

Paper Planes and Pebbles: Explore the evidence for investment in creative approaches intended to enhance the health and wellbeing of children and young people in Wales.

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For this assessment we were asked to *Explore the evidence*

I found this particularly hard as I had so many thought's for direction on this. I felt as a youth worker this is something we are continuously striving towards. It is not something we necessary think about, and over the years youth work has found it's self hard to be evidentially and demonstrate it's worth due to it's nature.

Within my job description, It's aimed at working with NEET's. However I work with any individual whom needs it, I work for the young person and what they need and, not necessarily what my job description defines. So yes, I work with the 16-24's whom are not in education, training and employment to help them get where they want to be, but I also support a wide range of young people.

Youth work develops those soft skills which usually are hard to measure and therefore hard to evidence. I have recently just wrote a number of case studies to help evidence the impact youth work has made within my organisation.

I hope through this presentation today, It highlights one of the key aspects which I feel that influences individuals wellbeing, that of play, fun and enjoyment.

Overview

The role of the educator.

Health and Wellbeing



Throughout my role as a youth worker, my aim is;

“Enable young people to develop holistically, working WITH them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.” (LSIS , 2012)
National Occupational Standards for Youth Work 2008

-We do this by offering voluntary learning opportunities which are often informal /non formal. Young people choose to be involved because they want to. Predominately because they find it FUN and enjoyable.

-Aim for teachers as educators - ‘ Imparting knowledge from one generation to another ’ ? This knowledge is expressed on what we should know by governing bodies, government . However each teacher will have their own reasons to go into teaching with their own aims ...

Health and Wellbeing – The WHO Stated health as ... ‘ A state of complete physical, psychological and social wellbeing’ (WHO 1948,P1 Cited in) Not just the absence of disease a definition which still stands today.

However the term wellbeing itself is included within the definition although this word itself has its own ambiguity. –**We know from our previous study and knowledge that wellbeing is subjective and is a general and unspecific ambiguous umbrella term. It means different things to different people ..**

Wellbeing – Marmot and Wilkinson (2006) , Wyn(2009a) State that wellbeing is

underpinned by conditions such as economic security ,safety, connection to others , having a sense of meaning in life, having control over decisions in life and having positive personal relationships (Cited in Wyn , Cuervo and Landstedt ,2015)

Creativity and Education

Role of Education?



Traditionally it has been seen that school are the influential place to enhance H&W of students 'A whole school approach is often used in government policies , Stevenson 2017

The role of Education as suggested by Jones (1972)

- ' Must be to secure the full potential of it's pupils in both body and mind, to ensure that these are used to the good of the community, and to give adequate preparation for everyday life in the world of work and leisure. It will not succeed in any one of these aims unless it offers a place for all kinds of creative works' (Jones, 1972)
- When doing further reading, I came across the Varkey foundation website which led me to the P21 skills for today research series, which suggested that education should be reviewing it's focuses, instead of the 3 Rs, reading, writing and arithmetic. It suggested that we should focus on the 4Cs, Creativity, Communication, Collaboration and Critical Thinking.
- In my previous assignment, I spoke about silo working and how collaborative working needs to be essential in policy writing and action , rather than playing a whack a mole game with problems. This has also been suggested with the Varkey foundation about education that skills are not learnt through facts and subjects but through methods including project based learning and collaborative group working, Varkey foundation (2017) The research which has

been undertaken suggests that of change of skills for life and employability.

Assumptions



I previously mentioned wellbeing being ambiguous. Throughout my discussions with people regarding this course and throughout my google searches, there are many suggestions around what health and wellbeing mean and what the subject area consists of, including but not limited to (C -PP). Why do we automatically presume these assumptions, is it because these topics' areas' are at the forefront of out practice, policies and media. However one significant aspect I have noticed is missing on a personal perspective is that of HAPPINESS and HAVING FUN .

To me these are ultimately the crucial underpinning aspects of living a fulfilling life and the wellbeing of a individual, hence making it so subjective.

Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young people in Wales

Early Years

Education and Learning opportunities

Health

Access to play, sport, leisure and culture

Participation in decision making

Safe home and community

Not disadvantaged by poverty

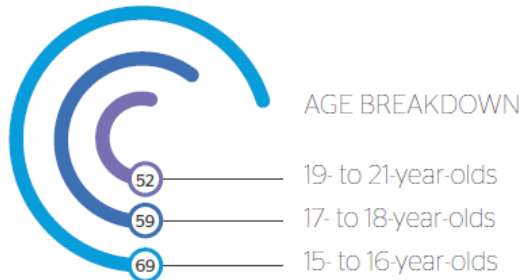
Since 2008 Welsh Government has been measuring the health and wellbeing of Children and Young people in Wales, and released 3 publication of the Children and Young peoples wellbeing monitor. 2008, 2011 and 2016 with the purpose to gain a clear perspective of CYP health and wellbeing (0-25) in Wales and also act as a resource for those working on policy and programme development.

