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# A GUIDE TO PLANNING YOUR NAMING DAY

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Each ceremony is unique and is tailored to suit your individual needs.



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# *A Guide to Planning Your Naming Day*

A naming ceremony is a non-religious celebration of the arrival of a new child. It is a way of welcoming the child and officially introducing him/her to family and friends.

Naming ceremonies are appropriate for anyone, at any age. The arrival of a new baby, uniting of step or adopted children within a family, or an adult name change are all great reasons to hold a naming ceremony.

Naming ceremonies involve the important people in the child's life - family and special friends. Parents have the opportunity to ask other adults to play a supportive role to their child through to adult life (grandparents, godparents, mentors or supporters).

Poems, readings and quotes of personal significance can be used throughout the ceremony. The celebrant, family, friends or the parents themselves can do the readings. Often a symbolic gesture is also made such as the lighting of a candle, planting of a tree etc. In addition, certificates are presented to parents and other special people as a record of the occasion.

Naming ceremonies are not a baptism or christening. While the ceremonies are non-religious, many parents with religious beliefs hold naming ceremonies to welcome their child. Doing so does not prevent the child from holding or participating in a religious ceremony at any stage of their life.

While the Naming Ceremony and accompanying documents don't have any legal status, they are a wonderful way to welcome your child and celebrate them as they begin their journey through life.

Basically the baby naming ceremony format is as follows:-

## INTRODUCTION

Celebrant welcomes everyone and touches on the sentiment of the celebration of this child.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks and recognition to those who have come such a long way particularly those close to this child and family, also acknowledgement of siblings (this is a good idea so they don't feel left out)

## BODY OF CEREMONY

How did this child come about; is there a special story.

Parents often have a speech prepared which explains their intentions for their Child's future

## GODPARENTS / GUARDIANS / MENTORS

Parents ask these special people/persons to accept the honour of playing an exceptionally important role in this child's life, to support the parents in their intentions and to take over at any necessary time.

## SPECIAL RITUALS

This can be a number of things for example drops of water on the child's head along with chosen words, candles can be used at this time, fragrant oils burning, each guest is given a small card, and they write a blessing and attach it to a tree which is planted. Really this is a time for parents to individualise their Child's ceremony.

## THE NAMING

The chosen names are given and the parents or whomever they chose can give an explanation along with it.

## POEM OR READING

At any time a poem can be incorporated into the ceremony. This is a nice time for a poem or reading to be recited as it may relate to the child's names which he or she were just given.

## CONCLUSION

A few words by the celebrant to conclude the ceremony, signing and presenting the certificate.

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Baby's Full Name:

Reason for choosing this name:

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Parent 1's Full Name:

Parent 2's Full Name:

Names & ages of any brothers/sisters:

Contact Details:

Address:

Phone – Home:

Mobile:

Email:

Date:

Time:

Venue Address:

Council Approval:

Ceremony style and format (formal/informal/theme):

Family/friends participation in the ceremony (Guardians/Godparents/Life Guardian/Mentors)

Symbolic gesture for ceremony:

Music:

Poems, readings or quotes:

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## **Suggested Poems, readings and quotes**

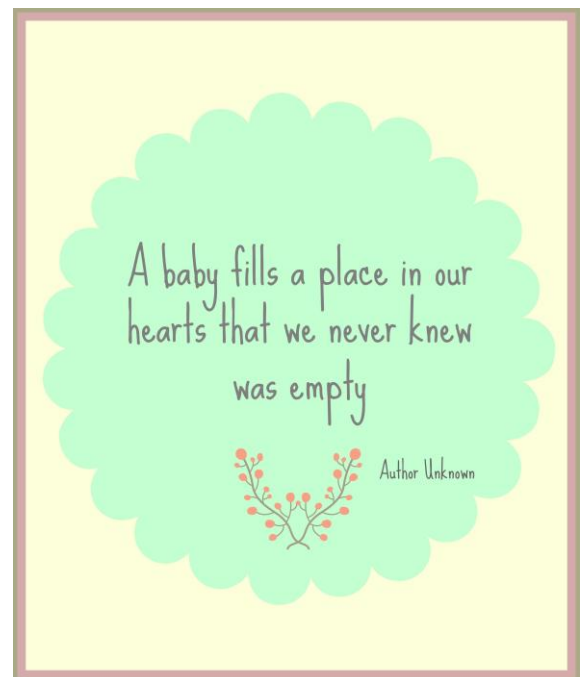
On Children (Kahlil Gibran)

Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.  
They come through you but not from you,  
And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.  
You may give them your love but not your thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,  
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.  
You may strive to be like them,  
but seek not to make them like you.  
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.  
You are the bows from which your children  
as living arrows are sent forth.  
The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,  
and He bends you with His might  
that His arrows may go swift and far.  
Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;  
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,  
so He loves also the bow that is stable.



