10 Questions to Ask Before Planning a Celebration Day/Week

A reflective guide for early childhood and school age educators

Celebration days are most powerful when they focus on meaning, not novelty. These ten questions support educators to plan with intention so that children understand ***why*** we celebrate, not just how.

1. What is the purpose of this day in our setting?
Does it connect to children's identities, interests or our community context?
EYLF/MTOP: Vision; Belonging; Place-based pedagogy.

2. What story sits behind this day/week?
Have we explored the history, meaning and cultural significance in an age-appropriate way?
EYLF/MTOP: Cultural responsiveness; Respect for diversity.

3. Who celebrates this day and who might not?
Are we acknowledging that not all families mark the same days, and that this diversity is valuable?
EYLF/MTOP: Equity, inclusion and high expectations; Partnerships.

4. How might children feel today?
Might they be excited, curious, unsure or overwhelmed? How will we support emotional safety and agency?
EYLF/MTOP: Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; Wellbeing.

5. How can we include every child meaningfully?
Are our choices accessible, culturally safe and free from stereotypes?
EYLF/MTOP: Respect for diversity; Cultural responsiveness; Learning environments.

6. What do children already know and what do they wonder?
Have we listened to children's questions first, then planned from their thinking?
EYLF/MTOP: Responsiveness to children; Collaboration with children and young people.

7. How will we teach the why, not just the what?
Are we offering stories, images, conversations and materials that build understanding, not just activities?
EYLF/MTOP: Play-based learning and intentionality; Holistic approaches.

8. How will families be invited in with choice and respect?
Are we offering optional, low-pressure ways for families to contribute their perspectives?
EYLF/MTOP: Partnerships; Cultural security; Community connections.

9. How will the environment continue the learning after the day has passed?
Can we leave micro-provocations, books, maps, photos or languages available beyond the event?
EYLF/MTOP: Learning environments; Continuity of learning.

10. How will we document the learning meaningfully?
Are we capturing children's thinking, identity, empathy and connections, not just the "wow" moments?
EYLF/MTOP: Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing.