# Unit 3 - Expect the Unexpected



#### Overview

The main focus of this unit is recognising that, no matter how much we would like to, we cannot protect ourselves from change as it is a part of life. Sometimes change can be a positive experience (e.g. exciting new opportunities) but sometimes it brings with it, disappointments, difficulties or loss. Helping children to understand that change in life is a given, and not unique to them, can help normalise their experiences and encourage reflection on what can help us to better prepare ourselves for a future full of unknowns.

"None of us are static objects we have histories and stories. We change over time. Who we are today is influenced by the sum of the things that have happened to us along the way but how things are today is not how they are always destined to be."

This unit will also give children a chance to revisit work on emotions and particularly that it is OK to feel emotions such as sadness when the reality around you changes or when experiencing loss. It will also give children tools to help support others in distress. We cannot control the amount of good or bad experiences in our lives, but research finds that being in touch with and accepting your emotions – even the difficult ones – and expressing them in authentic and healthy ways is the key to wellbeing<sup>2</sup>.

The final part of the unit, will be reflecting over the Building Resilience programme and the journey on the River of Life with Skipper as a guide. Over the past 3 years, we have looked at 10 different tools in turn which have much been much evidenced by research as having a positive effect on our mental wellbeing. While we do not know what challenges life will deal us, children have learnt that there are things we can do to look after our mental health to make sure we are in a good place to meet and effectively recover from them<sup>3</sup>.

#### Key messages to communicate

#### 1. Change is a part of life.

Pupils will be introduced to a big change that Skipper has to face and give them an opportunity to encourage reflection on how life is always changing and what positives and negatives this can bring. They will explore changes in animals, nature, cities, populations, people around them and in themselves. The activities will encourage critical reflection about why we might prefer to continue in the River of Life despite its constant changes and all the ups and downs. The truth is we cannot selectively numb difficult experiences or emotions. When you numb or ignore sadness, hurt or anger you also numb happiness, excitement, love and joy.

#### 2. It's OK not to be OK

In this section, pupils learn that sometimes you will encounter difficult experiences including loss and it is normal and healthy to feel emotions like sadness or anger. Some things cannot get better or be fixed no matter how much you wish for this and how they can manage or find ways to cope with loss. Pupils will also learn ideas for how they can support their peers too, check in with and listen to others that might be upset or distressed. While we cannot be expected to fix someone else's problems, no matter how tempting it may seem, research finds that being a good active listener is the best thing we can do to comfort others.<sup>4</sup>

#### 3. I have learnt ways to look after my mental health

In this section, pupils will consider how just like we learn to look after our physical health from a young age (e.g. importance of eating vegetables/fruit, brushing our hair, cleaning our teeth, washing our hands), we also need to look after our mental health. Children will be given opportunities to reflect on and remember the different tools that Skipper has used on his journey on the River of Life that can help us. It is a chance to reflect on the 3 year programme and how they might apply the tools in the future no matter what it holds.

#### **Role Model It**

Share with your class an occasion when you faced an unexpected big change and the positive and negatives that this meant for your life?

Share which of the 10 tools described in the Building Resilience programme you have found the most useful to support your own mental health and wellbeing.

#### **Additional Information**

TED TALK:

Sheila Cox-Lousada: Emotional well-being – Are we failing our teenagers?

