



In this half termly issue, we will be looking into supporting our children with failure, Valentines activities and finding out what has been happening in our settings.

After the glitz and glitter of Christmas, January and early February can feel a little dull and unexciting. The weather is not great and even indoors the walls can seem bare when the tinsel and fairy lights have been packed away. But here are 3 festivals that are celebrated over the next few months to add some cheer;

Chinese New Year – 12th February. Chinese New Year, also referred to as Lunar New Year, is the Chinese festival which celebrates the New Year on the traditional Chinese calendar. The Chinese Zodiac animals are often used to represent years and 2021 is the year of the Ox. Chinese New Year is a perfect way to introduce children to different cultures and traditions such as tasting Chinese food and using chopsticks to eat, painting your own Chinese dragon made from hand and foot prints in green, orange, yellow and red paint and adding big eyes, scales and a moustache or encourage your child to write Chinese names and numbers in black paint.



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Shrove Tuesday—16th February. Pancake Day is celebrated the Tuesday before Lent starts which is 40 days before Easter. Traditionally, Pancake Day was all about using up all the eggs and butter and rich foods before the period of fasting. There are lots of easy pancake recipes online such as this one; (<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/easy-pancakes>) and your family can get involved with the mixing, tossing and eating of sweet or savoury pancakes. Or maybe having a pancake race ! And once you have finished, you could watch the story of 'Mr Wolf's pancakes' on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXQDiqHp-xM>).

Chinese Lantern Festival – 26th February. Celebrated on the 15th day of the first Chinese lunar month, the festival traditionally marks the end of the Chinese New Year. Families will go out to look at the moon, send up flying lanterns, fly bright drones, have a meal, and enjoy time together with family and friends in parks and natural areas. The Lantern Festival is the first full moon night in the Chinese calendar, marking the return of spring and symbolising the reunion of family. Make lanterns with your children by cutting slits into a cylinder cardboard tube and decorate with paint and sequins. Riddles are usually attached to the lanterns and so as a family, you could make up some riddles and see who can guess the answer.



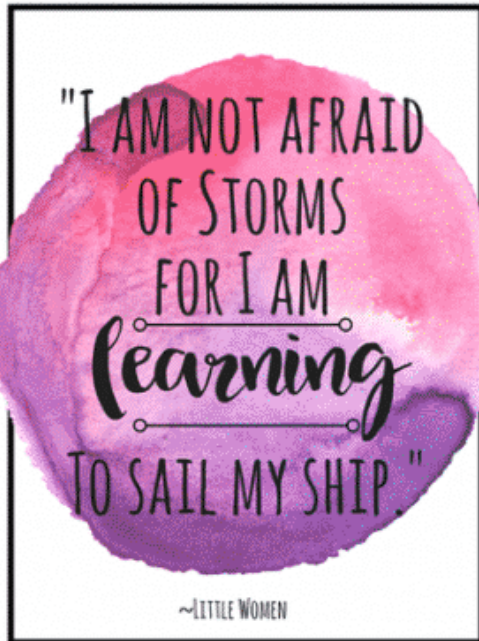


FEATURE ARTICLE:

'SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO FACE FAILURE'

Whilst this may seem like a harsh title, not learning to tolerate failure can leave some children feeling vulnerable and anxious.

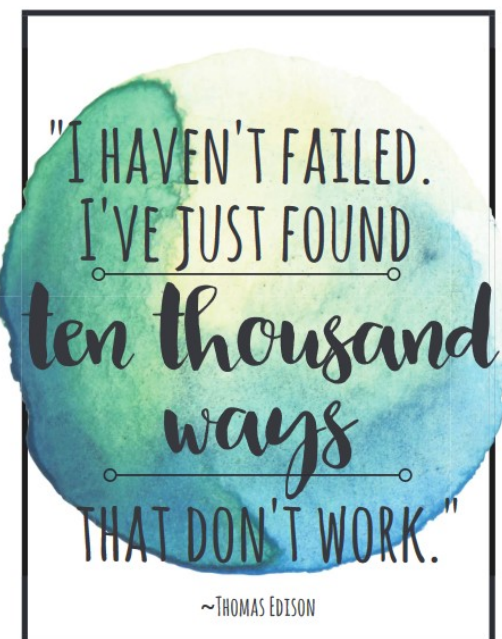
From the moment your children are born, parents love them unconditionally and as they grow, you support them as they learn to sit, crawl, and walk and comfort them after every bump and bruise. You find ways to nurture, support, teach, and provide for your children. But there also need to be opportunities for learning that come from making mistakes. Letting children learn from their mistakes helps build resilience and is essential to raising confident, capable, happy, and successful adults.



