

What we believe

Why we believe in it, and what that means for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.





IHC will advocate for the
rights, inclusion
and **welfare** of all people
with an intellectual disability and
support them to live
satisfying lives
in the community

FOREWORD

FOR MORE THAN 70 YEARS IHC HAS CHAMPIONED THE RIGHTS, INCLUSION AND CAPABILITY OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN NEW ZEALAND.

What we believe outlines our philosophy, values and commitment to our mission.

We must always challenge ourselves and others. Old-fashioned prejudices and outdated language are less common – but there's always more each of us can do to ensure people with intellectual disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens in our communities.

Being connected and supporting IHC means being committed to our mission – whether they be people with intellectual disabilities, family members, members, staff or volunteers.

We are proud of our values. We've stood on national and international stages and stated them. Our work reflects these values, such as fighting to close institutions, lobbying government for services, working with families, and providing support to people to be part of their communities so they have a place to belong. Our work promotes the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities as defined by New Zealand and international law.

We are also responsive to the changing needs and expectations of people with intellectual disabilities.

I am proud to be part of an organisation that has the courage to state clearly what it believes in, and the energy, bravery and determination to put it into action.

Tony Shaw
IHC Chair



People with intellectual disabilities have the right to be treated with *respect and dignity*

IHC BELIEVES THIS BECAUSE:

1. People with intellectual disabilities are individuals with the same feelings and rights as anyone else.
2. People with intellectual disabilities are sometimes discriminated against because some people do not see them as individuals with these same rights and feelings.
3. People who receive services can be vulnerable to organisational routines that dominate their lives and suppress their individuality.
4. New Zealand is a multicultural society with a range of values and beliefs. These are an important part of an individual's sense of belonging.

IHC WILL:

- treat people as individuals
- protect people from abuse and neglect
- respect people's values and culture
- respect privacy
- ensure legislation and international conventions are observed
- monitor policy and law to ensure they do not discriminate
- promote a positive image of people with intellectual disabilities.

People with intellectual disabilities have the right to a say in *their own lives*

IHC BELIEVES PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY:

- have a right to make choices and have a say in what happens to them
- are capable of being involved in making decisions
- must have information on which to base their decisions
- must be supported to understand the consequences of their decisions
- if necessary, must be helped to communicate their decisions.

IHC BELIEVES THIS BECAUSE:

1. People know what they want and need. Having control of their lives increases self-esteem, which is vital for confident social interactions and relationships.
2. Having a disability does not mean individuals are not able to learn about their rights and responsibilities and make choices.
3. Under law, everyone, including people with intellectual disabilities, is presumed to be able to make decisions unless it is proven otherwise. Only when all communication options are explored and every effort is made to assess decision-making capability, should a decision be made on their behalf.
4. Support to make choices will change as children grow into adults, take more responsibility and learn from their experiences.

IHC WILL:

- involve people with disabilities in decisions about their lives
- encourage and support people with disabilities to participate in decision-making in IHC
- openly discuss with self advocates, families and independent advocates any risks associated with particular decisions
- recognise the importance of families, advocates and networks in the decision-making process
- involve independent advocates when there is no one who is able to support people with intellectual disabilities to make decisions
- support the development of independent consumer movements that promote self advocacy.





People with intellectual disabilities have the right to live, learn, work

and enjoy life as part of the community

IHC BELIEVES PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY MUST HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- the same educational opportunities as everyone else
- choose where they live
- interesting and exciting community activities
- opportunities for personal development
- participate in the paid workforce
- contribute to society
- have fun, try new things and experience life
- develop friendships with people who care about them
- opportunities for sexual expression and fulfilment.

IHC BELIEVES THIS BECAUSE:

1. People with intellectual disabilities have the same needs and aspirations as everyone else.
2. The community is a place where everyone has the freedom to make choices about day-to-day life, mix with different people and interact with others.
3. Segregation leads to people not understanding the community and the community not understanding them.
4. Attitudes change when people discover that everyone has a place.

