

Let's talk about 26th of January Professional Conversation – Chat comments Connecting the Dots Through Culture

Tell us why you are here and what clarification you need around Australia Day?

- How to celebrate Australia Day as being Australian by being respectful to anyone
- It's a very divisive issue. There is heat on both sides and not enough listening from the people who have the power to create an atmosphere conducive to change. Very set ideas on patriotism from many older members of the white community definitely. My father is one!
- I am here to understand more and be able to teach appropriately when it comes to days like the 26th of January. As I am not an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander I am growing my knowledge to be able to teach both sides.
- The more knowledge we have the more we can have respectful conversations to educate and work on truth telling for all.
- Do I teach it for what it is? Colonisation and genocide "invasion Day"
- I would like to learn more culturally safe ways to acknowledge Australia for all Australians.
- How can we share the true Australian history with young children? How much detail should we share?
- I have spoken with Awabakal families about what they would like to see, just wanting to get another opinion to ensure I am being respectful and inclusive to all.
- Is it now more about abolishing the date than changing the date? Doing a whole new date and name of this celebration altogether?
- to learn more on how to have conversations with my young staff team and the school age children I work with
- I'm not from Australia but as an educator and citizen, I want to know different ways to teach toddlers about this day in a meaningful and respectful way
- As an Aboriginal woman it is very difficult to live with this day which is given as a celebration.
- How to teach the history of Australia day respectfully both culturally and not to bring up trauma in families or cause distress.
- How to acknowledge Australia Day/Invasion day in a culturally sensitive way - background about me I was born in England

- My approach to celebrating Australia day respectfully was to ask each educator and family for their culture so we can celebrate being Australian. The information was added to a world map. How does this sit with you?
- I'm a kinder teacher in Melbourne, I am originally from New Zealand and would like to know more about Australia day and how to respectfully acknowledge it with our children
- I want to be able to respect Indigenous People and ALL people to be able to acknowledge how it applies to them. How can we deliver this in a child friendly way?

- To have a better understanding of how to celebrate Australia Day Respectfully as a whole Centre and community. My Centre is multicultural so all of my family have different views on what the day is about.
- I'd like to subtly educate families.
- Unfortunately we aren't always able to have these deep conversations yet professionally we should. We can't even have these conversations with colleagues.
- I'm here to learn respectful language when discussing Australia Day with my staff to ensure we continue to show respect to my First Nation families and alternative learning activities, conversations for the under threes age group especially.
- Thanks for the opportunity to ask how I / do others raise the conversation with others not yet acknowledging the history of this day.

What does Australia day mean to you?

- The day reminds me each year that the government should move the date.
- I'll be honest, don't know anymore
- Personally I'm not very connected to the day
- Shame
- I want in to be acknowledged as invasion day and change the date to celebrate Australia as a safe multicultural and diverse country
- I just feel sad and embarrassed for our Country that this is even a thing
- I feel conflicted as I feel I am just learning more about this and have in the past enjoyed this day with friends
- feel sad
- As an immigrant, I want to celebrate my freedom and a life of opportunities provided to me and my family in Australia
- Australia Day has always been a celebration only because it is my mum's birthday. growing up it was something drummed into your head *celebrate Australia* Now being older and being an educator, I realised we were never taught about first nations people. which is disgusting. I now as an adult would like to learn more to be a better educator for our younger generation
- I don't celebrate, I treat it as any other day. I believe that Australia has a long way to go in truth telling and acknowledging the true history of how we came to be 'Australia'.
- For me, it is about celebrating Australia as it is. I have not hung bunting or flags or done anything big because it is a painful day for many. I would be happy to move it off the day white men claimed this land, not only dispossessing the Aboriginal people, but forcing many white people to be here as prisoners and slaves
- For us its part of our Reconciliation Journey.
- I am so conflicted. I loved celebrating my beautiful country..... but I am learning more and more about the horrible history in the origins of this country! My heart breaks for the inter generational trauma experienced by our first nations people.
- For me, as an Aboriginal woman, it is a reminder of past and present traumas. I think it's an opportunity to not reinforce future traumas. My children have grown up knowing this understanding but also in the confusion of seeing this day celebrated.
- My point is, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and understand our history and own past mistakes. What's the big bloody deal if we move Australia Day to a different day that is less hurtful to a cohort of our nation that has already suffered

enough by white folk? Surely that's not asking too much. To many Aboriginals there is little to celebrate on this day and it is a commemoration of a deep loss. Loss of their sovereign rights to their land, loss of family, loss of the right to practice their culture. Change the date. Still have the day. Let's be compassionate.

