



Health, Well-being and Lifestyle

This poster will explore the concept of health, well-being and lifestyle and how they interconnect to influence the overall quality of life, specifically in the early years. An exploration of health and well-being will include both the different aspects along with the factors that influence them. An analysis of relevant legislations and theoretical perspectives will also be implemented to provide a better understanding of key information in relation to health, well-being and lifestyle. Consideration of the role of the early year's practitioner and how they can effectively support and promote health, and well-being will also be provided. Overall, the poster will highlight the nature of health and well-being in the sense that it is holistic and is influenced by numerous factors. Public Health Wales (no date) highlights that at the heart of the new Welsh Curriculum lies a commitment to health and well-being. The importance is reflected in its inclusion among the six areas of Learning Experience within Welsh schools.



Health

WHO (no date) states that health is the overall state of physical, mental and social well-being. Musgrave (2017) supports this statement, further emphasising that health involves both the attainment and ongoing maintenance of physical fitness and mental stability. Public Health Nigeria (2021) underline that there are six key components of health. These involve physical, spiritual, emotional, social, mental and environmental. Marshall-Seslar (no date) confesses that physical health describes the condition and performance of an individual's body and their functions. It involves maintaining proper nutrition, staying physically active, managing body weight and supporting overall wellness. Coe and Enomoto (2024) depict that spiritual health provides meaning in a person's life and is a key element along with physical, mental and social health. Emotional health concerns the ability to be self-aware, regulate emotions and navigate challenges portrays (Owen, no date). Killam (2025) depicts that social health involves the ability to develop and maintain close, meaningful relationships, feel a sense of connection and belonging within a community, and have access to a reliable support system. BBC News (2016) express that mental health refers to an individuals emotional, psychological and social well-being. It influences how people think, feel and behave. It plays a key role in how someone copes with stress, builds relationships and makes decisions. WHO (no date) emphasises that strong environmental health depends on clean air, a stable climate and the protection of natural ecosystems. It also requires reliable access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene, along with protection from harmful radiation, toxic chemicals and hazardous working conditions. Public Health England (2016) highlight that early childhood health is critical, as the foundations laid during pregnancy and the early years influence a child's development well into adulthood. Nurturing, healthy early experiences support school readiness and improve long-term life chances. Foundation Years (no date) explains that everyone has mental health and just like physical health, it can fluctuate. It is further highlighted that for children and babies, mental health is closely linked to their social and emotional development. Each child's mental health experience is unique and can be shaped by a variety of factors, including the quality of their relationships with parents or care providers, their nutrition and even their experience in the whom. The importance of health is underscored by its recognition as a fundamental right in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF (no date) underline that children have the right to the highest attainable standards of healthcare, access to clean drinking water, nutritious food and a clean and secure place to live. Both adults and children should be equipped with the knowledge they need to maintain their health and well-being. Similarly, Kendra (2024) recognised the significance of health as a foundational requirement aligning with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Health and well-being are encompassed within the second tier of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, known as safety and security needs. According to Kendra (2024) together the safety and physiological levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs comprise what is often referred to as basic needs.

Well-Being

Mental Health Foundation (2015) confirms that the Oxford English Dictionary defines wellbeing as “the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy”. However, Mental Health Foundation (2015) adds that it is important to understand that well-being goes beyond just moment to moment happiness. While happiness is a part of it, well-being also includes broader aspects such as overall life satisfaction and a sense of purpose. Mind (2023) declares that mental wellbeing does not have a single definition. It can refer to a person's emotions, their ability to handle everyday challenges or their sense of what they can manage or achieve at any given time. It is further suggested by Mind (2023) that having good mental well-being does not mean an individual is always happy or untouched by events that occur. It means that the person can navigate the challenges and emotions in a healthy way. Davies (no date) confirms that well-being is a broad concept that includes feeling happy, being healthy and living a life with purpose. Further research also indicates that well-being is a broader aspect and involves six distinguished factors suggests (Davis, no date). GOV UK (2013) states that well-being includes both how individual's experience their lives and how they perceives their life circumstances in relation to social norms and values. GOV UK (2013) emphasised that well-being exists in two dimensions, and these involve subjective well-being and objective well-being. Subjective well-being questions individual directly about how they think and feel in relation to their well-being. Whereas objective well-being is based on presumptions about basic human rights and requirements. Davis (no date) highlights that there are different forms of well-being and some of these include emotional, social and mental well-being. Emotional well-being concerns an individual's emotions and satisfaction with their life. Social well-being refers to an individual's relationship quality with others. Finally, mental well-being concerns the well-being of the mind. GOV UK (2013) also recognised mental well-being as a key factors and discussed that mental well-being is the overall well-being of an individual and involves more than just the absence of mental illness. For GOV UK (2013) mental well-being is a positive state of mind and body and is supported by social and psychological well-being. Mind (2023) conveys that prioritising and improving mental well-being is important and this can be achieved through several strategies. Davis (no date) suggests that well-being is arguably the most important thing in life, conveying its significance. His further reason being that a fundamental motivator of human behaviour is the pursuit of greater well-being, influencing decisions across work, relationships and personal interests. Davis (no date) underlines that well-being is the purpose of life even though it is defined and experienced in all different ways. Mental Health Foundation (2015) indicates that wellbeing is commonly recognised as a central objective in human life, consistently reflected in people's goals and choices. Jarden and Roache (2023) portrayed that when parents are asked about their aspirations for their children, well-being is not only commonly mentioned but often considered the most important factors. Again, indicating the fundamental importance of well-being. Public Health Wales (no date) highlights the importance of well-being in the early years by stressing that physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits.