When children are given the opportunity to struggle and sometimes fail, we allow them to develop important social and emotional skills. Of course, you shouldn't risk their safety or not respond when what is needed most is reassurance. However, our role as adults should be to support and guide, rather than do for them what they need to learn to do for themselves. It is often during times when things aren't working out or pose a challenge that children have the opportunity to develop coping and resilience skills. Coping skills are like muscles; we don't know how strong they truly are until we need to use them!

Consider the learning that occurs when a child and a friend have an argument. Even though it is unpleasant, children learn to reflect on their own actions, manage their emotions, take another's perspective, solve problems, and compromise. If parents swoop in to fix those problems, children miss out on that critical skill-building that results from learning from mistakes or failure. Children that don't have opportunities to fail or struggle and recover have lower self-confidence and a less developed self-concept. They tend to be more fearful of failure and less willing to try new things because they don't know how they will handle it.

Providing opportunities to develop skills of resilience and coping within a safe, loving, and supportive environment are the best way to prepare children for life's challenges.



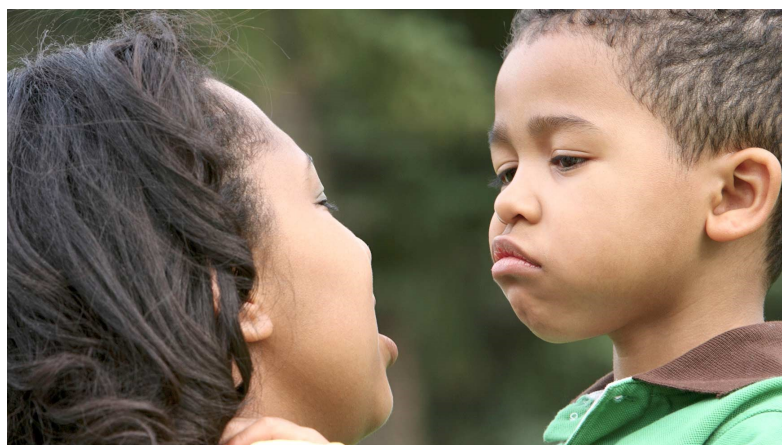
Opportunities for learning from mistakes

When your child asks for help: Try giving your child time for trial and error. "Let me see you try first and then I will help with the rest." Or, offer to do it together. If your child is non-verbal, give words to their actions so they can start to learn the process. For example, when a child reaches upward to be picked up, you can say, "It seems like you want me to carry you. I will hold you for a few minutes and then we will walk together." You don't need to do this every time, but consider it often.



When your child asks for an answer: A common parental instinct is to share all of your hard-earned wisdom, but in most cases it's best to support your children as they learn on their own. Start by asking them what they think or what they have tried. Then you'll know where you're starting from and how you can support them as they discover the answer. If they guess the wrong solution, support them as they experiment, make mistakes, and discover why they weren't right. You may not have time for this process every time, but it proves invaluable when you do.

When something goes wrong: Maybe they are fighting with their siblings or doing something socially inappropriate. Instead of telling your children how to fix it or fixing it yourself, start by asking how they think they should fix it. Ask questions like, "How do you think your brother feels? Why do you think he feels that way? What can you do to change that? How can you solve the problem?" Guiding children to reflect on the problem takes more time, but provides rich opportunities for learning and skill-building. While children learn from mistakes, they also develop the self-confidence, self-concept, and moral judgement.



When you struggle with letting your child fail: Allowing children to fail is not always easy for parents. The family we grew up in and cultural influences make an impact on how naturally this comes to us. Some of us grew up in families where learning from mistakes was an everyday occurrence; others of us had few opportunities to fail. Fortunately, you don't have to create these scenarios; they exist in everyday life. You just have to be there for support when needed!

I have a **GROWTH MINDSET.**

I am in charge of how smart I am because

I can **GROW** my **BRAIN**

like a muscle by learning hard things.