#### **BOOKS:**

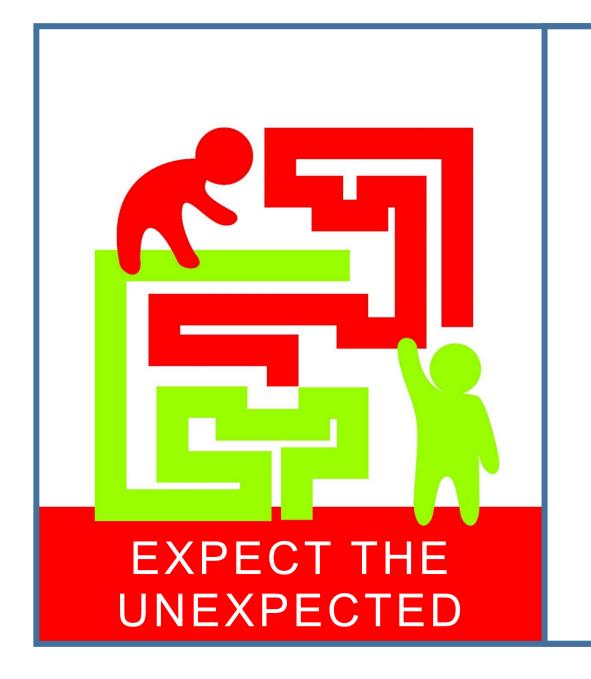
It's OK that you're not OK: Meeting grief and loss in a culture that doesn't understand (Book) – Megan Devine

#### **VIDEO LINKS:**

Talking About Mental Health: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCrjevx3-Js">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCrjevx3-Js</a>
Brains: Journey To Resilience: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJvDrT6N-mw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJvDrT6N-mw</a>

#### References

- <sup>1</sup> Pryor, L. (2019). Mental Illness Isn't All In Your Head. New York Times. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/opinion/preventing-mental-illness.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/opinion/preventing-mental-illness.html</a>
- <sup>2</sup> Rollin, J. (2016) 3 Reasons to Let Yourself Feel Your Emotions. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/mindful-musings/201611/3-reasons-let-yourself-feel-your-emotions">https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/mindful-musings/201611/3-reasons-let-yourself-feel-your-emotions</a>
- <sup>3</sup> Mental Health Foundation (2015). Prevention Review: Landscape Paper. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk">www.mentalhealth.org.uk</a>
- <sup>4</sup> Zareen, Z. (2019) Sometimes we just need to be heard, not fixed. Retrieved from <a href="https://medium.com/s/can-we/talk/the-art-of-listening-lovingly-e724b5ca3b6d">https://medium.com/s/can-we/talk/the-art-of-listening-lovingly-e724b5ca3b6d</a>



UNIT 12

# Expect the Unexpected

Classroom activities for Early, First and Second Level

Unit 12	Expect the Unexpected Early Lev					
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities		
Change is a part of life	I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them. HWB 0-02a  I understand that my feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the ways other behave. HWB 0-04a	I know that change is a necessary part of life  I know that change can be positive and negative  I understand we can all react differently to change	Everything changes Encourage the children to think about things that change in nature. They may want to think about the changing seasons or the changes we see in nature, e.g. tadpoles changing into frogs.  Transition - Moving on Things must come to an end and they will move on. If this is towards the end of P1, the class may want to reflect on their first year of school and what they have learned. Perhaps the class could prepare an assembly to welcome the new P1 children, telling them about what to expect in P1.  Skipper's new boat Skipper needs a new boat. Encourage the children to design and build his new boat. What will the new boat need to help Skipper to cope on the river of life?	Stories		

Unit 12		Expect the	e Unexpected	Early Level
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities
It's OK not to be OK	I am learning skills and strategies which will support me in challenging times, particularly in relation to change and loss. HWB 0-07a  I know that friendship, caring, sharing fairness, equality and love are important in building positive relationships. I care and show respect for myself and others. HWB 0-05a	I know that it is OK to experience disappointment, difficulties and loss and that some things cannot get better or be fixed  I can ask other people if they are OK and show I care by really listening  I have ways to cope with loss	How are you feeling today? Share the book 'How are you feeling today' by Mary Potter with the class. Discuss the different feelings that the characters experienced. Make a list of the different feelings. Next talk to pupils about how some feelings can be 'big feelings' like being excited or angry. Identify some 'big feelings' from the list. Reread the story, stopping at any point where a feeling is expressed in the pictures or through the words. Pupils can hold up a face picture or word cards which match the emotion or feeling in the story (see resource file).  Listening Game Encourage the children to learn how to listen carefully by playing a listening game, e.g. prepare a pre-recorded tape of some environmental sounds - birds singing, cars, telephone ringing etc. Start by listening to the sounds of silence. Once you hear a sound - attract the children's attention to it - imitate it - point to a picture of what makes it - name it - encourage the children to name it and then say - "Shh let's sit here and listen for the next one".  Memory Tree Read and discuss the book 'Memory Tree' by Britta Teckentrupp. This provide a simple way to discuss loss.	Other stories 'Nothing' by Mick Inkpen (Ioneliness, unloved) 'Angry Arthur' by Haiwyn Oram (anger) 'The second princess' by Tony Ross (envy, jealousy) 'The very lonely firefly' by Eric Carle (Ioneliness)  Feelings mirror Using a mirror, pupils can make faces/expressions to express the feelings in the stories/list.

