

Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Policy Statement

The Y Canberra Region is committed to promoting an inclusive and accepting community that values the dignity and intrinsic worth of all people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, belief or other difference. Our primary role is building strong people, children, families and communities. We aim to enhance connections, increase access, build social inclusion and encourage individual empowerment and participation in our community. Y People will create environments that support and promote inclusive attitudes and practices.

This policy has been developed to reflect our commitment to the below professional standards.

- United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Y Australia Children’s Services Philosophy, Mission, Vision and Values
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics
- ECA Statement on the Inclusion of every child in early education and care
- The Y Canberra Region Code of Conduct
- Y Canberra Region Safeguarding Children and Young People Policies and Practices
- Fair Work Act 2009 <https://www.fairwork.gov.au>

Objectives

- To acknowledge, include and respect children and young people, parents / guardians, participants and Y People regardless of their age, gender, LGBTQIA+ preferences, culture, beliefs or abilities.
- To encourage inclusive attitudes and practices
- To ensure children and young people, parents / guardians, participants and Y People are treated with dignity and respect
- To uphold and advocate the principles and values of social justice.
- To work towards removing barriers to full participation in community life and advocating for social change.
- To provide quality environments which are inclusive and responsive to the needs of the participants using them.

Procedure

The Y Canberra Region will:

- Include and embrace ‘Social Justice and Inclusion’ in Y Canberra Region strategic planning.
- Enhance social inclusion by implementing and evaluating strategies and practices that provide opportunities and address barriers to participation in our services, in our programs and in the community.
- Address attitudes and behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others and refer these behaviours to a Supervisor / Manager or People and Culture.
- Recognise and value the differences and similarities that exist between all people.
- Translate key documents into other languages as required by utilising support agencies such as the free Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>

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NR06	Y Canberra Region	Internal	April 2021	May 2018	APPROVED

- Provide flexible payment options for participants experiencing temporary financial hardship demonstrating respect and awareness of their situation and maintain inclusion in the service.
- Promote positive attitudes towards social justice and diversity including
 - a. Aboriginal, Torres Strait and South Sea Islander backgrounds
 - b. Participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - c. Participants who may be socially isolated or vulnerable
 - d. Participants with diverse abilities
 - e. Gender and LGBTQIA+ Preferences
- Where possible provide access to buildings and facilities to accommodate and enable participants of all strengths and abilities.
- Provide opportunities for employees to develop their cultural competence, build strong community partnerships and develop their cultural knowledge.
- Engage in the planning and implementation of the Y Canberra Region Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to drive our contribution to the reconciliation movement and foster a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and contribution.
- Acknowledge if the needs of any participant cannot be adequately met, we will endeavour to direct them to a service provider in the community who are able to meet their needs.

Y People will:

- Respect the rights and diversity of each child, young person and participant.
- Acknowledge our differences and use this as a positive aspect of who we are and provide opportunity for mutual learning.

The Y Australia values the individual worth, uniqueness and diversity of all people. We seek to remove barriers to participation in programs and activities that will enable all people to meet their full potential, and experience meaningful involvement in The Y Movement and the community, according to the Mission statement and values The Y Australia. Our commitment to social inclusion will be achieved by our Member Associations through:

- *Striving to remove any barriers to full participation in community life These barriers may be social, economic, attitudinal, cultural, geographic or political.*
- *Supporting and fostering active citizenship in particular we are committed to fostering a spirit of volunteering and local governance*
- *Enhancing people's rights, access and opportunities The principles of Access and Inclusion are an important element of Social Inclusion.*
- *Advocating for the rights of all people in our communities The YMCA is uniquely placed to use its relationships to influence decision makers on behalf of those less able to express their views and need*

YMCA Australia Commitment to Social Inclusion Statement

- View participants as capable and competent with many diverse strengths and abilities which contribute to their learning.
- Support participants to extend their knowledge and understanding of diversity by being positive role models.
- Provide access to specialised equipment and resources to support individual and diverse requirements.
- Provide access to appropriate Inclusion Support and NDIS Services as required.
- Provide all participants with opportunities and experiences to develop meaningful social relationships and lifelong skills.

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- Promote environments where people are treated and respected regardless of their gender, age, socio-economic status, race, language, beliefs, additional needs, family background or lifestyle.
- Plan and implement inclusive environments to embrace and value the diversity of the service and wider community.
- Provide professional learning opportunities to enhance their knowledge of diversity, anti-bias practices, social justice topics and inclusion.
- Ensure the resources and equipment in our services are authentic and respectful to individual cultures of families and the community.
- Demonstrate respect and understanding for participant’s diverse cultural values, beliefs and child rearing practices.
- Be sensitive to cultural differences in body language, behaviour, attitudes, communication styles and practices related to cultural beliefs.
- Provide an environment and experiences to nurture and celebrate an individuals culture and to support the development of their cultural identity.
- Act ethically and with professionalism when addressing diversity without bias.
- Be aware and reflect on their own values and beliefs including their behaviour, language, attitudes, assumptions and expectations.
- Provide education and experiences not based on gender stereotypes.
- Use resources to challenge traditional gender stereotypes to enhance participants understanding and acceptance of diversity.
- Support to maintain the language of the home.
- Respond to conversations and interactions where unfair behaviours are displayed with positive guidance and understanding.
- Liaise and network with health professionals and community support groups as required.
- Role model by describing emotions, feelings, equity and fairness.
- Collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to support participant’s unique requirements.
- Work collaboratively with Y People and external bodies to determine the most appropriate strategies to achieve inclusion for participants.
- Where required collaborate with relevant agencies, schools and medical professionals to support the inclusion of participants.
- Be aware of the definitions of Inclusion in relevant professional standard documents e.g. MTOP / EYLF

Including Participants with Diverse Needs

- Identify program / service the participant wishes to engage in.
- Allow the participant to have a voice by documenting their needs and interests.
- Arrange a meeting with Y People and participants including children and young people, parents / guardians, participants, support services (where required) and Y People to discuss the participant’s strengths and needs.
- Identify support needs e.g. support worker, modified equipment.
- Determine support services available to facilitate access to the service and liaise as appropriate.
- Consult with the participant, parent / guardian to ensure the medical condition is recorded on the participant’s enrolment form (Childrens Services – QK Enrol) and the Medical Condition Form has been completed with the relevant support strategies.
- Where required to support the safe inclusion of participants;
 - develop an Individual Behavioural Support Plan
 - assess any risk to the participant / participants using the Inclusion Support Risk Assessment

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Related Policies and Procedures:

Y Canberra Region Employee Code of Conduct
 Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
 Safeguarding Code of Conduct
 Interactions with Children

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Due for review April, 2023 or as required

Standards, Legislation, Supporting Documents

Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2012
 Educational and Care Services National Regulations, 2011
 Disability Discrimination Act 1992
 Racial Discrimination Act 1975
 Sex Discrimination Act 1984
 Age Discrimination Act 2004
 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
 Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)

References:

UNICEF – fact sheet / summary of the rights of a child.
www.unicef.org.au ; sourced Jan, 2012

ACECQA - Guide to the National Quality Framework Sept 2020
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

Early Childhood Australia, a voice for young children - Code of Ethics
www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

The Anti-Bias Approach in Early Childhood 4th Edition
 Edited by Red Ruby Scarlet - Multiverse, 2020

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