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ECOMAPS

KNOW YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK



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A BEGINNERS GUIDE

*Learn about the benefits of making
your own ecomap, and the tools to
do it with your family today*

The information provided is general in nature, and though it is a form of evidence of changes in supports and needs, it may not be accepted by all insurance providers.

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WHAT IS AN ECOMAP?

An ECOMAP is a visual representation of the connections and relationships between a person, their family, informal (not paid) supports and formal (paid) supports.

ECOMAP's are a wonderful tool to allow a family to evaluate all of their supports, discuss the value of each support and reflect on how they see that support changing over time.

When used regularly, an ECOMAP can be a great resource to use as evidence for additional supports, as it can show the benefits of that support and its impact on the person's life over a period of time.

It highlights how various social systems (family, friends, work, school) interact and change over time. It can also highlight where services are being duplicated or doubled up.

An ECOMAP should be made at least every 12 months, however if there is any major change in your child's life, or the life of their supports, this should indicate a need to update the ECOMAP.

HOW TO MAKE AN ECOMAP?

Step 1. Paper

Find an A3 piece of paper, tape two A4 pieces of paper together, or print the provided template at the end of this guide. Write the date in the top right hand corner

Step 2. Family Meeting

Sit down with your child, partner or the person you consider to be your child's biggest advocate.

Step 3. Child

In the centre of the page write the child's name.

Note: The left hand side will be informal supports and right hand side will be formal supports.

Step 4. Immediate Family

In a circle on the left hand side, write down all members of the family that live under the same roof, including parents, siblings, grandparents and pets. Note the type of work each person does and if it is casual, part-time, full-time, or fly in fly out.

Indicate how long you have been in this house.

Note: If parents have separated, write the supports for each household and the time spent in each house by the child.

HOW TO MAKE AN ECOMAP?

Step 5. Extended Family

Write a list of extended family, including grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Note how often they see you, how far away they live and the type of support they provide.

Step 6. Friends

Write a list of friends who provide support to you or your child. Note where you see them and how often. Also note the type of support, and their responsibilities such as their own children and work status.

Step 7. Community Supports

Write any community activities or supports used by your child or your family. This can include support groups, hobbies, religious groups, social clubs and sports. Include how often you go to or use this support.



HOW TO MAKE AN ECOMAP?

Now write on the right hand side of the page.

Step 8. Education

Write down if your child attends daycare, before/after school care, school or university. Name the place of education, what class they are in and how often they attend. Also note the supports they receive such as an individual education plan or education assistance, and how often this occurs.

Step 9. Allied Health Supports

Write down the different types of therapy your child attends, the name of the therapist, the location and how often it occurs.

Step 10. Medical Team

Include the names of your General Practitioner and any other specialists seen. Note where they are, what their specialty is and how often appointments occur.

Step 11. Work

If your child is old enough to volunteer or work indicate this here. Include where they work, their role and how often a week they attend. If your child does not have a job, also indicate this if it is something they want to do.

HOW TO MAKE AN ECOMAP?

Step 12. Other supports

If there are other supports involved with the child or your family, please indicate these. It may include Health Insurance Providers or other government agencies. It could also include digital and online communities, such as facebook support groups.

Step 13. Equipment

Underneath your child's name, write down all of their existing equipment including assistive technology and medical equipment. Note when it was purchased, when it was last maintained and how often it is used each day/week.

Note if any equipment needs replacing and who maintains the equipment.

Step 14. Support strength and direction

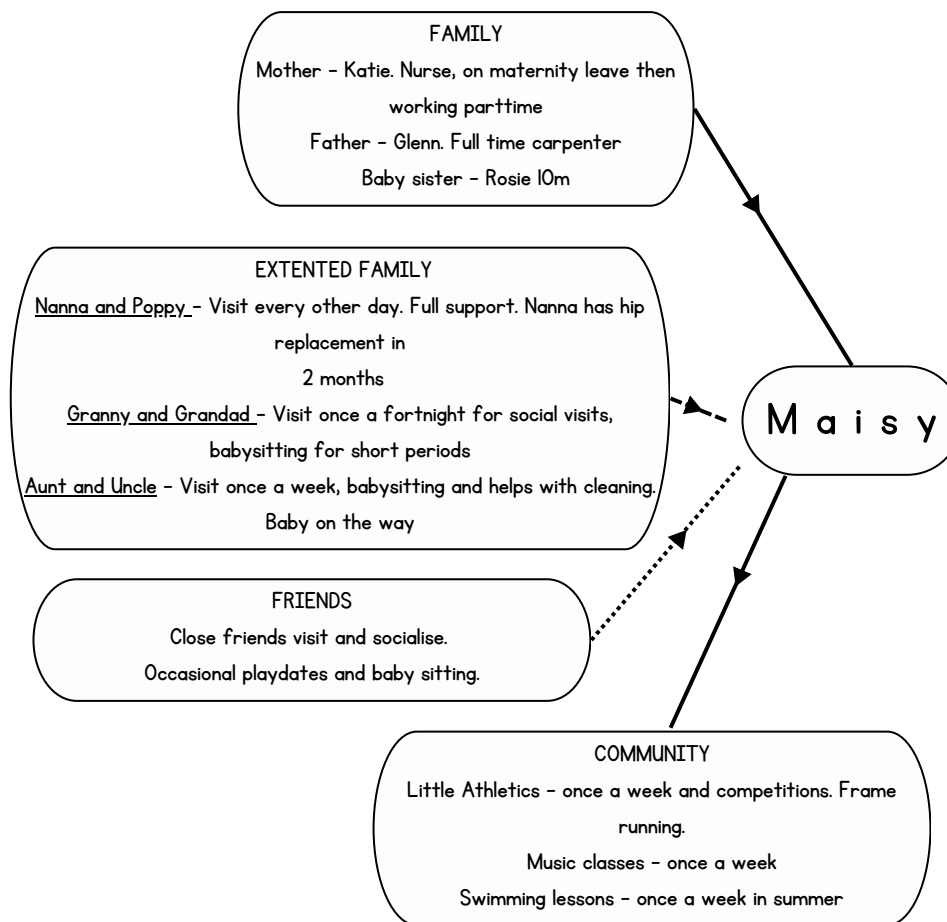
Draw a solid line to indicate a strong connection

