



Including diverse families on Mother's Day and Father's Day

We know Mother's Day and Father's Day are important days to celebrate, but they can be tricky for children from diverse families. Mother's Day and Father's Day present some challenges for families that don't have a mum and a dad. Schools can be supportive of all families by honoring how individual families choose to celebrate the day.

Schools can put an emphasis on all of the loving relationships a child has instead of a specific relationship they may not have. Some families make the day about other people in their child's life, including grandparents, older siblings, or friends of the family.

What can educators do to include all families?

"The teachers would ask how many Mother's Day or Father's Day presents we wanted and that was it."

1 Asking families how they would like their child to celebrate the day is a great place to start. And then use their words when talking about their families. Ask parents and children for direction and follow their lead.

2 On Mother's Day and Father's Day give the option to make a gift for a special adult - not necessarily a mum or dad.

"I have 2 dads, so on Mother's Day I make a card for my aunt"

"My dads don't wear ties so I felt funny giving them a card with a tie on it"

3 Avoid gender stereotypes in children's crafts. Steer away from cards with flowers for mum or ties for dad.

4 Don't let a child be alone. If your school has a Mother's Day event where mothers come in, make sure no child is alone while others have a family member present. Make sure someone—maybe a teacher can be there to be with that child.

5 Use the day to talk about different kinds of families. Not every family has one mum and one dad. Make it safe to celebrate any supportive relationship a child has. Provide **books** in the classroom that show different kinds of families.

Our **School Support Guide** has more information about how to include diverse families on Mother's Day and Father's Day.

