

CSD Cultivating Inclusion Committee News

Person and Family-Centered Care in December

A common greeting throughout the month of December is “Merry Christmas.” Providing Person and Family-Centered Care requires us to understand that not all of our clients (or our students, faculty, and staff) celebrate Christmas. Although many are not offended by the salutation, we should respectfully consider whether the phrase reflects our clients’ belief systems. For example: while the Church of the Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) celebrate Christmas, Jehovah’s Witnesses do not. We serve many people of different faiths or of no particular faith.

*Do you know some of the celebrations happening at this time of year? We created a Winter Holiday Survey: [Test yourself here!](#)
It is anonymous and just for fun.*

How do we handle this with our clients and each other? You may know the client and family well enough to ascertain their faith and culture and this information informs your behavior. Otherwise, make no assumptions. If a person volunteers “Merry Christmas,” you may want to respond with the same or, if this is not your faith, “Yes, I hope you have a Merry Christmas.”

Whatever time of year we are in, having awareness of the major holidays and festivals of other cultures and religions is one feature of providing respectful and culturally competent care.