

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

Practice Name: Rooted Together Pediatric Occupational Therapy

Location: Ontario, Canada

Effective Date: January 31 2026

Review Date: January 31 2027

Approved By: C.Jarman

Rooted Together Pediatric Occupational Therapy

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy

Purpose

Rooted Together Pediatric Occupational Therapy is committed to providing services that are respectful, safe, equitable, and inclusive for all children, caregivers, families, and colleagues. This includes, but is not limited to, respect for differences in age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ability, neurodiversity, and lived experience.

This policy reflects our mission to honour the dignity and worth of every person and aligns with the **College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (COTO)** expectations for ethical, equitable, culturally safer, and client-centred occupational therapy practice.

1. Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Rooted Together values and respects the uniqueness of each child and family we serve. Our commitment includes:

- **Equity:** Ensuring fair and just access to occupational therapy services by identifying and addressing systemic, structural, and individual barriers to participation, engagement, and outcomes.
- **Diversity:** Recognizing and honouring the wide range of identities, experiences, cultures, abilities, and ways of being.
- **Inclusion:** Fostering an environment where all individuals feel welcomed, valued, and able to participate authentically and meaningfully.

These principles are integrated into all aspects of practice, including clinical decision-making, service delivery, communication, and workplace culture.

2. Culturally Safer, Client-Centred & Anti-Oppressive Practice

Rooted Together is committed to **culturally safer and anti-oppressive practice**, consistent with COTO guidance. This means:

- Recognizing that **cultural safety is defined by the child and family**, not the therapist.
- Actively listening to children and caregivers to understand what feels safe, respectful, and meaningful to them.
- Adapting interventions and communication to reflect individual values, preferences, identities, and cultural contexts.
- Engaging in **cultural humility**, understood as an ongoing process of self-reflection, learning, and openness rather than a fixed level of competence.
- Practising **anti-oppressive care** by acknowledging power imbalances, systemic inequities, and historical harms within healthcare systems, and taking steps to reduce their impact.

Rooted Together is committed to ensuring services are delivered free from discrimination, judgement, or harm.

3. Critical Reflexivity & Professional Self-Awareness

In alignment with COTO expectations, clinicians at Rooted Together engage in **critical reflexivity**, which includes:

- Ongoing reflection on personal positionality, assumptions, values, biases, and privilege.
- Awareness of how social, cultural, and systemic factors may influence clinical interactions and decision-making.
- A commitment to learning from clients, colleagues, and communities to improve ethical and equitable care.

4. Accessibility & Barriers

Rooted Together recognizes that **availability of services does not guarantee accessibility**. We are committed to:

- Identifying and working to reduce barriers related to affordability, scheduling, communication styles, language needs, transportation, and sensory or physical environments.
- Supporting equitable participation by adapting services and information to meet diverse needs and preferences.
- Recognizing access to occupational therapy as part of broader **occupational rights**, including the right to meaningful participation in daily life.

5. Professional Responsibility & Ethical Practice

All clinicians and staff are expected to:

- Uphold the **COTO Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice**, including the provision of fair, respectful, and inclusive services.
- Engage in continuous professional development related to equity, diversity, inclusion, cultural humility, and anti-oppressive practice.
- Actively recognize, address, and mitigate bias and discrimination within clinical practice and organizational policies.

6. Collaboration & Community Engagement

Rooted Together is committed to:

- Working collaboratively with families, community partners, and other professionals to support coordinated, culturally informed care.

- Respecting and valuing lived experience, particularly the voices of equity-deserving and historically marginalized groups, in shaping practice and policy.
-

7. Monitoring, Accountability & Continuous Improvement

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are ongoing commitments. Rooted Together will:

- Regularly review this policy and related practices to ensure alignment with COTO guidance, evolving standards, and community needs.
- Welcome feedback from children, families, and collaborators to inform improvement.
- Promote accountability within services and workplace culture to ensure DEI commitments are actively practiced and experienced.