IHC WILL:

- support people with disabilities to access education, accommodation and work
- provide support so that people can participate in the community
- provide opportunities for friendships and relationships to thrive
- advocate for policy and law that supports inclusion
- identify all possible ways people can participate in local communities.

People with intellectual disabilities have the right to support

to meet their goals and aspirations

IHC BELIEVES PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES SHOULD HAVE SUPPORT THAT:

- allows them to meet their goals and aspirations
- matches individual needs, no matter how complex
- is provided by people who understand them
- promotes self development and independence
- makes them feel good about themselves
- respects culture, spirituality and sexuality
- eliminates risk of harm or abuse
- enhances and strengthens the family.

IHC BELIEVES THIS BECAUSE:

1. Like everyone else, people with intellectual disabilities have different needs.
2. Support from IHC is tailored to the individual and is part of a support network that includes the family, the community and friends.
3. People with intellectual disabilities have the same health needs as everyone else and require the same health services.
4. Disability is not an illness, but does require people to have some support for daily living.

IHC WILL:

- work to understand the needs of individuals
- provide support based on individual needs and aspirations
- provide support that is age appropriate
- ensure the dignity of the individual is respected, no matter how complex or challenging their needs may be
- provide workshops, connections and events for people with intellectual disabilities, families and support people
- regularly review support, which will change as people learn new skills, learn from experiences and grow older
- help people access other services
- maintain close links with friends, family and whānau.



People with intellectual disabilities have the right to be *part of a family or whānau*



IHC BELIEVES:

- children belong in a family or whānau
- everyone is part of a family or whānau
- family and whānau provide a sense of identity and belonging
- the definition of family or whānau can vary
- some of us are born into family/whānau while others choose them for themselves
- family and whānau have a lifelong interest and are a source of knowledge
- the role of a family or whānau changes over time.

IHC BELIEVES THIS BECAUSE:

1. Family and whānau provide love, security, knowledge, understanding and a sense of belonging.
2. Most people with intellectual disabilities live with their family or whānau.
3. A family or whānau connection is lifelong, but the role of the family and whānau changes as children grow into adulthood and are able to make their own decisions.
4. We believe we can learn from family and whānau, and they have much support to offer. Service providers cannot replace families or whānau.

IHC WILL:

- support family and whānau to provide a caring environment for their children
- provide information and support to family and whānau as their children go through various phases in their lives
- advocate with family and whānau to ensure services are receptive to their needs
- involve family and whānau in planning and decision-making
- respect the values, views and knowledge of the family and whānau of people using services
- ensure staff understand the role of the family and whānau in a person's life.

IHC supports the principles of

Te Tiriti O Waitangi

IHC BELIEVES THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH TE TIRITI O WAITANGI, MĀORI WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

