

## RIGHTS ORIENTED

### MEANING

Upholding of children's and parent's rights as they are expressed in key international human right treaties, and in the 1989 UN Convention on the rights of children, in particular. According to these rules and their interpretation by the Courts, the primary consideration of the best interests of the child should be observed as a standard in the achievement of his/her rights and in balancing other relevant interests.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

A commitment to children's rights and welfare, and of parents and families, is foundational for the Action. It reflects a core commitment to the betterment of the lives of children and parents and within this, the achievement of their rights, in order to contribute to their development. The work of the network is ultimately about upholding their rights in the Family Support policies, practices and research that it supports.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

Emphasise children's, parent's and family rights and the primary consideration of the best interests of the child in products and outputs created by the network.

## ETHICAL PRACTICE

### MEANING

Operating to a set of standards and principles that inhere in the professional roles of Action participants and that are further expressed in the way that the work of the Action proceeds.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

Ethical practice derives in part from the need to respect rights. It accords with the principle of being rights-based. De facto, there is an expectation for ethical practice for all those in the network, from academics and researchers through to policy and practice stakeholders. This is likely to be already codified within the operating standards of the professional and other organizations in which Action Participants are members.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

The network needs to operate in an ethical fashion, with all matters of governance and organizational processes transparent. All research undertaken by the network must proceed according to the highest ethical standards. Ethical practice will be expected within training / education provided by the Action and in policy and service approaches it promotes.

## PARTICIPATION

### MEANING

A bottom-up process, involving children, parents and families in the design, implementation and evaluation of Family Support policies, services and practices.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

Participation by children, parents and families reflects the intent to achieve their rights. Children and parents are the point of departure and arrival of the Action, so they must play a central and active (not passive) role in the dynamics of the network. Participation by children and parents should lead to practices and services that better meet their needs.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

Children's and parents' voices and those of other family members must be heard in the activities of the action. Appropriate mechanisms must exist for their participation in the structures and processes of the network.

## MULTI & CROSS-SECTORAL MULTI & INTER-DISCIPLINARY

### MEANING

Recognizing Family Support as a policy, service and practice orientation that has applications across various sectors of state and international policy and different professional disciplines. This often involves people from different sectors and disciplines working together. Likewise, Family Support research and evaluation proceeds within and between different academic disciplines.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

Family Support can be an orientation in all sectors. Effective Family Support is likely to involve interaction between services / practitioners in more than one sector. Practitioners from a variety of professional disciplines deliver Family Support. In the same way that Family Support is more effective when it spans different sectors, it is more likely to be effective if it draws on different disciplinary approaches.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

The network must be inclusive of different sectors and different disciplines. The network should encourage cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary Family Support.

# Eurofam PRINCIPLES

## POLICY & PRACTICE AWARE

### MEANING

Placing policy and practice considerations to the forefront of the work of the Action, both in informing the agenda of activities and in framing its various outputs.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

The network aims to improve the lives of children, parents and families by supporting the development of better policies, services and practices. Eurofamnet was established primarily as a mechanism that supports academics/researchers but its funding by COST was premised on a strong connection with stakeholder groups and building from the 'bottom up'. The primary emphasis of the scientific work of the Action is towards this aim.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

This orientation needs to drive the Action and the post-Action network that will remain, such that practical and policy application is always to the forefront of academic research.

## EVIDENCE- INFORMED

### MEANING

Committing to evidence founded on scientific methods, reflecting the values of those who use services, and the experience and wisdom of practitioners.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

To be credible to all stakeholders, Family Support policies, services and practices need to be evidence-informed, in order to guarantee the rigour of the work of the Action and the outputs that it develops.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

All of the data collection and analysis processes of the Action must have scientific merit. Design and analysis phases must incorporate peer review processes. Ideally, the views of service users and practitioners will be included.

## PLURALIST APPROACH TO RESEARCH & EVALUATION DESIGN

### MEANING

Adopting a pluralist approach to research and evaluation seeks to achieve greater fit between the demands of academic rigour in research / evaluation and the 'real worlds' of policy and intervention. It embraces the full range of design and methodological possibilities to address the diversity of contexts within which research studies and evaluations are set.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

A core aim of the network is to ensure a better fit between research, policy and practice. This requires that research and evaluation provide accounts that genuinely reflect the lived experience of children, parents, families and practitioners. It assumes that policy prescriptions grounded in better research have a greater chance of effective implementation. It also assumes that different approaches will lead to different types of questions and deeper knowledge.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

The Action must promote this as a principle to be followed in generating and using evidence for decision-making.

## INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE

### MEANING

Using communication formats and language that are accessible and clear to all citizens.

### RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION

As they are part of its ultimate target group, it is critical that Eurofamnet communicates effectively with all groups regardless of background. Additionally, there is a significant tendency in the policy and academic worlds to use specialist terminology and jargon. This is a major risk to the success of the Action as its outputs and products will not be accessible by all those that it seeks to inform, influence and support.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NETWORK

In order to be accessible to all, we will make the results and products derived from the actions available in a variety of formats and languages, insofar as the Action's resources allow.