

Who We Are, **Practice, Values**



Who We Are

Chosen Family is a disability support provider grounded in the values of justice, empathy, and community. We are dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities and promoting their full inclusion, dignity, and participation in all areas of life. Our name reflects our deep belief in connection and belonging—because everyone deserves a place where they feel seen, heard, and valued.

Our Vision, Mission & Core Values

Vision

We are here to co-design futures—transforming the landscape of disability support through the strength of chosen families and the power of inclusive communities. We envision a world where everyone belongs, where support is shaped by the people receiving it, and where lives are built on compassion and agency.

Mission

To build communities where all individuals, regardless of ability, can thrive free from barriers and bias. Through deep connection, radical inclusion, and human-first support, we empower people with disabilities to live with dignity, independence, and joy.

Our Guiding Values

Flexibility

We reject one-size-fits-all models. Recognising the unique needs of each person, we commit to flexible, adaptive supports. Systems should be sources of empowerment—not barriers. We continuously evolve our practices to ensure that our services stand as reliable, resilient foundations of support, not instruments of harm.

Tenderness

Tenderness is the heart of our approach. It calls us to meet each person with gentleness, care, and deep respect. By nurturing an environment of compassion, we foster authentic relationships, emotional safety, and a culture where every person's humanity is affirmed and upheld.

Equity

We are committed to building an equitable environment that celebrates diversity in all its forms—ability, race, gender, culture, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. We actively uplift LGBTQIA+ voices and center those most impacted by systemic exclusion. Equity is not only a goal; it is our ongoing practice.

Belonging

Belonging is both a feeling and a foundation. At Chosen Family, everyone is welcome to bring their full selves. We foster communities built on trust, acceptance, and shared humanity—where no one stands alone and everyone has space to grow, contribute, and lead.

Our Pillars of Practice

Belonging & Empathy

We honor each individual's story. Our work starts with deep listening and continues through mutual respect, ensuring every person feels seen, safe, and supported.

Joy

Joy is radical. It reminds us that celebration and connection are not luxuries—they are vital to healing and thriving. We create joyful, life-affirming spaces that elevate every milestone and moment of beauty.

Equity & Empowerment

We do more than support—we amplify. By addressing structural barriers and providing personalised care, we foster self-determination and empower each person to shape their own path.

Trust

Trust is earned. We build it through consistency, integrity, and open communication. Our relationships—with participants, families, and community—are rooted in reliability and respect.

Our Approach: A Social Model of Disability

Understanding the Social Model

At Chosen Family, we proudly align with the social model of disability, a perspective developed by and for people with disabilities. This model shifts the focus from “fixing” individuals to identifying and removing societal barriers that create exclusion.

Disability is not an individual deficit—it is the result of physical, social, attitudinal, and institutional barriers that restrict participation and limit opportunities. In contrast to the medical model, which locates disability within the person, the social model demands systemic change to ensure access, equity, and dignity.

Removing Barriers: Building an Inclusive Society

We work to identify and dismantle the following barriers:

Attitudinal Barriers

These arise from stereotypes, low expectations, and discrimination. They lead to exclusion and internalised oppression. We challenge these through education, representation, and advocacy.

Environmental Barriers

Inaccessible infrastructure—from narrow doorways to poor lighting—impedes mobility and participation. We advocate for inclusive design that meets diverse physical, sensory, and cognitive needs.

Institutional Barriers

Policies and practices that exclude or disadvantage people with disabilities—such as inaccessible transportation or inflexible work systems—must be reimaged. We push for systemic change and inclusive policymaking.

Communication Barriers

When information isn't accessible—whether due to format, language, or complexity—people are excluded from vital decisions. We prioritise accessible, inclusive communication in every form, including Auslan, plain language, and alternative formats.

Our Commitment in Practice

Through a social justice lens, Chosen Family is committed to:

- ✔ **Uplifting lived experience** – We center the voices and choices of people with disabilities in all we do.
- ✔ **Removing structural barriers** – We take action to ensure environments, systems, and services are accessible and equitable.
- ✔ **Advancing rights and autonomy** – We support individuals to make decisions about their own lives, with the resources and respect they deserve.
- ✔ **Fostering interdependence and community** – We believe in the African philosophy of Ubuntu—"I am because we are." We thrive through connection, and we rise by lifting each other.

At Chosen Family, we're not just a support provider—we are co-creators of a more just, inclusive world. Together, we build spaces where care is radical, dignity is non-negotiable, and everyone belongs.