

Introduction

This academic poster explores the aspects and importance of professional practice in the early years, regarding children's health, wellbeing, and lifestyle. It will examine children's lifestyles, including any nutritional inadequacies, stressors, and reasons for poor health and wellbeing, which is a holistic view on the theme. A holistic definition of health and wellbeing considers a person's physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing as well as their lifestyle. It concentrates on the entire body and mind rather than a specific bodily component and the problem's symptoms (Welsh Government, n.d).

Health

In contrast to simply being free from illness or infirmity, health is a condition of whole physical, mental, and social wellbeing, as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1948 (2022). Health emphasises both physical abilities, as well as social and personal qualities. This conceptualises health as a positive, underpinning wellbeing, rather than state of freedom from illness and impairment alone, and of including mental and social dimensions of health in addition to physiological ones. A later WHO definition in 1984 focused on the interactions between individuals, groups, and their physical, psychological, and cultural environments further developed this positive perception on health. The degree to which an individual will fulfil wants and realise objectives while also being able to adapt within their environment.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2022) state children who engage in regular physical activity can increase their cardiorespiratory fitness, grow strong bones and muscles, manage their weight, lessen the signs of anxiety and depression, and lower their risk of health conditions including obesity. Children should engage in exercise for 60 minutes a day, according to the National Health Service (NHS) (2018), however, it need not occur all at once. It can be just as beneficial to work out for a few 10-minute or 5-minute periods throughout the day as it is for an hour. Children may engage in active play such as ball games, chasing activities like, riding scooters, and using swings, climbing frames, and see-saws at playgrounds.

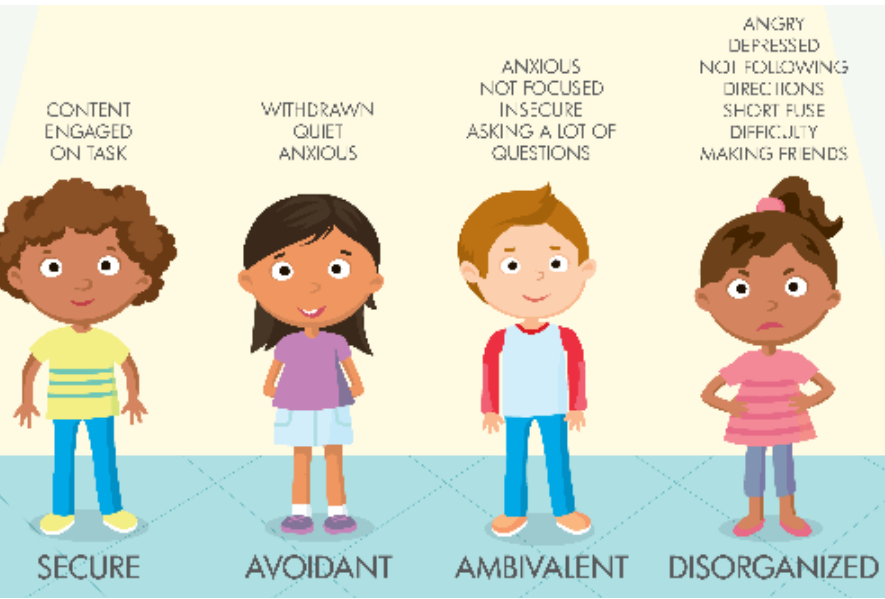
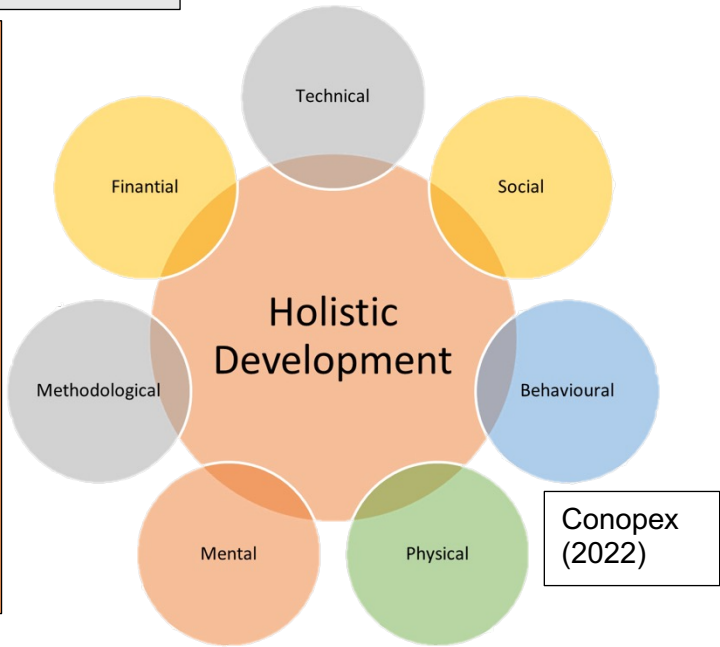
Data from developed nations indicate that many young people do not have the best mental health. Children who are in good mental health are more emotionally resilient in life and mature into healthy individuals. Children and young people who are in good physical health, consuming a balanced diet, and exercising regularly can help keep them mentally healthy. Other elements, such as feeling loved, trusted, understood, and safe, are also crucial. Children who are resilient, upbeat, and who feel like they belong in the world are more likely to have good mental health. Triggers can include changes like moving homes, transferring schools, and the arrival of a new sibling. When children start school, some are eager to meet new people and participate in new activities, while others could also feel uneasy. Children and young people who are already at risk for mental health issues can develop these issues as a result of traumatic situations (Miller, Gilman, and Martens, 2008; Mental Health Foundation, 2021).

