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AUSTRALiA

CODE OF ETHICS REVIEW

AUGUST 2024

AUTHORED BY

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REIMAGINE AUSTRALIA

About Reimagine

Imagine a world of unlimited possibility. A world without barriers, where opportunity is infinite. A world where we can be as responsive as we desire. A world where the benefit of effortless access enables profound social and economic dividends for children, families, community, business and government. A world where children have every opportunity to thrive. At Reimagine Australia this is the world we dream of.

Reimagine Australia, formerly known as Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA), has been the leading Australian body for early childhood outcomes for very young children with disability, developmental delay and neurodivergence, and their families, since 1986.

As the singular national organisation that works with families, the practitioners who support them, government, service providers, and community to enable the very best outcomes for young developing children and their families, we seek to be courageous advocates for systems redesign and reshaped policy approaches, to ensure that responsive and inclusive supports and services are embedded as a cornerstone of Australian society.

Reimagine Australia's purpose is to ensure that all children, including those with disability, developmental delay, and neurodivergence, and their families, have every opportunity to realise their potential during their future-shaping early years.

For more than 38 years, Reimagine Australia has been leading the early childhood sector in embedding best practice and inclusive design at its core. We do this by working in continuous co-design with families and the practitioners who support them, to reimagine the future by enabling life-changing outcomes for their children

Reimagine Australia dreams of a tomorrow where the eco-system supporting families of young children provides them every opportunity to thrive, and where inclusion is not a goal, it's our way of life. Together we can change the future. Are you ready to Reimagine?

Foreword

The Code of Ethics (the Code) is more than just a set of guidelines; it is a foundational document that guides practitioners in delivering high-quality, ethical early childhood support (intervention) services for nearly a decade. It encapsulates the principles and values essential for fostering an environment where every child's unique needs are met with the utmost care and respect. However, as our society progresses and our understanding of diversity, inclusion, and child development deepens, it becomes imperative that our guiding principles evolve accordingly.

Our approach to this review was grounded in collaboration and inclusivity. We initiated a broad consultation and co-design process, engaging with a diverse array of stakeholders across the early childhood supports sector. This process included early childhood support practitioners, academics, early childhood teachers, and, most importantly, the parents of children with developmental delays, disabilities, or differences. Their insights and lived experiences were invaluable in shaping the revised Code, ensuring it is not only reflective of best practice, but also aligned with the realities and needs of the communities we serve.

The updated Code of Ethics emphasises the importance of embracing each child's uniqueness, affirming diversity, and embedding neuro-affirming practices into our everyday work. It recognises the critical role of families as partners in decision-making and the need for practitioners to foster positive relationships, support family strengths, and provide trauma-informed care. It also reaffirms our commitment to professional collaboration, community engagement, and the continuous pursuit of knowledge and excellence in our field.

As we move forward, I am filled with optimism and confidence that this revised Code will serve as a robust tool to support ethical practice, empowering practitioners to deliver services that are not only effective but also just, inclusive, and compassionate. It will guide us in our mission to ensure that every child, regardless of their developmental path, is given the opportunity to thrive in an environment that respects and celebrates their individuality.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all who contributed to this review process. Your dedication, insights, and passion for the well-being of children and their families have been instrumental in crafting a document that will undoubtedly shape the future of early childhood supports in Australia.

Together, we are not only upholding a tradition of excellence, but also forging a path toward a more inclusive and equitable future for all children.

Yvonne Keane AM
Chief Executive Officer
REIMAGINE AUSTRALIA

At Reimagine Australia, we recognise that the field of early childhood supports (intervention) is not static; it is a dynamic, ever-evolving space where the needs of children, families, and practitioners are continually better understood, growing and changing.

It is with this understanding that we embarked on a comprehensive review of the Early Childhood Intervention Australia Code of Ethics to ensure that, as a tool for the sector, it remains relevant, inclusive, responsive, and reflective of contemporary best practices.

Introduction

The Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) Code of Ethics [the Code] serves as a foundational document guiding practitioners in their work with young children and their families. It outlines the principles and values essential for delivering high-quality, ethical early childhood support (intervention) services. As the field of early childhood support evolves, it is imperative that the Code of Ethics remains current and reflective of best practices to ensure it continues to meet the needs of practitioners, families, and children.