Within these reports they have 7 categories ... within each category they look objectively at these in quantitative outcomes, what's improved, what possible programmes have done this.

As Cahill suggests many policy makers and report writers fail to identify why they have worked and what are the underlying success factors of those projects and the philosophical underpinning pedagogical approaches (Cahill , 2015) Throughout out this assignment I hope to identify maybe one reason why some interventions work.

% of Young People and Happiness Levels

Varkey Foundation (2017)



The Varkey foundations research into the 'How the World's Young People think and Feel' and found that the happiness level of young people drops as an individual gets older. However doesn't explore the reasons this may be, but does identify that young people are most worried about money, school pressures and health and the main contributing factors to a young persons wellbeing was Health and relationships with family and friends.

This may suggest that a young persons health or relationships deteriorate as they get older, or is it due to other added pressures as an individual gets older such as money and independence. How can we support an individual throughout to maintain their happiness and wellbeing.



EARLY
INTERVENTION
FOUNDATION

EIF Score	Intervention	Locality Reported	Summary
EIF 2 Cost Rating 1	Solihull Approach Parenting Group	Powys	The Solihull Approach Parenting Group (also known as Understanding Your Child's Behaviour) is a universal parenting intervention for any parent with a child between the ages of 0 and 18. The Solihull Approach aims to increase emotional health and well-being through both practitioners and parents. Parents identify personal goals and the strategies that will help meet them, and reflect on their child's behaviour and their relationship with their child. Further information is available at: https://solihullapproachparenting.com/quick-guide-to-the-solihull-approach/
Who is it for: Families with children 0-18 years			
How is it delivered: To groups of up to 12 families - delivered over 10 sessions, of two hours' duration each			
How is it targeted: Universal			
Outcomes: • Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour • Improved children behaviour			

Add reference to document and photo here

The Early intervention foundation is an independent research charity, which focuses on promoting and enabling evidence-based approaches to early intervention. They do a lot of consultation and research with the government and produce reports on effectiveness of early intervention programmes. They focus on interventions from birth to the age of 18.

One way they measure the effectiveness of a programme is by using a 5 tier model to evaluate a programme and the positive outcomes. Each project/intervention gains a EIF score based on their evaluation

It also includes cost ratings 1. is relevant to a low set up cost and delivery with the estimated cost of less than £100 per unit/individual

2. Is for those project with a medium to low cost between £100-£499 per unit.

This is clearly a viability report, assessing the outcomes however as we see on the next slide.

Current Evidence/ Evaluation

Level 4 recognises programmes with evidence of a long-term positive impact through multiple rigorous evaluations. At least one of these studies must have evidence of improving a child outcome lasting a year or longer.

NL2 'not level 2' distinguishes programmes whose most robust evaluation evidence does not meet the level 2 threshold for a child outcome.

Level 3 recognises programmes with evidence of a short-term positive impact from at least one rigorous evaluation, that is, where a judgment about causality can be made.

NE 'found not to be effective in at least one rigorously conducted study'. This is reserved for programmes where a rigorous programme evaluation (equivalent to a level 3) has found no evidence of improving child outcomes or providing significant benefits to other participants. This rating should not be interpreted to mean that the programme will never work, but it does suggest that the programme will need to adapt and improve its model, learning from the evaluation.

Level 2 recognises programmes with preliminary evidence of improving a child outcome, but where an assumption of causal impact cannot be drawn.

Add reference to information here

On this slide you can see the ratings they give out and reasons why they have been awarded those ratings. The EIF states that a programme is considered to be evidenced based only if it receives at least a level 3 evidence rating. However those reaching a level 2 are also included within their example handbook. They give the scorings according to 4 different levels which can be seen on hand out 2, Effectiveness, Efficacy, Preliminary Evidence and Logic Model.

The criteria is quite extensive, which can also be fairly expensive too as to receive the when looking through it, for example that of having evaluation conducted independently of the programme developer. When it comes down to sampling we know we can't always pick and choose whom chooses to be a part of a project, however they ask for sufficient representative sample, which can be hard to predict.

