, goals and ideas that might help us find what we want to focus on together?
- ▶ What do you think is important for (child)'s learning and development?
- ▶ What do we need to focus on to support (child)'s learning, development and inclusion at the ECEC service?
- ▶ Can we talk about what we agree is important to focus on first?
- ▶ Let's start small. Let's agree on (shared priority) and start to work on next steps.
- ▶ This might be challenging for... because... Another way to do this could be...



To agree on the path forward

- ▶ Can we get together to talk about the next steps? What day and time will suit?
- ▶ Let's brainstorm what needs to happen to get started.
- ▶ Who will do what? Let's make sure everyone knows what's happening and who is doing it.
- ▶ What else do we need to do? Do we need any extra help us to do this?
- ▶ How will we know when things are working well and we're on the right track?
- ▶ Let's make sure everyone knows what is happening. Who is sharing the plan?



To keep connected and check in on progress

- ▶ Can we schedule a check-in? What day and time will suit?
- ▶ How was (child)'s day today? Did you get to try that new strategy? How did it go at group time/outdoors/during transitions/at lunch time...
- ▶ I am just checking in to see if you received the information I emailed to you. What do you think about this idea?
- ▶ I have noticed that ... seems to be going well. What are your thoughts?
- ▶ (Child) really likes...with their educator and friends. How could we try the strategy ... during a group experience?
- ▶ I have some observations/experiences/ideas about why our inclusion team plan is not working well. When would be a good time to have a chat about this?
- ▶ Let's get together to review our progress.



To start a difficult conversation

- ▶ I've noticed that.... This makes me think... What is happening from your perspective?
- ▶ I'd like to chat about (issue/problem). Can we schedule a time to talk about it?
- ▶ I am not understanding... Can you help me to...? What am I missing?
- ▶ I need your help with (issue/problem). Let's work out how we can solve it together.
- ▶ I'd like to chat about how we might be able to work better together.
- ▶ I'd really like to hear your ideas. What else could we do?
- ▶ I'd like to share something I've observed. Can I get your help with...?

Click [here](#) to find out more about *Inclusion Together* or go to <https://inclusionagency NSW act.org.au/about/inclusion-together>