Recognising the need for a comprehensive review and update, Reimagine Australia initiated a consultation and co-design process involving key stakeholders across the early childhood support sector, which included early childhood support practitioners, academics, early childhood teachers, and parents and carers of children with disability, developmental delay, and neuro-divergence. This review process aimed to assess the current relevance, inclusivity, and comprehensiveness of the Code, with the goal of identifying areas for improvement and alignment with contemporary practices.

The review process was multifaceted, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gather diverse perspectives. Two co-design sessions were conducted, bringing together families, practitioners, and academics to engage in detailed discussions about the strengths and weaknesses of the existing Code. These sessions provided an open forum for participants to share their experiences, insights, and suggestions for enhancement. The discussions focused on several key areas, including the relevance of the Code's principles, the inclusivity and accessibility of its language, the importance of cultural competence, and the role of ongoing professional development.

In addition to the co-design sessions, a comprehensive survey was distributed to a broader audience of stakeholders. The survey aimed to capture a wide range of views on the Code's effectiveness and areas needing improvement. Respondents provided valuable feedback on specific aspects of the Code, such as its alignment with best practices, the clarity and inclusiveness of its language, and the adequacy of its guidelines for cultural responsiveness and ethical considerations.

The combined input from the co-design sessions and survey responses was analysed to identify common themes and critical areas for revision. Key themes that emerged included the need to update the Code to reflect current best practices, integrate neuro-affirming language, and address the ethical use of technology. Participants also emphasised the importance of simplifying the document, enhancing its inclusivity, and actively including cultural practices in service delivery.

This report synthesises the findings from the review process and presents detailed recommendations for updating the Code. The recommendations aim to ensure that the Code remains a relevant, inclusive, and comprehensive guide for practitioners, promoting ethical and effective practice in early childhood support. By implementing these changes, the Code will better support the diverse needs of children and families, fostering a more inclusive and responsive approach to early childhood support.
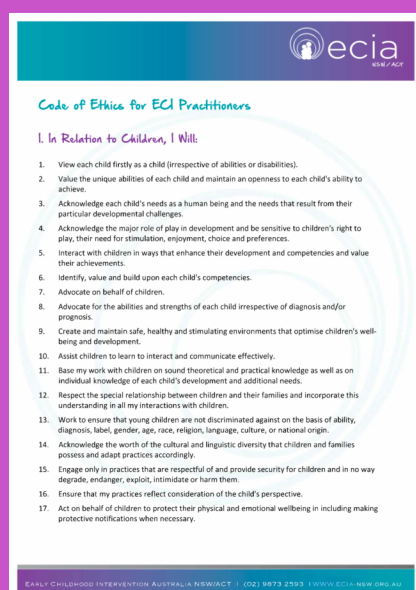
At Present

The Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) Code of Ethics serves as a pivotal framework guiding the professional conduct and decision-making of practitioners working in early childhood support (intervention). The Code outlines fundamental principles and values designed to ensure that children receive the highest quality of care and support. These principles respect the rights and dignity of children, the importance of family-centred practice, the necessity of cultural competence, and the commitment to ongoing professional development. Specifically, the Code delineates ethical obligations in relation to children, families, colleagues, communities, and the profession itself, providing a comprehensive guide to ethical behaviour in diverse situations.

In practice, the Code is implemented across the sector through various means. Organisations incorporate the Code into their policies and procedures, ensuring that all staff members are familiar with its principles. Training programs, Practitioner onboarding and accountability, and professional development workshops often include sessions on the Code of Ethics, embedding its application in current practice. Practitioners use the Code as a reference point for ethical decision-making, helping them navigate complex situations with clarity and integrity. The Code also serves as a tool for self-reflection and peer discussions, encouraging continuous improvement and adherence to high ethical standards.

Moreover, the Code is utilised in Tertiary Education settings such as Universities, Colleagues and TAFE to prepare future professionals for the ethical challenges they may encounter in their careers. By embedding the Code into the curriculum, educational institutions ensure that students understand the importance of ethical practice from the outset of their training.

