



Implementation ideas for participating schools



Introduction

The Aussie of the Month primary school civics and citizenship recognition program is delivered under the auspices of the Australia Day Council's National Network, which also delivers the Australian of the Year Awards.

Our focus, through this program is to encourage and recognise students for their contribution to community through a demonstration of Australian values as outlined in the Values for Australian Schooling and Curriculum framework. These are values outside of academic application, instead about active contribution to school, community and peer groups.

Students are nominated, selected and recognised each month at school assemblies by their school. Special guests such as Australia Day Ambassadors, Australian of the Year Alumni and Program Partners are encouraged to attend and address the students at the various monthly presentation ceremonies.

We also encourage schools to recite the Australian Citizenship Affirmation at the Aussie of the Month assemblies in the same way we encourage singing the national anthem.

Australian of the Year
Awards

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.





AUSSIE OF THE MONTH

PURPOSE

Recognising and celebrating active citizenship that demonstrate inclusive Australian values in our primary schools.

VALUES

Fair go - not just in how we apply ourselves but also providing opportunity for all

Mateship - generosity of spirit and compassion for those in need

Respect - of self, others, of our community and the environment

Inclusion - Celebrating difference, and the rights and freedoms we are all entitled to

INTEGRATION

These values provide a guide for selecting your Aussie of the Month however, we recognise that your school may have its own school values, which are interchangeable into the program. Schools are encouraged to include any additional criteria which develop and support great young Aussie citizens.



IDEAS CALENDAR

Showcasing national community initiatives throughout the year, this calendar is designed to assist in the delivery of the program, to support our values and encourage you to consider incorporating them into your delivery of the Aussie of the Month Program in your school.



Harmony Week

The central message for Harmony Week is that 'everyone belongs', reinforcing the importance of inclusiveness to all Australians. Harmony Week is a great opportunity to recognise that inclusiveness is an Australian value. If possible, the AOTM could be presented in a Harmony Week assembly, with a student from a diverse background given the opportunity to tell their story, or for a student to be recognised for their effort in including all.

Activity Options

Stand Up For Diversity

Ask students to stand in their assembly who were not born in Australia. Remaining students are then asked to stand if any of their parents were born in Australia, followed by their grandparents, and finally any of their friends or community. This visual technique is an opportunity to show students that the Australian identity is not determined by where they are born, but their involvement in the community.

Unique Stories

Have members of the community tell how they or their families arrived in Australia. Stories from students, staff and members of the community could be used to show students the multicultural nature of Australia, and recognise the unique journeys many make to be here.

Classroom Bandanna Project

Students could create a large bandanna for their classroom, where each student is given the opportunity to draw something significant to their culture.



- Explain the concept of 'culture'
- How many different languages are spoken in the classroom?
- How can we help all people feel like they belong in Australia?

Resources

[Ideas & Inspiration - A Taste of Harmony](#)

[Schools Event Planning Kit](#)

[Department of Home Affairs](#)

Who might you invite to present the award?

- Multicultural group representative
- A significant individual from a diverse background



Clean up Australia Day

'Clean up Australia Day' was started in 1989 by an 'average Australian bloke', who had a simple idea to make a great difference in his own backyard - Sydney Harbour. This simple idea of cleaning up his 'backyard' has now become the nation's largest community-based environmental event. His name was Ian Kiernan and he was named Australian of the Year in 1994 for his Clean Up Australia initiative. Over the past 30 years, Australians have devoted more than 35 million hours towards the environment through Clean Up Australia Day, and over 365,000 ute loads of rubbish have been removed as part of Clean Up Australia activities

Activity Idea

Creating a Clean Up event is a great way to make a difference for our environment. You can register your event online and you will receive a free Clean Up Kit and then all you need to do is follow three simple steps to activate your Clean Up Event. Spread the word about your event and get ready to make a difference! To provide an extra incentive for the class, how about a prize for the top 3 students who have collected the greatest amount of litter?

