

Working together
Client Code of Conduct



January 2023

Client Code of Conduct



Message from the Executive Officers

At AEIOU, we love what we do, and we take our jobs seriously. Every team member is committed to working with our families to deliver excellence in early intervention for young children with autism. We do this with care, commitment and empathy.

Clear and open communication around expectations is also important to us. All AEIOU employees are bound by an organisation-wide **Code of Conduct**.

This **AEIOU Client Code of Conduct** is for any parent, guardian or carer who engages with AEIOU Foundation's service.

Both resources are designed to ensure everyone understands their rights and responsibilities when engaging with one another at any AEIOU service or office.

If you are ever unclear on any of the issues covered in this document, please reach out to your centre management team in the first instance. You're also welcome to contact the team at Central Office.

AEIOU takes pride in the community our parents and staff have created, and we thank you for being part of that. We are proud to lead an organisation that demonstrates care, professionalism and mutual respect between the families and staff in each service.



Alan Smith
CEO



Chris Kyranis
Head of Operations

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Our story

AEIOU Foundation was established in 2005, inspired by the experiences of Brisbane parents James and Louise Morton when their son was diagnosed with autism. Their experience began shortly after Andrew's first birthday. It was at this time his behaviour changed; he would cry continuously and at times, his behaviour escalated to severe head banging. He did not try to attempt baby talk and was silent except for the word 'mum'.

Andrew was diagnosed with autistic disorder at the age of two, and Louise and James sought the best possible educational program to support his needs. They discovered an early intervention pilot program run by Education Queensland. After securing a placement, within a short period of time, Andrew's behaviour improved, and by learning to communicate with pictures, he became less frustrated. Within 18 months in the program, Andrew began to put sentences together, he learned the alphabet and could count to 20. He played with his siblings and loved parks, McDonalds and indoor playgrounds just like other children. Andrew started at a regular kindergarten and enjoyed the experience. To further his educational development, Andrew still required ongoing therapy from his early intervention teachers.

However, in 2003, the early intervention centre was closed. There was no other service of its kind offered anywhere in Queensland and, as a result, the Morton's were forced to continue Andrew's therapy in their own home. Dissatisfied with the fact that Andrew—and thousands of children like him—had no opportunity to attend an early intervention

facility that was dedicated solely to children with autism, they decided to develop a service that would provide this level of care.

In November 2003, James and Louise, together with Andrew's therapist Rebecca Allen, developed the concept for AEIOU.

In February 2005, the first AEIOU centre was opened in Moorooka, Queensland. The centre was dedicated solely to an intensive early intervention learning program for children with an autism diagnosis.

Today, AEIOU operates from 11 locations, across Queensland and, the ACT, and South Australia. It is managed by a Board of Directors and the program is delivered by a transdisciplinary team comprised of specialist early childhood educators, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, and behaviour therapists.

Vision

Children with autism living their best life.

Purpose

To enhance the lives of children with autism and their families, through evidence-based, successful early intervention programs and practical support.



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Your rights

As a client of AEIOU Foundation, you have the right to:

- > Receive a quality group-based early intervention service
- > Receive support for your child's individual development goals
- > Trust your child's physical and emotional wellbeing is safeguarded by our staff
- > Have your and your child's privacy respected
- > Be treated fairly, heard fairly and taken seriously
- > Ask questions and provide feedback about any aspect of the service
- > Raise a concern or complaint
- > Be updated about changes which may affect how you access the service

Your responsibilities

As a client of AEIOU Foundation, you have a responsibility to:

- > To understand the Service Agreement signed upon enrolment
- > To follow the Code of Conduct and be mindful of AEIOU's social media guidelines
- > Participate in the development of your child's Individual Plan (IP), including setting goals
- > Access the training and support provided by AEIOU
- > Treat yourself and others with respect
- > Do your best to implement agreed strategies at home and in the community
- > Provide a safe environment in the event of home-visits

Respectful conduct

While there may be occasions when a parent or guardian is overwhelmed, feels angry or frustrated, AEIOU does not tolerate any intimidation, discrimination, bullying or harassment of staff or other parents and guardians. This includes but is not limited to:

- > Physical or verbal abuse
- > Making threats
- > Humiliating another individual/s, spreading rumours, or partaking in malicious gossip
- > Defaming another individual or the organisation
- > Physical or verbal intimidation of another person
- > Any repeated behaviour which results in another individual feeling disrespected or intimidated

All of these examples apply whether they take place onsite, or via social media or other group chat channels on any digital platform. Importantly, please note it is also a breach to identify children or families in the service or staff at AEIOU either implicitly or explicitly, without their permission.