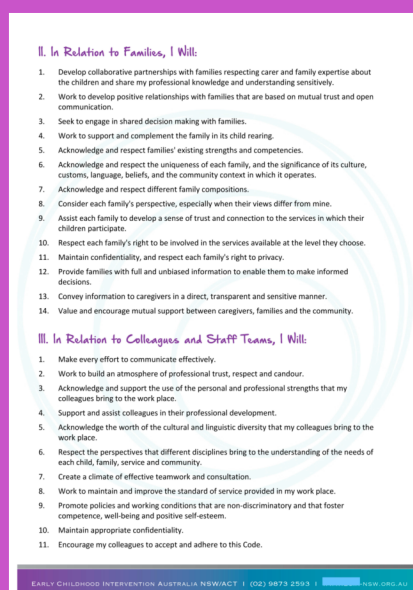## THE ORIGINAL EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION AUSTRALIA CODE OF ETHICS

Code of Ethics for ECI Practitioners

I. In Relation to Children, I Will:

1. View each child firstly as a child (irrespective of abilities or disabilities).
2. Value the unique abilities of each child and maintain an openness to each child's ability to achieve.
3. Acknowledge each child's needs as a human being and the needs that result from their particular developmental challenges.
4. Acknowledge the major role of play in development and be sensitive to children's right to play, their need for stimulation, enjoyment, choice and preferences.
5. Interact with children in ways that enhance their development and competencies and value their achievements.
6. Identify, value and build upon each child's competencies.
7. Advocate on behalf of children.
8. Advocate for the abilities and strengths of each child irrespective of diagnosis and/or prognosis.
9. Create and maintain safe, healthy and stimulating environments that optimise children's well-being and development.
10. Assist children to learn to interact and communicate effectively.
11. Base my work with children on sound theoretical and practical knowledge as well as on individual knowledge of each child's development and additional needs.
12. Respect the special relationship between children and their families and incorporate this understanding in all my interactions with children.
13. Work to ensure that young children are not discriminated against on the basis of ability, diagnosis, label, gender, age, race, religion, language, culture, or national origin.
14. Acknowledge the worth of the cultural and linguistic diversity that children and families possess and adapt practices accordingly.
15. Engage only in practices that are respectful of and provide security for children and in no way degrade, endanger, exploit, intimidate or harm them.
16. Ensure that my practices reflect consideration of the child's perspective.
17. Act on behalf of children to protect their physical and emotional wellbeing in including making protective notifications when necessary.
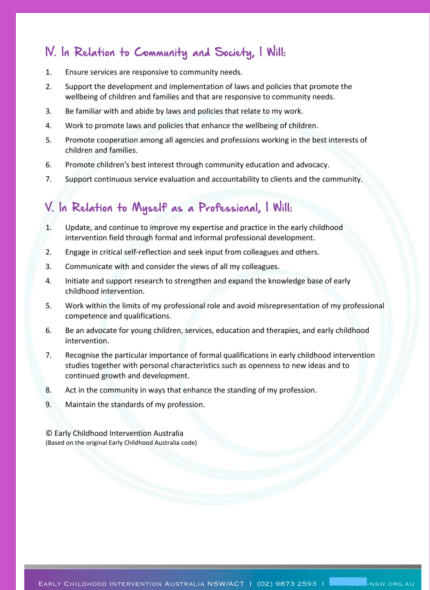
II. In Relation to Families, I Will:

1. Develop collaborative partnerships with families respecting carer and family expertise about the children and share my professional knowledge and understanding sensitively.
2. Work to develop positive relationships with families that are based on mutual trust and open communication.
3. Seek to engage in shared decision making with families.
4. Work to support and complement the family in its child rearing.
5. Acknowledge and respect families' existing strengths and competencies.
6. Acknowledge and respect the uniqueness of each family, and the significance of its culture, customs, language, beliefs, and the community context in which it operates.
7. Acknowledge and respect different family compositions.
8. Consider each family's perspective, especially when their views differ from mine.
9. Assist each family to develop a sense of trust and connection to the services in which their children participate.
10. Respect each family's right to be involved in the services available at the level they choose.
11. Maintain confidentiality, and respect each family's right to privacy.
12. Provide families with full and unbiased information to enable them to make informed decisions.
13. Convey information to caregivers in a direct, transparent and sensitive manner.
14. Value and encourage mutual support between caregivers, families and the community.

III. In Relation to Colleagues and Staff Teams, I Will:

1. Make every effort to communicate effectively.
2. Work to build an atmosphere of professional trust, respect and candour.
3. Acknowledge and support the use of the personal and professional strengths that my colleagues bring to the work place.
4. Support and assist colleagues in their professional development.
5. Acknowledge the worth of the cultural and linguistic diversity that my colleagues bring to the work place.
6. Respect the perspectives that different disciplines bring to the understanding of the needs of each child, family, service and community.
7. Create a climate of effective teamwork and consultation.
8. Work to maintain and improve the standard of service provided in my work place.
9. Promote policies and working conditions that are non-discriminatory and that foster competence, well-being and positive self-esteem.
10. Maintain appropriate confidentiality.
11. Encourage my colleagues to accept and adhere to this Code.