- Australia Day has evolved for me over my whole lifetime. From my youth, celebrating with community and family and acknowledging the greatness of the country in which we live. To my adult years and professional years in which I have seen stronger feelings come from this day and wanting to be respectful of everyone as a community. It is definitely an adjustment going from the experience as a child to knowing TRUTH and then having to educate the children of today.
- As a young Educator my family would celebrate this day by having a BBQ. It was celebrated in school by colouring the flags, as I have Started my journey In understanding what this day actually means to my First Nation families.
- It's a sad day. The date needs to be moved to acknowledge the First Nation people.
- As a teacher of Prep children I have taken on more of a commemoration perspective rather than a celebration. I teach the history of the day and how this perspective has changed over the years - I try to give information from both indigenous and European perspectives. I also share what the day often means to immigrant families who are given their Australian citizenship on this day.
- is how I'm teaching it this year. focusing on the coming together of cultures. focusing on the land, the flora and fauna
- We started our Australia Day/Who are we? project this week
- We pay attention and focus learning about Australia the whole month
- I do an acknowledgment to country every day and weekly explain what that is about

What other names have you heard Australia Day being referred to?

- Invasion Day
- Colonisation day
- Mourning Day
- Survival Day
- I like to keep the conversation respectful so that I don't lose who I am speaking with and try to engage them with interest.
- At our preschool we started the theme 'learning about our country' instead of Australia Day.
- I find in the primary school setting teachers will only do one activity the day before as the curriculum is overcrowded and they do not have enough time.
- It has taken us lots of practice to feel comfortable. Knowing history is vital. This year we started learning about the Bunya Festival and the Bunya Tree. Which then led into reading Day Break today in the lead up.
- I love the idea of celebrating all cultures inclusively
- I will do "All About Me" in January. Starting with themselves and moving to family and community. I have five under 20 months and one 2.7.
- Of course it is an invasion day

Do you understand why people may get upset about Australia Day?

- Totally understand why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people get upset.
- It was the beginning of trauma that the Indigenous suffered

- A day aboriginal people know as the day the country got invaded and where ancestors lives didn't get acknowledged or respected
- Yes I do
- Absolutely! How can we celebrate this day when it came with so much trauma, brutality and destruction.
- Absolutely! Ownership of the land was never acknowledged properly for so many years. So now this 'celebration' is linked to the complete degradation of culture, language and connection to country.
- It marks the day that Australia was colonised by Europeans. That brought disease, violence towards the first Australians, destruction of land, stealing children from families.
- Multi generational trauma
- that's why we strongly try to focus on equality, human rights and anti-bias practises in early childhood
- I find as an Aboriginal man when discussing this that it's not about getting rid of the day but changing the date. And more often than not it always comes back to people not wanting to miss out on their day off.
- Yes this understanding has always been with me, but has deepened in recent years thanks to some wonderful families who have shared their stories with me which has given me such an insight on a personal level. I feel very lucky.
- We are told that the day is about Respect Reflect Celebrate but it is based on no reflection and no respect
- Loss of language is just one example of the pain of our past, that alones should reflect why Australia Day is such a traumatic time for our First Nations people.

Conversation about useful resources:

- Using great resources can help you with language and sharing ideas in ways that are appropriate for early childhood.
- **Shake A Leg,**
- **I Am Australian Too,**
- We listen to music from **Gurrumul** and other Indigenous artists.
- Organised crimes re: First Australians
- **You and me Murrawei**
- **Indigenous Australian map** - it has been interesting supporting them in finding where their families live across Australia.
- **Day Break By:** Amy McQuire, Matt Chun is another good book that we have read
- The Gambay First Languages map is great as well because it has links to videos and audio recordings from Word Up and other programs sharing language.
- In the primary school setting we are bound by the curriculum determined by Ed Qld. So I might speak to my Head of Curriculum tomorrow to see what we are allowed to share. I will look further into the Australia Day resources class teachers are using next week.
- <https://www.sbs.com.au/topics/voices/culture/article/2018/01/23/many-different-dates-weve-celebrated-australia-day?fbclid=IwAR3KnTOvnDGz78yE9iyeVAQibhOrgW5ozKl1uJJRj4t5EO-dmr3l-ayO4OI>
- **Share Our Pride:** <https://www.shareourpride.org.au/>

