

EDFD221- Assignment 2 (37.5%)

The *Association for Children with a Disability* (ACD) is a non-profit organisation that provides information, support, and advocacy for families who have children with special needs. Families have access to parent support, guides regarding inclusion and positive education planning and various information documents and programs for siblings. It also provides support for members of the community such as professionals like educators where information and resources are provided to adapt the curriculum and classroom environment to cater for children with special needs. Professional development is seen from a family perspective and how this impacts the child, students, and preparing an inclusive classroom. Systematic advocacy involves how the agency communicates with governments to improve the service and education system for children with special needs. This connects to legislation, specifically the Disability Discrimination Act (2014) as appropriate facilities are to be provided on the grounds of inclusive education. This agency would be appropriate for children like Max Brauer, who has Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and his family of two brothers and his single father. The agency also provides services like the Sibling Program Directory, which would be specific to the Brauer family's needs.

The *Association for Children with a Disability* (2013) aims to improve the lives of children with special needs and their families. This is reflected in their policies as outlined in their Strategic Plan (2013), which includes advocating for children, educating service providers, collaborating to improve opportunities for children, continuing quality advocacy for and promoting the rights of children with a disability. These policies are reflected in legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act of 1992 (2014), that states that any person with a disability, which includes behavioural problems like Oppositional Defiant Disorder, is protected under this Act and has the same rights as someone without a disability. The Disability Standards for Education (2005) further argues this on the basis of inclusive education, which includes providing appropriate facilities and accommodating students with a disability into the curriculum. These rights are reflected in the agency's policies, particularly in the Inclusive Classroom School Resource, which aids teachers to provide an environment that supports students with special needs. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (Foreman, 2011), curriculum that is

inappropriately designed are the major causes for exclusion for students with a disability.

The agency also provides a number of services that supports parents, children, educators, and schools. Some of these services include; an information booklet, *Helping You and Your Family*, is specific for families who have a child with a disability, which covers a range of topics, including diagnosis, family and friends, siblings, your support network, parent support, and a list of referrals. The program *Parent Support Service* focuses on how parents can be the best advocates for children of diversity, and further support is available by phone or email. This service highlights the underpinning theory of the need for parental engagement, when combined with support from the school, improves the educational outcomes of students with special needs. This is seen in *Positively Engaging Parents* (2010) that states when engaging parents, culturally supportive networks need to be established as this will aid parental engagement and strengthen the support for the child. This relates to Max Brauer, as he is of German background, his father would also benefit from this network, to improve Max's language ability, as it is currently at a poor standard. Another service provided is the Sibling Program Directory, which links to camp programs such as People Outdoors. This is ideal for Max and his two brothers, as Max's interests include physical activities such as bike riding. This would give the three brothers an opportunity to strengthen their relationship, as there may be difficulty or conflict between them due to Max's Oppositional Defiant Disorder. Through this program, it also gives the separated father opportunity for a break, as he needs to look after himself too.

The *Association for Children with a Disability* seeks to address issues of social justice through a number of initiatives. For example, the ACD works in conjunction with organisations such as *The Aids and Equipment Action Alliance* aims to achieve proper provision of aids, equipment and facilities for people with a disability. The basic need of sufficient toilet facilities is addressed by *Changing Places*, which aims to increase the number of fully accessible toilet facilities. The ACD supports the Victorian State Disability 2013-2016 (2011), which involves four key policy directions; 1) a strong foundation for learning, 2) protection of rights and inclusion, 3) access to facilities

and transport, and 4) working towards a National Disability Insurance Scheme. In terms of education, the report *Inclusive Education: Opportunities for every Victorian child to reach their full potential* (Imber, date unknown) argues that teachers need to recognise and respond appropriately to include students with a disability as well as make suitable changes to the system, such as a flexible curriculum, to cater for the students' needs.