IV. In Relation to Community and Society, I Will:

1. Ensure services are responsive to community needs.
2. Support the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote the wellbeing of children and families and that are responsive to community needs.
3. Be familiar with and abide by laws and policies that relate to my work.
4. Work to promote laws and policies that enhance the wellbeing of children.
5. Promote cooperation among all agencies and professions working in the best interests of children and families.
6. Promote children's best interest through community education and advocacy.
7. Support continuous service evaluation and accountability to clients and the community.

V. In Relation to Myself as a Professional, I Will:

1. Update, and continue to improve my expertise and practice in the early childhood intervention field through formal and informal professional development.
2. Engage in critical self-reflection and seek input from colleagues and others.
3. Communicate with and consider the views of all my colleagues.
4. Initiate and support research to strengthen and expand the knowledge base of early childhood intervention.
5. Work within the limits of my professional role and avoid misrepresentation of my professional competence and qualifications.
6. Be an advocate for young children, services, education and therapies, and early childhood intervention.
7. Recognise the particular importance of formal qualifications in early childhood intervention studies together with personal characteristics such as openness to new ideas and to continued growth and development.
8. Act in the community in ways that enhance the standing of my profession.
9. Maintain the standards of my profession.

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(Based on the original Early Childhood Australia code)

Our Approach and Methodology

To ensure the revised Reimagine Australia's Code of Ethics for the Early Childhood Supports (intervention) sector is a useful and appropriate document for parents, practitioners, and academics, this review included co-design sessions which provided data for analysis and led to recommendations outlined later in the report.

Action 1: Recruitment of Participants:
Identify and recruit a diverse group of stakeholders including families, practitioners, and academics.

Action 2: Selection of Participants:
Carefully select participants to ensure a representative sample from the early childhood sector.

Action 3: Virtual Co-design Sessions with Practitioners and Parents:
Conduct online co-design sessions to facilitate open discussions about the current Code of Ethics. Gather insights and feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the Code.

Action 4: Review of Co-design Sessions to Identify Key Themes:
Analyse transcripts and survey results from the co-design sessions to extract key themes and recurring points.n Identify areas needing improvement and common themes for updates.

Action 5: Recommended Actions Arising from Themes:
Develop actionable recommendations based on the identified themes. Ensure the recommendations address the key areas of relevance, inclusivity, cultural competence, and professional development.

Action 6: Development of Final Report:
Compile the findings and recommendations into a comprehensive final report. Present the report to the Reimagine Australia Board for review and approval of the proposed updates to the Code of Ethics.

The review was conducted using a systematic and inclusive approach designed to gather diverse perspectives and comprehensive feedback. The methodology involved both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure a thorough evaluation of the Code. The review process began with two consultation sessions that included families, practitioners, and academics. These sessions facilitated open discussions about the Code's strengths and weaknesses, allowing participants to share their experiences and provide insights into opportunities for development. Key discussion points focused on the relevance of the Code's principles, the inclusivity and clarity of its language, cultural competence, and the necessity for ongoing professional development.

In addition to the consultation sessions, a detailed survey was distributed to a wider audience of stakeholders across the early childhood intervention sector. The survey aimed to capture a broad range of views on the Code's effectiveness and gather specific suggestions for enhancements. Respondents were asked to evaluate the Code's alignment with best practices, the inclusiveness of its language, and the adequacy of its guidelines for cultural responsiveness and ethical considerations.

The data collected from both the consultation sessions and the survey responses were meticulously analysed to identify common themes and critical areas for revision. This mixed-methods approach ensured a robust and comprehensive review, incorporating diverse viewpoints to inform the recommendations for updating the ECIA Code of Ethics.

Findings

The review process of the Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) Code of Ethics yielded several significant findings that highlight the need for updates and enhancements to ensure the Code remains relevant, inclusive, and comprehensive.

