

Research on Peer Work in Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Project

Plumtree is a proud advocate of peer work in early childhood intervention.

Since 2015, we have trained and employed 20 peer workers who do a range of paid work, including running workshops and courses, research, project management, vision-setting and planning with families. If you work with Plumtree, you have already connected with one or more of them.

Peer workers' lived experience in raising a child with disability or developmental delay are a valuable resource that complements existing family-centred services. Their insights can provide a new kind of support and knowledge-building for families. These are just a few examples of increasing hope and optimism, promoting inclusive services and approaches, and decreasing social isolation.

And yet, peer work is not common in the early childhood intervention and disability sectors. We want to change that.

With a grant from the Innovative Workforce Fund in 2017, we began a project to research, document and develop resources to support the introduction of families as peer workers in ECI organisations. The research drew from the experience and evidence of peer workers in the mental health sector and those working at Plumtree.

The project promotes peer workers as a new, untapped workforce that should be used more in the disability sector.

Related resources



At a glance:
Families as peer
workers in ECI



Literature Review on
peer work in mental
health and ECI



Guide and resource toolkit
to support peer workforce
integration in ECI org.



Report on peer worker
use in ECI org. by CDS,
Sydney University



Families as peer workers in
ECI: Knowledge
Translation plan



Podcast: Families as
peer workers in early
childhood intervention



Now Next



Parents as
peer workers