There are number of referral procedures to the *Association for Children with a Disability*. For example, councils like the City of Whitehorse provides a document *Early Years Referral Pathways: Useful Websites* (2012), which lists services that are specific to your need and that you can contact personally. Another referral procedure is the LETS program (date unknown), which offers ways for parents to access and contact services including the ACD. The website ReachOut.com Professionals (2014) is ideal for educators dealing with children with special needs, that offers resources and support services, which provide guidance when helping young people seek information and support such as counselling or online communities. The *Association for Children with a Disability* also offers referral procedures, which ranges from counselling to disability services to information and equipment.

This agency addresses issues particularly for students from a culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds from a family perspective, especially regarding sibling relationships. The *Association for Children with a Disability* (2013) explores how culture influence sibling relationships and whether this focuses on an independent or interdependent relationship between siblings. This also relates to how parent expectations influence how they make adjustments to cater for their child with special needs. Research shows that cultures based on interdependent relationships experienced more conflict, as it emphasised equal treatment for all children, despite one sibling is dependent on other family members and therefore equal treatment is not always possible.

There are implications for educators that need to be addressed. As seen in *Positive Education Planning* (2012), it requires both educators and parents to plan a positive

approach towards education, which includes children with a disability. This parent-school partnership can be developed through a Student Support Group, which includes the parents, teachers, the principal, and consultants. This is a process involving understanding the child as a learner, developing an individual learning plan, supports for students with a disability, measuring the student's progress, and adjusting the individual learning plan as needed. This adjustment is specific to Max Brauer's situation, as due to his Oppositional Defiant Disorder, he may find difficulty in following instructions and classroom routines. According to Positive Education Planning (2012), it is the school's responsibility to support students to behave appropriately. This is further supported in the underpinning theory seen in *Building a Realistic Pyramid of Instructional and Behavioural Supports for Prevention and Intervention* (Lewis, date unknown) that states that students with challenging behaviours need active consistent support from the school. Schools therefore need to implement initiatives such as *Values Education* and *National Safe Schools Framework*. Some of the key principles outlined in the *National Framework for Values in Australian Schools* (2005) include school planning, partnerships within the school community, and providing a safe and supportive learning environment. Similarly, the *National Safe Schools Framework* (2003) supports these values as well as focusing on positive behavioural management, professional learning, and student well being. These initiatives supports students with special needs, like Max Brauer, who need a safe and supportive learning environment to gain positive outcomes in education. Resources like *Kids Matter* (2012) provides methods, tools, and support to help schools and educators to work with parents and carers, and professionals in the community, to assist students, especially with special needs. This program can be adapted to the school's particular needs, which promotes inclusion.

In terms of the role educators play in protecting children, whether they have a disability or not, the underpinning theory in *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people* (2010) argues that mandatory reporting is required by professionals such as teachers if they have formed a belief regarding the safety of a child concerning physical or sexual abuse. While this does not apply to Max Brauer, there are some cases that have implications for the teacher and it is their duty to report. Other theories that have not been discussed earlier include child risk and

protective factors, and student well-being and resilience and mental health. According to Risk and Protective Factors (date unknown) a child is at risk due to, for example, disabilities, family conflict/divorce, and chronic medical problems. Max Brauer is considered to have a disability and his parents are separated. Therefore he can be considered to be “at risk” due to these factors and may not achieve at the same level as other students. In this case, resilience is a method of protection. For the school, this means three principles should be implemented; 1) Caring and supportive relationships, 2) High but achievable expectations, and 3) Ongoing opportunities for participation and contribution. Responding to Mental Health Problems (2008) further discusses the school’s responsibility for the child’s wellbeing. The GRIP framework can be used, which involves gathering information for additional support, responding to the troubled person, involving others like the school counsellor, and promoting a healthy school environment.

The *Association for Children with a Disability* is an ideal agency, which provides support, information and services that help families, like the Brauers, which Max has Oppositional Defiant Disorder. Services such as the Sibling Program Directory is ideal for Max and his two brothers, as they may have conflict in their relationship, due to Max’s disability and so this gives them opportunity to bond. Other services, like the Student Support Group, provide the parents and educators with support to cater for students with special needs.