First, the co-design sessions and survey responses (Sample Survey Questions Appendix 1.0) revealed that while the principles and values outlined in the Code are largely still relevant, there is a critical need to integrate contemporary best practices, particularly in the context of neuro-affirming language. This change is essential to create a more supportive environment for neurodiverse children.

Furthermore, the ethical use of technology emerged as a crucial area that requires explicit guidelines, given the increasing role of digital media by parents, practitioners and within early childhood settings.

Participants also discussed the importance of making the Code more inclusive and accessible. This involves simplifying the language and structure, eliminating redundant points, and creating visual aids such as infographics to make the document easier to understand and apply. The need for active inclusion of cultural practices, rather than mere acknowledgment, was another key theme.

A theme relating to relational safety and providing practical guidelines for incorporating cultural values into practice were identified as essential steps toward achieving cultural competence.

The co-designs sessions also highlighted the importance of ongoing professional development, sector dissemination and engagement with contemporary frameworks and evidence-based practices. Encouraging critical self-reflection and integrating lived experiences and family voices into professional practice were seen as vital for continuous improvement. Emerging ethical considerations, such as the impact of social media influencing practice and the use of various therapeutic approaches, were identified as areas that need to be addressed in the updated Code.

Key Themes

01

Reflect Current Best Practices

- Integrate neuro-affirming language
- Address ethical use of technology

02

Ensure Inclusivity and Accessibility

- Simplify the language and structure
- Create infographics and visual aids

03

Promote Cultural Responsive practice and Inclusion

- Move from acknowledgment to active inclusion of culturally responsive practices
- Emphasise relational safety

04

Support Ongoing Professional Development

- Highlight importance of continuous learning
- Engage with contemporary frameworks and evidence-based practices
- Incorporate lived experiences and family voices

05

Address Emerging Ethical Considerations

- Provide guidelines for the ethical use of social media
- Address use of contemporary therapeutic practices linking to best practice and current research

Key Theme 01

Reflect Current Best Practices

One of the primary themes identified in the review is the need to reflect current best practices within the Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) Code of Ethics. Two key areas of this include using Neuro-affirming language and addressing the ethical use of digital technology.

Neuro-affirming language recognises and respects the unique neurological makeup of each child, promoting a positive and inclusive approach to their development and well-being. By addressing the ethical use of technology is crucial in today's digital age. With the increasing reliance on digital tools and social media in early childhood support settings and homes, it is essential to provide clear guidelines on how these technologies should be used ethically. This includes considerations for data privacy, content review aligned with best practice and research, and the appropriateness of digital content for education and therapeutic purposes.

> "WE NEED TO ENSURE WE'RE USING AFFIRMING PRACTICES AND NOT PUTTING TYPICALLY DEVELOPING GOALS ON CHILDREN."

> "I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID ABOUT TECHNOLOGIES WORKING IN 2024 AND MOVING FORWARD...HOW WE NAVIGATE OUR WAY THROUGH THE ISSUE OF TECHNOLOGIES IN OUR WORLD."

> "A LOT OF THEM COME TO ME WITH TIKTOK VIDEOS OR INSTAGRAM REELS ABOUT PRACTICE THEY WANT TO DO WITH THEIR CHILD...IT IS A LOT OF EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY AROUND WHERE'S THAT FROM AND WHAT'S THE EVIDENCE FOR THAT?"

Recommendations

01 Integrate Neuro-Affirming Language:

- Revise the Code to include neuro-affirming language. For instance, replace terms that may be perceived as pathologising with language that affirms and validates neurodiverse experiences. Utilise persons with lived experience to review the draft Code.

- Provide explicit examples of neuro-affirming practices, such as individualised approaches to learning and behaviour that respect and honour lived experience.

02 Address Ethical Use of Technology:

- Develop comprehensive guidelines that outline the ethical use of technology in early childhood intervention. This could include researchers and professionals providing supporting documentation for the Code,

- Include case studies and scenarios to illustrate best practices in the ethical use of technology, ensuring practitioners can apply these guidelines in real-world settings.

Key Theme 02

Ensure Inclusivity and Accessibility

Another significant theme is the need to ensure the inclusivity and accessibility of the ECIA Code of Ethics. Simplifying the language and structure of the document is a key step in making it more user-friendly across the multifaceted Early Childhood Supports (Intervention) Sector. Clear, concise language will help ensure that the Code is easily understood by a diverse audience, including parents, practitioners, and community members with varying lived experience and contexts. A specific suggestion within the co-design suggested a creation of infographics, supporting documents and visual aids to enhance the document's accessibility. Visual representations can help break down complex information, making it more digestible and easier to reference.

