



Children's Week

Planning Your Event

Congratulations on deciding to hold your own event for Children's Week.

The key to the success of your event will be in the planning. The following information is a guide to support your event and to address some of the commonly asked questions regarding community Children's Week Events.

Event Goal:

Start at the very beginning – The goal of holding a Children's Week event should be to celebrate children and childhood. The first step is to decide on the type of event you want to hold and who you are holding it for. Check the Children's Week Website and contact your local council to ensure your event doesn't clash with another in your community.

Consider asking the children and parents involved with your centre or group how they would like to celebrate Children's Week. This will provide valuable information to help you plan your event and the types of activities or entertainment you will offer.

Risk Management:

Events managers promoting large community events must have a risk management plan. For your event to be successful, it is essential to minimise the risk of harm to children and families attending, staff running the event and the environment. Brainstorm with your committee, your staff and stakeholders things that you need to consider to make the event safe.

The exercise of designing a basic event plan will be beneficial to your organisational process. It will clearly determine everyone's role and give you a time table to work by.

Organisation Key Points:

Timing:

Try and do as much preparation as you can in the days prior to your event and set up as much as you can the day before. Make sure you have enough helping hands and that everyone knows their responsibilities. Do not underestimate the time you need for final preparations on the morning of the event. There's nothing worse than trying to work around the public arriving at your event. Allocate 'pack away' roles too, everyone will be tired at the end of the event and you might find your helpers disappear leaving you to clean up.

Communication:

Hiring a PA system (electric or battery operated) is strongly recommended so that you can be heard over a crowd. A reputable sound hire company will design a system to suit your needs. A small speaker, amp and microphone is suitable for an in house event and will allow you to make speeches, issue instructions or make lost child announcements. More sophisticated systems with CD players can be hired for larger events and come with an operator if required. A PA system is vital for an outdoor/park event in case of an emergency.

Safety:

Any event that invites community participation should engage the services of a first aid provider. There are several providers offering excellent services in both Perth metropolitan and rural areas and can offer a single first aider to full ambulance post depending on your needs. Contact St John's Ambulance, or the Redcross.

Weather:

The one thing you have no control over! If you're planning an outdoor event, ensure there is shade in the form of big trees as well as tents. Set up your event close to the trees, not in the middle of the oval and you may choose to engage the services of the Sun smart van available from the cancer council who offer sun safe education, hats and sunscreen.

Budget:

The next step is to decide on the budget for your event. Unfortunately, event planning is an exercise that can generate some small, unforeseen costs. These add up and can quickly eat into a budget.

Funding for your event can be supported by a small grant. Local councils often have small community grants available to not for profit organisations. Telephone your local council and ask to speak to the grants officer for advice.

Grants are also available from Gambling Community Benefit Fund

<http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/corporate/sponsorships-and-grants/grants/community-benefit-funding-programs>

Your service might encourage families to fundraise for the event by holding cake stalls, car boot sales, raffles, Tupperware parties or book or toy fundraisers.

Once you have decided on your Children's Week Event budget, stick to it!

An Invitation:

The most important aspect of planning any event is to be able to cater for the number of people attending. For example, you might consider holding a fun day for your mothers group.

Some prudent questions to ask are:

- To whom you are extending the invitation?
- Is the event for the children that usually attend in that group?
- Are you including siblings or extended family members?
- Will you open the event to the local community with the intention of promoting your centre, service or group to the public?

Be sure to clarify your target audience before you decide on the date, time and duration of your event. Making these decisions will help you to estimate numbers of children and adults potentially attending



Venue:

Indoors:

If you are holding your event 'in house', ensure you move the furniture to allow for flowing traffic.

If you are inviting adults, especially grandparents into the centre, avoid having too many children's chairs (trip hazard) and choose simple activities that children can do independently. Stick with simple large construction and puzzles, books, and table activities such as play dough and drawing.

- Add an extra tea pot or two in the home corner or dress up area to make sure there's enough equipment for everyone to use. Avoid offering 'messy activities such as painting and put complex construction, 'one user at a time' toys such as computers or bikes and musical instruments away.
- Incorporate some simple activities eg – sand pit toys, bubbles, drawing, chalk , a play dough table with natural materials such as leaves and sticks to add, into the outdoor area to spread your visitors around.
- Place some adult chairs around the edge of the room – grandparents and visitors like to sit and watch.
- As a safety issue, kettles and urns must be kept well away from children so serve your refreshments in an area away from the children's activities or outside where there is more room.
- If you are gathering the children to perform some songs, or speak - ensure they sit facing the visitors!

Outdoor or External:

Outdoor or external venue events require more detailed planning.

If you intend to book a venue room for your event make an appointment and visit with the manager to ensure the venue is child friendly and suits your needs. Check accessibility, the hall capacity and number of toilets, the kitchen facilities, parking and whether the venue has disabled facilities and can cater for prams.

Outdoor or External Continued:

If you are considering a park or open space, you will need to book through your local council. Ensure there are big trees to provide shade for activities and for families to relax under. Tents in the middle of an oval get very hot and often provide very little shade.

Choose a park with access to toilet facilities. You cannot run a children's event (regardless of the size of your event) in a park without access to a toilet!

Rules pertaining to holding events in public places vary from council to council and will depend on the size of your event and what you intend to provide. The council will ask for your insurance certificate of currency.

Catering:

There are also some useful links for food safety standards guidelines and fact sheets. Your local council will be able to answer any questions if you are unsure.

Catering in house is much easier to manage as there is access to running water, fridge, hygienic area etc. You might consider using the services of your local Rotary club or scout group to help with a sausage sizzle.

Entertainers:

Whether you are holding your event in house or at an external venue, any entertainers, activity providers or rides, including bouncy castles or party hire providers that supply tents, tables and the like, that you engage for your event must provide you with a certificate of currency indicating their insurance is up to date.

In accordance with the Office of the Children's Commission, Young people & Guardian with Children policy, all entertainers and operators must hold a current Blue Card.

Please ask to see this card when you engage their services. If a provider is unable to give you either of these documents, decline their services.

Entertainers Continued:

Bouncy castles can't be erected in windy conditions, and some rides cannot operate in wet weather. Be guided by experienced providers, they have the safety of the children to consider.

If the weather is wet, have an idea of how unacceptable the conditions will need to be before you consider cancelling the event or reverting to your 'Plan B'.

Cancelling is a hard call to make especially after all the planning and anticipation – remember safety is paramount and needs to be your utmost consideration.

You can email any questions you have to qld@childrenweek.com.au

**Don't forget to register your
event on the Queensland
Children's Week Website.
Good Luck!**