Resources

[Cleanup Australia](#)
[Digital Library - Cool Australia](#)
[Step Up with Clean Up Australia](#)
[Cool Australia - Curriculum Materials](#)

- A local council representative
- An environmentalist
- An environmental science student from a local university

Who might you invite to present the award?

Talking Points

- Highlight the impact of litter to our environment
- Explain the importance of recycling
- Address the concept of a wasteful society
- Outline the environmental consequences if the next generation doesn't recycle



APRIL

Youth Week

Youth Week is an opportunity for young people to express their ideas and views, act on issues that affect their lives, and create and enjoy activities/events. The AOTM program is about recognising young Australians, which makes it a great combination with youth week. The AOTM award could be given to a student who displays leadership and involvement in their community.

Activity Options

Presentation

Have a student or group perform in a assembly. It could be a musical, dance or anything to showcase a skill. This is an opportunity to talk about the talents of young people, and their potential to learn new things while they are young.

Battle of the Bands

Are your students part of a band? If so, this is a perfect event for your school! Showcase some live music and celebrate youth by holding a school-wide battle of the bands.

Dance Competition

Have students perform individual dance routines, or within a group, and compete in a school-wide dance off!

Sports Competition

Help students create their own teams and compete against others in their favourite sport. This event would be a great opportunity for students to stay active, get involved, have fun and possibly fundraise. How about a game of teachers vs students?

Big Kids Mentor

Invite local High School student leaders to talk to your students about their experiences - after all ... everyone loves the Big Kids!

Talking Points

- The importance of our youth, the next generation.
- The potential for all students to become future leaders.
- The creativity and innovation of young people.

Resources

[About Youth Week](#)
[Propel Youth Art](#)
[Youth Central](#)

Who might you invite to present the award?

- A High school student
- A sports captain or peer support leader from high school
- A former student from your own school



MAY

National Reconciliation Week

Here in Australia we're fortunate enough to have one of the richest and oldest continuing cultures in the world. Each year National Reconciliation Week (NRW) celebrates and builds on the respectful relationships shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. The dates that bookend the week are significant milestones in the reconciliation journey.

Activity Options

Presentation

27 May marks the anniversary of Australia's most successful referendum and a defining event in our nation's history. The referendum saw over 90 per cent of Australians vote to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognise them in the national census. Prepare a presentation about the referendum and discuss the before and after effects for Australia's first peoples.

Activity

Have students re-enact the high court's Mabo decision which legally recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a special relationship to the land.

Resources

[Reconciliation Australia](#)

[Share our Pride](#)

Talking Points

- What was life like for Australia's first peoples before the vote?
- Who are some of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leaders and why are they considered leaders?
- What is the concept of terra nullius, and why is it important in reconciliation discussions today?

Who might you invite to present the award?

- The School's Reconciliation Captain or representative
- A local community elder



JUNE

World Environment Day

World Environment Day is the United Nations' most important day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment. Since it began in 1974, it has grown to become a global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated in over 100 countries.

Above all, World Environment Day is the 'people's day' for doing something to take care of the Earth or become an agent of change. That 'something' can be focused locally, nationally or globally; it can be a solo action or involve a crowd - everyone is free to choose.

Activity Options

- Why not do your bit to green the urban environment, by greening your street or a derelict site, or planting a window box?
- You could put a spade in the soil or lift a paving slab and see what creatures live beneath.
- Design a World Environment Day Poster
- Hold a fundraiser Morning Tea and use the funds to 'Adopt an endangered Animal' at the zoo

Resources

[World Environment Day](#)

[Perth Zoo](#)

[Australian Endangered Species](#)

Talking Points

- Annual Theme "Time for Nature"
- Together we can act #ForNature
- Home to some of the most extravagant, eccentric and dangerous animals, Australia also has some of the most endangered wildlife in the world.

Who might you invite to present the award?