In the event of a breach of this Code of Conduct, AEIOU seeks to mediate the situation with parties involved in the first instance. In the unlikely event of repeated breaches of this Code of Conduct, AEIOU reserves the right to take action, which may include suspension or termination of a child's enrolment at the service.

All parents and guardians can feel confident that AEIOU's staff are committed to AEIOU's organisation-wide Code of Conduct policy. Any staff member you engage with at AEIOU will respect your rights and act with integrity, and is held accountable to do so.

Where to go for guidance and to raise a complaint

AEIOU has a framework of policies and procedures to ensure families and staff alike understand their options to resolve an issue.

Do you have a have a question, problem, or a concern to discuss with us? We encourage you to do so via the correct channels explained in the Feedback, Complaint and Resolution Procedure. This document also details how we manage complaints with you. You can find it on the AEIOU Website, under 'Contact us'.

In your service, you can also access policies and procedures, including:

- > POL5.0 Feedback Complaints Management Resolution Policy
- > PRO5.01 Feedback Complaint and Resolution Client Procedure
- > PRO5.02 Implementing Procedural Fairness Guidelines
- > POL1.3B Privacy Notice Policy

For a question, problem or concern, in most cases, your Centre Manager should be your first point of contact. He or she is likely in the best position to take appropriate action.

If your Centre Manager is unable to assist, you may contact AEIOU:

- > By phone to our Central Office on 07 3320 7500
- > In writing addressed to the Designated Complaints Officer – by email to info@aeiou.org.au or by post to PO Box 8072 Woolloongabba Qld 4012
- > Using the confidential online **Feedback, Compliments and Complaints form** at www.aeiou.org.au/feedback

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We will discuss your complaint with you, record it, review it and respond to you with an outcome. If you're not satisfied with the response you have received, you may raise it with the Head of Operations or CEO.

If you're not satisfied with the response after discussing your complaint with the Head of Operations or CEO, you may escalate your complaint to AEIOU's Board of Directors or a relevant government department. This may include the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner (for service and support concerns) or the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (for privacy related matters).

Government departments:

Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland
W: www.oic.qld.gov.au
T: 07 3234 7373

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
W: www.oaic.gov.au
T: 1300 363 992

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
W: www.ndiscommission.gov.au
T: 1800 035 544

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

If any client of AEIOU Foundation breaches this Code of Conduct and the responsibilities listed here, AEIOU reserves to take action. This may include, but is not limited to cancelling enrolment. Please note, in this instance the child will receive transition support.

In the unlikely event that you observe or suspect fraudulent, corrupt, unlawful or unethical activity within AEIOU's service, you can anonymously report it to independent whistleblower authority, Stopleveline.

You can make a report online at aeiou.stoplevelinereport.com or by calling 1300 30 45 50.



Business principles

Our guiding principles are following all organisational policies and procedures, with specific attention to:

Fair treatment

At AEIOU, we value an inclusive culture for both our families and staff that is free of discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification. AEIOU does not tolerate any discrimination, harassment and bullying of staff or other parents and guardians.

Privacy and confidentiality

We respect the privacy of children, families, staff at AEIOU or others you may come into contact with via AEIOU Foundation. AEIOU treats personal information with utmost care, and expects all parties engaged with the service to do so, too.

Personal information is any type of information that could potentially be used to identify someone, either directly or indirectly, such as name, photo, CCTV footage, employee identification number, mobile number or email address.

AEIOU's Privacy Policy (as required by the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act)) explains the type of information AEIOU may collect, why this information is needed, how it is used, and how it is safeguarded. This document also outlines how to make a complaint or provide feedback in regard to the management of private or personal information. For further information about privacy and confidentiality, please speak to your manager or AEIOU's Privacy Officer via info@aeiou.org.au.

Quality standards and continuous improvement

We demonstrate continuous improvement through our company value – Excellence. At AEIOU, we collaborate, respectfully challenge, explore and learn how we can improve on what we already do, every day. At AEIOU we follow:

- > NDIS Quality Safeguarding Framework, Rules and NDIS Practice Standards
- > Relevant State/Commonwealth Education and Care Services legislative frameworks

AEIOU encourages all employees to meet or exceed our internal standards, in addition to the standards set by legislation, regulations and our industry. The views of our families are also important to us. We welcome feedback from families engaging in the service. You can share your feedback with us through the confidential form at www.aeiou.org.au/feedback or by contacting your centre management. This form also provides the opportunity to select from a compliment, general feedback or a complaint.