I can achieve **ANYTHING**

with **EFFORT** and **RIGHT STRATEGIES.**

And when I fail or make a mistake, it is a **GREAT** thing, because

I can **LEARN** from them and **I GET BETTER!**

1. Mistakes are an opportunity to grow.
2. Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn.
3. Mistakes are expected, inspected, and corrected.
4. If what I'm doing isn't working, then what I'm doing has to change.
5. **I can't do it...YET!**
6. Today, I will try something new!
7. Practice makes progress.
8. I can do hard things!
9. I fail now, so I can master later.
10. Even if I make mistakes while trying, I will still do my best every time because eventually, I will succeed!
11. FAIL= First Attempt In Learning
12. **Mistakes are how I learn.**
13. Whatever happens, I'll handle it.
14. This is tough but so am I.
15. Everyone makes mistakes, that's why pencils have erasers.
16. Where there's a will, there's a way!
17. I am capable.
18. Do your best and learn from your mistakes.
19. **Do your best and have fun!**
20. Be the change you want to see.
21. If it doesn't challenge you, it won't change you!
22. Forget the mistake, remember the lesson.
23. Big ideas start small.
24. Everything is difficult before it gets easy!
25. The expert in anything was once a beginner.

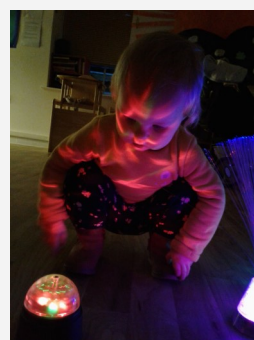
As early years practitioners, we are tasked not only with teaching children but we are also responsible for helping them to get to know themselves as learners. We are helping them learn to learn. These skills, brought into focus from the Tickell review (2011) and embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), are not only important in the early years, but help to create lifelong learners, with a love of learning and a toolkit of strategies to enable them to achieve.

For the children in our settings, identifying which of these mindsets they have can have a massive impact. Children with a fixed mindset are likely to be most concerned with outcome or judgement rather than the learning process and can lead them to struggle when making mistakes. However, children with a growth mindset see that the challenge of learning is more important than the outcome. Their resilience to set backs only supports them understanding how to better their approach.

You may notice on your child's eyLog observations that they are linked to the 'Characteristics of Effective learning'. These are used by the practitioners to reflect on the different ways that children learn, and then implement these in their practice. A child's individual learning characteristics will determine the way they respond to both the teaching and learning taking place in the environment. Under 'active learning', a sub heading of 'keeping trying' supports your children with their growth mindset. This characteristic focuses on the mental aspect of learning rather than the physical. It involves aspects such as concentration, which breeds involvement and in turn motivation. If your environment is stimulating and driven by the children's interests, it encourages more active learning. Children are more likely to concentrate on a task or activity that they have chosen, rather than something they are being told to do. They are more likely to persevere and achieve greater satisfaction on completion.



Wilton The children have been attending Forest sessions this term much to everyone's excitement. They have made paint brushes and wands using natural resources, mobiles to hang in the woods, reading stories and generally exploring the woods and jumping in puddles. Other topics that classes have covered are; Barn 1-Tales as old as time, looking at Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Winnie the pooh, The Wizard of Oz and Robin Hood. Barn 2-Places from around the world including Africa, Europe, Asia and Great Britain. Poppy-Winter including Arctic animals and winter clothes. Sunflowers-Shapes and numbers incorporating pencil control and colours. Daisy-Children's favourite stories including The Tiger who came to tea, Going on a Bear hunt and A Squash and a Squeeze. Baby unit-Sensory play in the sensory room and mark making using different media.



Burcombe This term, the staff and children have been learning about feelings and exploring the many emotions in more depth as a result of our current pandemic. The children have been involved in lots of differing activities with the use of various resources including emotion fishing and calming yoga. We used playdough to make facial expressions and incorporated feelings into snack times using our food to create facial expressions. Whilst exploring our feelings, the children were able to communicate their interests; interests that we were able to go on to explore incorporating them into our child-led planning. The children have participated in volcano experiments and pirate treasure hunts and looked at transport, monster trucks in particular. And the children have participated in some 'junk modelling' making various creations.