Draw a dotted line to indicate a weak connection.

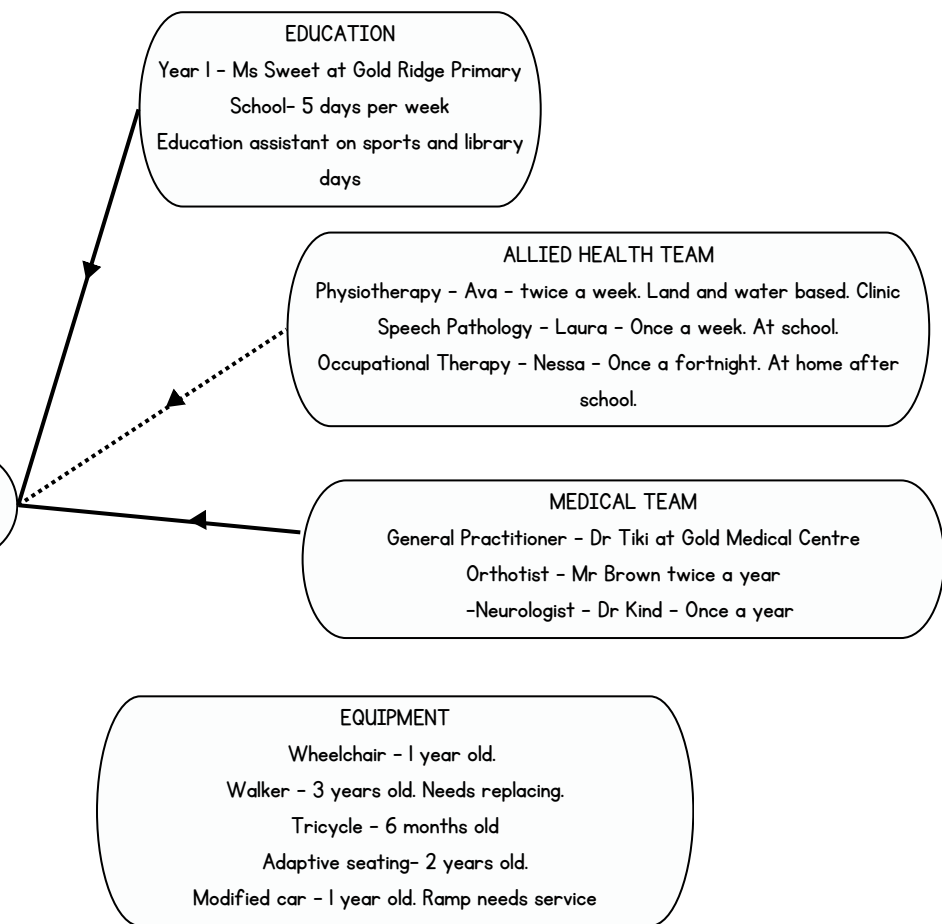
Draw a broken line to indicate a support which is at risk of being lost or if the relationship is strained or stressful.

Draw arrows to show the direction of the support and if supports are linked beyond your connection ie therapists communicate to doctors

ECOMAP EXAMPLE



ECOMAP EXAMPLE



HOW TO USE AN ECOMAP?

Funding Meeting

The ECOMAP used alongside a goal tracking system, will allow you to show where a reduction in funding has resulted in less frequent therapy sessions, and the result of a support being at risk or being removed. It can also show where informal supports have naturally increased or decreased, such as with age, geography or illness/surgery.

For example, using the ECOMAP, it can be seen that the support from Maisy's family is about to reduce significantly, and with Maisy's mum returning to work, additional support such as a support worker may be needed for a short period of time.

Therapy Goal Review Meeting

In tracking the therapy a child is participating in, along with their school hours and other medical appointments, contact hours with allied health can be better managed.

In conjunction with the therapy goals, this information can help reallocate funding to areas where more support is required.

For example, the Maisy's family may choose to pause hydrotherapy during summer, while Maisy is attending swimming lessons.

HOW TO USE AN ECOMAP?

Individual Education Plan Meeting

The ECOMAP in conjunction with a child's learning goals and previous report, can be used to justify the child receiving more or less, teacher assistant hours at school. This is because it will show how therapy hours, teaching assistant hours and the therapy and learning goals are progressing.

Doctors/Specialist Appointments

Easily keep track of who your specialist is with your ECOMAP. If used with a medical planner, this will help you ensure your child's medical team is covering all aspects of your child's disability and health care needs.