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CRITERIA	HIGH DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	CREDIT	PASS	FAIL
LO1. Understand and apply principles of teaching for social justice and relevant inclusion policy to schools, classroom practice and community					
Description of how the agency seeks to address issues of social justice if at all	The overview provides a comprehensive description of how the agency seeks to address issues of social justice if at all	The overview provides a very detailed description of how the agency seeks to address issues of social justice if at all	The overview provides an adequate description of how the agency seeks to address issues of social justice if at all	The overview provides a basic description of how the agency seeks to address issues of social justice if at all	The overview provides minimal description of how the agency seeks to address issues of social justice if at all
LO4. Identify and demonstrate an awareness towards the particular needs of students with higher support and additional learning needs and relevant whole school/classroom practices to enhance protective factors minimizing risk					
LO8. Design and implement effective strategies to diversify the curriculum in an inclusive setting and identify networks which support teachers in dealing with effective inclusion					
The services provided by the agency	Description of the services provided demonstrates a comprehensive awareness of the particular needs of higher support needs students and the networks available to support teachers	Description of the services provided demonstrates a detailed awareness of the particular needs of higher support needs students and the networks available to support teachers	Description of the services provided demonstrates an adequate awareness of the particular needs of higher support needs students and the networks available to support teachers	Description of the services provided demonstrates a basic awareness of the particular needs of higher support needs students and the networks available to support teachers	Description of the services provided demonstrates a limited awareness of the particular needs of higher support needs students and the networks available to support teachers
Referral procedures to agencies	Description of the referral procedures to	Description of the referral procedures to	Description of the referral procedures to	Description of the referral procedures to	Description of the referral procedures to

and duty of care

LO7. Critically examine the current policies and principles on inclusion, disability and education of gifted students					
Description of the agency	The overview provides a comprehensive description of the agency	The overview provides a detailed description of the agency	The overview provides an adequate description of the agency	The overview provides a basic description of the agency	The overview provides a limited description of the agency
How legislation is	The overview	The overview	The overview	The overview	The overview

	agency is clear and comprehensive	agency is detailed	agency is adequate	agency is basic	agency is limited
Responses/strategies /treatments provided by the agency to address issues particularly for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	The overview provides comprehensive information about responses/ strategies and treatment provided by the agency	The overview provides detailed information about responses/ strategies and treatment provided by the agency	The overview provides adequate information about responses/ strategies and treatment provided by the agency	The overview provides basic information about responses/ strategies and treatment provided by the agency	The overview provides limited information about responses/ strategies and treatment provided by the agency
Identification of implications for educators including ideas for accommodations and adjustments to support students	The identification of implications for educators including ideas for accommodations and adjustments to support students demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of how to design and implement effective strategies to diversify the curriculum in an inclusive setting	The identification of implications for educators including ideas for accommodations and adjustments to support students demonstrate a detailed understanding of how to design and implement effective strategies to diversify the curriculum in an inclusive setting	The identification of implications for educators including ideas for accommodations and adjustments to support students demonstrate an adequate understanding of how to design and implement effective strategies to diversify the curriculum in an inclusive setting	The identification of implications for educators including ideas for accommodations and adjustments to support students demonstrate a basic understanding of how to design and implement effective strategies to diversify the curriculum in an inclusive setting	The identification of implications for educators including ideas for accommodations and adjustments to support students demonstrate a limited understanding of how to design and implement effective strategies to diversify the curriculum in an inclusive setting
LO6. Apply the relevant legislation, systems policies and utilize external agencies within a context of prevention for child protection					

I believe I should receive a High Credit or Distinction as I have provided detailed descriptions of how the services provided by the agency supports the child, family and educators. Legislation is shown how it is reflected in the agency's policies. The implications for educators are addressed with supporting underpinning theories. As

stated in the unit outline, the essay is no more than 2000 words and has at least 15 references.