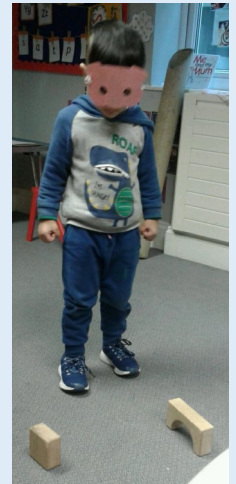
St Peters At St Peter's the children have had a really big interest within being creative. This has led to us learning all about different artists and exploring different Media's within the Goslings group and learning about all different forms of mark making within the ducklings. We have explored the different art styles of artists such as Jaxon Pollock, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso and Vincent Van Gough. This has allowed the children to explore different ways of using paint, making collages, drawing portraits and so much more. We have been enjoying spending time outside in the garden spotting all different kinds of weather changes, especially enjoying a snow day. We have also been having lots of fun joining in with Joe Wicks' keep fit sessions and cosmic yoga sessions.



Bemerton We have been very busy since the New Year. The children have been enjoying messy play and have been honing their skills with using one handed tools. We have also celebrated Burns night and explored all things Scottish including trying new foods such as porridge and flat sausage, done Highland dancing and drawn the Scottish flag.



City In Owls class, we have been exploring the story of The Three Little Pigs. The children made masks of the characters and then acted out the story. We explored what houses are made of, talked about chimneys and why houses have them and the children shared thoughts about their own houses. We used a variety of construction toys to build houses with and we explored how to make them balance and be strong like in the story. We made a 3D story scene in our tuff tray and the children showed great skills in retelling the story and using language to repeat refrains from the story, using different voices for each of the characters. We then watched the story using our ICT equipment and we learnt a new song linked to the story. Explorers and butterfly room had their very own Winnie the Pooh day where the children coloured pictures, sang songs and had a fun teddy bears picnic including honey on toast. The children have been exploring colours through their favourite book, enjoying mixing colours and seeing the different results. We have also been busy making Valentines cards and crafts for our loved ones. Butterflies were also lucky enough to venture out in the snow in which they had lots of fun.



Semley The flurries of snow have led to much excitement over the past weeks and have leapfrogged the children to learn some lovely new songs about snowmen. The children have been thoroughly enjoying sensory and messy play too with flour, cornflour, foam, and ice, providing the perfect medium for exploration, drawing, and having fun together. From colder climates to red hot volcanoes, one of our children inspired their friends to become fascinated by lava. Science fun has therefore emerged with many making their own volcanoes ready to fizz and bubble with a concoction of vinegar and bicarbonate of soda! It has been so wonderful to hear the excitement....."Watch out guys, its going to explode"! As Valentines Day is soon upon us, sweet smelling roses and hearts adorned our creative area, encouraging the children to use different materials to design cards and pictures for the people they love. At a loving time, we talked about what makes us good friends to each other and practised super sharing and kindness.



Corsham The children have been developing a wide range of skills and experienced many activities that encourage the children to be independent learners whilst developing their physical, social and emotional abilities, all the while being cared for by supportive and responsive practitioners.



Calne We would like to start by saying a huge thankyou to all the children. The world they have known has been very different and difficult at times over the past year, yet they have shown great strength, resilience and understanding. Some are missing family, trips to the park with friends or simply a hug from loved ones. Yet through all this they have kept their joy, enthusiasm and thirst for learning. The Adventure Room children have made the days fun through their love of singing and stories and has provided us all with the happiness and enjoyment needed. Through our focus on health and self-care this term the children are developing a great awareness of self-regulation and well-being. Their enthusiasm for 'Mindful Moments' is delightful. Our story 'Dr Dog explains coronavirus' has given the children wonderful opportunities to share their feelings, promoting their confidence and understanding. The Explorer Room children have been focusing on mathematical concepts this term, through a range of activities, developing awareness of shape,



and pattern making fruit kebabs. They have also been taking part in the RSPB's big bird watch and have made their own binoculars and have been exploring the life cycle of birds. They are currently undertaking an egg experiment to see the transparency of the egg which has been a real talking point for the children.