- A member of the local council
- An environmentalist
- An environmental science student from a local university
- A Zoo Keeper



JUNE

International Olympic Day

International Olympic Day brings together people from all over the world to celebrate the Olympic Games and the Olympic Values. Many Olympians have been recognised also as Australians of the Year because they reflect values we also share as Australians and are great role models for us all. International Olympic Day encourages young people to participate in sport and lead active and healthy lives. Olympic Day is internationally celebrated on 23 June each year. In Australia, Olympic Day is celebrated throughout June on a day selected that is convenient to participating schools.

Activity Options

Recognition

Consider integrating the ASPIRE Olympic Values and then select your Aussie of the Month as the ultimate recipient - these are Attitude, Sportsmanship, Pride, Individual responsibility, Respect and Express yourself. They're great values and align so well with the Aussie of the Month Values

Australian of the Year Olympians

Do a research project to identify olympians and National Sportspeople who have also been recognised as Australians of the Year and why.

Resources

[The Olympic Museum](#)

[Australian of the Year honour roll](#)

Who might you invite to present the award?

- Ask us about inviting an Olympian
- Ask an aspiring Olympian in your local community

Talking Points

- Learn about a new sport - identify a new Olympic hero.
- Investigate the commitment it takes to be an Olympian
- Talk about overcoming adversity and how Paralympians have a range of disabilities but all achieve so highly.
- Discuss how different countries excel in different sports



JULY

NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC Week is held in the first full week of July. It's a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements and is an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society. The AOTM could be linked to a NAIDOC Week assembly through considering a student who has embraced learning about the Indigenous culture.

Activity Options

Hold an Assembly

Open the assembly with an acknowledgement of the traditional land owners. Invite an Aboriginal Elder to conduct a smoking ceremony, or a musical performance. The Elder could give a speech on a story about Aboriginal culture regarding the Aboriginal flag, their food, arts and crafts, dreamtime or a significant historical event.

Learn an Aboriginal Language

The Australian Aboriginal languages consist of around 290–363 languages belonging to an estimated 28 language families and isolates. Let's aim to emphasise and celebrate the unique and essential role that Indigenous languages play in cultural identity, linking people to their land and water and in the transmission of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, spirituality and rites, through story and song.

Many place names for our suburbs, rivers, mountains and parks are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language words. Noticing and paying attention to these words will generate greater appreciation and respect for the significance of language among all Australians. Identify some of your local place or street names.

Talking Points

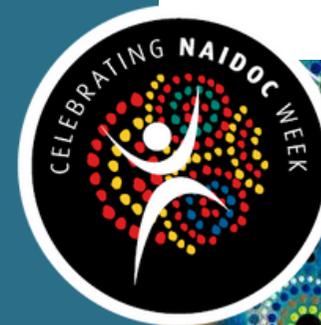
- Describing the concept of 'Indigenous people'.
- Understanding Aboriginal cultural significance.
- What is the history of the local Aboriginal people?
- Discuss some famous Aboriginal People who we have celebrated as Australians.

Resources

[NAIDOC Week Teacher Guide](#)
[Dot Painting Resource](#)

Who might you ask to present the award?

- An Aboriginal Elder
- An Aboriginal sportsperson or community representative



JULY

National Tree Day

National Tree Day and Schools Tree Day combine to make Australia's biggest community tree-planting and nature care event. Coordinated by Planet Ark, these are special days for all Australians to help planting and caring for native trees and shrubs. National Tree Day started in 1996 and since then more than 3 million people have planted 23 million seedlings every year, on this day.

Each year, around 200 000 Australian students participate in a special National Tree Day event designed just for children! It is a wonderful opportunity to get kids into nature and instill a love for the great outdoors, as well as teach them the importance of environmental stewardship and taking care of the planet.

Activity Options

Plant a Tree

Students could raise funds to contribute to purchasing a tree. The class then plants the tree within the school grounds on National Tree Day. Another option is for teachers to contact the National Tree Day Hotline on **1300 88 5000** or local council, to ask if the council would provide a tree and a location where the class could plant it.

