



Embedding Aboriginal perspectives into culturally significant events: An accompanying guide

What are culturally significant events?

Throughout the year, there are days that recognise, commemorate and/or celebrate significant events. Some of these days are culturally significant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities, and culture.

Why do we acknowledge cultural significant days?

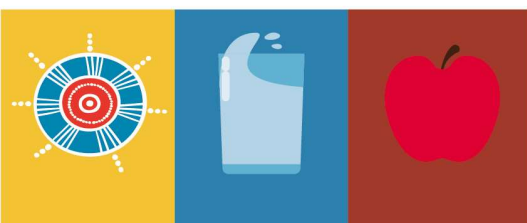
In Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) respecting the many ways of living, being and knowing is important. Equally important is creating environments that value diversity and the richness that it brings to society. Acknowledging culturally significant events, depending on the event, can

- Recognise the importance for all Australians to take affirmative actions to acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, and country.
- Commemorate historical injustices that occurred and still have a long-lasting impact on all Australians.

Each family and community may have their own approach to acknowledging culturally significant days. For some families and communities, the first time they become aware of culturally significant events could be from the events that you acknowledge in your service.

Why we developed these handouts?

We developed these handouts to support ECEC services, located within the Hunter New England Local Health District, to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's culturally significant events. In the handouts we provide information about each of the culturally significant events and suggest two activities to acknowledge the event. The activities align with the Munch & Move key messages, such as eating healthy and physical activity.



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What principles can you use when applying the culturally significant handouts?

It is important for educators to develop knowledge on Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing. Implementing the following principles could be a starting point for considering how to best embed Aboriginal perspectives in your service.

- Build relationships with children, families and community members, including local Elders.
- Seek guidance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members about local processes and protocols, history and culture.
- Learn more in relation to Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing, like the diverse cultural connections that exist between children and Country.
- Embed Aboriginal ways of knowing being and doing in the philosophy of your service, as well as in the planning and implementation of programs.
- Reflect on your personal beliefs, values, and identity, and identify how they may impact on your work.

How to use the culturally significant events handouts?

The culturally significant events handouts are located on our [Good for Kids](#) website and can be accessed any time. Prior to each culturally significant event, we will email you a link to the handout with this accompanying guide and other useful information. Work with your service and Aboriginal stakeholders to plan and implement activities that are meaningful and authentic.



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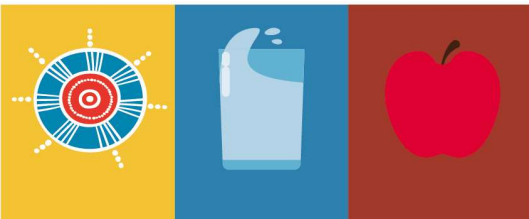




Links to the National Quality Standards and Munch & Move practices

Acknowledging culturally significant events and doing so by embedding Aboriginal perspectives is supportive of the National Quality Standards and Munch & Move Practices areas. For example;

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD	MUNCH & MOVE
<p>Element 1.1.2 - Child centred</p> <p>Each child’s current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.</p>	<p>Provide intentional learning experiences about Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing as it relates to healthy eating and physical activity</p>
<p>Element 2.1.3 - Healthy lifestyle</p> <p>Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.</p>	<p>Embed Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing by recognising healthy eating and physical activity are key aspects of the broader holistic concept of Aboriginal health and wellbeing.</p>
<p>Element 3.2.3 – Environmentally responsible</p> <p>The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.</p>	<p>Set up the physical environment to include local Aboriginal plants. Use both intentional and spontaneous activities to promote Aboriginal ways of caring for country, producing food and looking after each other.</p>
<p>Element 6.1.2 – Parents views are respected</p> <p>The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child’s learning and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Work with families and Aboriginal stakeholders to understand the best way to provide health information to families about healthy eating, physical activity and more.</p> 



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Links to EYLF



Recognising culturally significant events and embedding Aboriginal perspectives can support the implementation Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). For example;

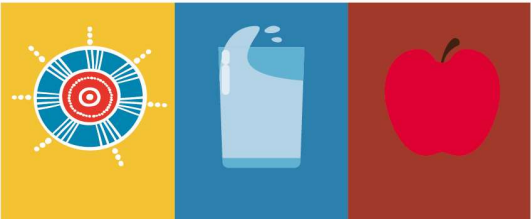
Principle: Sustainability by learning about local Aboriginal ways of caring for country. Planting local foods, communicating about the land we are on and showing respectful ways to care for the land we are on.

Practices: Play-based learning and intentionality by incorporating Aboriginal perspectives in play. Valuing the children’s knowledge on identity and allowing time and space to lead learning on culture. Educators will scaffold to embed Aboriginal perspectives through intentional teaching.

Outcome: Children have a strong sense of identity, by connecting with local and/or familiar events associated with culturally significant events. Inviting Elders and traditional owners within the community into the service to share knowledge of Country.

We have indicated in the below table potential principles, practices and outcomes that may be achieved by embedding significant events for Aboriginal people in your service.

PRINCIPLES	PRACTICE	OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships Partnerships Respect for diversity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives Equity, inclusion and high expectations Sustainability Critical reflection and on-going professional learning Collaborative leadership and teamwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches Responsiveness to children Play-based learning and intentionality Learning environments Cultural responsiveness Continuity of learning and transitions Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have a strong sense of identity Children are connected with and contribute to their world Children have a strong sense of wellbeing Children are confident and involved learners Children are effective communicators



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