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## Who we are

Aurora Early Intervention it's a non-government service provider that is funded by the NDIS. Aurora is bound by the National Disability Standards, UN Convention on Rights of the Child and various legislation including:

- Inclusion Bill NSW (2014)
- The Child & Young Persons (Care & Protection) Act 1998
- The Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection and Community Services) Act 1998
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

### National Disability Standards

There are six National Standards that apply to disability service providers.

1. **Rights:** The service promotes individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making and actively prevents abuse, harm, neglect and violence.
2. **Participation and Inclusion:** The service works with individuals and families, friends and carers to promote opportunities for meaningful participation and active inclusion in society.
3. **Individual Outcomes:** Services and supports are assessed, planned, delivered and reviewed to build on individual strengths and enable individuals to reach their goals.
4. **Feedback and Complaints:** Regular feedback is sought and used to inform individual and organisation-wide service reviews and improvement.
5. **Service Access:** The service manages access, commencement and leaving a service in a transparent, fair, equal and responsive way.
6. **Service Management:** The service has effective and accountable service management and leadership to maximise outcomes for individuals. For more details see :

[https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/12\\_2013/nsds\\_web.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/12_2013/nsds_web.pdf)

In addition, we abide by the [Standards in Action: Guide for services working with children and young people with disability and their families \(PDF\)](#) which provides additional guidance to support services working specifically with children and young people with disability and their families to meet the NSW Disability Service Standards. It also aims to ensure that services are provided in accordance with the principles in the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and references the UN convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Our Vision

To provide high quality, person centred service to support individuals and families to live high quality lives to their full potential in an inclusive and diverse society

In striving to contribute towards this, we are guided by our core values:



## What services we provide

### Early Start Denver Model Therapy

The Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) is a comprehensive behavioral early intervention approach for children with autism, ages 12 to 48 months. The program encompasses a developmental curriculum that defines the skills to be taught at any given time and a set of teaching procedures used to deliver this content. It is not tied to a specific delivery setting, but can be delivered by therapy teams and/or parents in group programs or individual therapy sessions in either a clinic setting or the child's home.

### Positive Behaviour Support

Positive Behaviour Support is an evidence-based program that looks at the reason why the challenging behaviour is occurring. It focuses holistically on the whole child/adult, the environment, their health and interactions with others in their daily lives. Positive Behaviour Support aims to create a shared understanding around why the individual is engaging in the behaviour and develop a plan to address the needs identified.

### Social Skills Support: Peer Power Program for children

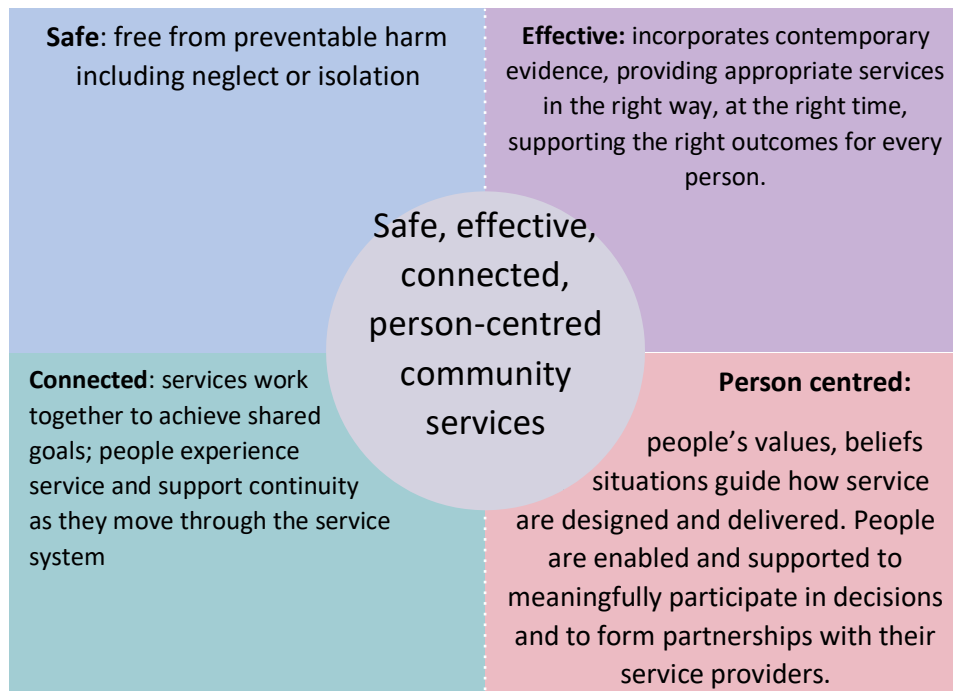
Peer Power follows the evidence-based research of school wide positive behavioural support and peer mediated learning. Peer Power uses the strengths of students with excellent social skills to mentor and support their fellow students who need direct teaching to learn friendship/social skills and be a truly included member of their school. Peer Power is designed to enhance the social and emotional competence of ALL students.

