



Tips for when you hit bumps in the road



A map for working better together

There are times when working together for inclusion may not go smoothly. Pinpointing where things have gone wrong will help you to find a starting point to get back on track.

Working together is not always easy, but it *is* possible, it *is* best practice, and it *is* worth it.



“Everyone has a different idea on what should happen.”

Navigating different perspectives and expectations can be challenging, but it can also increase opportunities for understanding and learning.

Each inclusion team member brings their own unique perspective and context to the team. This can lead to differing expectations and, occasionally, even misunderstandings.

Understanding the perspectives of each team member will help you to find common ground to focus on together. Different perspectives will also add to the team’s pool of knowledge, skills, experience and ideas that can be applied to your shared priority. Some points to consider include:



- ▶ The child brings their own disposition, strengths and interests. It is important to think about what decisions will mean both for and to the child. A child’s peers and siblings also play a key role in their belonging and learning. The child is part of the team when their voice and perspective is recognised and responded to. This is different to adults making all the decisions on behalf of a child. All children need opportunities to try new things and make choices for themselves.



- ▶ Families and carers know their child best. A child’s home is the main, natural, everyday environment for children to learn and grow. Families are often juggling work and home commitments as well as caregiving responsibilities for other siblings. Families and carers will have differing knowledge and understanding about inclusion and about what happens in early childhood education and care services. Families and carers from different cultural backgrounds may also have different expectations about what should happen for their child.



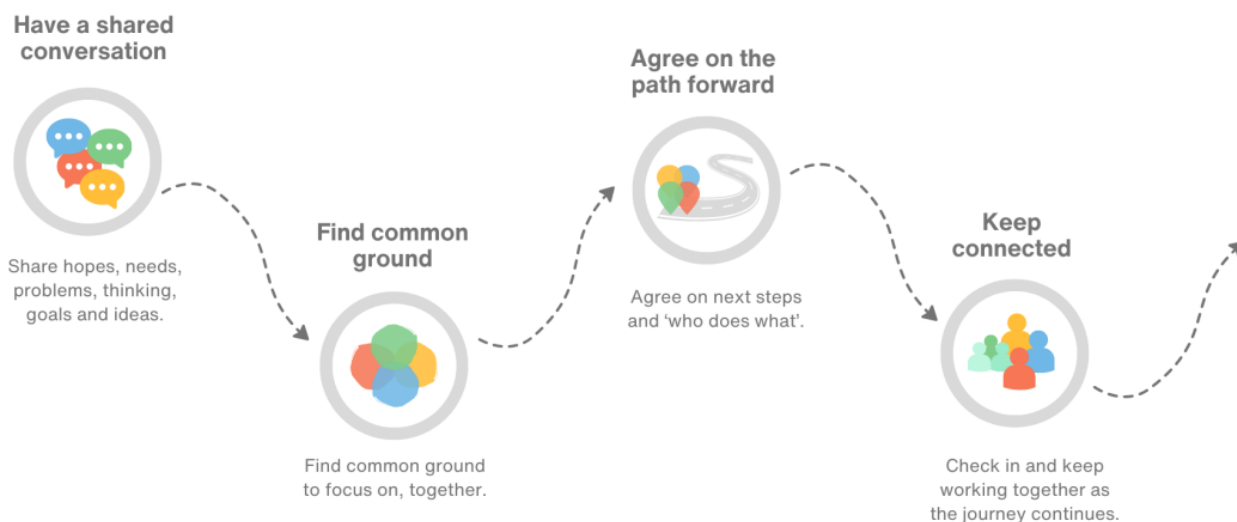
- ▶ Early childhood education and care (ECEC) services operate under the Education and Care Service National Law and Regulations. They provide a unique opportunity for children to learn and develop as they provide a play-based, social context that is different to home and very different to a clinical setting. ECEC services are an important natural, everyday environment for children. Early childhood educators specialise in supporting all children to learn through play and to develop friendships. ECEC services may be having multiple inclusion team meetings as they often include many children with disability and developmental differences.



- ▶ Early childhood intervention (ECI) professionals and partners have specialised perspectives and expertise and adapt their practices between clinical and natural, everyday settings. They are usually juggling a busy caseload and support multiple children and families each day. ECI professionals align their support with the hopes, goals and ideas that families and carers have for their child. They may have access to some specific resources to support this.

To share perspectives and get the inclusion team journey back on track:

- ▶ Recognise the value that different perspectives bring to the team.
- ▶ Be curious, ask questions, clarify understanding and strive for best practice, together.
- ▶ Take extra time for shared conversations when starting together as a team. This will set things up for a smoother journey together, as you will have greater understanding of each other's perspectives and expectations.
- ▶ Re-set the team journey with another conversation whenever there is a bump in the road. This will help to address issues quickly.
- ▶ Work towards finding common ground for the team to focus on, together. No matter how small, a shared priority provides a focus to build upon.
- ▶ Consider if a shared priority that is not possible in the ECEC setting can be implemented at home or in another community setting such as playgroup. Also, think about whether there is another way that ideas and strategies could be implemented.
- ▶ Agree on the path forward, so each member team knows the next steps and who is doing what.
- ▶ Continue to use the *Inclusion Together* map.



“I need some more help.”

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.
- ▶ [Thrivary](#)

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