

INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

AIM:

To provide educators with a set of guidelines to assist them in the creation and implementation of “inclusive practices”.

“Inclusive practices” refer to the educator providing care in such a way that it recognises and celebrates each child’s individuality. This includes culture, religion, gender, ability and family structure. Remember - culture refers to the family’s individual culture as well as the traditional culture of a community.

There are four very important reasons for using inclusive practices with the children in our care.

1. So children can be knowledgeable about their family and individual attributes;
2. So that children can develop to their full potential;
3. So that children learn to accept and embrace the differences of people in the community;
4. So that children can participate in community opportunities that enhance/support respect for people who have disabilities, the aged and other minority social groups

POLICY:

An important aspect of children’s “belonging, being, and becoming” involves them learning how their behaviours and actions affect themselves and others, and developing the skills to regulate these independently.

Interactions with families

Educators are encouraged to:

- (i) recognise the importance of the family in the child’s life and respect the family’s beliefs, attitudes and values in reference to caring for their child;
- (ii) learn about the family and understand the specific needs of the family and their children;
- (iii) communicate with families about their child and encourage families to communicate with them in return; and
- (iv) encourage the family to share the culture of their home and give the educator ideas about how the family culture can be included in their day-to-day programming.

Interactions with children

Educators are encouraged to:

- (i) interact with each child in a way that is appropriate for that particular child;
- (ii) use non-biased terms when discussing gender;
- (iii) use language and display attitudes that encourage equality and tolerance toward minority groups or any members of the community or children in care.

Play Materials

Books, dramatic play materials etc. should represent children of different cultures and religions, children with additional needs, various family structures, and people of both genders participating in traditional and non-traditional male and female roles.

The use of play materials which can be adapted to cater for children with additional needs is also encouraged.

Activities and Experiences

Activities and experiences can be provided in a way that encourages both sexes to participate; eg. dolls and trucks provided with the large blocks, and paint, crayons, textas and paper of varying skin tones can be provided for children to enable the children to represent themselves when creating their self vision.

Resources

Coordinators can provide educators with resources and ideas to support this policy. Educators can network with other educators/services/community members and seek guidance from families using their service. The Inclusion Support Agency is also available to provide other resources.

Key Resources: *Indigenous Perspectives for Children's Services*, C.A.R.E. Inclusion Support Team, 2004;
Saris and Skirts –Gender Equity and Multiculturalism, Glenda MacNaughton, Early Childhood Australia Inc.
Inclusion Support Service Guidelines, 2007.