## Governance and Operational Management Procedures

High-quality services require a commitment from all staff in pursuing and maintaining excellence, especially in the face of complexity and adversity.

The purpose of quality governance is to help Aurora achieve this goal through continuous monitoring, evaluating and improving.

We aim at having quality governance to provide a framework for Aurora to deliver safe, effective, connected, person-centred community services for everybody, every time



Clients  
and  
families

People are the central focus of quality governance. Their experiences of and participation in community services are fundamental indicators of quality and safety.

Clients and families:

- participate to their desired extent in the services they receive
- participate in system-wide service improvement
- advocate for safety to support the best possible outcomes for themselves and other clients
- share their experience, provide feedback and offer suggestions to support improvement.

**The principles below guide effective, high-quality governance systems:**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>What this looks like</b>
<b>Excellence in client experience always</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commitment to a positive experience for clients every time (safe, effective, connected and person-centred)</li></ul>
<b>Continuous improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data collection, surveys are used as measurement of performance and progress that is benchmarked and used to improve the quality of services and experience</li></ul>
<b>Partnership with clients and families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Client engagement is actively sought and supported at all levels, from engagement in direct service provision, service design (such as Behaviour Support Plans) and delivery to governance and oversight</li></ul>
<b>Clear accountability and ownership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accountability and ownership for quality and safety is demonstrated</li><li>• Compliance with legislative and departmental policy requirements</li></ul>
<b>Effective planning and resource allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I commit to regular training and educational resources to maintain and enhance my skills</li></ul>
<b>Proactive collection and sharing of information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The 'way we do things' is regularly challenged and additional information sought when clarity is required</li><li>• Robust data is collected, shared with colleagues and mentors to inform decision making and improvement</li></ul>
<b>Openness and transparency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reporting, reviews and decision making are transparent and accurate, and are clearly linked to decision making when planning with clients</li></ul>
<b>Empowered staff and clients</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We promote and support safe services</li><li>• Clients feel comfortable to speak up about quality and safety concerns, and are listened to</li><li>• Service delivery centres on clients and families</li></ul>
<b>Workforce leadership and engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A culture of all families, teachers and clients owning and contributing to service outcomes is promoted and practiced</li></ul>

## **Service Delivery**

### **Development of Plans for individual children and families**

We recognise that family priorities are the starting point for planning. We support families to understand that planning can bring focus to their program and help them to achieve positive outcomes. We believe that planning and evaluation are integral to program delivery.

#### ***Aim:***

To ensure that our work with families is guided by plans which are developed in collaboration with the family.

The family's goals are a reference point in shared activities and discussions, and families are encouraged to contribute to ongoing shared evaluation of how effectively the program is working towards their goals.

### **Family/individual Relationships**

#### ***Aim:***

To work in partnership with the individuals we support and families in order to build relationships that are the foundation of person-centred planning and early childhood intervention.

#### ***Policy statement (for families):***

Knowing that a family/ carer with a child with a disability is going to face added pressures, we aim to provide a service that will attempt to meet the needs and encourage the strengths of families. We also understand that the family will be the most important people in the life of the child. We want to learn from their knowledge of their child and make sure that they feel adequately supported in their roles as parents.

Where children do not have their family caring for them, Aurora will provide similar support for the child's guardians.

### **Key principles in building relationships**

- We work from a strengths-based perspective, identifying both child and family strengths.
- Our practice is family centred in all our interactions with families.
- We offer flexible supports and services, while at the same time being clear about non-negotiable procedures (such as active involvement of parents in implementation of plans).
- We build trust, by doing what we say we will do, and being transparent about our limitations.
- We invite feedback, to monitor whether what we are doing is working or helping.
- We avoid doing things for a family that they could do for themselves.
- We acknowledge the stresses that may arise for staff in working with a family, especially where there are complex and multiple needs, and offer support to the staff member in their role.

## **Privacy, dignity and confidentiality policy**

**Aim:** We believe every individual, every child, every family and every staff member has the intrinsic right to be treated with dignity. This includes respecting their right to privacy and confidentiality. We aim to uphold that right in all our endeavours.

