

# 2026 CALENDAR FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

JANUARY

## Australia Day

26 January

Yabun

Australia Day acknowledges and celebrates the contribution that every Australian makes to our contemporary and dynamic nation. Engage in a classic family activity like backyard cricket. Keep it simple and safe and have children make their own bats with rolled-up paper or use pool noodles.



Yabun festival is a gathering and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Australia. The event honours the survival of the world's oldest living culture. Play a traditional Indigenous game from the Yulunga resource.

## Australian Open 12 January - 1 February



The Australian Open is an annual tennis tournament. Practice the FMS of striking and play the Bats and Balls game (page 41 of Franky & Friends).

FEB

## National Lunchbox Week 9 - 15 February

Check out PICNIC's No Pressure Lunchbox resource. A practical resource that considers the ups and downs of children's appetite, fussiness and learning to eat.

## Safer Internet Day 10 February

Safer Internet Day raises awareness of online safety. Read Swoosh, Glide, and Rule Number 5, which shows children what to do when something unexpected happens online.

## Valentine's Day 14 February



Invite children to draw and colour red fruits and veg. Explore them through sensory play and offer opportunities to taste if they choose, with no pressure.

## Chinese New Year 17 February



Celebrate and learn about Chinese New Year with 2026 being the Year of the Horse. Engage in some cooking experiences with the children to help celebrate this event.

MARCH

## Clean up Australia Day 1 March

Clean Up Australia inspires and empowers communities to clean up, fix up and conserve our environment. Encourage families to pack a waste-free lunchbox by sharing this image with families via social media/email/ newsletter.

## Veggie Month 2 - 27 March



Veggie Month runs from 2 to 27 March. This is a time to help children learn about and build confidence with different veggies. Use this link to register for Veggie Month and get access to activities to do with your children.

## World Sleep Day 13 March



World Sleep Day promotes the importance of sleep for health and wellbeing as well as aiming to reduce sleep problems and disorders. Share these tips with your families to communicate the importance of sleep for children.

## St Patrick's Day 17 March



The day commemorates Saint Patrick and Irish heritage. Serve fresh, green foods on your menu or ask parents to send some in lunchboxes. Grapes, cucumbers, green apples, kiwifruit, beans, snow peas and so many more!

## Harmony Week 16 - 22 March

Harmony Week celebrates the integration of migrants into our community.

Ask families to share a recipe or a plate of food from their culture. Explore sport and movement that children from different cultures may participate in.



## Close the Gap Day 19 March

It has been 20 years since the Close the Gap campaign began. This day calls on Australians to take action towards Indigenous health equality.

This year's theme is 'All In'.

## World Oral Health Day 20 March

World Oral Health Day aims to raise awareness of the role that oral health plays in our overall health and wellbeing. Use some of these fun activities to teach children about the importance of oral health.



## National Ride to School Day 20 March



Encourage families to walk or ride to preschool this week, or include some bike skills in outdoor play.

You can register your service to be a part of the day.

APRIL

## Easter 3 - 6 April

Celebrate Easter with some Fundamental Movement Skill games e.g. the 'Hop little bunnies' song and dance, or a scavenger hunt - hide items around the yard and see who can collect the most, or play 'Down the rabbit hole', from the mini moves resource.



## World Health Day 7 April

During group time, ask children how we keep our bodies and minds healthy. Send this wellbeing activity home and encourage families to do some of the activities.



## Nature Play Week 11 - 22 April



Nature Play Week promotes getting kids into nature and creating a sense of wonder.

Encourage the children at your service to reconnect with nature and organise an excursion outdoors. Add some more fun and use these scavenger hunt resources.

## Earth Day 22 April

This is a great event to teach children about taking care of our planet.

Engage children in activities such as recycling, composting and gardening.



## Anzac Day 25 April

Anzac Day is a national day of remembrance of all Australians and New Zealanders who served our country.



MAY

## Compost Awareness Week 3 - 9 May



Compost Week aims to raise awareness of the importance of composting and how we can use it. Plan some learning activities with children this week and discuss what kinds of foods we can put in the compost.

## Families Week 11 - 17 May



National Families Week celebrates the vital role that families play in society with this year's theme being 'Lending a hand to thrive - supporting each other'.

## Walk Safely to School Day 15 May



Children and families are encouraged to commute safely to school, promoting road safety, health, public transport and the environment. Encourage families to walk this week. If possible, provide a safe space to store bikes, scooters and prams.

## Australia's Biggest Morning Tea 21 May

Help raise funds to help beat cancer. Host a morning tea and invite families to come together for a shared cause.

Pre-register here



## Sorry Day & National Day of Healing 26 May

A day to acknowledge and recognise members of the Stolen Generation. Look out for and get involved in a Sorry Day event or walk in your local area.

## Reconciliation Week 27 May - 3 June



A time for all Australians to learn about our shared history and culture, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation. This year's theme is Bridging now to next.

