

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY GARRISON VICENZA
UNIT 31401, BOX 92
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IMEU-VIC-MWC

1 March 2006

STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)

SUBJECT: Holiday Celebration in CYS Facilities

1. REFERENCES:

- a. AR 608-10, Child Development Services, 15 July 1997.
- b. Memorandum, CFSC-FSCY, subject: Holiday Celebration in Army Child and Youth Programs, 20 January 1996.
- c. DA Publication: Holiday Celebrations in Army Child and Youth Programs, June 1998.
- d. National Association of Education for Young Children: Developmentally Appropriate Practices, 1998.
- e. Teaching Strategies: Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Diane Trister Dodge, 2002.

2. PURPOSES: To provide CDC, FCC, SAS and YS staff with policies and procedures to properly celebrate holidays in CYS programs.

3. APPLICABILITY: This SOP applies to all CYS programs.

4. GENERAL: Holidays will be planned and executed in accordance with the guidelines established in the above-referenced publications, as applicable. Considering that teaching values to children is a parental responsibility, CYS programs will offer their support by following the rules listed below:

- a. All ten federal holidays will be recognized in CYS programs.
- b. Parent surveys will determine the holidays, other than the 10 federal holidays, to be recognized.

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c. Parent surveys will determine at what levels holidays will be recognized or celebrated (brief recognition, significant observance or comprehensive celebration).

d. Traditional holidays will be celebrated and explained in developmentally appropriate ways.

e. Holidays will be recognized and celebrated by emphasizing their shared basic values and their relation to Army Core values.

f. Children will be invited but not forced to participate in holiday celebrations.

g. Families will be offered the chance to participate in the planning and the celebration of holidays.

h. Families will be invited to share their holiday traditions with the center or the program.

i. Children's Birthdays will be celebrated as special days and will serve to acknowledge and reinforce each child's personal identity.

5. When approaching a Federal Holiday, administrative staff will post a reminder to parents that the Center or the Program will be closed on the day of the holiday.



ERIC WEISEL
Coordinator, Child and Youth Services



Celebrate!

Celebrate Childhood!

Do you remember those feelings you used to get when you were a child waiting for a holiday to come along? Did your family celebrate those special days through song, feast, and family gatherings? Were holidays a time for your parents to pass along traditions and values to their future generation - you? As an adult, do you have vivid memories of these events?

While teaching values to children is a parental responsibility, Child Development Services is ready to support you in this vital role. Celebrating holidays and the values they represent are one way we can do this. And - as a bonus - positive celebrations, meaningful to your child, build happy memories that last a lifetime!

We celebrate traditions.

What Do We Celebrate?

The Army is made up of all kinds of people from many different backgrounds with many different beliefs. Yet, as diverse as we are, we share a common family, the Army Family. The Army Family shares a proud history of tradition, centering around Army Core Values. These core values are represented through the recognition of National Holidays - the holidays our nation "keeps." The Army and Child Development Services, as part of the Federal government, support the traditional recognition of these days.

We celebrate values.

What Else Can We Celebrate?

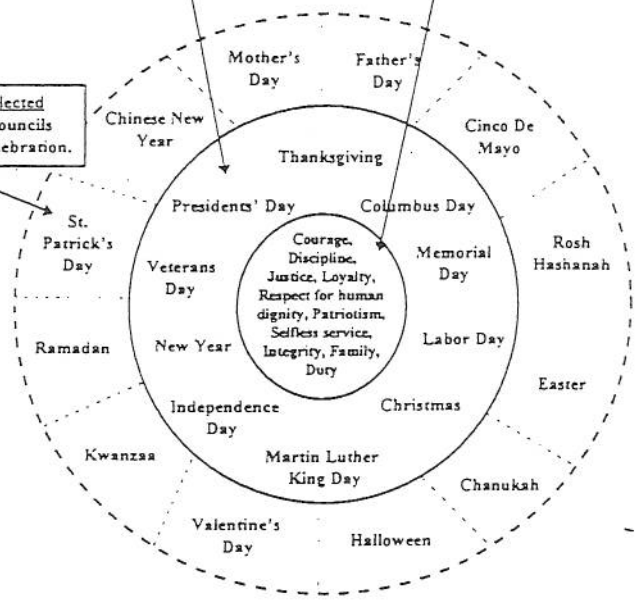
In addition to the "core" federal holidays, there are many other "selected" holidays which might be observed. Depending on parental interests and needs, the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) makes recommendations to the Commander about additional holidays the majority of parents would like their children to celebrate and activities for core holidays. When a few families celebrate a holiday that has not been selected by the PAC, they may choose to come to the child care setting to share their family traditions with the other children. What a wonderful way for children to learn about each other!

We celebrate families.

National Holidays which all CDS programs will celebrate

Core Army values linked to holidays

EXAMPLES of selected holidays Parent Councils may choose for celebration.



What About Birthdays?

When asked how old you are, do you respond, "27 and 1/2"? If you think like a child, you would. To children, getting older is actually something to celebrate. A birthday might just be the most important "holiday" they celebrate during the year. It is a day for them to feel "extra special." It is a part of their "kid culture." Child Development Services recognizes the achievement of "getting bigger."

We celebrate life.

What's My Role?

Celebrations depend heavily on parents for success! You can help by:

- responding to parent questionnaires
- recommending how to celebrate "core" and "selected" holidays and birthdays
- participating in planned celebrations at the program.



HOLIDAY QUESTIONNAIRE
Vicenza Child Development Center

We are polling Vicenza Family Child Care (FCC) Services parents to identify who can participate and support holiday observances and obtain feedback on which holidays other than national holidays you feel should be included in the curriculum of activities. If you have any questions please direct them to the FCC Director at 634-7615.

Please complete the questionnaire and return to your child's FCC.

A. Parent/Child(ren) Information and Feedback:

a. My child is _____ years old:

b. I understand my child's program will observe the national holidays identified as core holidays.

_____ I have no specific recommendations for how to observe these days.

_____ I have no recommendations but I am willing to participate in these activities as shown in the parent section.

_____ I have the following suggestions for celebration of core holidays

B. Parent Participation

_____ I will participate in _____ holiday celebrations as follows: _____

_____ I am willing to participate in any way the program has needed for me.

_____ I am willing to participate in _____ holidays.

Name: _____

Child's Room: _____

Phone: _____

Mail Box Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

If your child's classroom does not have a Parent Advisory Council representative are you willing to be the representative? _____