

Frequently Asked Questions



Who is the *Inclusion Together* resource for?

Inclusion Together provides practical tools for supporting a child's learning, development and inclusion in an early childhood education and care service. This resource is designed to support the inclusion of children with disability or developmental differences and may also be useful when adults are responding to other barriers to inclusion that children may experience.

Inclusion Together has been created for **families and carers, early childhood education and care services and early childhood intervention professionals**. It can help you to build an inclusion team that collaborates and works well together.

This resource can be used by...

- ▶ Families and carers, which refers to and includes:
 - Parents or primary carers; and
 - Extended family members.
- ▶ Early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, which refers to and includes:
 - Centre based day care services including both long day care and preschools;
 - Family day care services;
 - Outside school hours care services;
 - In home care; and
 - Occasional care services.

Our reference to ECEC services can also include representatives from the provider organisation of a service or school representatives for an outside school hours care service.
- ▶ Early childhood intervention (ECI) professionals, which refers to and includes:
 - Allied health practitioners – speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, nutritionists etc.;
 - Medical practitioners including paediatricians, general practitioners (GPs), specialists; and
 - Specialists, practitioners and consultants including key workers.

Each inclusion team member may have their own external supports.

These supports may include representatives from specialist organisations, inclusion support professionals and consultants from Commonwealth and State funded inclusion programs. They have a role to play in supporting their relevant stakeholders to explore and use this resource. However, it is **not** expected that these external representatives will be members of the inclusion team.

Please see the section below titled "I need more support. What can I do?", for links and contact details of inclusion support organisations and resources you may find helpful.

Why would I use this resource?

Inclusion Together is designed to help you build an inclusion team to support a child's learning, development and inclusion in an ECEC service.

Some examples of when this resource can help you include:

- ▶ You are enrolling a child with development differences in an ECEC service;
- ▶ You want to strengthen your partnerships and teamwork;
- ▶ You are experiencing a challenge relating to early childhood education and therapy working together;
- ▶ You are new to your role and not sure about the best way to work together; and
- ▶ You are a therapist planning to visit an ECEC service.

Is the *Inclusion Together* resource for children?

Children are important members of the inclusion team. A 'team *with* the child' includes the 'voice' of the child, the adults supporting them, as well as their peers and siblings.

An inclusion team *with* the child is central to *Inclusion Together*. However, the resource does not provide resources specifically designed for children. In most cases, young children will not be actively contributing to discussions and meetings. However, it is important that the team think about how to capture and include what's important **to** the child, not just what's important **for** the child.

This resource will help families and carers, ECEC services and ECI professionals to value and include children's voices.

What is the *Inclusion Together* map?

The *Inclusion Together* map helps the inclusion team navigate their journey of working together.

There are four steps that support team relationships, guide decision making, and monitor the progress of actions taken. The four steps focus on:

- ▶ having shared conversations;
- ▶ finding common ground;
- ▶ agreeing on the path forward; and
- ▶ keeping connected.

Each step in the map has information, ideas, strategies, and videos to help the inclusion team work together and stay on track.

Does this resource help me to develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP)?

Inclusion Together is a framework to support the adults in a child's life to form an inclusion team that works well together. The resource has been created to provide information and practical tools for supporting a child's learning, development and inclusion in an ECEC service through use of a team approach.

Inclusion Together is broader than individual goal setting or service planning for inclusion. It focuses on team collaboration to achieve greater outcomes for a child. Some discussions and planning may inform individual intervention planning and broader inclusion planning such as an ILP or SIP, but the main purpose of this resource is to build and facilitate ongoing teamwork.

Are there *Inclusion Together* templates to use and do we need to use them?

This resource includes some templates to support the inclusion team's journey. These templates have been created to support the inclusion team to gather information, agree on a

focus, plan next steps, and record progress. However, using these templates is optional, and the team may decide to use different approaches for capturing and recording their work together.

The *Inclusion Together* templates include:

- ▶ Meeting planner/agenda
- ▶ Finding Common Ground information sheet
- ▶ Who does what?
- ▶ Inclusion Team Agreement

The *Inclusion Together* templates can be found by clicking on the Resources buttons throughout the resource.

How was *Inclusion Together* Developed?

In 2016, Early Childhood Intervention Australia, now known as Reimagine Australia, formed a working group of key stakeholders to develop a resource to navigate some issues that arose during the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The *Working Together Agreement* resource was developed to support early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, early childhood intervention (ECI) professionals, and families to work together.

In 2022, The NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency invited the original working group to come back together to review the resource. There was an identified need to increase accessibility to the resource, and to strengthen awareness of the importance and benefits of working together to support the inclusion of children with disability and developmental differences in ECEC settings.

A new stakeholder working group was formed to provide guidance, feedback and recommendations and, in April 2023, funding for the project was approved by the Australian Government Department of Education.

In reviewing the original resource, the working group recognised that teamwork requires far more than having an agreement alone and this informed the development of *Inclusion Together*.

Inclusion Together aims to support families and carers, ECEC services and ECI professionals to work together to strengthen inclusion and support children to play, learn, develop and thrive.

We are grateful for the contribution of the representatives from the following organisations who were part of the working group.

- ▶ ACECQA
- ▶ Early Childhood Australia NSW Branch
- ▶ EarlyEd Inc
- ▶ Family Advocacy
- ▶ Firstchance
- ▶ KU Children's Services
- ▶ NSW Department of Education
- ▶ Reimagine Australia

I need more support. What can I do?



There are times when working together for inclusion may not go smoothly. The *Inclusion Together* resource has a HELP section with practical strategies and tips for when you hit a bump in the road. You can access this HELP section from every page of the resource.

If the inclusion team needs further help, access these inclusion support organisations and resources:



- ▶ [Family Advocacy](#)
- ▶ [Kindred](#)
- ▶ [Reimagine Australia](#)
- ▶ [Thrivary](#)



- ▶ [PRECI: Professionals and Researchers in Early Childhood Intervention](#)
- ▶ [Reimagine Australia](#)
- ▶ [Thrivary](#)



- ▶ [Disability Discrimination ACT \(1992\) resources](#)
- ▶ [Inclusion Agencies](#) provides free tailored inclusion support to educators in Commonwealth funded centre-based day care, family day care and out of school hours care services across Australia.
- ▶ [Reimagine Australia](#)
- ▶ State funded programs provide inclusion support to community-based kindergartens and preschools. The structure and focus of these programs vary from state to state. For example,
 - New South Wales – [Sector Capacity Building Program](#)
 - Queensland - [Kindergarten Inclusion Support Scheme](#)
 - Victoria - [Kindergarten Inclusion Support \(KIS\) Contacts](#)

Contact your relevant state or territory education department for information and contact details.

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