### ***Policy Statement:***

Aurora keeps all information with regard to individuals and families in strictest confidence. Information about individuals and families is not shared with other agencies without their express permission. We take steps to insure that information is digitalised where possible and stored securely at all times.

Each participant/family's consent is obtained to collect, use and retain their information or to disclose their information (including assessments) to other parties, including details of the purpose of collection, use and disclosure. Each participant is informed in what circumstances the information could be disclosed, including that the information could be provided without their consent if required or authorised by law.

### **Security of files**

As per the Privacy, Dignity & Confidentiality Policy, all children's observations and records must be kept at all times in a secure place and locked overnight or password protected. We will avoid leaving paper copies of confidential information on the printer or on desks.

As all files are electronic and it should be unnecessary to take paper files off site. However, should this be necessary:

- Files should not contain unnecessary identifying information
- Files are not to be left unattended
- Under no circumstances should files be left in a car
- It must be ensured that unauthorised persons do not have access to the files.

## **Documentation Policy**

### ***Aim:***

Documentation of programs and services will be a means of sharing information with families and individuals we care for and will fulfil all legislated requirements.

### **Policy**

Children and individual's files shall be started and maintained electronically for every individual receiving services.

Children and individual's files must be kept confidential, current, accurate and complete. Progress notes are, for the most part, created jointly with the individual or parents, who hold the original document. These notes are supplemented according to professional or legislated requirements.

## **Advocacy Policy**

Knowing that some children and individuals with disabilities are unable to clearly articulate their needs and desires, we aim to provide resources, support and training that will empower them or their families and carers to take on that responsibility. We also acknowledge that there are times when it will be difficult for families to act as an advocate on behalf of their child, and that parents and carers may find it hard to advocate for their own needs. Therefore, we aim to provide an advocacy service if requested or to link families to people who can take on that role

## **Child protection policy**

### ***Aim:***

We will play our part in keeping children safe within our community.

### ***Policy Statement:***

As mandatory notifiers we must understand what that implies. We will ensure we are up to date in child protection policies and receive updates every two years or when there is a change in mandated policies and procedures.

We are guided by all relevant legislation pertaining to child protection, in particular:

*The Child & Young Persons (Care & Protection) Act 1998*

*The Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection and Community Services) Act 1998*

*The Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998*

*The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*

## **Procedures for determining appropriate action to keep children safe**

We will use the following procedures to assist with recognising and reporting child abuse and neglect:

When you have a concern that a child is being sexually abused, abused or neglected:

Step 1. Decide if the situation needs immediate response.

- If you are observing an immediate, life threatening threat to the child, ring the police.
- If you have reason to believe that a child is at imminent, serious risk of harm, ring the Child Helpline immediately on 13 36 27 (13 DOCS).
- If you are not certain whether a child is at risk of harm, or the risk is not imminent, go to the Mandatory Reporter Guide: <http://sdm.community.nsw.gov.au/mrg/screen/DoCS/en-GB/summary?user=guest> and complete the necessary Decision Making Tree. This will tell you what action to take next. Print a copy of the Decision Making Tree and file.

Step 2. Continue to take clear, dated and simply stated observations of the child, recording any indicators.

Step 3. Collaborate with the various agencies involved in child protection and follow through on professional responsibilities.

## **Feedback and complaints Policy**

### ***Aim:***

As a service striving to be person and family-centred in all our practices we desire to encourage individuals and families, other agencies and the community to feel free to make comments, express their concerns and to voice suggestions on all aspects of our service without negative consequences and retribution.



**Policy Statement:**

We aim to respond to feedback and complaints in a timely manner, working towards a resolution within an agreed timetable. Families will be assured that their feedback is welcome as it assists us to improve the quality of our service.

**Complaints**

We believe families, other agencies and community have the right to have complaints and disputes regarding our service resolved quickly and to their satisfaction. We acknowledge that we will be more responsive to the community where people feel free to express their dissatisfactions. We are also aware of the vulnerability many of our parents/carers may feel and that they may need reassurance that a complaint will not lead to diminished service.

