

Principles for Social Inclusion - everyone's job

With the endorsement of the **Australian Social Inclusion Board**, the **Australian Government** has adopted principles to guide social inclusion. These can be applied at many levels, from local to national. They include **aspirations** – what we want to achieve, and **approaches** – what we might do to get there.

To be **socially included**, people must be given the opportunity to:

- secure a job;
- access services;
- connect with family, friends, work, personal interests and local community;
- deal with personal crisis; and
- have their voice heard.

Aspirations

- **Reducing disadvantage** - Making sure people in need benefit from access to good health, education and other services;
- **Increasing social, civic and economic participation** - Helping everyone get the skills and support they need so they can work and connect with the community, even during hard times; and
- **A greater voice, combined with greater responsibility** - Governments and other organisations giving people a say in what services they need and how they work, and people taking responsibility to make the best use of the opportunities available.

Approaches

- **Building on individual and community strengths** - Making the most of people's strengths, including the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from other cultures;
- **Building partnerships with key stakeholders** - Governments, organisations and communities working together to get the best results for people in need;
- **Developing tailored services** - Services working together in new and flexible ways to meet each person's different needs;
- **Giving a high priority to early intervention and prevention** - Heading off problems by understanding the root causes and intervening early;
- **Building joined-up services and whole of government(s) solutions** - Getting different parts and different levels of government to work together in new and flexible ways to get better outcomes and services for people in need;
- **Using evidence and integrated data to inform policy** - Finding out what programs and services work well and understanding why, so you can share good ideas, keep making improvements and put your effort into the things that work;
- **Using locational approaches** - Working in places where there is a lot of disadvantage, to get to people most in need and to understand how different problems are connected;
- **Planning for sustainability** - Doing things that will help people and communities deal better with problems in the future, as well as solving the problems they face now.

The Board has also developed the advice below on how to provide better support to two early priority groups: **children at the greatest risk of long-term disadvantage**, and **jobless families**.

Social Inclusion – early priorities

Effective services for children at greatest risk of long-term disadvantage

- Interventions at key transition points (for example from hospital to home, home to educational setting) and as early as possible;
- A conversationally rich, stimulating, non-threatening, respectful and welcoming program environment;
- Quality trained professionals and volunteers and a low child-teacher ratio in educational settings;
- Active family involvement, including support for participation, focus on capacity and strengths, active involvement in problem solving and decision making, and quality relationships with facilitators/professionals;
- Multi-layered and multifaceted approaches to support different people with different needs;
- Effective partnerships between organisations to provide integrated services and a single entry point to all services;
- Community involvement in development and delivery of programs to allow parents the opportunity to connect with others in the community and to build on community strengths and capacity;
- Programs that are evidence-based or with a strong evaluation component;
- Flexible child and family focused programs, which are culturally aware, respond to individual needs and build on strengths;
- Programs delivered by highly skilled, committed professionals and volunteers;
- Delivery in partnership with a widely recognised and respected organisation;
- A long term program focus (beginning during pregnancy and then sustained);
- Practical assistance incorporated to facilitate access by the most disadvantaged including: transport, cost, flexible opening hours, flexible settings (i.e. formal settings may be threatening), care for children and additional support.

Providing inclusive services to jobless families

- Capitalise on existing infrastructure;
- Use innovative and replicable design;
- Provide a coherent package of integrated services;
- Take a family centred, multilayered, strengths-based approach;
- Recognise the history, aspirations, culture and characteristics of the community;
- Include creative partnerships between all levels of government;
- Focus interventions on transition points;
- Operate on a sufficient time-scale to have measurable impact; and
- Build in performance monitoring and evaluation.