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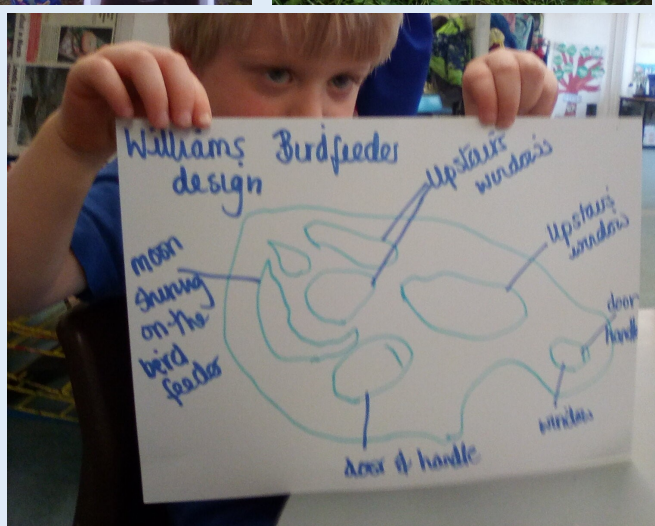


We have been busy exploring letter sounds this term. The children have enjoyed singing the jolly phonics songs and using Makaton to ask for their drink and snack. We made treasure maps for the pirates, created a still life gallery of apple paintings, hid snakes in the sand and built igloos out of ice. Taking part in the RSPB's garden bird watch, the children identified birds in our garden, looked for insects and made their own bird food. The winter weather has also given us many exciting opportunities. The children dressed up warm before exploring the icicles and

frosted spider webs, they even took their own photographs for our display and made glitter trails in glue. Later in the month our garden was covered in snow so we made different sized foot prints and explored how the snow changed when we brought it inside.



Froxfield Following our Upper Nursery Eco school committee meeting, our action plan was to take care of the birds, the bees and the trees! Our babies and toddlers have been digging over their flower beds and planting wild flower seeds for the bees. Lower nursery have been planting apple and pear trees to make sure there are enough trees for our planet Earth. Upper nursery have made a wormery and been designing bird nesting boxes. We then used junk modelling to create our own. A kindly parent donated some real nesting boxes which we have positioned on trees in our forest area and we really hope we get some feathered residents soon!





In to the great outdoors

Imogen is our company curriculum lead for outdoor learning and is a qualified Forest School Practitioner. Based on the activities she has been completing with the children attending our Wilton setting, you might want to use the following information to have some fun with your children at home too;

For babies and toddlers—Natural Imprints in Playdough. At this time of year pine, pinecones, yew, catkins and sticks are all fantastic to leave imprints in playdough, or for little hands to explore vertical and horizontal perspectives whilst delving into investigations of texture and media. Option to complete indoors after collecting your nature finds on a walk.

Playdough recipe:

1 Cup Plain Flour, ¼ Cup Salt, 1/3 Cup Luke Warm Water, 1 tbsp Oil, 3 tbsp Lemon Juice

A few drops of food colouring (optional)

Combine. Play with quantities until you are happy with the dough.

For Pre-schoolers—We've been celebrating various festivals of snow and ice by making ice lanterns. During your daily walk, collect various foliage to freeze in your lantern. Cut the bottom off of a milk bottle, add your greenery and pour over some water. Weight a plastic cup in the centre (this will form the gap for your candle). Freeze. Remove from the freeze fill the plastic cup in warm water to remove, stand the milk bottle in warm water to thaw the lantern from the bottle. Add your LED tealight, and display.





Tomato soup with pasta

Ingredients— 2bsp olive oil, 1/2 onion finely chopped, 1 small carrot finely chopped, 1 celery stick finely

chopped, 100ml passata, 400g peeled tomatoes, 1/2 vegetable or chicken stick melt or cube, 2 tbsp cream (optional), 100g soup pasta.

Method—Heat the oil in a saucepan over a low heat. Add the onion, carrot and celery and fry for 8-10 mins until tender, but don't let them brown too much. Add the passata and tomatoes and bring to the boil. Add the stock, 200ml water and a pinch of sugar, then season and simmer for 20 mins. Taste the soup and adjust the seasoning – add more water if you need to. Stir in the cream (if using) and the cooked pasta. Spoon into bowls and top with cheese, basil or pesto – or all three.

Easy slow cooker chicken casserole

Ingredients—1 leek roughly chopped, 1 carrot roughly chopped, 1

onion roughly chopped, 350g new potatoes roughly chopped, 6 boneless chicken thighs chopped, 500ml chicken stock, 4 tbsp vegetable gravy.