- A complaint can be made face to face, by phone, in writing or by email

**Procedures to follow when a parent makes a complaint**

- Privacy and confidentiality will be respected.
- For any complaint, notes will be taken and opportunities given to the family/individual/carer to decide how they would like the issue resolved.
- A meeting is organised as soon as possible to help resolve the complaint.
- A plan of action will result from the meeting which will include the desired goal, actions, and agreed timely reporting timeframes

**References:**

*Recommended Practices in Family-Centred Early Intervention*, The Australian Early Intervention Association  
*Standards in Action*, The NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care Good Complaints Handling, The Community Services Commission

**Inter-agency Contacts Policy****Aim:**

Aurora will have positive, collaborative relationships with other agencies providing services to families in our area.

**Policy Statement:**

We understand that each family will have different needs and will use different agencies at various times. We want to ensure that families will be able to find and choose those agencies that are helpful to them as well as to respect families' privacy. We aim to be flexible in our service delivery and believe that we should work in cooperation with other agencies rather than in competition.

All information provided to third parties must be in accordance with Aurora's Privacy, Dignity & Confidentiality Policy. Specifically

- Individuals/Parent/guardian permission must be obtained before disclosing a child's personal and sensitive information to any professional from another service. This includes preschool /childcare teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, doctors and counsellors or government departments.

## **Referrals to other agencies**

### ***Aim:***

All families participating in Aurora's services will be offer choices where other services may be in a better position to meet their needs.

### ***Policy statement:***

When our Service or resources cannot meet the needs of a child or family, or if a more appropriate agency is identified, options for transitioning to another service will be discussed with the family.

## **Transition to school / other organisations**

***Aim:*** Our staff will help and support parents and carers to make informed choices about future placements for their children. In addition, we will support parents in that decision and provide assistance to make that transition as smooth as possible. We affirm the right of all children to go to their local school.

## **Ensuring programs are culturally relevant**

***Aim and Policy:*** As Australia is a country populated by people of diverse cultural backgrounds we desire to reflect that diversity in our programs. We wish to provide an atmosphere where people from all backgrounds will feel included. We also acknowledge the diversity of family structures in our community.

## Adult Support

### Individual's rights

**At Aurora we believe in respecting the right of the individuals we support to make choices and to have freedom of expression and self-determination.**

#### Policy:

**Act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making in accordance with applicable laws and conventions**

People with disability have the right to make their own decisions, to be free to live the life they choose, and to have the same rights and freedoms as any other member of the community

The team at Aurora will comply with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018, which have been developed in line with the National Standards for Disability Services and the National Standards for Mental Health Services.

To promote the rights of the individuals we support we will:

1. Always assume that the individuals we support have the capacity to make choices
2. Provide the necessary support to the individuals we support to make informed choices
3. Provide the individuals we support the possibility to have people they would like to involve in their choices present to support them in decision-making
4. Consult with the individuals we support, about who, if anyone, they would like to involve in decisions and discussions about their services
5. When supporting children work with families to understand a child's strengths, interests and needs, and support them in their caring role
6. As a child grows up, involve children and young people in decisions that affect them in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development.
7. When the person with disability has a legal guardian support the person to make decisions by using supported decision-making
8. Provide additional information as required in a way that the individual understands:
  - a. communicate in a form, language and manner that is accessible and appropriate
  - b. use a range of communication tools to communicate with the people we support, including assistive technology and alternative forms of communication, such as email, text messages or symbols.
  - c. where the person speaks a language other than English or uses Auslan, or organise an interpreter or someone who uses Auslan (where possible) to assist with important discussions, or use qualified interpreters, where this support is covered by their NDIS plan.
  - d. make sure that the person with disability – and their families, carers or advocates (where relevant) – understands what has been explained, and is aware of potential benefits and risks associated with any part of a proposed plan for the delivery of supports and services.
  - e. respond to the will, preferences and concerns of the person with disability in relation to their supports and services – raising requests or complaints to be addressed by the NDIS provider, where necessary.

## **Abuse, assault or neglect**

Aurora believes that the safety and best interests of the person who is the subject of suspected or alleged abuse, assault or neglect is a priority

The individuals we support and their families or carers, and Aurora employees should:

- understand their rights;
- be aware of what constitutes abuse, assault and neglect, and
- be aware of signs and indicators;
- Have access to advocacy services when required

Support staff and therapist are to be trained in the prevention and protection of the individuals we provide support to from abuse and be committed to ensuring their safety.

Response to allegations of abuse or neglect shall occur promptly, sensitively and confidentially to protect the person from further harm and offer the person the medical, psychological and legal assistance to which they are entitled. Staff, Service Users, carers and advocates should be aware that any allegations or suspected instances of abuse or neglect, may be reported to necessary authorities, including the police, and to the National Disability Service Abuse and Neglect Hotline. Phone: 1800 880 052 TTY: 1800 301 130.

