

# MINI BLOG: CREATING A GREETINGS RITUAL

HEY, GOOD TO SEE YOU

HOW ARE YOU?

HOW'S IT GOING?

HOWDY

G'DAY!

MORNING

LONG TIME NO SEE

A greetings ritual is a daily way to create a thoughtful welcoming ritual.

The definition of **greeting**: a polite word, sign of welcome, or recognition.

Have you ever stopped to think how you greet a person? Whether a child, friend, colleague, partner, relative, or a stranger.

If you did, what would you discover?

- Are you friendly?
- Do you smile?
- Do you use movements?
- Do you rush?
- Does it *really* matter to you?



Some research shows that how you greet a person can have tremendous impact on the whole day ahead for them, and for you.

When we greet someone, we not only make them feel acknowledged and valued but we also boost our own mood. This positive exchange can lead to a more optimistic outlook on life and increase overall happiness. Furthermore, spreading positivity can create a supportive community atmosphere.

Our practice of greetings can create and cement a calming welcoming ritual that should be as individual as each of us are made. Children are unique, we are all created individually and our needs and wants are specific to each of us...

- What we like
- What we don't like so much
- What we crave
- What we desire
- What we deserve

To truly know how a single individual may prefer to be greeted, is to really know and understand holistically that person. Through knowing and spending time with our children and families, we know them well. We have learnt so much about them...

- Personality
- Temperament
- Nature
- Social background
- Likes and dislikes



## GREETINGS RITUALS, CONTINUED...

Some ways to greet and be able to meet the needs of all:

- a smile
- a gentle touch on an the arm or back
- kind words
- facial expression
- joyous vocal tone
- calm and serene
- bubbly and jovial
- no eye contact or touch, a spoken word or two
- reassurance
- in control
- a listening ear
- an incidental look or glance
- physical gestures

These are just a few ways and gestures to greet. As Early Years Practitioners, we will have come across so many more that have been used to deliver that initial daily greeting, most probably completely unaware of the difference we have made.

This is something all of us do without thinking and that is what makes it so wonderful, individual and a delight that leads into a day with a little connection between you and the individual.

Stop and think for a second, how you say the next few words may alter the day for you or the child or adult in front of you, you can evoke emotions with powerful yet simple language and expressions.

The Danish are a happy nation with Hygge being a way of cosiness and being comfortable, a feeling of well-being. They have two lovely words for greetings:

**Hej (pronounced hi) a versatile and common greeting.**

**Hallojsa (pronounced Hall-oh-sa) a more informal, fun way of saying hi.**

We can take a lot of inspiration from the Danish, as Denmark is reportedly the happiest place to live in the world. To have greetings rate so highly, this tells us the importance of having the interaction with others when you meet them, to make them feel comfortable and welcome. A considered greeting can help to create interaction and trigger positive conversation or behaviours.

So the next time you meet someone, really think about how you say your greeting, your expression, your tone, your gestures, your body language. Consider how you feel and how the other person may feel.

**It is a special momentary bond.**

what does the evidence say?

If you would like to read more around the impact of communication and language as a widening opportunity to engage children in meaningful social interactions, please do so on the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Evidence Store website. On this website you can discover so much more, not only language themes but also themes around emotions and self-regulation.

[EEF Evidence Store, Communication and Language: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/communication-and-language?approach=teaching-and-modelling-social-communication-skills](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/communication-and-language?approach=teaching-and-modelling-social-communication-skills)



Thank you for reading.

Mrs Tracey Anderson, Senior Lead Practitioner at Childhaven Nursery School, Scarborough.

**Copyright © Tracey Anderson May 2025**