JUNE

## Mabo Day 3 June

A day to commemorate the courageous efforts of Eddie Mabo in his campaign for recognition of native title and traditional land rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## World Environment Day 5 June

World Environment Day encourages worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment. Share this resource to encourage families to pack a waste-free lunch.



## World Ocean Day 8 June

World Ocean Day celebrates our oceans and promotes what we can do to keep them safe.



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JULY

## Plastic Free Day 3 July

A global initiative that aims to eliminate the use of plastic bags.

Encourage educators and families to go plastic free for the day.



## NAIDOC Week 5 - 12 July

NAIDOC Week recognises our First Nations people and celebrates their history, culture and achievements.

Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture this week – engage with your local community and invite them to your service. Play a traditional Indigenous game from the Yulunga resource.



## School Tree Day 25 July

Tree Day is an opportunity for you to do something positive for your community and the environment by connecting with nature.

Register your service to participate and access free lesson plans.



## Day of Friendship 30 July

International Day of Friendship is a day to appreciate those who bring joy, love and positivity to our lives.

Read a book about friendship, make a fruit and veg figure of a friend, or make friendship bracelets.

AUGUST

## World Breastfeeding Week 1 - 7 August

World Breastfeeding Week aims to raise awareness of and promote the importance of breastfeeding.

How do you support mothers at your service to continue breastfeeding?

Check out these free breastfeeding policy templates, posters and support plans.



## Dental Health Week 3 - 9 August

Dental Health Week raises awareness of the importance of our dental health and the ways in which we can keep our teeth and gums healthy. Share this image with your families this week.



## National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day 4 August

Children's Day is a time for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to celebrate the strengths and culture of their children. Bring Elders, families and their children together for storytelling and to share knowledge about their culture with the rest of the children at your service.

## Science Week 15 - 23 August

Science Week encourages an interest in science among children and young people. Plan some fun science experiments with the children this week.



## Children's Book Week 22 - 28 August

Book Week is a time to celebrate Australian children's literature through book parades and displays. This year's theme is Symphony of Stories. Check out 2025 Books of the Year for inspiration on new books to add to your school library.



SEPTEMBER

## Spring has sprung!

Does your veggie garden need some love? Spring is a great opportunity to plant some new herbs and veggies.

To see what is best to plant in September, check out this when to plant vegetable guide.



## National Health & Physical Education Day 2 September

National HPE Day highlights the importance of physical activity, not just at school, but in everyday life. Share some active play ideas with families to do at home.



## Early Childhood Educators' Day 2 September

Early Childhood Educators' Day recognises and celebrates the great work **YOU** do in early learning services and your wonderful contribution to the wellbeing and healthy development of the young children in your care.



OCTOBER

## World Space Week 4 - 10 October

World Space Week is an international celebration of science and technology and their contribution to improving the ways in which we live, work and play.



Play 'Solar System Relay'. Have children stand in a circle. Assign a planet to each child. When the planet is called, children must run a complete orbit around the sun (circle).

## National Nutrition Week 12 - 18 October

Include food-themed books in your story time. Off to the Market is a favourite, a celebration of markets, cooking and fresh food.

Check out PICNIC in Early Education for educator training on child feeding and nutrition.

Share PICNIC project with your families.

## World Teacher's Day 5 October

A day to recognise and appreciate teachers and the important role they play in shaping the next generation. Have you ever asked a child why they like coming to preschool? It's often you!

## Children's Week 24 October - 1 Nov

Children's Week is a celebration of children's rights, talents and contributions to society.

What talents do children at your service have? Have children identify their talent and write on a piece of paper so it can be shared with parents.

NOV

## Remembrance Day 11 November



Each year on this day Australians observe one minute's silence at 11am, in memory of those who died or suffered in all wars and armed conflicts.

## National Recycling Week

National Recycling Week brings a focus to the environmental benefits of recycling and aims to provide the tools to minimise waste and manage material resources responsibly at home, work and school. Find out what more your service can do to recycle responsibly and protect our environment.

N.B. Date for 2026 yet to be confirmed.



## Diwali 8 November

Diwali is referred to as the festival of lights and is celebrated to honour Rama-Chandra, the seventh avatar. It is often celebrated with traditional Indian foods, dancing and musical performances. Put on some traditional Indian music and get the children dancing to these tunes.



DECEMBER

## Summer is in the air

The weather is starting to heat up. Teach children about the importance of Sun Safety with Sun Smart videos.



## Christmas time

The end of the year is a great time to reflect on what your service has done.

At your Christmas party, show what Fundamental Movement Skills the children have learnt with a game. Get the parents and carers to join in too.



## Graduations

It's graduation time!

Include some healthier options at celebrations such as fruit platters, veggie sticks and dip, cheese and crackers, sweet or savoury scones.

Flavour water with lemon, lime and mint.



## Join us online

Join our Facebook group and connect with other educators on the Mid North Coast.

Click here to join!



## Munch & Move

For more information: <https://mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au/healthy-living/programs/munch-move/>