Unit 12	Expect the Unexpected Early Lev					
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities		
I have ways to look after my mental health	I understand the importance of mental wellbeing and that this can be fostered and strengthened through personal coping skills and positive relationships. I know that is not always possible to enjoy good mental health and this if this happens there is support available. HWB 0-06a  I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health. HWB 0-15a  I am learning what I can do to look after my body and who can help me. HWB 0-48a	I know looking after my mental health is just as important as my physical health.  I am able to explain to someone else what the ten tools are and how they helped me.  I know which tools can help me look after my mental health and wellbeing	Looking after our bodies and our minds Create a visual chart of the things we do to look after our bodies and things we do for our minds using pictures, drawings and photographs.  The 10 Things poster Support the children to reflect on the tools they have learned this year. Explain there are more tools they will learn about in the future. Can they name the three tools they have learned this year and how these can help them?  River of Life Treasure Chest (class task) Talk to the class about a scenario where someone is experiencing a difficult/challenging feelings. Provide pupils with a treasure chest template and ask them to fill their treasure chests with strategies that they think would help the person to feel better. Pupils fill their chest with words, descriptions or pictures which represent their treasure. Explain that they are probably using a lot of different strategies already but stopping and recognising them helps us to know how to manage our feelings, especially at difficult times. Likewise, we may be using strategies that no longer work or that we find difficult to use. Thinking about the different options we have can help us to feel better and to feel less alone with our uncomfortable feelings and emotions.	Ireasure Chest (continued) Discuss their ideas:  What strategies do you have in your treasure chest?  What kinds of feelings/emotions do you think they'd help us to manage?  Why do those feelings/emotions need managing? What else can we try - what other treasure do we have? Suggest that 'treasure' can come in different forms, i.e. people at home, friends, people in school who we can share our feelings with and who won't 'judge' us		

Unit 12	Expect the Unexpected Early Leve				
Key Questions	Key Vocabulary	Significant Aspects of Learning	Learning and Teaching Resources	Wellbeing Indicators	
* What big changes have happened in your life?  * How does it feel when change hurts?  * Which of the 10 Tools have helped you the most?	Good feelings; not so good feelings; happy; sad; worried; confused;, excited; calm; upset; face; expression; body language	* Explore and make choices as they develop their learning and interests and can identify their achievements	* Books: '	ACHIEVING Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community.	
		Learning Statements	Cross Curricular Learning and Teaching Links	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	
		* I can show resilience to cope with change * I can show confidence to cope with change	Literacy & Language  * Writing  Expressive Arts  * Art & Design  Learning Powers  * Don't Give Up	Article 29 Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.  Article 31 You have the right to play and rest.	

Promoting mental, emotional, social & physical health and wellbeing

Unit 12		Expect t	he Unexpected	First Level
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities
Change is a part of life	I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them.  HWB 1-02a  I understand that my feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the ways other behave.  HWB 1-04a	I know that change is a necessary part of life  I know that change can be positive and negative  We can all react differently to change	Our changing bodies Explore what changes our bodies have gone through since we were born. Why is this? What would have happened if our bodies hadn't changed? What changes will our bodies do in the future?  How to Survive Guide Ask the class the think about transitions/moving classes next year. If they could write a guide for next year's P2/P3/P4 classes what advice would they give them. Get the children to work in pairs to prepare a Survival Guide for next year's P2/P3/P4.  Little Tree Read the book 'Little Tree' by Lauren Long to help the class explore change. Discuss why they like hold onto things and why they don't like things to change? What are the positive things about change?	