Wellbeing, Care and Healthy Living

(ECEY5009/C)

Lydia Davey/1909154

2168 Words



Counselling Student
(2022)

Wellbeing

Statham and Chase (2010) explain that the quality of people's lives is generally perceived of as their level of wellbeing. It is a dynamic state that is improved when individuals may achieve their personal and social objectives. Both subjective and objective values, including household income, educational resources, and health status, are considered. Subjective measures would include indications such as happiness, views about one's quality of life, and level of contentment with existence. It is believed that fostering children's wellbeing is crucial as it establishes the framework for future health. Therefore, cynics can counter that investing in children's futures is the main reason to care about their wellbeing (McAuley and Rose, 2010). Roberts (2010) states that through research, it is clear that young children's wellbeing is important. Every child has a right to receive a childhood that is supported by health and happiness.

Thoillez (2011) explains one of the major concerns of human cognition and activity has been and continues to be happiness—its definition, pursuit, and realisation. A person is happy when they develop the virtue of doing and thinking virtuously or acting and thinking like an individual. Children's wellbeing must be taken care of holistically, naturally considering the child's personal experiences. It may then be feasible to speak of an ideal quality of childhood life or good childhood wellbeing, but not necessarily of a subjective state of personal happiness, after the objective criteria of some specific indicators are met (Hong, Ra, and Jang, 2015). Hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing are distinguished in a common framework of wellbeing. Hedonic, in Greek Philosopher Aristippus' view, is the greatest of pleasure and the lessening of pain, whereas eudaimonia is the state of being fully alive and at one's best, for example, self-actualization in Maslow's theory (Dodge, *et al.*, 2012) Eudaemonia wellbeing encompasses being loyal to oneself and striving for personal progress and goes beyond pleasure-driven enjoyment. Studies suggest that hedonic motives reliably predict adaptive performance, particularly among young people, and may even balance out the negative consequences of high hedonic motives in some children. Eudaimonic motives, on the other hand, predict a variety of good and negative outcomes. Three interconnected factors form subjective wellbeing: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect. A cognitive sense of life satisfaction is different from affect, which refers to good and bad moods and emotions (Axford and Nick, 2008; Disabato *et al.*, 2016; Gentzler, *et al.*, 2021).

