

Health, Well-being and Lifestyles

Introduction

The aim of this academic poster is to determine and discover the meanings and importance of health, well-being and lifestyles while considering the early years of life. To do this, a range of theories and models will be used to identify meaningfulness. Additionally, the poster will examine how all three ideas influence one another in specific ways. According to article 3 from UNICEF (The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) (1989) every choice and action that has an impact on children must be made with the child's best interests in mind, whether this be providing an ideal environment, the correct nutrition or significant relationships. Factors as such are what interlink to impact a child's health, well-being and lifestyles. As suggested by Hautekie *et al* (2022) health, well-being and lifestyles are all connected, for example, Hautekie *et al* (2022) said that when someone adapts to negative lifestyles, it will result in negative health outcomes. Throughout the study, they were able to discover that maintaining a healthy lifestyle was favorably correlated with wellbeing and mental health. To add to this, Musgrave (2017) stated that the attainment and upkeep of mental stability and physical fitness can be regarded as health and well-being.

Health

The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2022) believes that health is more than just the absence of illness or disability; it is an impression of entirety physical, mental, and social well-being. Furthermore, GOV UK (No Date) has a similar view of what they consider health to be, to be concerned about a person's complete health in addition to whether or not they are unwell or have a medical issue. As stated by National Academies of Sciences *et al* (2019) a child's health is important because where a child is not provided with the correct milestones throughout their early years, it is highly likely that there will be a representation of negative outcomes upon cognitive development and psychological and behavioral health. Nevertheless, alongside mentally, these health issues also frequently appear physically as disorders. According to UNICEF (1989) article 24, these basic needs include clean water, healthy food, a safe and hygienic environment, health education, and secure relationships as every child is entitled to the greatest health care available. For example, as shown in a study carried out by Christian *et al* (2015), the environment that a child is living in has a large impact on a child's physical and social health and mobility. Over the years independent mobility within children has decreased, this is largely due to the area that certain children grow up in. Such as, those children who grow up in less fortunate upbringings experiencing lower incomes may not have the facilities to engage in physical and social activities due to having no urban green areas or a park close by. However, the more fortunate children experiencing a higher income are often surrounded by appropriate facilities which provide opportunities for healthy development. The findings from this study showed that a child's health is highly connected to the destination in which they live in. Moreover, as expressed by Bowlby in his attachment theory, health is also highly affected by the relationships created within the early years, Bowlby discussed that the relationships that a child makes will impact their future relationships, social relations and interactions, sense of security and they will anticipate future interpersonal challenges and social functioning (Aditama *et al*,2023). Finally, the Dahlgren-Whitehead model is a model which refers to both the connection between a person's environment, health, and the individual. The model has made it possible for us to comprehend the wide range of intricate aspects that impact a child's development into adulthood. The biological and genetic aspects of age, sex, and heredity are examined in the model's initial layer. The individual's behavior and how their lifestyle either enhances or detracts from their health are examined in the second layer. The third layer investigates social and community factors and if they affect an individual's health. Lastly, the fourth tier investigates the physical surroundings, including housing, working situations, and access to necessary medical resources (Answers, Nursing, 2024).



Source: Pinterest:2024

Well-being

WHO (2021) claims that a favorable state that both individuals and societies experience is called well-being. Like health, it is a resource for day-to-day living and is influenced by environmental, social, and economic factors. Quality of life and the capacity of individuals and communities to make meaningful and purposeful contributions to the world are both components of well-being. Lee (2021) agrees with WHO (2021) and expands upon these points, for example, Lee (2021) maintains that the definition and measurement of happiness are derived from individual evaluations of the quality of their own lives, such as whether they are content with their lives overall and how they have evolved, as well as disagreements over the elements of experience and thought that are most essential to a good life. He then goes onto discussing two different methods, hedonic and eudaimonic. According to Ryff *et al* (2021), hedonic well-being is what minimises discomfort and maximises enjoyment. Cognitive assessments of life satisfaction and the proportion of content or adverse feelings are used to gauge hedonic wellbeing. The term "hedonic adaptation" describes people's inclination to generally return to a certain degree of happiness regardless of life's highs and lows. Ryff *et al* (2021) then suggests since eudaimonic signifies that a person has lived a life well lived, it encompasses qualities like authenticity, excellence, progress, significance, self-acceptance, and meaningful connections. To illustrate, NSPCC (2021) claims that encouraging the well-being of children is essential to their safety, development, and successful transition into adulthood. Factors that children may experience that will interfere with development are family situations, the setting in which they are brought up in, stress, social isolation, and abuse and neglect. In result, these negative factors will harm a child's current and future state of well-being, just as affirmative experiences can support it. Furthermore, NSPCC (2021) builds on this where they tell us that a child's well-being is everyone's responsibility, from the parent to the to the practitioner. For example, promoting children's wellness, identifying any concerns regarding their welfare, and knowing what to do to keep them safe are all duties of anyone who works with children. Ways in which will support a caregiver to do this is by supplying children the opportunity to express themselves in a variety of ways, creating healthy relationships which will motivate them to speak out or through strategies such as exercise to up-lift their physical health and well-being. Equally important aspects of physical well-being are social and emotional well-being. Children's social and emotional growth is essential to their cognitive

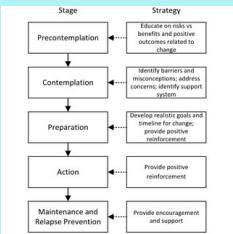


Source: Communication Theory:2019

development and to their ability to live a healthy, fulfilling life. Children can learn to comprehend emotions, have confidence in their skills, take care of themselves independently, and form friendships through adult modeling, supervision, and supportive connections (Department of Education, No Date). As indicated by Pichère and Cadiat (2015), Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs represents five levels of needs that are essential throughout life, these include, physiological, security, belonging, esteem and personal accomplishment, Maslow believed that this was the order of importance and before going on to the next level, you should meet the requirements of the previous one. If one did not experience these needs throughout the early years of life, the individual will not be satisfied or develop correctly.