Someday I'll jump through puddles,  
Take a stroll or run a race.  
Someday I'll walk across the street  
Or maybe walk in space.  
Someday I'll scale a mountain  
Or I'll join the ballet corps.  
Someday I'll walk a tightrope  
Or explore the ocean floor.  
Someday these feet will do some things  
That only heaven knows  
But for today they're happy  
Just to wiggle their toes!

I am so very special  
I have been from the start  
Before they held me in their arms  
My family held me in their hearts  
And like a single drop of rain  
That on still waters fall  
My life and love will ripples make  
And touch the lives of all  
So read this precious story  
As step by step I grow  
I am a special blessing and a gift  
As each page here will show.



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Parents could read this to their child:

## THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

We give you the greatest gift of all,  
a head start that will last throughout your life  
We shall do our best to teach you,  
but it will be up to you to learn  
We shall try to guide you in the right directions,  
but it will be up to you to make the right decisions  
We shall also encourage you to seek your own  
independence  
but it will be up to you to be responsible

We shall tell you about 'drink and drugs',  
but it will be up to you to say 'no'  
We shall teach you about respect,  
but you will choose whether to appreciate it's  
value  
We shall encourage you to try,  
but you should want to succeed for yourself  
We shall teach you kindness,  
but it will be up to you to be good-natured

We shall teach you to share,  
but it will be up to you to be unselfish  
We shall model values for you.  
but you have to develop your own morals  
We give you this knowledge as a gift  
with all our love.

You are the poem  
I dreamed of writing,  
The masterpiece  
I longed to paint.  
You are the shining star  
I reached for in my ever-hopeful quest  
For life fulfilled...  
You are my child.  
Now with all things  
I am blessed.

May all your wishes come true  
May you always do for others  
And let others do for you  
May you build a ladder to the stars  
And climb on every rung  
And may you stay forever young  
May you grow to be righteous  
May you grow up to be true  
May you always know the truth  
And see the light that is surrounding you  
May you always be courageous  
Stand upright and strong  
And may you stay forever young  
May your hands always be busy  
And may your feet always be swift  
May you have a strong foundation  
When the winds of change shift  
May your heart always be joyful  
And may your song always be sung  
And may you stay forever young.

## My Wishes for You.

May the sun forever shine on you  
to warm you through your day.  
May the stars above shine in the night  
to help you find your way.

May the breeze blow gently through the trees  
singing to you it's song.  
May the Lord and Lady watch over you  
Throughout the whole day long.

May the angels sing you their lullaby  
as you enter into sleep.  
May your dreams be filled with happiness  
May you never weep.

May your life be filled with laughter and joy  
May your worries and troubles be few  
May you always be with the ones you love  
These are my wishes for you.

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Here are some ideas to help you plan your special day.

**Time capsule/treasure box** - Can contain small gifts, photos, letters or written note cards. The capsule/box is presented to the child when they turn 18 or 21. Invite guests to bring an item instead of a present i.e. CDs; magazines; newspapers; the Guinness Book of Records; coin collections; symbols of something they wish for the child such as runes & crystals to symbolise different things like peace and hope; pebbles from someone's favourite beach 'that the child may always have a special place to go and think'; Celtic symbols such as a horseshoe for good luck; cuff links that he may be a gentleman; a joke book - that she/he may always keep her/his sense of humour; a pressed leaf that they may appreciate nature.

**Photo board of baby photos of 'special people'.**

**Planting of a tree** - Guests help plant the tree and as they place dirt into the ground, (Native Australian Plants are ideal and symbolic).

**Lighting of a candle** - Candles can be personalised and decorated with little flowers, butterflies, sporting items, cars, child's name, photo, date of birth, weight and length and a poem etc. The parents light the candles, make wishes for their child and promise that on each birthday when they light the candle on the cake they will remember what a miracle the child is.

**Release a dove** - the worldwide symbol for peace.

**Wishing well/cards** - Guests write their wish for the child on a note and place it in a wishing well for the parents to read and keep for the child.

**Rose petal blessing** - Shower with rose petals.

**Write a poem** about your child to read at the ceremony.

