

At Fern Creek Elementary School in Orlando, Florida, the school-wide celebration involves children marching across the stage, stopping at the microphone and announcing their celebrations. Some would say, "My name is Terrell. I am in Mrs. Robin's second grade classroom. I am celebrating my mom's new job." The crowd would cheer. On one occasion, 5-year-old D'Mario walked up to microphone and said, "I am celebrating I didn't hit nobody," and started walking away. The crowd cheered for his success. He returned quickly to the microphone and added, "All day!" The crowd roared.

We often imply what should be celebrated, like good grades or the number of books read. This dampens children's ownership of success and joy in their celebration. We must free children to celebrate what they find meaningful. When Fern Creek (a Title 1 elementary school) first started doing celebrations, most of the children chose non-academic accomplishments. By the second year of Conscious Discipline implementation, most of what the children chose to celebrate had to do with academics. They had learned the joy of learning for themselves.

Mini Lesson: Conduct mini lessons (no more than three to five minutes) that complement what you are learning about Conscious Discipline as a faculty. If you are doing a monthly faculty book study and monthly assemblies, create a lesson from each skill chapter. The first assembly would be about composure through belly breathing. The second assembly would be about assertively using your BIG Voice. Some schools have children act out the Shubert books as part of the mini lesson.

Activity to Commit: Pick one specific thing from the mini lesson and ask attendees if they are willing to commit to practicing that particular skill or have that specific focus. Have some kind of chant or motion (thumbs up) to signal the commitment. Follow up with morning announcements, hall bulletin boards and classroom activities that reinforce the concept.

Ending Song and Exit: Select an ending song and have the classrooms exit in preplanned ways. Use the M.A.P. process like you did for the entrance procedure. The goal is for all those who attend the assembly to feel more love, joy, connection and motivation in their hearts. This includes the staff! If teachers seem to feel like they are policing children instead of joining in the fun, invest additional time in planning and focus vigilantly on what you want to happen.



Student-led School Family Assembly



Practicing S.T.A.R. in School Family Assembly