If we considers that an NDIS provider has not responded appropriately or if they think the matter might be of more systemic significance (for example, a pattern of violence, or a pattern of the provider brushing off incidents or relocating problem staff), they are encouraged to report the incident to the Commission.

At Aurora we avoid the recommendation or use of restrictive practices. However, if we encounter the use of restricted practices by service providers or if we deem necessary the use of a restricted practice as a last resort to keep an individual safe, we work in partnership with their NDIS provider, to contribute to the reduction and elimination of restrictive practices. In doing so we will follow the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018

## **Accidents and Incidents Policy**

Aim: To identify and manage risks by ensuring that every accident to individuals supported, children or staff is documented and the information used to prevent another occurrence.

### **Definitions:**

Accident: an event occurring to an individual, child, or staff that will require the administration of first aid.

Incident: an event that, while not requiring first aid would equally cause concern to the individual, parents/carers or members of staff (eg a child running away).

Illness : the circumstance where an individual becomes unwell during a visit.

**Policy Statement:**

Aurora will respond to accidents, incidents and illnesses in a way that prioritises the safety and well-being of all concerned.

In the event of an accident occurring to an individual, child or staff (e.g. a fall causing the child to cry or when first aid needs to be administered) a report will be written in the individual/child's file

Support services from Aurora will never occur without a parent or a team member (school personal, support staff) present.

**Health and Safety****FAMILIES**

- Parents must remain with their child at all times.
- The home visit can only proceed with the attendance of the parents. Other caregivers are welcome to attend in addition to the parents.
- Parents must cancel the home visit if their child or a member of the family is sick. Guidelines for families who may be considering cancellation are:
  - When they need Panadol or alternative remedies,
  - When they are not eating or playing as usual,
  - When they are sick enough for you to cancel other activities such as preschool or swimming.

**Continuity of services**

Options are provided to families to meet online if continuity of services cannot occur, as per Covid 19 pandemic.

As a sole provider I aim at keeping a case load that allows me to provide continuity of services to the families I support

In the case of illness, appointment are reschedule to the first available date and families are advised of the cancellation as soon as possible

In case of disruption to services due to unforeseen events, such as the family moving out of area, all efforts are made to refer the family to a different provider

For behavioural services, families are given information at the time of enrolment on their role in the process and advised of the level of commitment required to work together to create and implement a Behaviour Support Plan to find out if my services are the best option for what they need

If a family or team requests discontinuation of services or for services to be put on hold (family going away or needing a break from therapy), a meeting is organised to discuss options moving forward and to plan when to continue with supports

In case of time away due to holidays I aim at making sure families are left with strategies and supports (referral to colleagues) in case of emergencies and that follow up meeting are planned as soon as I return

## Aurora Early Intervention Covid Safety Plan

Our service will apply measures that prioritise health and safety measures, including:

- Implementing vigilant hygiene practices that prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19
- Encouraging good health and sanitation
- Monitoring sources of public health information
- Implementing all measures recommended by authorities and
- Educating and informing families we support with current and trusted information.

Practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 will include:

- Regularly and thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or with soap and water.
- Washing hands on arrival to and departure from meetings
- Signing in and out for each meeting with school, preschool or in community settings
- Observing social distancing when meeting with families or staff, during observations and therapy sessions with children.
- Using masks when meeting with families and preschools or school and encourage meetings on zoom and in open areas when possible.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible.
- Following good respiratory hygiene, when coughing or sneezing:
  - o cover mouth and nose with bent elbow or tissue and –
  - o dispose of the used tissue immediately and –wash hands with soap and water or, if water is not available, use hand sanitiser
- Checking in with families before scheduled meetings to make sure everyone is well and cancel meetings in the event a child, parent or staff member are unwell.
- Letting families, school and preschools know if feeling unwell or experiencing symptoms of Covid 19 and cancelling meetings until free of symptoms or testing negative to a Covid 19 test

Asking families, we support to:

- Follow practices to reduce the chance of being infected or spreading COVID-19 including regularly and thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand or with soap and water and following good respiratory hygiene when coughing or sneezing.
- Follow directions From the Local Public Health Unit (such as the need to self-quarantine) and inform Aurora Early Intervention if you have recently travelled to an overseas destination, have a confirmed case of COVID-19 or been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- If you have travelled overseas or been in contact with someone who has been overseas please let a staff member know.
- Seek medical attention for your child should they be unwell.
- Immediately collect your child from the service if requested to do so by staff due to concerns for their health.