Unit 12	Expect the Unexpected First Level					
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities		
It's OK not to be OK	I am learning skills and strategies which will support me in challenging times, particularly in relation to change and loss. HWB 1-07a  I know that friendship, caring, sharing fairness, equality and love are important in building positive relationships. I care and show respect for myself and others. HWB 1-05a	I know that it is OK to experience disappointment, difficulties and loss and that some things cannot get better or be fixed  I can ask other people if they are OK and show I care by really listening  I have ways to cope with loss	Big Feelings Ask the pupils to recall some 'big' feelings that they know or have felt. If necessary, prompt the pupils with words such as 'frightened' or petrified' (encourage pupils to broaden their range of words to describe feelings, e.g. anxious, scared, frightened, and petrified). Collect these feelings on a list and explore the facial expressions and body language that goes with them. Next talk about when people may feel like this. For example: 'Someone might feel frightened when someone turns out the light/someone might be petrified if they got lost.  Helping Hands Working Wall Throughout the week, as opportunities arise, encourage pupils to identify sources of help and support for difficult feelings. This can be done within the context of characters in the stories you read. Each time a new strategy is identified, a pupil should draw round their hand and cut it out with a strategy written on it and add it to the working wall. Ensure 'listening to people' is one of the strategies mentioned.  The Heart and the Bottle Read and discuss the book 'The Heart and the Bottle' by Oliver Jeffers. This provide a simple way to discuss loss.	Role Play In groups ask children to roleplay some of the suggestions and invite them to think about ways in which the problem could be solved and/or how their back up team might be able to help them.  Skipper's Box Remind pupils about using the anonymous questions box or speak to you if they have any questions they'd like to ask.		

Unit 12		Expect	the Unexpected	First Level
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities
I have ways to look after my mental health	I understand the importance of mental wellbeing and that this can be fostered and strengthened through personal coping skills and positive relationships. I know that is not always possible to enjoy good mental health and this if this happens there is support available. HWB 1-06a  I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health. HWB 1-15a  I am learning what I can do to look after my body and who can help me.	I know looking after my mental health is just as important as my physical health.  I am able to explain to someone else what the ten tools are and how they helped me.  I know which tools can help me look after my mental health and wellbeing	Looking after our mental health Watch the animation below: https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in- mind/resources-for-schools/talking-mental-health- animation-teacher-toolkit/ Ask pupils to work in small groups to design their own poster to promote looking after our mental health as well as their physical health.  The 10 Things poster Support the children to reflect on the tools they have learned this year. Explain there are more tools they will learn about in the future. Can they name the three tools they have learned this year and how these can help them?  River of Life Treasure Chest (class task) Talk to the class about a scenario where someone is experiencing a difficult/challenging feelings. Provide pupils with a treasure chest template and ask them to fill their treasure chests with strategies that they think would help the person to feel better. Pupils fill their chest with words, descriptions or pictures which represent their treasure. Explain that they are probably using a lot of different strategies already but stopping and recognising them helps us to know how to manage our feelings, especially at difficult times. Likewise, we may be using strategies that no longer work or that we find difficult to use. Thinking about the different options we have can help us to feel better and to feel less alone with our uncomfortable feelings and emotions.	

