

# MY 'FUTURE SMART' PLAN

Life has been a bit different lately. For one thing, words like 'bubble', 'lockdown', and 'isolation' meant quite different things back in February! One minute you had your friends, school, hobbies and future to look forward to. And then, "Boom!" You had to stay at home in your 'bubble', learning from home, away from everything and everyone. (Well, not quite, but it sure feels like it, sometimes!) And, no doubt, it has been a mix of good and ... well ... not so good.

Most of us are feeling uncertain, not knowing what the future will look like next week, let alone in a year! Change can be hard. It's normal to feel upset or even excited. Being prepared for change can help us cope, as can talking with someone you trust. But, at some point, you will return to school and a life like what you had before the lockdown. It will be great to see your friends and teachers and do the things you love to do, but you may also have some big questions:

*Will school be the same as before or different?*

*What will we need to do to be safe and how will our teachers support us?*

*What are the sorts of things I can do to help me with the changes?*

*Will I be able to play sport or attend the other things I love to do, like art or music class?*

*Will I be able to hang out with people outside my bubble, like my friends and wider whānau?*

*Will my whānau be safe while I am at school?*

**Stocktake:** *What changes do I want to keep going? What areas of my life do I need to pay attention to? Or get some support with?*

Use *Te Whare Tapa Whā* to think about your hauora (health, wellbeing). Ask yourself about the benefits and downsides of the changes around lockdown for your Taha Tinana (physical wellbeing), Taha (spiritual wellbeing), Taha Whānau (social and family wellbeing), and Taha Hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing).

**My 'future smart' plan:** Focus on your strengths, supports, and heroes, and the things you want to do to help yourself and others. You can write, draw, or record your plan, or mix it up! Do it alone, with people in your bubble, or through connecting with friends and family by phone or online.

**STEP 1: Who am I?** When we worry about new or big things, we can forget about the things we are good at, including how we have coped with big stuff in the past. Now is a good time to remind yourself of the things that you are good at and enjoy and the people that supported you.

**STEP 2: Everyday heroes:** A lot of people have been keeping us safe and well in our 'bubbles'. Is there someone you admire or who has been helpful during the lockdown? What makes them special? Is there a way you could tell them? Or could you help others the way they did?

**STEP 3: Different but the same:** What things have changed in your life lately, and what has stayed the same? Of the things that have changed, and you have liked, how could you keep them going after we move alert levels?

**STEP 4: What have I learnt?** Even if we feel a bit scared about a change or difficult situation, most of the time we cope. Afterwards, we feel stronger and know more about ourselves. Think about how you coped when school stopped quickly and you had to stay in your bubble? What did you do to cope? What was helpful to you?

**STEP 5: Acting up for good:** When we are dealing with something new or difficult, it can help to take action. What are some of the things you can do that might help you get used to or deal with the move back to school? For example, it might be finding out about what will happen or talking to a teacher or friend. Choose at least one idea and try it out!

## HINTS ON HELPFUL PLANNING

**How do I feel?** When things change, you may feel lots of different things. You may feel nervous about the unknown, happy at the thought of seeing your friends and teachers, and sad about not being with your family. It can get confusing!

Nervous Happy Sad Upset Angry Calm Lucky Relaxed Joyful Confused Disappointed Grumpy  
Playful Brave Curious Worried Guilty Lonely Hurt Bored Restless Tired

**My own best friend:** All of us have thoughts in our heads, all of the time. Sometimes, the thoughts can be encouraging, like: "I can do this. Just chill out and you will be alright." Sometimes, our thoughts can be a bit mean or unhelpful, like, "I can't do this" or "I am no good." We can choose to be a good friend to ourselves by talking to ourselves with kindness. This can help us feel better when we are upset.

**Talk it over:** Sometimes, when we are upset or finding something difficult, it can help to talk it over with someone we trust like a parent, sibling, or friend. Other times, it may help to talk to someone outside the family like a teacher, doctor, or counsellor. You can also call a helpline such as What's Up 0800 942 8787 or Need to Talk 1737 or take a look at *The Lowdown*.