

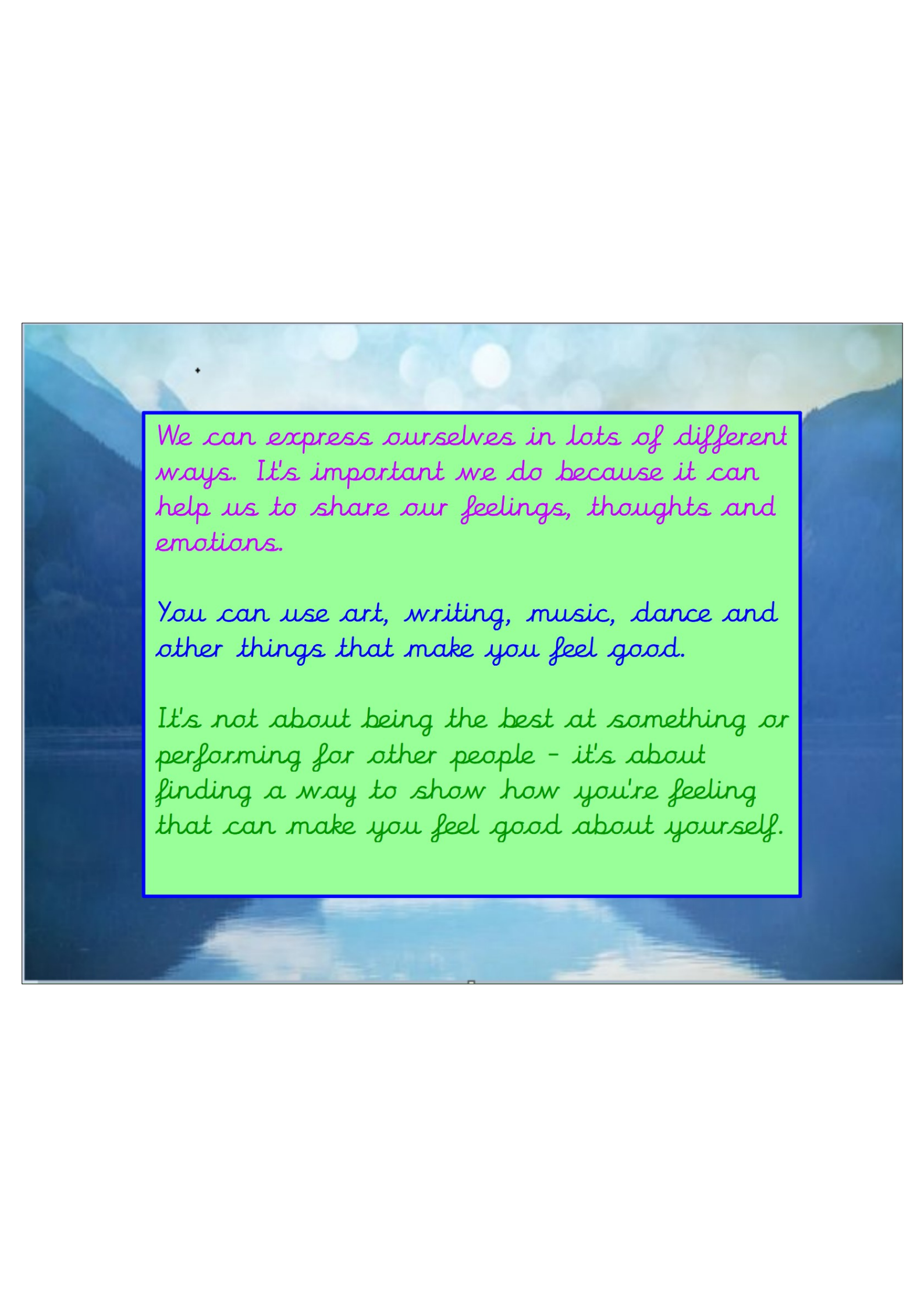
General





This year, the theme for Children's Mental Health Week is...

EXPRESS YOURSELF!



We can express ourselves in lots of different ways. It's important we do because it can help us to share our feelings, thoughts and emotions.

You can use art, writing, music, dance and other things that make you feel good.

It's not about being the best at something or performing for other people - it's about finding a way to show how you're feeling that can make you feel good about yourself.

Watch this video and count how many different ways people are expressing themselves here:



Did you spot any activities that you like to do to express yourself? Were there any activities missing?

Artists express themselves in their work.



Writers often express themselves through their stories or characters. Some of us at home have been reading Rumblestar by Abi Elphinstone. Look at what Bristlebeard, a vegan snow troll, has to say about life:

Bristlebeard sat down in the armchair by the hammock and took a good long sip of tea. 'Life, Casper, is wigglysplat.'

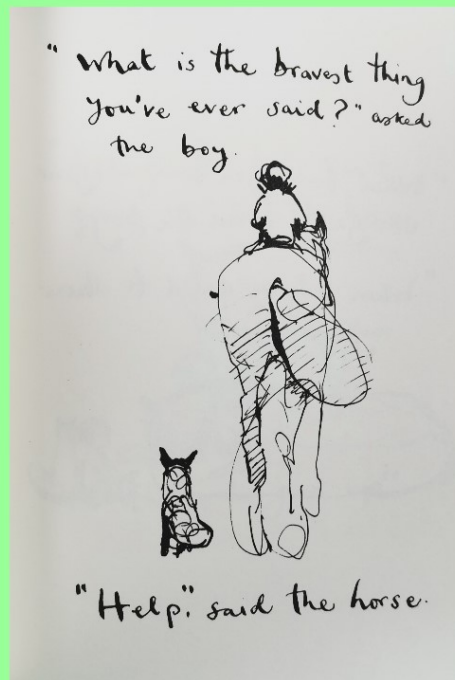
'Wigglysplat?'