Unit 12		Expect t	he Unexpected	First Level
Key Questions	Key Vocabulary	Significant Aspects of Learning	Learning and Teaching Resources	Wellbeing Indicators (SHANARRI)
* What bog changes have happened in your life?  * How does it feel when change hurts?  * Which of the 10 Tools have helped you the most?	;	* Learners recognise their own skills and abilities as well as those of others and find out about the wider world of work	*	ACHIEVING Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community.
		1	Construction to annihilation of Tanakina Halia	United Nations Convention
		* * I can show	Cross Curricular Learning and Teaching Links Literacy & Language	on the Rights of the Child Article 29
		resilience to cope with change  * I can show confidence to cope with change	* Writing  Expressive Arts  * Art & Design  Learning Powers  * Don't Give Up	Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.  Article 31 You have the right to play and rest.

Unit 12		Expec	t the Unexpected	<b>Second Level</b>
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities
Change is a part of life	I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them. HWB 2-02a  I understand that my feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the ways other behave. HWB 2-04a	I know that change is a necessary part of life  I know that change can be positive and negative  We can all react differently to change	The Parable of the Butterfly Share the Parable of the Butterfly on: https://clockworxz.wordpress.com/2016/07/28/the-parable-of-the-butterfly/ Discuss the morale of the story and the importance of having some struggle/change in our lives.  Coping with Changes  1. Ask pupils to think of something that could have changed for someone their age over the last year (remind them not to share each other's personal stories). This could include moving, changing hairstyle, changing friendships, someone dying, body changes, having more responsibility.  2. In pairs, ask them to record some of the changes that they have just discussed on sticky notes.  3. Write the headings: 'sudden change, difficult change, exciting change and small change' on the board and ask groups to decide where their suggestions might go and to stick them under the relevant headings.  4. Discuss – what is obvious? How did you decide? Did everyone agree? Remind them that lots of changes in our lives can be exciting and challenging, like getting older or taking on new responsibilities – and that how we react to changes differs from person to person and depends on how we view a change.  Preparing for Change What can help us prepare for changes and challenges that may lie ahead? Ask pupils for ideas. Bring together as a class and discuss. Allocate one of the changes listed on the board to each pair and ask them to create an action plan for how to best prepare for and cope with this change. What thoughts could they practice? What actions could they take beforehand? If there is time students can design a toolkit recommending ways to face changes ahead. This could be turned into a display.	Changes Ask each pupil to think about all of the things that have changed in their lives in recent years. Small changes happen every day; from what we eat, what we wear, how we get to school and so on. Other changes we can plan and prepare for to help us cope with them and make the best of them. Sometimes changes happen that are out of our control and we have to find ways to cope with them and find a way to think positively about what has happened. Ask each student to think of an exciting positive change that might happen for someone their age over the next few years.

Unit 12		Expect t	he Unexpected	
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities
It's OK not to be OK	I am learning skills and strategies which will support me in challenging times, particularly in relation to change and loss. HWB 2-07a  I know that friendship, caring, sharing fairness, equality and love are important in building positive relationships. I care and show respect for myself and others. HWB 2-05a	I know that it is OK to experience disappointment, difficulties and loss and that some things cannot get better or be fixed  I can ask other people if they are OK and show I care by really listening  I have ways to cope with loss	Circle of Feelings Go through some of these feeling words, exploring some of the newer, more complex words and ask how we might recognise that someone was feeling like this:    happy	Thinking about feelings every day During general day-to-day classroom interactions and activities, make a conscious effort to name feelings, encouraging pupils to do the same. The more that pupils name and identify their feelings day to day, the better they will be able to identify, respond to and manage difficult feelings as they arise.  Musical feelings Play a clip from 'Happy' by Pharell Williams. Ask pupils how it makes them feel? Can they do this without using the word 'happy'? How many other feeling words can they use instead?  Skipper's Box Remind pupils about using the anonymous questions box or speak to you if they have any questions they'd like to ask.  Story 'The Great Big Book of Big Feelings' by Mary Hoffman