"I THINK A DOCUMENT THE WAY THAT IT IS NOW IS, JUST WORDS. AND I'M A PICTURE PERSON."

"IT'S [THE CURRENT CODE OF ETHICS] VERY LONG. SOME THINGS COULD BE SUMMARISED OR PUT TOGETHER IN A WAY THAT MAKES MORE SENSE."

"IT WOULD JUST BE ONE OF THOSE THINGS THAT YOU PRINT OUT AND YOU STICK UP ON THE WALL AND YOU REFER BACK TO IT ALL THE TIME. AND IT'S A REALLY USED DOCUMENT, SOMETHING THAT'S NICE TO LOOK AT."

Recommendations

03   ## Simplify Language and Structure:

- Conduct a thorough review of the Code to identify and eliminate redundant or overly complex language. Simplify the document to ensure clarity and ease of understanding for all stakeholders.

- Develop a glossary of terms to explain any technical jargon or specialised language used within the Code, enhancing accessibility for all readers.

04   ## Create Infographics and Visual Aids:

- Design infographics, supporting documents, and other visual aids that succinctly convey the key principles and guidelines of the Code. These tools should be integrated into the document and made available as standalone resources for training and reference.

- Ensure that these infographics are culturally inclusive and accessible to all individuals.

Key Theme 03

Promote Culturally Reponsive Practice and Inclusion

Promoting culturally responsive practice and inclusion is a critical theme that emerged from the review. The current Code needs to move beyond mere acknowledgment of cultural diversity and instead actively include culturally responsive practices in service delivery. This involves understanding and integrating the cultural values, traditions, and practices of the families and communities served. Secondly, relational safety is also essential. Relational safety means creating an environment where families feel respected, understood, and safe to express their cultural identities without fear of judgement or discrimination. Practitioners should be provided with practical guidelines on how to incorporate cultural values into their work, ensuring that their services are culturally responsive and inclusive.

"WE HAVE TO STOP AND RESPECT THAT INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATION AND THEN TAKE THAT JOURNEY TOGETHER."

"LET CHILDREN'S VOICES, FAMILIES, AND THEIR CULTURE LEAD THEIR EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT JOURNEY"

"ACKNOWLEDGING THE WORTH OF THE CULTURAL LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY. TO ME ACKNOWLEDGING THERE'S STILL A SEPARATION BETWEEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND INCLUSION."

Recommendations

05 **Active Inclusion of Culturally Responsive Practices:**

- Transition from acknowledgment of cultural diversity to active inclusion by embedding culturally practice responsive throughout the Code. This involves providing specific guidelines for integrating cultural values, traditions, and practices into service delivery.

- Include detailed examples and case studies that demonstrate how cultural competence can be embedded in various contexts.

06 **Embed Relational Safety:**

- Underpin the concept of relational safety throughout the Code, which involves creating environments where families feel safe, respected, and understood. This should include strategies for building trust and fostering open communication with families from diverse backgrounds.

- Provide training modules and reflective practice exercises to help practitioners develop the skills necessary to create and maintain relational safety in their interactions with families.

Key Theme 04

Support Ongoing Professional Development

Supporting ongoing professional development is another key theme identified in the review. Continuous learning is crucial for practitioners to stay current with the latest research and best practices in early childhood intervention. The Code should highlight the importance of engaging with contemporary frameworks and evidence-based practices to ensure that practitioners are well-equipped to provide high-quality care.

Another key area of this includes, incorporating lived experiences and family voices into professional practice being vital. This involves listening to and learning from the experiences of families and incorporating their insights into service delivery. Encouraging critical self-reflection and continuous improvement will help practitioners grow professionally and improve the quality of care they provide.

THEME 04: QUOTES FROM CO-DESIGN SESSION AND SURVEY

"WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT CAPACITY BUILDING...BUILDING UP THOSE SKILLS ESPECIALLY IN THE FAMILY CAPACITY."

"CONTINUING TO IMPROVE MY EXPERTISE AND PRACTICE AND ENGAGE IN CRITICAL SELF-REFLECTION."