'It means complicated,' Bristlebeard said. 'Lots of bumps. Plenty of bruises. And so many unexpected problems that it's a wonder any of us bother getting up in the morning.'

'So, why do we bother?' Casper mumbled.

Bristlebeard leant back in his armchair. 'Because life is a little bit like snow, boy: frequently disruptive, hopelessly unpredictable and often quick to fade. But my word, is it beautiful while it lasts.' He smiled. 'We can't always know where we're heading, when we'll get there or even who we'll meet along the way, but we can choose how we travel – and I'd say it's best to journey with friends alongside us and hope tucked firmly in our pockets.'

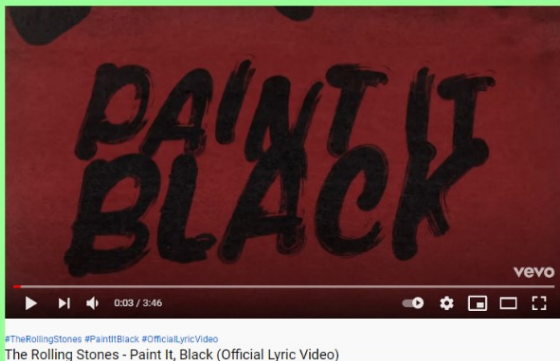
What do you think the writer and illustrator, Charlie Mackesy, is trying to say here?



Some people use music to express themselves...



Songs about grief/loss...



...about love...



...about feeling down...



[TNewC] R.E.M. - Everybody Hurts (Lyrics)

...about not worrying!



#BobMarley #ThreeLittleBirds #BobMarley75

Bob Marley & The Wailers - Three Little Birds (Official Video)

There are lots of different ways to express yourself and celebrate who you are. However you do it, it should make you feel happier, calmer and more positive about yourself.



Why is it important to talk about mental health?

Just as we look after our physical health (our bodies) by eating healthily, exercising and getting enough sleep, we need to do the same for our mental health (our minds).

One way to do this is to share how we are feeling. Expressing ourselves in creative ways can help, especially if we find it difficult to talk about our feelings.

Apart from expressing ourselves, what else can we do to help ourselves?

- Yoga
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Exercise
- Listening to music
- Any others?

Who can we go to when we need help?

- Your adults at home
- Older siblings
- Your teacher
- Your friends
- Other adults at Chesswood
- Childline
- Any others?

Stress and anxiety



We hold tension in our bodies when we're under pressure, feeling stressed or feeling anxious.

Draw the outline of a gingerbread person and add where you feel stress and anxiety in your body - that might be butterflies in your tummy, your legs feeling weak or your heart beating fast.

Draw how it feels in each part of your body and use colours or numbers to show where you feel the strongest sensations. Let go of any tension by unclenching your hands, dropping your shoulders, stretching, doing yoga or dancing and draw or write any changes on your picture.

Connection



Write 1 or 2 words about how you're feeling.

Draw a heart or a star for yourself and write 3 kind words or messages to yourself.

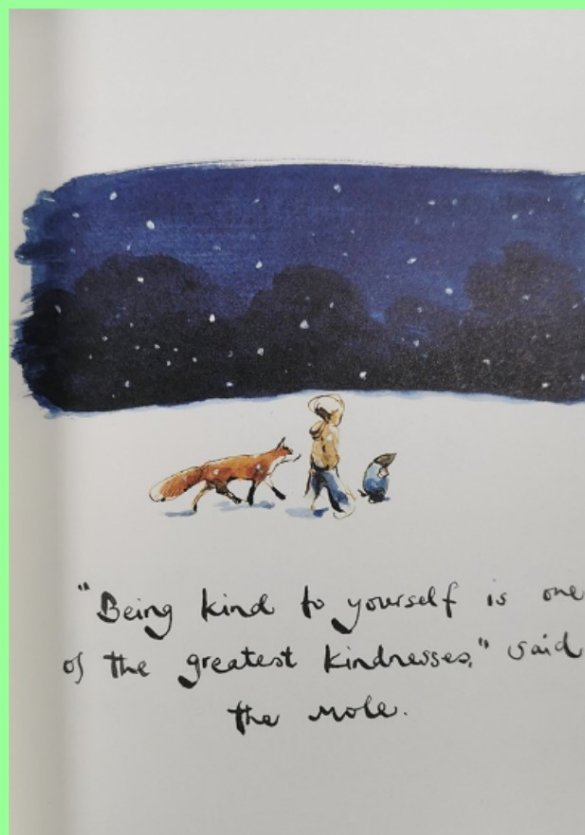
Remind yourself that no matter how difficult things feel, you are not alone - someone in your street, neighbourhood, town or city is likely to be feeling similar emotions to you right now.

Draw a heart or a star for someone else who is feeling like you do and write 3 kind words for them too.

You can do this for as many people you like.

Some final
thoughts...

What do you
think these
following
illustrations
mean?



"Being kind to yourself is one
of the greatest kindnesses," said
the mole.

"Most of the old moles
I know wish they had
listened less to their fears and
more to their dreams."



Don't forget to share how you express yourself by sending a photo or video to your teacher this week. We'd like to share and celebrate your self-expressions on Friday!

