# **ECIA VIC/TAS Submission: NDIS Code of Conduct**

**Early Childhood Intervention Australia Victoria/Tasmania**

Early Childhood Intervention Australia Victoria/Tasmania Limited (ECIA VIC/TAS) is the peak body for early childhood intervention in Victoria and Tasmania. We represent professionals and organisations providing specialised support and services for infants and young children with disability and/or developmental delay to promote development, well-being and community participation. Our vision is for young children of all abilities to fully participate in family and community life. We provide information and professional development across the sector.

**NDIS Code of Conduct**

ECIA VIC/TAS considers all nine (9) obligations listed in the online survey to be extremely important inclusions in the NDIS Code of Conduct.

We also note that in the *General principles guiding actions under the National Disability Insurance Act 2013*, section 5 (f) states that:

(f) if the person with disability is a child—the best interests of the child are paramount, and full consideration should be given to the need to:

(i) protect the child from harm; and

(ii) promote the child’s development; and

(iii) strengthen, preserve and promote positive relationships between the child and the child’s parents, family members and other people who are significant in the life of the child.

In developing the Code of Conduct, we believe that explicit consideration must be given to children with disability and/or developmental delay and recommend the following.

**2.1 Promote individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making**

ECIA VIC/TAS believes that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should also be included as a document that underpins the broader policy, legislative and regulatory environment. The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises that while children have the same human rights as adults, children require special protection due to their vulnerability.

The rights and freedoms of children need to be clearly articulated within the Code of Conduct rather than left open to interpretation.

**Preamble to the Code of Conduct**

The development of a preamble to the Code of Conduct would provide another mechanism to reinforce the rights of children as distinct from adults and to express a commitment to their safety, development and full participation in the community.

**21st June 2017**