Personally I think using this form of comparison and evaluation can work in the right circumstances and is a good way of evidencing value and worth in a project. However also feel that the extensiveness of it and the in depth work involved can take control of the actual intervention and the workers to reach a certain level. Within my practice and I'm sure for many others we sit with many different hats on, and have more than one focused project on the go and to be evaluated like this would actually draw us away from other work/priorities.

I also noted that due to evaluations are chosen by the project deliverer, do they

consider aspects of enjoyment and value to the participant? Does it consider the 5 ways to wellbeing?

5 Ways to Wellbeing



The five ways to wellbeing was developed by The New Economics Foundations and is used by NHS, UK Government and others. Connect, Be Active, take notice, keep learning and Give are the 5 key aspects to maintaining and developing a good wellbeing according to NEF.

If a project is to be therefore successful do they need to contain all these elements?

Research undertaken between Cambridge University and The New economics Foundation looked at the participation rate of each action in different countries and different ages. – Which is an interesting read if anyone wants to. However what was said is that some people found the '5 ways to vague and open to interpretation' (NEF, 2016) an example was this the take notice actions, surrounding vs feelings. It also explored why participation in these actions were low.

One thing I have really taken a interest in over the last few months is that of wellbeing and enjoyment. We as humans tend to do actions for a sense of reward or avoidance of danger. For example; we go to work to gain money so we can buy and survive.

However when looking back at the wellbeing monitor for Wales which of these are we measuring, different priorities , government wants to see hard physical outcomes such as drops in drug use and teenage pregnancies, then overall

subjective wellbeing

Play, Learning and Wellbeing

Springate and Foley 2008,
state

- ' Play is an essential learning tool , but it is more than that. Play, in it's widest sense , can make a significant contribution to people's quality of life and to their physical, social and emotional wellbeing.'

Play is an essential learning tool but it is more than that. Play in its widest sense, can make a significant contribution to people's quality of life and to their physical and emotional wellbeing. (Springate and Foley, 2008)

Ennew, 1994 cited in Springate and Foley (2008) suggested that although play is associated with trivial, childish things it is the opposite to school and work, although play can be interpreted in many activities such as sport, fun, music, gambling. Ennew also stated that play is central to all human culture and that it's the source of learning, sociability, language and arts (Ennew, 1994,p.139) .

In 2002, the Welsh Assembly decided to exuberate the importance of play by publishing a play policy. Within the policy it stated that Welsh Government believes that 'play is the elemental learning process by which humankind has developed'. We are aware that the human brain continues to develop until we are in our 20s yet we see play as unimportant and an add hoc exercise to our daily lives.

Play Matters



How Does play link to the 5 ways to Wellbeing,

Play allows people to connect; they build communication skills and they learn to interact with others. It develops how to pick up social cues and development of self and social cues (Springate and Foley, 2005)

Be Active; we know exercise increases endorphins and therefore influences how someone feels, but 'physical play develops motor skills and creates a sense of wellbeing (Springate and Foley, 2005)

Take Notice; Children in particular are very intuitive and curious, as often notice the things we don't. A study undertaken by Sloutsky 2017, found in a study that children often spread their attention out even when asked to focus on one thing, whereas adults only focused on what was needed. (Demonstrating the point that although children don't focus their attention as well as adults even when asked, they ended up noticing and remembering more.)

Keep Learning ;

Play gives opportunities to interact and learn new things from others. I'm using the term play broadly, playing a board game you are learning communication skills, you learning how to be empathetic to others. Playing a sport learning how to understand the rules (However one I will probably never understand is the off side rule!), learning to communicate, learning hand eye coordination. Gardening learning what works, what doesn't, how things grow and what care and attention means to support those plants.

Give; Although play can be done independently, often you play with others you spend time with others and interact.

With this in mind, isn't play just one of the simplest way to enhance wellbeing. We know as we get older we play less, however as mentioned earlier wellbeing decreases as we get older too.

Play and Evidence

Intergenerational Care

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSG_FCQ10fA

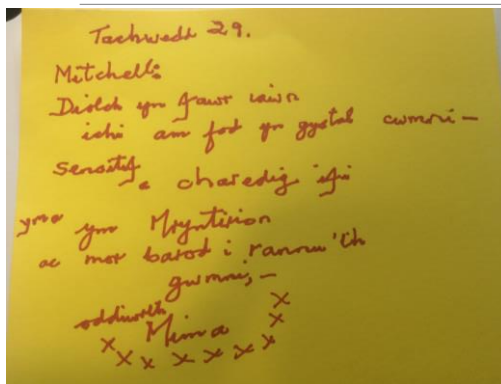


One of the most prominent studies of play in regards to people and their health and wellbeing, is that of the social experiment of day cares in residential care homes intergenerational work.