"IT IS CRITICAL AND ESSENTIAL THAT PEOPLE HAVE CURRENCY AND ARE KEEPING UP WITH CURRENT RESEARCH AND THE IDEAS THAT ARE EMBEDDED AGAINST THE LANGUAGE THAT WE KEEP EVOLVING AND CHANGING AS WE IMPROVE PRACTICE IN THE SECTOR."

Recommendations

07　**Highlight Importance of Continuous Learning:**

- Emphasise the importance of continuous professional development within the Code through regular training and education on current research, best practices, and emerging trends in early childhood supports (intervention).

- Incorporate requirements for practitioners to engage in reflective practice and peer review, ensuring they continuously improve their skills and knowledge.

08　**Engage with Contemporary Frameworks and Evidence-Based Practices:**

- Encourage practitioners to engage with contemporary frameworks such as the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Autism Strategy. Provide guidelines on how these frameworks can be integrated into daily practice to enhance the quality of interventions.

- Include annotated bibliographies and summaries of key evidence-based practices, facilitating easy access to current research and resources.

09　**Incorporate Lived Experiences and Family Voices:**

- Promote the inclusion of lived experiences and family voices in professional practice by establishing mechanisms for regular co-design and feedback from families. This can include family advisory councils and routine surveys.

- Provide training on effective communication and partnership-building with families, ensuring that their insights and experiences inform service delivery and policy development.

Key Theme 05

Address Emerging Ethical Considerations

Addressing emerging ethical considerations is essential to keep the ECIA Code of Ethics relevant and effective. One important area is the ethical use of social media. Given the widespread use of social media platforms, practitioners need clear guidelines on how to use these tools responsibly, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families they serve, while also being able to assess the validity and rigour of social media posts in alignment with research and best practices.

Another suggestion throughout the co-design was the emphasis on ensuring that the use of contemporary therapeutic practices should be addressed with a focus on linking to best practice and current research. It is important to ensure that these practices are implemented ethically and effectively, prioritising the well-being of the child and family.

THEME 05: QUOTES FROM CO-DESIGN SESSION AND SURVEY

> **"WE HAVE TO DO A LOT OF EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY AROUND. WHERE'S THAT FROM AND WHAT'S THE EVIDENCE FOR THAT?"**

> **"STANDARDS TO ENSURE RELIABLE, TRUSTED & AUTHENTIC SOURCES ARE FOLLOWED ESPECIALLY AROUND THERAPEUTIC PRACTICES."**

> **"WE NEED CLEAR GUIDELINES ON HOW TO USE THESE TOOLS RESPONSIBLY, ENSURING THE PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THEY SERVE."**

Recommendations

10   Provide Guidelines for the Ethical Use of Social Media:

- Develop explicit guidelines for the ethical use of social media by practitioners. This should include protocols for maintaining privacy and confidentiality, ethical considerations for sharing information, and strategies for assessing the validity and rigour of social media content.

- Offer professional development opportunities focused on digital literacy and ethics in the digital age, ensuring practitioners are equipped to navigate social media responsibly.

11   Address Use of Contemporary Therapeutic Practices:

- Provide detailed guidelines on the use of contemporary therapeutic practices. Ensure these guidelines are grounded in current best practices and research, highlighting the ethical implications of these interventions.

- Include specific criteria for evaluating the appropriateness and effectiveness of therapeutic practices, and establish protocols for monitoring and reviewing their use to safeguard the well-being of children.

Appendices

Appendix 1.0
SAMPLE OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Are the principles and values outlined in The Code still relevant and aligned with current best practices in early childhood supports (intervention) [ECIA Best Practice In Early Childhood Intervention]

2. Is the language used in The Code inclusive, affirming, and accessible for a diverse audience.

3. Is the document too simple / too complex?

4. Does The Code adequately address the importance of cultural competence and inclusion in working with diverse children and families?

5. Are there any gaps or areas that need to be addressed in The Code to ensure it reflects the diverse needs and experiences of children and families?

6. Does The Code place enough emphasis on the importance of ongoing professional development and continuous improvement in the field?

7. Does the code adequately promote collaboration and interdisciplinary teamwork among practitioners in the field of early childhood supports (intervention)?

8. Are there any specific guidelines or recommendations that should be added to The Code to address the use of technology and digital media in early childhood supports (intervention)?

9. Are there any emerging ethical considerations or challenges in the field of Early Childhood Supports (intervention) that should be included in The Code?

10. Are there any other considerations that you would like to raise in relation to updating The Code?

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