Resources

[Planet Ark](#)

[Why Plant a Tree?](#)

[Schools Activity Guide](#)

Talking Points

- Importance and significance of trees to our environment
- Beautify your school and attract birds and other wildlife
- The consequences of the erosion of the world's forests

Who might you invite to present the award?

- A member of the local council
- An environmentalist
- An environmental science student from your local university



National Book Week

Each year, schools and public libraries across Australia spend a week celebrating books, and Australian authors and illustrators. Teachers and librarians conduct activities relating to a theme to highlight the importance of reading. Book week can be linked to the AOTM awards, perhaps through giving consideration to a student who has been making a strong effort to read. Another example would be a student who has helped others with reading, aligning with the AOTM fair play and generosity of spirit values.

Activity Options

Special Guest

Invite an Australian author to help present the AOTM Awards. We can help facilitate this relationship. Have the author read an extract from a children's book, or speak about the importance of reading and writing skills.

Free Dress Day

Students and teachers would be encouraged to dress up as their favourite book character, in exchange for a gold coin donation, that could go to the schools charity of choice.

Corporate Partnership

Reach out to a local book store. The book store could reward to AOTM winner with a book voucher, and potentially come in to present this award and speak on the importance of reading.

Who might you invite to present the award?

- A librarian from your local council
- A local author

Talking Points

- Explore a range of texts. There are lots of other things to explore such as magazines, menus, newspapers, newsletters, recipes, instructions, even maps. Share all these different reading and writing experiences and talk about them together.
- Talk about how books work. Help children learn about books. Talk about the cover, the title and how it gives clues to what is inside. Talk about the pictures and how the words tell about the pictures.

Resources

[Teacher Costume Picture Gallery](#)

[Educational World Activities](#)

[Children's Book Week Activities](#)

Please note that in 2020, National Book Week will be held 17-23 October. For more information visit:

[Childrens Book Council of Australia](#)

BOOK WEEK



SEPTEMBER

Australian Citizenship Day

17th September each year is Australian Citizenship Day and a special day to reflect on and celebrate being an Australian citizen. Australian citizenship is more than just a legal status. It is our common bond that represents our shared democratic beliefs and gives us a sense of belonging and pride in our achievements as a nation. This day contributes to educating students and bring greater cultural awareness, a sense of social unity and belonging for all Australians.

Activity Options

Classroom Lesson Idea

The common values held by people living in Australia are an important aspect of our democracy. As a class, brainstorm and list values that are important to Australians - 'A fair go'. Invite students to explore Australian values further by surveying members of the community. Students could interview three people and ask them to identify the three values that are important to them. Students then reflect on the values that they consider to be most important.

Whole school activity

Host a Citizenship Ceremony! The Department of Home Affairs, is proud to offer this exciting opportunity to participating Aussie of the Month schools.

Citizenship ceremonies are a significant community event, where our newest citizens make the Australian citizenship pledge. For most people, this is the final step in their journey to becoming an Australian.

To find out more and to see if your school meets the requirements to host a citizenship ceremony, please complete this [online form](#) to assess what type of ceremony might suit your school best.

Talking Points

- What do you think it means to be an Australian Citizen?
- What does being an active citizen mean?
- Why was Australian Citizenship Day introduced?

Resources

[Australian citizenship affirmation](#)
[What is the pledge?](#)
[Citizenship Ceremonies](#)

Who might you invite to present the award?

- The mayor or member from your local council
- A community member who recently received their Australian citizenship.



RUOK? Day

R U OK? Day is Thursday 10 September. It's our national day of action when we remind Australians that every day is the day to ask, "Are you OK?" if someone in your world is struggling with life's ups and downs. R U OK? inspire and empower everyone to meaningfully connect with the people around them and start a conversation with anyone who may be struggling with life. You don't need to be an expert to reach out - just a good friend and a great listener.

Activity Options

Classroom Lesson 1

Look Out For Your Friends - Are You Ok? Get ready for R U OK? Day by displaying a Look Out for Your Friends - Are You Ok? poster. Display Poster Packs from Reach Out in your classroom and learn about the four R U OK? conversation steps.