Method—Put the veg and chicken in a slow cooker. Pour the stock over and around the chicken thighs, then mix in the gravy granules to thicken it up (the sauce will be quite thick – use less gravy if you prefer a runnier casserole). Switch the slow cooker to low and leave to cook for at least 4 hrs, or up to 8 hrs – try putting it on before you go to work, so that it's ready when you get home. Season well then serve.



Cheesy burrito casserole

Ingredients—1lb Lean ground beef 1/2 medium onion, diced small, 1 packet taco seasoning, 6 flour tortillas, 1 can refried beans, 4 cups grated cheese, 1 can condensed cream of mushroom soup, 6oz sour cream. Method— Preheat oven to 170°C. Brown the beef and onions over medium heat in a large pan. Add taco seasoning and stir in refried beans. Mix together mushroom soup and sour cream in a bowl. Spread half the sour cream mixture on the bottom of a 13" x 9" dish. Tear 3 flour tortillas into medium size pieces, and place them over the sour cream mixture. Spread half the beef mixture over the tortillas. Layer 2 cups of shredded Mexican cheese over the beef mixture. Repeat the layers. Bake uncovered in a preheated 350° oven for 25 minutes. Remove casserole from the oven and allow to set 5-7 minutes before serving.



Winter warmer recipes.

These are cheap to make, easy to do and filling on cold days.

Tuna pasta bake

Ingredients—300g fresh pasta, 500g tomato and herb pasta sauce, 3 x 120g tins tuna steak in in springwater, drained and flaked, 325g tin sweetcorn in water, drained, 390g carton Italian chopped tomatoes, 14g fresh flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked, washed and chopped, 100g mature cheddar, grated. Method—Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. Bring a large pan of water to the boil, then add the pasta and cook for 6 minutes. Drain. Tip the cooked pasta back into the pan and stir through the pasta sauce, tuna, sweetcorn, chopped tomatoes and half the parsley. Tip the mixture into a 1½-litre baking dish and sprinkle the cheese over the top. Cook for 30 minutes until golden and bubbling. Garnish with the remaining parsley just before serving.



Cut out large hearts and place them on the floor. Play a game of musical bumps but rather than sitting down when the music stops, you stand on a heart.

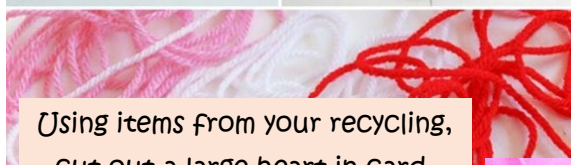


Make a heart necklace for your loved ones. Use pre cut hearts of differing sizes with a large hole punched from the middle. Encourage your child to decorate the hearts before threading onto wool or string using cut up straws as spacers.



Old jam jars are great for turning into night lamps. Cover the outside of the jar with PVA glue and place light coloured tissue paper all around. Add hearts cut out either from more tissue paper, card or sequins. Place a tea-lights or battery operated lights inside for the full effect.

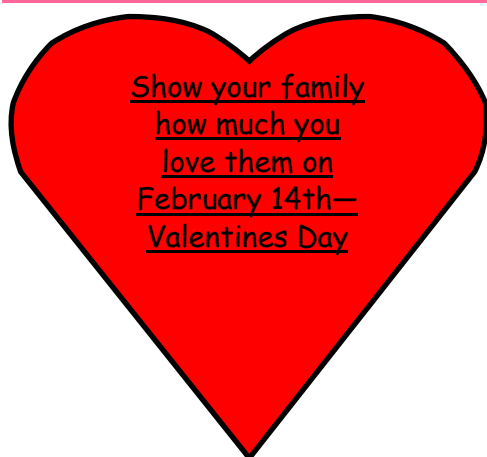
Using items from your recycling, cut out a large heart in cardboard and then a smaller heart from the inside. Wrap red or pink wool all around the shape until you can't see any card. Tie the end in a knot and hang up in your house.



Using a heart shaped cutter, lolly sticks and your favourite fruit (here they have used watermelon and strawberries to keep with the Valentines coloured theme) for a healthy and tasty snack.



Show your family how much you love them on February 14th—Valentines Day



Make your own heart shaped wrapping paper or prints by using paint and the centre of a toilet

Making 'love bugs' from playdough, pipe cleaners and other crafty bits is a lovely way for your child to show off their creative side to give to their family or friends. They can be any size and use heart cutters.