Application to Early Years Practice

While clearly represented throughout this poster, Chakraborty (2020) informs us that life-style decisions account for 60% of health and wellbeing. Nonetheless, a young child’s lifestyle is often in the hands of the parent or caregiver, in this case, Berlinski *et al* (2015) believes that for children to have a higher chance of becoming contributing members of society, they must thrive during their formative years, to do this, the parent or caregiver must keep in mind that children have a distinct legal identity and different set of interests from their parents, which should be respected in order to satisfy their needs and entitlements. According to Bakopoulou *et al* (2024), where a child’s needs are not met and there are poor parent-child relationships, their mental health and emotional well-being are affected, and they lack social and emotional learning, which makes it difficult for them to set and accomplish constructive goals, feel and act empathetically toward others, build and sustain healthy relationships, comprehend and control their emotions, make responsible decisions, lack social understanding, self-management, self-awareness, and accountable decision-making skills. If this is the case and a child has not yet established elements for sustaining mental well-being, the goal is to acquire favorable results in school and in the future. For example, Seaman and Giles (2021) tells us that early childhood education experiences can foster children's social and emotional development and lead to greater lifelong results. Professional practitioners will carry this out through many strategies using the New Curriculum for Wales which was created to support the wellbeing of each learner while attending to their specific needs and holistic development (HWB, 2024). A practitioner can achieve this by modeling and encouraging healthy behaviors, which will teach children how to take care of their bodies, including healthy eating and managing their own needs. Practitioners can also facilitate physical development by offering both indoor and outdoor play opportunities within clean and safe environments to help children develop their strength, stability, balance, fine and gross motor skills, and agility (Sevel, 2022). To add to this, to be a professional practitioner they need to be able to identify signs of abuse and neglect and act on them by creating safeguarding concerns. The NSPCC (2024) asserts that safeguarding is vital because every child has the right to be free from harm. Every organisation that works with or encounters children should have safeguarding policies and procedures in place to protect their safety. In result, Department of Education (2024) believes that working together with parents and caregivers is an important element of the early years foundation stage as it will lead to consistency, trust and stability, which in turn establishes healthy limits and effective at-home parenting (Wilson, 2016).



Source: Research Gate:2019

Lifestyles

Molborn (2021) says that lifestyles are a component of social inequalities that stem from individual actions in social group differences. A healthy lifestyle is a significant step toward comprehending social inequalities and healthy behaviors. As pointed out by ESTYN (2013) living a healthy lifestyle enhances wellbeing. Components of a healthy lifestyle include healthy eating and drinking habits, frequent physical activity, emotional and mental wellness, responsible attitudes and behaviors—particularly regarding substance use and abuse and lastly, a clean and safe environment. Thomas and Lewis (2016) suggest that one must enable the three essential actions, forming positive habits, cultivating positive thought patterns, and being driven to be able to do this. However, there are specific life factors that may play as an obstacle when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle, Li *et al* (2018) maintains that healthy nutrition and exercise habits are largely impacted by the type of environment and income a person is surrounded by due to the lack of access to facilities. In result, this can often be the cause of parents not being able to correctly care for their child leading to lack of development and frequently, un-secure relationships. Although, when children are put in these situations there are multi-agency workers and organisations that are there to support these children to meet their needs. To illustrate, HM Government (2023) tells us that the needs of the entire family should be met by practitioners while using a child-centered approach to protect the welfare of every child. Multi-agency interaction and collaboration at all levels are necessary to safeguard children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. When it comes to protecting children, local organisations and agencies that work with families and children have an immense and frequently required role. Examples of these organisations are ESTYN, Save the Children, Children’s Commissioner Wales and so on. As noted by Bronfenbrenner, to raise children successfully requires the cooperation and assistance of the entire society, from large societal institutions to environmental systems Hayes *et al* (2017). As stated by Bagordo *et al* (2017) the reasons to why lifestyles are important for young children are because where children are brought up surrounded by health-risk behaviors as opposed to health-promoting behaviors, it is likely that they will experience negative health outcomes as both a child and adult such as, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, obesity and cancer alongside, poor choices, lack of development physically and mentally, incapability's of forming relationships and a lower educational level. However, GOV UK points out that the transtheoretical model, in summary, is a theory of behavior change that evaluates a person's willingness to adopt a new, healthier behavior and then offers guidance to support someone in changing their lifestyles positively (CommGAP, No Date).

Source: IMGBIN: 2020



Conclusion

In conclusion, from this research it is evident that health, well-being and lifestyles are closely related, and all have an impact on one another. An enabling adult is what is most important for a child to experience these healthy lifestyles and if the adult fails to provide these basic needs, the child will suffer from developmental delays and health conditions. Ensuring that healthy habits are a priority and fostering an environment that supports mental and physical well-being will help to make certain that children have the foundation they need for leading successful, happy, and healthy lives.

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