In Channel 4s programme, residents within the home were found to have improved mood, mobility and memory after 6 weeks of interaction with the children. It was reported that children also benefited from attention of people to have time to listen to them and their stories. (Age UK, 2018)

Children were more aware of surroundings and took on role and responsibilities, actively concerned for the wellbeing of the residents.

Intergenerational Play



' If I'm honest I dreaded today and was well nervous about going in , but once I started talking to her I really enjoyed it, I feel like I've done something good and when I gave her that Santa I made, she cried ' (Young Person aged 20)

Recently we have been doing a bit of our own intergenerational work within Ceredigion Youth Service, where we arranged a group of 16-24 yrs old to visit a day centre in Tregaron. We weren't quite sure how it was going to go but came armed with arts and crafts, games and activities.

However a resident from the day centre wrote a letter to one of our young people after just a morning session. The staff within the home also noted a significant improvement in many of the residents from just the company they received. Although what the young people had to say about the experience was even more surprising. Young persons evaluation (C. PP) We also noted that we saw a visible difference in the young persons' confidence, which grew and developed, you saw them become comfortable and when driving home in the car, they were more motivated and engaged.

English translation of letter; "November 29 Mitchell; Thank you very much to you for being good company, sensitive and generous in Brynteirion and for being ready to share your company. From Mima"

Using Play as an essential tool

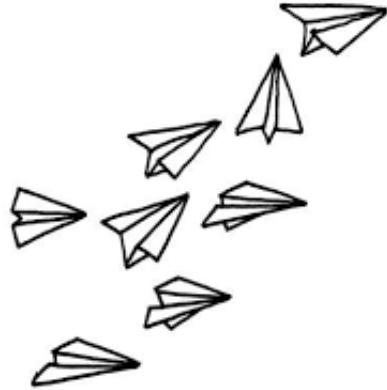


Burdette, Roberts and Whittaker stated that 'play has the potential to improve all aspects of children's well-being; physical, emotional social and cognitive' They also argued the change and use of language could influence the health and wellbeing of children. While childhood obesity has been an important agenda topic for public health, they suggested that if physical activity or exercise was remarketed with different positive language such as play and a different set of outcomes were suggested such as child's wellbeing rather than physical health, this would have more of a positive effect.

When adults think of the term play they have more positive associations with the word rather than exercise or physical activity. Sometimes these images can reiterate failed attempts of weight loss, embarrassment and structured classes.

We want to take part in Play as it's fun, it's enjoyable, it's not work and there often there is no right and wrong with play.

Conclusion



Because something has worked in one place, does not mean it will work in another. You can't skim stones without the water and you can't make planes without the paper and the space to enjoy them. (The EIF also states this too. It all depends on the needs of the individuals and the community)

We know wellbeing is subjective and depends on the needs of the individual/ community and that is why the first point it important to consider.

However, there is core evidence to demonstrate that as a child/ young person's health and wellbeing gets worse as they get older.

At the beginning of this presentation, I stated how difficult it can be for youth workers to evidence their work and to show true value.

However after the session within the care home before Christmas and that conversation I had with the individual, that one small intervention changed their complete outlook on life and influenced their motivation.

Just before Christmas, I sent a mass of individual text messages out to many of the young people I work with Just to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and although the office was closed during this period, that I will still be contactable if they needed me. The responses I had back were over whelming and therefore speak for them selves of the true evidence of youth work and the impact it's had on those young people's life's. Some things can not be measured, evaluated and valued truly in a formative way, unless we hear the stories of those it's benefited.

Young Person, - High achiever, Head boy in 6th Form - Hi Becca, Thankyou, you deserve to have an amazing Christmas and new year with all the hard work you do, if there is anything I can help you with at all let me know ! You have supported me so much this year and I will be forever thankful to you for that! Merry Christmas.

For me these messages and kind words are evidence enough that what we are doing is enhancing the health and wellbeing of these young people, something in which can't be measured. I haven't sat down and done Accreditation, I haven't given them a certificate to say they are more confident or that they have developed so far. I have been there, I have watched, I have listened, I have supported and given guidance. These approaches are what Children and young people need. The intervention it's self isn't enough. It's the rapport /relationship I have built with that individual. This is something we all need to think about .

Any Feedback or Questions ?

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