

ENCIRCLE LTD

Practice Framework Policy

Date Adopted: _____

Signature: _____

RATIONALE

The Practice Framework provides a shared understanding of how the mission statement, “Strengthening individuals and families to take informed control of their lives and together enriching our communities.” is enacted in all the services and programs of Encircle Ltd

POLICY STATEMENT

Encircle works within a Strength Based Framework in all interactions with the community it supports. A Strength Based Framework works alongside people to:

- identify and build on their competencies, resources and capacities rather than focus on perceived deficits
- identify and build on change that is naturally occurring and within the individual's control
- acknowledge that people are experts in their own lives, and uses language that reflects this
- see the problem as the problem, rather than the individual or group as the problem
- assist people to define their aspirations and goals and focus on the future
- recognize that change is constant and inevitable
- support self determination through genuine choice and the right to participation, inclusion and consultation

At an organizational level and at a board (governance) level this influences processes, including how we evaluate, give and receive feedback, work collaboratively, make decisions and engage with new ideas. It also facilitates a mutual learning environment that values self-reflective practice.

ENCIRCLE'S WORK IS

Community development oriented

The term "community" refers to both geographic communities and communities of interest:

- geographic communities i.e. people who identify with geographic areas
- communities of interest i.e. people who share a common history, culture, religion, experience or particular interest.

Community development strengthens individuals and groups to affect change in their own communities by engaging with others and building the skills and tools they need to bring about the desired change. A community development approach:

- involves individuals, families and communities in planning, direction setting, decision making and actions that impact on them
- builds the capacity of individuals, families and communities to address and find solutions to issues, and to set and achieve goals
- works collaboratively to achieve agreed outcomes

Child and young person centred

A child and young person centred approach means that children and young people are:

- at the centre of the process
- treated with respect and dignity
- given appropriate opportunities to participate and to be listened to
- supported and involved in developmentally-appropriate ways
- recognized as experts on their own experiences
- given choices and involved in decision making
- supported within the family context to build skills and strategies for the future
- provided with opportunities to develop and strengthen their peer relationships
- supported to develop healthy identities and skills as young adults

Family focused

A family focused approach:

- embraces the multiplicity of family types and situations
- requires workers to create a partnership with families, and work collaboratively with them
- includes family members in all decision making and planning activities at the level of participation they choose
- acknowledges the family members as the experts on their particular situation
- acknowledges families as the experts on their child's needs and abilities
- assists families to identify their strengths and build family resilience and resources
- involves families as participants in a continuous improvement processes

Prevention and early intervention focused

Prevention:

- is underpinned by education and information
- employs activities and strategies that support and promote individual, family and community wellbeing
- builds capacity

- supports self reliance

Early intervention:

- responds to individuals, families and communities that have displayed early signs of a risk or problem
- aims to minimize the extent of intervention required
- focuses on strengthening resilience
- may include follow up support after an initial intervention has been provided

ENCIRCLE'S PRACTICE FRAMEWORK IS INFORMED AND GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING OPERATING PRINCIPLES:

Social Justice

Socially just practice is premised upon a commitment to access, equity, participation and rights for all members of the community, particularly those who are vulnerable or systemically marginalized, including but not limited to;

- children and young people
- women
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- those with mental health issues
- people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- unemployed people
- sole parent families

Implementing socially just practice means ensuring:

- everyone is informed about and has access to services regardless of education, religion, abilities, marital status, sexual orientation, health status, socio-economic status, gender, culture or other personal factors or life choices
- where necessary, positive discrimination strategies are applied to facilitate access and equity
- all position descriptions include "Demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to the principles of Social Justice" as a selection criterion
- Encircle's workforce is appropriately skilled in cross cultural awareness
- work practices are inclusive, promote a sense of belonging, and contribute to an environment in which everyone feels respected and valued
- the organisation, staff and volunteers act fairly, in good faith and without bias

Professionalism

Professionalism involves demonstrating a high standard of ethics and behaviour in all work activities:

- maintaining a commitment to best practice, innovation and ongoing learning and development
- maintaining personal and professional boundaries
- working in accordance with industry standards
- employing workers who are appropriately qualified

Integrity

Integrity involves honesty, truthfulness and authenticity; it is demonstrated by consistency and methods:

- in the development of the organisational mission statement, policies and procedures
- by working in accordance with the mission statement, policies, procedures and funding body standards
- by engaging in self-reflective practice
- by declaring any conflict of interests
- by ensuring appropriate use of the organization's resources

Transparency

Transparency involves openness, communication and accountability and requires appropriate governance and reporting structures and systems, by ensuring:

- decision-making processes are based on consultation and collaboration i.e. people play an active part in decisions that will affect them
- rights, roles, responsibilities are explored and made explicit
- stakeholders understand the provisions (or boundaries) of privacy and confidentiality
- the right of individuals to access information relating to them

Respect

Respect involves a high regard for people's intrinsic worth, their right to self determination, participation and inclusion; it is demonstrated by:

- recognizing people's potential
- honouring and valuing people's strengths and seeking to learn from them
- acknowledging people's right to safety and resources
- valuing people's uniqueness and diversity

Partnership

Partnership involves cooperation and/or collaboration and may be informal or formal. We will work in partnership with the community, other organisations and funding bodies in order to best meet the needs of clients and the community, and to maximise resources. When working in partnership we will:

- ensure there is a shared purpose and agreed outcomes
- ensure there are defined roles, responsibilities and procedures
- engage in shared decision making processes
- encourage mutual learning by sharing resources, information, knowledge and networks
- work to maintain strong and positive relationships.