Arrange your students into six groups. Provide each group with a different poster, a large sheet of paper and a pen. Encourage students to discuss the poster and make connections to their own life experience.

Classroom Lesson 2

Circle Chat on the Mat - Move students in to a large free space
Position students in two circles, the inside circle facing out and the outside circle facing in so everyone has a partner. Teacher reads out the questions and each pair has 30 seconds to discuss their responses. The outside circle moves one space to the left and the next question is read out and answered and so on until all questions are answered. Some sample questions:

- Think of a time you asked a friend if they were OK. What did they do? How did it make them feel?
- What does it mean to support a friend?
- Who can help us if we are worried about a friend? At school? At home?

Talking Points

- Think of ways you can ask a mate how they're doing.
- Learn how best to have a difficult conversation with someone you know.
- Talk about what to do if someone doesn't want help: Find out why someone might not want help and what you can do to support them.

Resources

[RUOK Day](#)

[Reach Out](#)

[National Mental Health Commission](#)

Who might you invite to present the award?

- Mental Health Advocate
- School Psychologist
- RUOK Day Ambassador



What you're going through isn't easy. It's good we can talk about it.



OCTOBER

National Water Week

A splash across our Culture

Each October, National Water Week makes a splash right across Australia, inspiring individuals, communities and organisations to work together to build community awareness and understanding around water related topics and challenges.

National Water Week provides an opportunity to remind ourselves and teach others that access to clean water is hugely important to every aspect of our lives, and we must do our utmost to protect our water environments and resources, use water wisely and respect its importance in our societies.

Activity Options

Classroom Lessons

Stop the leak - Students identify leaking taps at school, suggest actions to stop leaks and handwrite a narrative about a leaking tap.

Classroom Discussion and activity

Students will share all the different ways they use water and discover why it's such a precious resource.

Children then draw up their perspective and all drawings are made into a collage and displayed in the classroom.

Who might you invite to present the award?

- Invite someone from the local Water Authority
- Invite a parent who is a plumber to teach the children how to check and repair leaky taps

Talking Points

- Why is water conservation so important?
- Do you recycle water in your home?
- What happens to the water when it goes down the drain?
- What are some ways we can save water each day?

Resources

[Australian Water Association](#)

[Water in Aboriginal Culture](#)

[World Health Organisation](#)



NOVEMBER

National Recycling Week

By 2050 there will be more plastic in our oceans than fish. The ratio of plastic weight to fish weight in the ocean was 1:5 in 2014, which is expected to change to 1:1 by 2050. Apart from fishes being the most affected by this, it has been estimated that nearly all of the world's seabirds have eaten plastic at some point in their life. Plastic recycling is an extremely important value that needs to be taught to kids to engage them in active recycling practice at school and at home.

Activity Options

Plastic Free Lunch

Encourage students to bring lunch that does not have any plastic waste or that minimizes plastic waste. Advise students to bring reusable lunch boxes and water bottles. This would also result in healthier food options for students with less prepackaged snack food and more fresh food.

Green Batch Plastic Collection Bins

Green Batch has taken an initiative to research and create new ways in which plastic can be recycled and reused to make other things. They have developed a sustainable model that recycles plastic waste into something useful. They collect re PET plastic bottles and recycle them into 3D printer filaments. Green Batch is approaching schools sharing their vision, knowing that many schools already have 3D printers. The Green Batch School Recycling Program enables schools to collect plastic and send it to Green Batch which will then be made into 3D printer filaments and given back to the schools.

Register to be a part of Green Batch school recycling program, then encourage students to recycle plastic waste from lunch or bring plastic waste from home. Classes can compete on the highest amount of plastic collected at the end of the week.



- What can be recycled?
- Where does the plastic go?
- The impacts of not recycling plastic.
- The effects on sea life on consuming plastic.

Who might you invite to present the award?

- A member of the local council
- An environmentalist
- An environmental science student from your local university



Our marine life has been replaced by trash





Contact:
info@aussieofthemonth.org.au



Program Supporters



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