Lifestyle

Cambridge Dictionary (no date) defines lifestyle as an individual's way of living, the things that a person or a particular group usually do. NHS England (no date) highlights that mental, emotional and physical health along with a healthy lifestyle all contributes to an individual's overall health and well-being. Conveying that all three concepts are connected. NHS England (no date) also portrays that not all diseases are preventable however a great quantity of deaths especially those from coronary heart disease and lung cancer can be prevented by maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It is emphasised that a healthy lifestyle is not just avoiding disease but that maintaining a healthy diet, completing enough exercise, hydration and sleep are essential components of life. BBC Bitesize (no date) agrees with this point and suggests that to lead a healthy lifestyle, it is important to eat a balanced diet, stay physically active and get enough rest. However, BBC Bitesize (no date) goes into further detail and explains further reasons as to why a balanced diet is essential for a healthy lifestyle. It is stated that this is because bodies are like machines and require a balance of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals and water to maintain good working order and disrupting this balance may compromise bodily functions and increase the risk of health issues. A balanced diet also involves staying within the recommended calorie intake, as any excess energy the body does not use will be stored as fat. BBC Bitesize (no date) goes on to discuss that a balanced diet provides many benefits and these include a strong immune system to both fight and prevent illness along with lowering the risk of certain types of cancer. It is also associated with lowering blood pressure, maintains a healthy weight, provides higher energy levels and enables essential nutrients to assist with tissue growth. Implying that a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet provide many health benefits. BBC Bitesize (no date) further confesses how staying active also contributes to a healthy lifestyle., this is because the human body is designed for movement, not prolonged inactivity. Exercise improves physical health along with a healthy attitude towards challenges and mental pressures. It is also apparent that physical activity improves sleeping patterns, socialisation and develops new skills. Implying that staying active and a healthy lifestyle improves an individual's holistic development. Healthy Lifestyle London (no date) stresses that fulfilling a healthy lifestyle can add years of healthy life and improve overall well-being. For Healthy Lifestyle London (no date) this can be achieved by moving, eating, sleeping, relaxing, connecting and avoiding harmful substances. Healthy Lifestyle London (no date) encouraged that progress is made through small steps and that any movement is better than none.

BBC Bitesize (no date) claims that an unhealthy lifestyle is essentially the opposite of a healthy lifestyle and therefore involves factors such as a poor diet, inefficient amount of exercise, a lack of sleep and substance abuse. These detrimental factors contribute to negative influences on both the body and the mind and may have long term or short-term effects. Such effects can involve reduced life expectancy, increased stress, obesity, depression or cancer.

Welsh Government (2021) underlines that there are various factors can influence the kind of lifestyle a person leads, including their home environment, diet and nutrition, income level, relationships, community connections, parenting skills and how actively they engage with available services. For this reason, NHS Wales (no date) stresses that The ACE Support Hub is dedicated to making Wales a global leader in creating safe, supportive and trauma-free childhoods. Adverse childhood experiences involve traumatic events, specifically in early childhood that significantly impact the health and well-being of an individual (NHS Wales, no date). Individual's who experience adverse childhood experience are more likely to experience poor mental health and are more likely to complete health harming behaviours which can lead to diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer further on in life. Therefore, The ACE Support Hub are working hard to spread information and knowledge on the topic as well as providing training for professionals to drive change on the topic and make a difference.

Application to Early Years Practise

Foundation Years (no date) states that the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework suggests that early year's practitioners must encourage the good health, including the oral health of children that are in attendance of the setting. This involves providing balanced and nutritional food and drinks, supporting the children's mental health and well-being and all the other aspects of healthy child development. Department for Education (2023) highlights the importance of supporting mental health in the early years and suggest that this can be done by forming and maintaining healthy relationships and providing a loving and nurturing environment. Every child in the early year's foundation stage should have a named key person suggests (Department for Education, 2023). This is a practitioner that works closely with the child and their parents or carers and Department for Education (2023) states that this relationship is essential to support the child's mental health. Seaman and Giles (2021) discuss that building relationships with children was seen as essential for fostering their social and emotional well-being, as well as for nurturing their confidence and sense of security. Alongside the implementation of the key approach, several practitioners highlighted the value of offering physical comfort, giving focused attention and engaging with children at their level to support the formation of strong attachments. Practitioners also emphasised the importance of consistency and familiarity in promoting the development of children's social and emotional skills.

Martin et al. (2022) states that a foundational principle of infant mental health practise is the understanding that the quality of care an infant receives in the early years profoundly influences their development. Therefore, early years partitioners serve an important role in offering children responsive and supportive relationships that foster healthy coping skills and emotional resilience.

McMahon and Dyer (2018) discuss that early year's practitioners have a duty to safeguard children and to place their well-being at the centre of all aspects of practise. Therefore, practitioners must ensure that the environment is secure and that appropriate measures are in place to promote children's safety and well-being.

Conclusion

In conclusion it is evident that health, well-being and lifestyle are all essential concepts that interconnect to improve the overall quality of life for an individual. It is also explicit all three are important factors when considering the early years and that there are numerous legislations, theories and programmes to promote this.



I can confirm I have not used any form of artificial intelligence in this assignment.

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