- **Bringing them Home Report:** also has some videos on YouTube with stories of people who were stolen.
- https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/social_justice/bringing_them_home_report.pdf
- **Blood on a Wattle:**
https://www.booktopia.com.au/blood-on-the-wattle-3rd-edition-bruce-elder/book/9781741100082.html?source=pla&gclid=Cj0KCQiAip-PBhDVARIsAPP2xc0RYpEsQUpZwvJn9QR820mDy7Gt1E3HX2Kq0qWgZButHwZsLZeilQ4aAuUEALw_wcB
- **The Rabbits by John Marsden and Shaun Tan:**
https://www.booktopia.com.au/the-rabbits-john-marsden/book/9780734411365.html?source=pla&gclid=Cj0KCQiAip-PBhDVARIsAPP2xc3dCWlWtgZnl5Ji1DHXWSFaxTLSEB_9_w8N78p8t6sPLFzGYzC8usUaAmp6EALw_wcB
- **Day Break:**
https://www.booktopia.com.au/day-break-amy-mcquire/book/9781760508159.html?source=pla&gclid=Cj0KCQiAip-PBhDVARIsAPP2xc0R1T4XNp6XUU9tCxXH8PVRISdNIUXhqABuBqrBuG6L7qR7bgsTbkoaAu92EALw_wcB
- **Our Home Our Heartbeat:**
<https://www.booktopia.com.au/our-home-our-heartbeat-adam-briggs/book/9781760509859.html>
- **Somebody's Land:**
<https://www.booktopia.com.au/somebody-s-land-adam-goodes/book/9781760526726.html>
- **Finding Our Heart:**
<https://www.booktopia.com.au/search.ep?keywords=Finding+Our+Heart&productType=917504>

You might consider purchasing these resources from one of the ***Business We Love***. These businesses are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander owned:
<http://www.rileycallieresources.com.au/>

Can you see yourself celebrating Australia Day on another day?

- I do not remember celebrating it either as a child
- I think its better to have a balance between the two when teaching young children
- Absolutely
- Yes and I believe the next generation will change the day!
- Yes - celebrating the diverse safe country that we are
- Of course if celebration can become more harmonious then why not
- Definitely!
- I believe we could celebrate as a country who is one
- 'Celebrating' in a different way. Family time together as Australians.
- yes, unfortunately it would be very divisive and I don't think the government is ready for that. Australia isn't a republic, but a constitutional monarchy. don't know how that would be seen 😊
- another day to Celebrate australia day would go a long way for reconciliation
- New Zealand had a treaty with Maori chiefs in 1830. Australia never has :(
- we need to make sure that the trauma is not forgotten if the date is changed.

- I think it could be a different day as long as it is a celebration of Australia and it's diversity rather than recognition of landing on Australian soils
- I am all for the treaty but if it is done by First Australians
- We have a Federal election this year. What are the opinions of our elected members about changing the date.
- I have just finished reading Stan Grants book 'Australia Day' and it gave me so much to reflect on and think about (Donna Wynn)
- Only recognised in a crappy bit of legislation from about 1992 i think. That can always be taken away.
- I have asks staff and family to dress up in their traditional dress as my Center is multicultural to celebrate All culture in the Center. I have also had conversation with my First Nations families about the day.
- Tradition doesn't necessarily mean living the way we did. It's bringing your cultural practice and beliefs forward into life today

How will you have this conversation with your colleagues?

- Pose reflective questions
 - I am in leadership role and its easy to do with the staff members and i do it quite often
 - my co workers are very scared to do the wrong thing so often do nothing to be safe
 - I will ask my teaching cohort tomorrow what are they using to discuss Australia Day? How do they feel?
 - I always try to agitate but with respect. Deep but meaningful chats.
 - We have begun reflection on how we will acknowledge Australia, finding a away to open lines of discussion as well as finding out what it means to each of us.
 - I'll reflect after this professional discussion along with individual conversations and what this means for them personally and professionally. A reflection within the staff room to also gain knowledge and as a service how we can respectfully do this.
 - I plan on sharing that I had tuned in tonight and start the conversation from there and use these reflective questions you have shared
 - I think the conversations with children are the easy ones! It's the families and colleagues which I find more tricky
 - I am looking forward to having a discussion with my team surrounding this discussion we have had this evening.
 - Sending book list to parents is great idea, thanks!
 - I am going to check out my primary school library tomorrow to see if there are any of these books in there!
 - Looking forward to reading some new books to inform me.
 - More willing to talk about the topic we discussed with colleagues, families and children
- Can you please put up the link to this video please? I have never seen it before.