

The Inclusion Support Program

The Inclusion Support Program (ISP) is a key component of the Government's Child Care Safety Net, which commenced in July 2016, as an early element of the Child Care Package, introduced in 2018, this aims to give the most vulnerable children a strong start, while supporting parents or carers to increase their activity including work, study and training.

The ISP assists early childhood education and care (ECEC) services to include children with additional needs by providing tailored inclusion advice and support from the Inclusion Agency. The ISP also assists services to implement a quality, inclusive and equitable practice under the National Quality Framework (NQF) and in accordance with the National Quality Standards (NQS) and Approved Learning Frameworks.

Additional needs may arise for children who:

- ▶ Have a disability or developmental delay
- ▶ Are presenting with challenging behaviours
- ▶ Have a serious medical or health condition, including mental health
- ▶ Are presenting with trauma-related behaviours

The ISP supports ECEC services to meet the needs and requirements of:

- ▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- ▶ Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ▶ Children from refugee or humanitarian backgrounds
- ▶ Children who may also require specific considerations, such as cultural support, to ensure that they are able to participate fully in ECEC services and experience positive outcomes

Eligible ECEC services include:

- ▶ Long Day Care services
- ▶ Outside School Hours Care including Vacation Care
- ▶ Family Day Care services
- ▶ Occasional Care services
- ▶ Mobile services
- ▶ Community Child Care Fund Restricted (CCCF)

Inclusion Support QLD is funded by the Australian Government to provide Inclusion Agency support and is managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Cairns and District Child Care Development Association.

Contact us for further information

T 1800 811 039
E SELQLD@ku.com.au
www.inclusionsupportqld.org.au

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Inclusion Support Program

Specialist Equipment Library

Information for therapists

Providing specialist equipment support to Queensland early childhood and child care services





What is the Specialist Equipment Library?

The Specialist Equipment Library (SEL) provides resources to eligible early childhood education and care (ECEC) services to improve their capacity and capability to implement quality inclusive practices, and to address participation barriers so children with additional needs can be included alongside their typically developing peers.

Types of equipment available from the SEL

Equipment available may include (but is not limited to):

- ▶ Portable ramps to create access to the environment
- ▶ Standing frames and full support swings to allow a child with high physical needs to participate in the daily programme and activities
- ▶ Hoists, slings, harnesses, change tables, toilet sets or steps, potty chairs, mobile stools and seating or posture aids for educators, to assist them to lift and transfer children safely when carrying out basic care functions such as changing or going to the toilet
- ▶ Specialised inclusion toys such as switch toys
- ▶ Specialised furniture such as chairs, tables, desk and positioning equipment
- ▶ Communication cards or charts, and Auslan dictionaries to enable the child and educators to communicate effectively
- ▶ Resources to support the inclusion of Indigenous children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, such as books in languages other than English

How to access specialist equipment

The ECEC service's inclusion professional will assist them to develop a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) that outlines the barriers to inclusion in the service and strategies and actions that will be taken.

An ECEC service's need for specialist equipment must be identified in their SIP or be recommended by a relevant professional, such as an occupational therapist or physiotherapist who has knowledge of the child's biomechanical functional needs.

The ECEC service, in conjunction with the child's family and allied health professional/s, will ensure that the equipment requested will best overcome the identified barrier/s to inclusion and will be suited to a child's needs within the early childhood setting.

Once equipment is recommended, the inclusion professional must endorse and agree to the recommendation prior to a Specialist Equipment Library loan application form being submitted.

A detailed loan agreement between the ECEC service and KU Children's Services will need to be signed as part of the loan process.

Additional information, including non-approved equipment, can be accessed from: https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/isp_guidelines_-_version_2.2_0.pdf and www.inclusionsupportqld.org.au/specialist-equipment-library

Other points to consider when recommending specialist equipment

- ▶ What are the specific inclusion barriers that the specialist equipment will be utilised to overcome?
- ▶ Will educators be able to use the equipment in a safe way? Is training needed and are there any risks to educators regarding storage/setup/adjustments of equipment?
- ▶ Does the recommended specialist equipment support the inclusion of children to engage with typically developing peers?
- ▶ What impact will the equipment have on the existing environment?
- ▶ Provide clear and detailed information on the Specialist Equipment Library Item Request Form so the correct equipment is accessed. For example, size of equipment and the size of area the equipment will be going into, such as toilet space.
- ▶ Are there photographs available of the proposed equipment that can be shared with educators to ensure that they understand the suitability/size/complexity of the equipment before it is ordered?