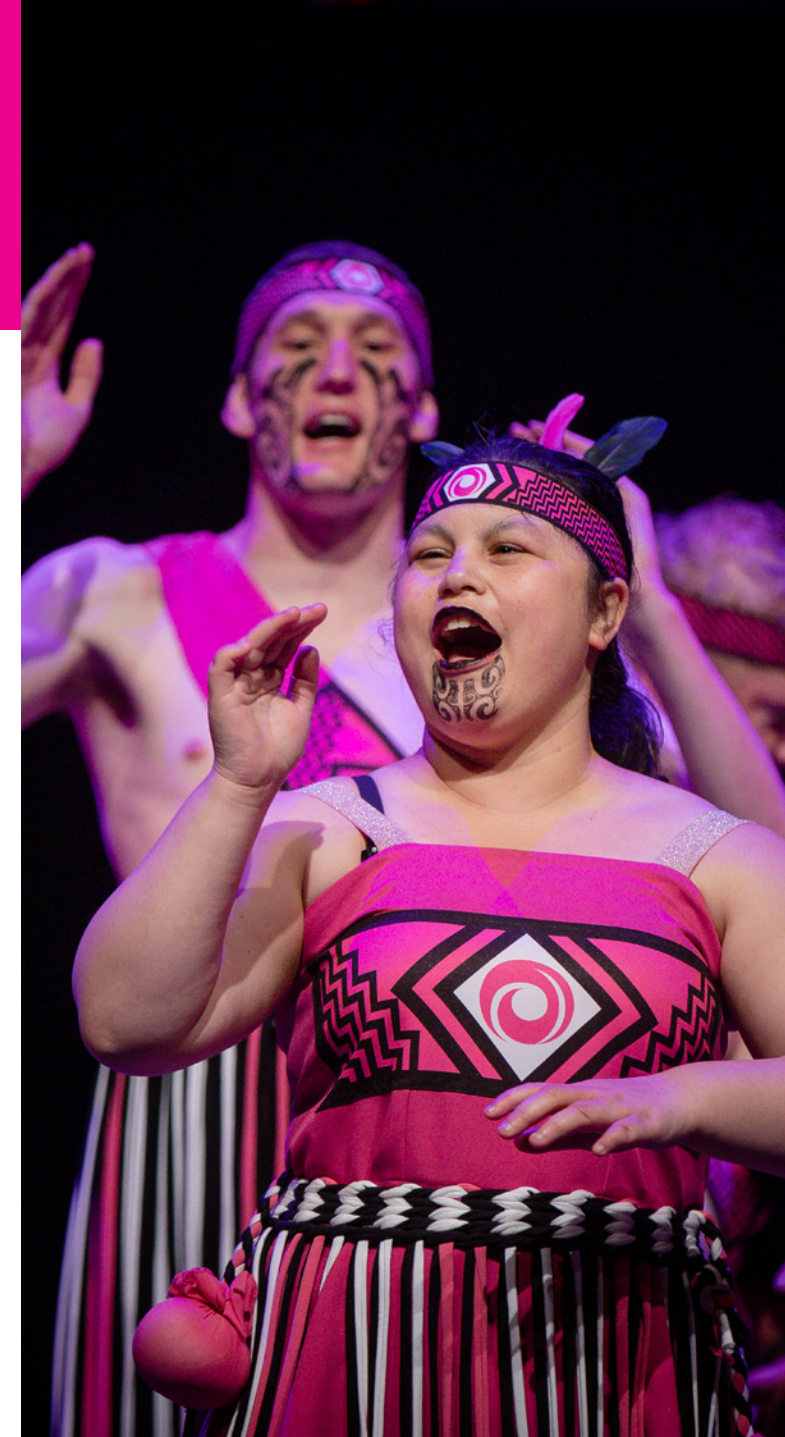
- participate in decision-making
- be protected by law
- have concerns resolved
- have control of their lives.

IHC BELIEVES THIS BECAUSE:

1. Although New Zealand is a country of many cultures, Māori are the indigenous people and have rights under Te Tiriti O Waitangi, an agreement between the Crown and Māori.
2. New Zealand has legislation, such as the Human Rights Act, that recognises the rights of New Zealanders of all cultures.
3. Culture is part of a person's individuality and our commitment to people with intellectual disability and their family must include an understanding of culture if we are to enhance and strengthen an individual's sense of identity.

IHC WILL:

- strengthen relationships with people we support, whānau, staff and the wider community and ensure the people we support are connected with their whānau
- ensure adequate resources are available to promote cultural understanding and provide services responsive to Māori
- develop the competence of staff to work in both worlds (te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā) and attract Māori to seek a career with the IHC Group and its subsidiaries
- create and identify opportunities for people to participate in cultural activities
- have an advisory group of Māori that supports the organisation (Te Anga Pāua o Aotearoa)
- encourage whānau participation in service planning and decision-making
- respond to requests to share expertise with other Māori providers.



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