 Using strengths and support for setting and achieving goals

Duration: 60 minutes

Purpose of the task

Research suggests that people who set goals:

* are less stressed and anxious
* have a higher motivation, greater focus and better wellbeing.

People who know about and apply their character strengths and seek help to achieve their goals have been shown to have a greater chance of achieving them.

Course outcomes

1.1 Assess personal strengths and skills to achieve positive outcomes in a range of challenging and changing situations.

1.2 Critically evaluate services and resources to identify sources of reliable information and support.

1.3 Build positive thinking, self-belief and a sense of empowerment to take action to promote meaningful futures for self and others.

7.3 Apply skills to take personal responsibility for their actions to protect and enhance the independence, health, safety and wellbeing of others.

What do we want students to know, understand or be able to do?

* Map their character strengths to their goals to plan for achievement.
* Identify and evaluate people and places who can support their achievement of goals.

Required resources and materials for preparation

Student activities are set around:

* small group
* individual activities
* offline and online

Equipment required:

* access to the internet and laptop, tablet or phone
* online access to websites:
  + [ReachOut.com](https://au.reachout.com/)
  + [Headspace](https://www.headspace.org.au/)
  + [Youth Beyond Blue](https://www.youthbeyondblue.com/)
  + [Bite Back](https://www.biteback.org.au/)
* Using my Strengths to achieve my goals worksheet
* Thinking flexibly: planning for changes with goal setting worksheet
* People and places to help achieve my goals worksheet

Suggested content

| Learning context | Content |
| --- | --- |
| Mental health and wellbeing  Focus: Developing self-efficacy and mental fitness | Building resilience   * recognising achievements and successes   Positive wellbeing   * accomplishment |
| Independence  Focus: Building self-concepts and independence | Personal values and beliefs   * recognising and assessing strengths, aspirations and potential * self-concepts   Self-management   * using mind-sets for motivation and achievement, e.g. growth mind-set * managing change and initiating contingency plans * responsibility for self and actions * planning, setting, tracking and modifying goals * strategies for future success |

Teaching notes

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

There are a number of strategies that can be used to create a supportive learning environment which enables students to feel safe to learn and ask questions. They include:

* making students aware at the beginning of Life Ready sessions that disclosing personal information that indicates they may be at risk of harm will be reported to the school principal in all instances. This includes personal disclosures related to instances of abuse, drug use, neglect or sexual activity under the legal age of consent.
* being aware that some parts of Life Ready can be confronting and sensitive for some students.
* enabling students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting to protect them from making harmful disclosures. Equally, it is important to be prepared for issues that arise as a result of a student making a public disclosure in the classroom.

More information on creating a safe and supportive learning environment can be found on the [Life Ready website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready).

Evaluating resources before use

Preview and evaluate all strategies, resources and teaching and learning approaches in full before use with students to determine suitability for student learning needs, stage of development and local school context. Consider the age, maturity, cultural background, sexuality, gender, sex, health and other characteristics of students in your care. Apply professional judgements to all strategies, teaching and learning approaches and resources including audio visual materials (e.g. videos, media clips and YouTube), interactive web-based content (e.g. games, quizzes and websites) and texts.

Use the [resource review flowchart](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/083acd3a-daca-4307-9afe-bc6c888f694a/1/final-resource-flowchart-html5.zip/index.html) to decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Materials should be reviewed in full and endorsed by the school principal before use in NSW government schools.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of Life Ready may be viewed as sensitive or controversial, such as learning about abuse, child protection, drugs, respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and violence. Inform parents and carers, prior to the occasion, of the specific details of the Life Ready program, so that parents and caregivers have time to exercise their rights of withdrawing their child from a particular session. In this regard, a parents or caregiver’s wish must be respected.

Establishing how parents and caregivers will be informed about programs and involved in consultation is a school-based decision. Where parents and caregivers indicate they wish to withdraw their child from a program it is useful to negotiate which parts of the Life Ready program they are concerned about. A sample information letter is available on the [Life Ready website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready).

Learning experiences

Key character strengths

* Students review their 5 key character strengths from the Power of yet for success activity.
* As a group, revise S.M.A.R.T goals from the Planning goals activity.
* Students map their key strengths to planning short, medium and long-term goals.
* Students complete Using my strengths to achieve my goals worksheet

Having a plan B

Having multiple options to goals assists in relieving pressure for if or when changes need to occur.

* Whole group discussion:
  1. In pairs, reflect on a situation where you have required a Plan B? Some examples could include: missing your bus home, being late for an interview or completing the wrong section of an assessment task.
  2. What are the benefits of having a Plan B when you are setting goals?
  3. Students complete Thinking flexibly: planning for changes with goal setting worksheet.

Support for achieving your goals

* Students create a mind map of people and places that can assist them in achieving their goals.
* Students use their mind maps to complete a circle chat to share their ideas on people and places to help with goal setting.

Circle Chat: students stand in two concentric circles, facing a partner. Students share their ideas with their partner. After 45 seconds, the teacher calls out “switch” and the outside circle moves one step to their right to meet their next partner. Continue sharing until each student has spoken with at least 4 different students.

* Online support: Students explore online sources of support for working to complete goals. Websites to guide the exploration include:
  + [ReachOut.com](https://au.reachout.com/)
  + [Headspace](https://www.headspace.org.au/)
  + [Youth Beyond Blue](https://www.youthbeyondblue.com/)
  + [Bite Back](https://www.biteback.org.au/)
* Ask students to write an evaluation of the websites.
  + When might you need these online sources of help?
  + Would you recommend these sites to friends? Why/Why not?
* Students complete *People and places to help achieve my goals* worksheet

Using my strengths to achieve my goals worksheet

List your five key character strengths

| Goals | How does your goal fit S.M.A.R.T.? | How will you use this character strength to achieve your goal |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Short term goal | S |  |
| M |
| A |
| R |
| T |
| Medium term goal | S |  |
| M |
| A |
| R |
| T |
| Long term goal | S |  |
| M |
| A |
| R |
| T |

Thinking flexibly: planning for changes with goal setting

Using the goals you created in the previous activity, list your Plan B’s if you aren’t able to achieve your goal, what will you do?

| Goals | What is your plan B if you do not achieve your goal? | How would a Growth Mindset assist you with your Plan B? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Short term goal |  |  |
| Medium term goal |  |  |
| Long term goal |  |  |

People and places to help achieve my goals

Fill in the circle below with one of your goals (either a short, medium and long term goal) and then, create a mind map of the people and places that can assist you to achieve them.