Unit 12		<b>Expect the</b>	<b>Unexpected</b>	Second Level
Key Learning	Experiences and Outcomes	Intended Learning	Core Activities	Additional Activities
I have ways to look after my mental health	I understand the importance of mental wellbeing and that this can be fostered and strengthened through personal coping skills and positive relationships. I know that is not always possible to enjoy good mental health and this if this happens there is support available. HWB 2-06a  I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health. HWB 2-15a  I am learning what I can do to look after my body and who can help me. HWB 2-48a	I know looking after my mental health is just as important as my physical health.  I am able to explain to someone else what the ten tools are and how they helped me.  I know which tools can help me look after my mental health and wellbeing	Mental Health Quiz Read the book 'Looking After Your Mental Health' by Alice James. Ask pupils to work in pairs to design their own mental health quiz to play with their classmates.  The 10 Things poster Ask pupils to carry out research into why each of the '10 things' are important for our health and wellbeing. Pupils can present their research in any way they choose.  River of Life Treasure Chest (class task) Talk to the class about a scenario where someone is experiencing a difficult/challenging feelings. Provide pupils with a treasure chest template and ask them to fill their treasure chest with strategies that they think would help the person to feel better. Pupils fill their chest with words, descriptions or pictures which represent their treasure. Explain that they are probably using a lot of different strategies already but stopping and recognising them helps us to know how to manage our feelings, especially at difficult times. Likewise, we may be using strategies that no longer work or that we find difficult to use. Thinking about the different options we have can help us to feel better and to feel less alone with our uncomfortable feelings and emotions.	Preparing for the future Discuss what changes pupils are going to face in the future, e.g. transition to high school, moving school, loss of friends. What tools are going to help?  Little Book of Resilience Share the book, Little Book of Resilience by Matthew Johnstone with class. It is about how we can fortify our lives mentally, emotionally and physically. It is not about what happens when we get knocked down but more about what happens when we get up again. It is a book about what resilience is and how we grow and maintain it.  River of Life Can they write a poem, song or story to explain about Skipper and the River of Life for next year's P1s?

Unit 12		Expect the	<b>Unexpected</b>	Second Level
Key Questions	Key Vocabulary	Significant Aspects of Learning	Learning and Teaching Resources	Wellbeing Indicators (SHANARRI)
* What bog changes have happened in your life?  * How does it feel when change hurts?  * Which of the 10 Tools have helped you the most?	Change; big feelings; ignore; persevere; listen; emotions; online; offline; social media; negative feelings; positive feelings; intensity	* Learners identify their skills and areas for development and preparing themselves for the next stage in their life and learning	*	ACHIEVING Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community.
		Learning Statements	Cross Curricular Learning and Teaching Links	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
		* I can show resilience to cope with change  * I can show confidence to cope with change	Literacy & Language  * Writing  Expressive Arts  * Art & Design  Learning Powers  * Don't Give Up	Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.  Article 31 You have the right to play and rest.

# **UNIT 12 Expect the Unexpected**



# **Family Sharing Activity**

We have learning that no matter how much we would like to, we cannot protect ourselves from change as it is a part of life. Sometimes change can be a positive experience (e.g. exciting new opportunities) but often it brings with it disappointments, difficulties or loss.

Helping children to understand that change in life is a given, and not unique to them, can help normalise their experiences and encourage reflection on what can help us to better prepare ourselves for a future full of unknowns.

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- □ Change is a part of life
- □ It's OK not to be OK
- ☐ We have ways to look after our mental health

#### **Expect the Unexpected Task**

Think about something you want to be able to achieve as a family in the next few weeks. Set a goal that is meaningful for everyone.
Create a step-by-step plan for how you are going to achieve your goal. Think about who is doing what and what will help you to achieve it. How will you know you have achieved it?
Expect that you may experience setbacks or make mistakes. Don't worry – just keep on trying!
Agree together how you will celebrate as a family when you have reached your goal.

Please return your family sharing activity to school so you can share your ideas with your class. Some examples will be chosen to share at our Sharing Assembly.

# THINGS OVER

CHALLENGE YOUR MINDSET

RESPECT YOURSELF

KEEP CONNECTED

**BUILDING RESILIEN** 













MAKE A DIFFERENCE

HAVE A GOAL **BE KIND TO OTHERS** 

**GET ACTIVE**