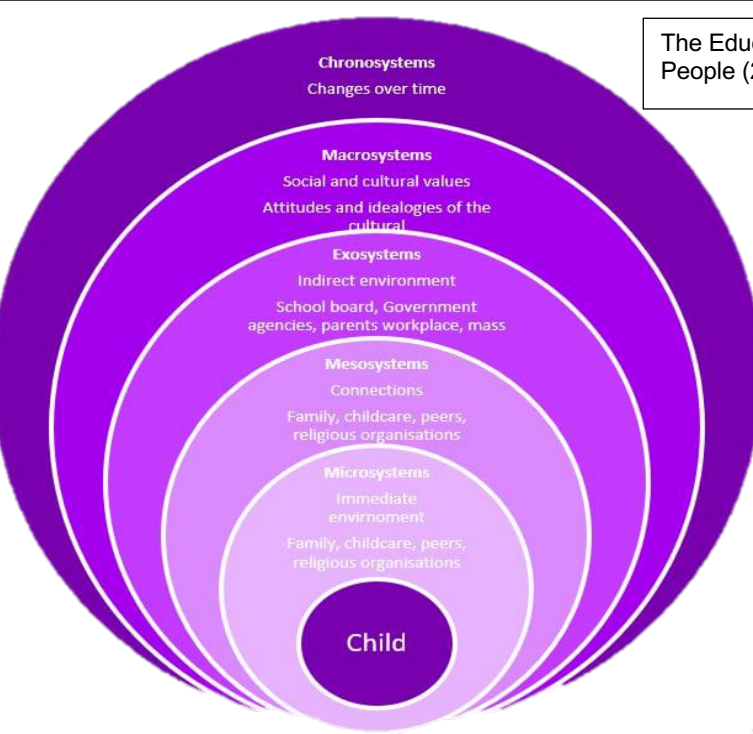
A research study by Sixsmith, *et al* (2007) implies that positive activities or things to do and interpersonal relationships with family and friends, including pets, were crucial among the children's conceptions of wellbeing. Key themes that were identified in a study conducted by Layard and Dunn (2009) emerged from a review of responses regarding how children thought of a happy childhood: the calibre of the interactions they had with others, safety, and independence. These two studies indicate a connection between children's beliefs about the importance of relationships in relation to wellbeing. An emotional connection to another individual is known as attachment. Theorist Bowlby (1969) believed a child's early relationships with their carers have a profound effect that endures throughout life. The child's chances of survival are increased, he claimed, as attachment keeps the child connected to the mother. Bowlby argued that attachment behaviours (such as proximity seeking) are instinctual and will be activated by any possible factors that seem to threaten the accomplishment of proximity, such as separation, insecurity, and fear. Additionally, Bowlby proposed that the anxiety of strangers is a crucial survival mechanism that is ingrained by nature.

Lifestyle

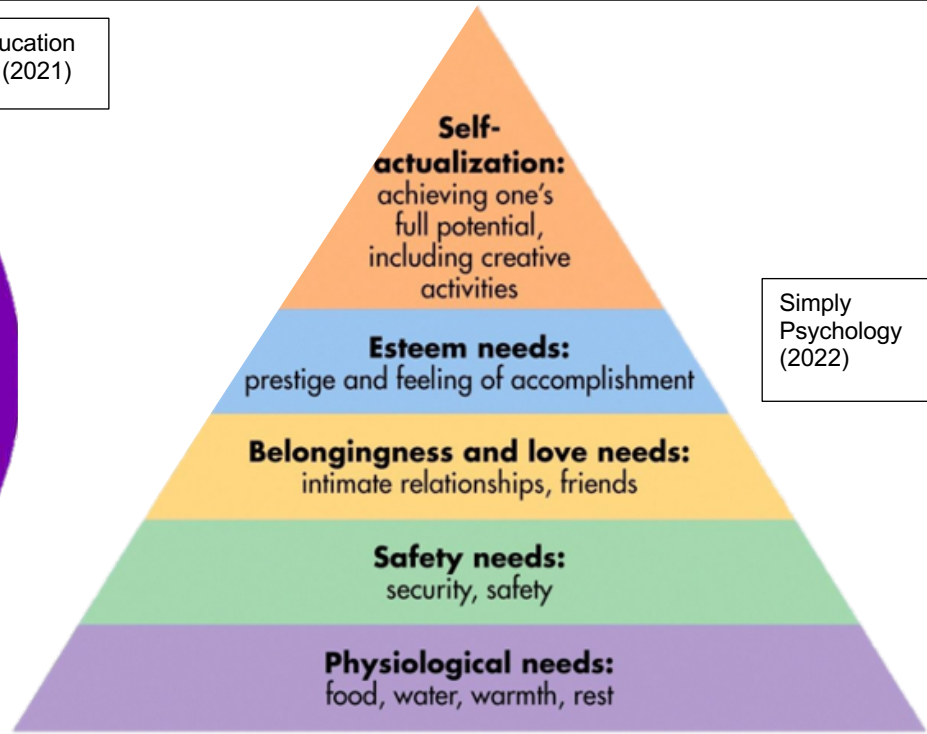
Children naturally desire to interact with their parents. When parents are unresponsive, unreliable, hostile, or inconsistent, an uneasy relationship may form, and later learning, behaviour, and health may suffer. Children that are neglected experience a variety of negative effects, including effects on the developing brain, which in turn impacts all aspects of development, including physical, socioemotional, cognitive, and behavioural development (Howarth, 2013; Action for Children, 2022). Parents that are unresponsive or neglectful may do so due to parental stress brought on by postpartum depression, substance abuse, social isolation, and poverty, which resembles an unhealthy lifestyle (Moran 2010; Moullin, Waldfogel, and Washbrook, 2014).

Theorist Bronfenbrenner's work played a significant role in helping to comprehend this. According to Bronfenbrenner (1977), a child's environment is made up of a series of interconnected structures. The ecological approach, which Bronfenbrenner first introduced in the 1970s, acknowledges that all a child's experiences will contribute to their total wellbeing and that what occurs in one area of a child's life will have an impact on what occurs in other areas. According to the ecological theory, children are surrounded by layers of social groupings that are progressively bigger and more complicated and have an impact on them. The immediate family is typically the initial group of individuals that children form a relationship with and remains a significant part of their lives, such as their parents or primary caregivers and siblings. However, a very big percentage of children experience more than one microsystem and may spend a significant portion of their daily life both at home and in places including nurseries (Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny, 2017).

According to a study by Puia and Leucuta (2017), children who have unhealthy lifestyles, such as those with poor eating habits, insufficient physical exercise for recreation and education, and excessive screen time, exhibit unfavourable indications of obesity. Therefore, those who serve as role models for children, such as practitioners, teachers, and family members, should be more mindful of the example they provide for a healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, the NHS (2018) states that children are more likely to maintain a healthy weight and grow up healthy if their parents encourage them to be active and eat well. Children who are a healthy weight typically exhibit improved fitness, health, learning ability, and self-confidence. In later life, they are also significantly less likely to experience health issues, such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.



The Education People (2021)



Simply Psychology (2022)

Theory, Application and Relationships

The environment in which children are raised, the relationships they form, and the experiences they have all have an impact on how they develop, and, how they perceive their own experiences. This development, as well as several other factors, such as trauma and abuse, have an impact on children's mental health, which affects their cognitive, behavioural, and social welfare. To create a child's total wellbeing, all facets of their health and development must be considered (NSPSCC, 2022; Goble and Bye-Brooks, 2020; Professional Association for Children and Early Years (PACEY), 2016).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states children should be treated as "human beings with a distinct set of rights." These rights outline what a child needs to live, develop, and reach their full potential (Manners, 2019). One of the most important determinants of healthy growth and development is how parents and other caregivers nurture and assist children in their early years. This has long-term and intergenerational benefits for health, productivity, and social cohesion. This entails ensuring they have access to learning opportunities beginning at birth, suitable nourishment, good health, and a sense of safety and security. Young children should have access to safe environments for play and relaxation as well as clean air, water, and sanitation (UK Government, 2004; Saeednia, 2011). Children's development depends heavily on play. Play provides a wealth of advantages for physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development. It enables children to work on their motor skills, explore with their social behaviour repertoire, simulate alternative outcomes, and discuss the different benefits and challenges of their behaviour in a secure and stimulating environment. Children learn and develop while living in society; the people, places, objects, and ideas they encounter, serve as the foundation for their learning and growth (Nijhof, *et al.*, 2018).

These are classed as basic needs based on theorist Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The hierarchy of needs is formed in the shape of a pyramid and serves as a model for defining human needs, from the most fundamental needs to the more fulfilling ones. In this model, according to Maslow, the needs of each level should be satisfied before progressing to the next (King, 2010). Moreover, Noltemeyer, *et al* (2021) discuss that following the satisfaction of these needs, the child might subsequently pursue additional aesthetic demands that will enhance their life. These requirements are seen as higher order as they may also be more driven by an individual's motivations to seek them. Children from homes with sufficient income, for instance, are therefore more likely to have their deficiency needs met, giving them a greater chance to be motivated to achieve their higher order growth needs. Overall, the potential barriers posed by deficiency needs may restrict one's ability to use their cognitive, emotional, and physiological skills, to pursue their growth needs, as well as the access to opportunities in their environment for getting support with their growth needs, such as academic success (Kenrick, *et al*, 2010; Tay and Diener, 2011).

Conclusion

It is evident that no one single theory can account for every aspect of a child's development. The importance to recognise the value of all theories and implement several guiding principles for early childhood education into action is critical, the development of children is determined by the relationships they form with others, and their surrounding environment. Children's lifestyles appear to be influenced by their health, which contributes to their wellbeing. The main concepts presented in this poster imply that early childhood development is essential to how an individual develops later in life. The conditions and surroundings of one's childhood can be used to explain why one acts, behaves, and thinks the way they do. In a child's development, parents also have a significant impact. Children should be given the chance to be physically active, have secure attachments and surroundings, be protected from danger, and be not to be exposed to various stresses in order to live a healthy life.