



Wellbeing, care and healthy living ECEY5009

Lauren Spice

2405414

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INTRODUCTION



THIS POSTER WILL
HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANT
FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE
CHILDRENS HEALTH ,
WELLBEING AND LIFESTYLE .

Wellbeing

• POVERTY



Children who grow up in low-income families, sacrifice on good nutrition, healthcare, social activities, learning resources and emotional wellbeing due to families unable to afford them, many children in poverty are now facing part time jobs alongside of school. This can often trigger mental health challenges for children growing up. The conditions children experience in early stages of life can impact their opportunities and wellbeing later in life (The Children's Society, 2020). Save The Children (2023) Charity helps families in poverty with grants with emergency expenses, helping children with providing school uniform as this can be expensive for low-income households. Save the children helps by working with the communities to promote children's learning through play. and helps low-income households.

The first 1000 days



The Department of Health and Social Care, 2021 highlights the importance of the first 1000 days as important to a child's life, it starts from conception to 2 years old, it affects a child's, cognitive, emotional and physical development, The World Health Organisation (2023) and UNICEF (2021) also support the first 1000 days. It is highlighted from the start of conception is the most important time for babies, making sure the mother is healthy for the child to have the best start. Babies and children are more reliant on their parents/caregivers and form an attachment. Bowlby's 1969 theory on attachment is where babies form a bond with their main caregiver to feel secure in their environment usually with parents/ guardians (McLeod and Bowlby, 2007)

Relationships



NCCA, 2009 stresses children's well-being in early education focuses on helping children develop into confident, content, and healthy individuals, it includes both psychological and physical wellbeing. Children's well-being is strongly influenced by relationships and interactions within their families and communities, when children feel valued, respected, cared for, and included, develop a sense of belonging and learn to respect others around (Department for Education and skills, 2000). Adults play an essential role in promoting children's holistic well-being by encouraging healthy habits, promoting independence, and providing opportunities for play and exploration. The aims of the Well-being theme include developing children who are emotionally and socially secure, physically healthy and active, imaginative, and hold positive attitudes toward learning. Children's learning goals focus on developing a secure attachment, by building their emotional awareness, and the ability to manage transitions, also growing confidence. To achieve these aims, adults must create supportive environments and enriching learning experiences, for babies and toddlers to be able to explore and use different objects and support older children with transitions in stressful situations. This relates to Bronfenbrenner's theory which highlights the importance of supportive relationships and secure environments are significantly important to children's development and wellbeing (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

Domestic Abuse

Children who are affected by domestic abuse experience emotional and behavioural difficulties, such as anxiety, depression, and aggression (Holt, Buckley & Whelan, 2008). The impact can vary depending on the child, family, and community. Having positive influences, such as supportive parenting, strong social relationships, and opportunities for healthy activities, can shape and protect children's wellbeing (Gewirtz & Edleson, 2007). Despite this, parental stress, negative parenting, and conflict can worsen the effects of exposure (Evans, Davies & DiLillo, 2008). Supportive relationships with non-abusive parents, peers, and teachers can reduce harm, and structured group interventions have been shown to improve children's emotional and behavioural outcomes (Graham-Bermann et al., 2007)

Children who have limited or no contact with health care services can harm their health. This is often caused by low- income families for various reasons from financial to jobs, or some parents/carers are disabled. Child Poverty Child Group,2025, are often seeing children living in poor housing conditions resulting in the high rate of respiratory illnesses which is caused by moulds and damp which can negatively impact a child's health and wellbeing. Low-income households are unable to afford nutritious foods which can also lead to malnutrition, obesity and dental problems. Many of these triggers can cause children's conditions to worsen. Marmot,2010 argues that poor housing and limited access to health organisations can affect a child's health, these factors can lead to long/short health term health conditions that could be avoided. This shows poor living conditions influence children's health.

Dental health
Having poor oral hygiene can significantly affect a child, it can cause pain, infection and often hospitalisation, which can impact a child's diet, sleep, speech development, self-image and mental health. A third of 5-year-old children in Wales between 2015-16 have experienced tooth decay. Children's oral health starts as early at the age of 3 or younger , it is shown in the most poorest areas children suffer dental disease (NHS Wales,2024) Design to Smile is programme run in Wales that provide advice to all families and toothbrush and toothpaste free to every child from 0-7 years of age, this programme is running in nurseries and primary schools to prevent tooth decay in early years (Welsh Government,2017).

Mental and emotional health
Children's health is shaped by physical, social and emotional influences which requires a holistic approach. by maintaining their basic needs and having a good relationship with friends and feeling loved by your parents/carers can impact confidence and self-esteem. Children need to feel secure in their environment by being comfortable to play and encouraged to explore their emotions and solve problems Care Learning(2025).
The Social Model Of Health.
The Model highlights the important factors that can affect the child, such as poverty, housing, limited access to support can affect children's feelings and development(World,Health Organisation,2023). The Social Model Of health connects to Maslows hierarchy, which states that children must have their basic needs before they can develop skills , friendships, and learn, to do this they need the confidence to grow (Maslow 1943 and Musgrave,2017).

Maslow, 1943 emphasizes the importance of physiological needs a person should have to thrive. However, the World Health Organisation(2025) (WHO) promotes children's health and together they both show to learn and grow children's basics needs must be met such as a clean safe environment, food and water.
The social model looks at health as a holistic view, it shows how people's health can be influenced by people's own decisions that can affect their health and wellbeing. However, the social model does not focus on medical or biological aspects of health (care learning,2024).

Children's nutrition is defined as the dietary needs of children, 3–17 years, which differ from those of infants, toddlers, and adults. A nutritious balanced and varied diet is important for healthy growth, development, and overall wellbeing, as it provides the nutrients and energy children need to function effectively (Public Health England, 2019). However, having poor nutrition increases the risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular problems, while children with a healthy diet are more likely to maintain a healthy weight, and concentrate better in school, and develop long-term positive eating habits (NHS, 2023). A nutritious diet should include a range of food groups, such as starchy carbohydrates, protein sources, fruits and vegetables, and unsaturated fats. Children also benefit from drinking 6–8 glasses of water daily, engaging in at least 60 minutes of physical activity, and getting sufficient sleep to support healthy development (World Health Organization, 2020). Limiting sugary drinks, salty foods, and those high in saturated fats is important for preventing diet-related health issues. Children following vegetarian or vegan diets must ensure adequate intake of nutrients such as protein, calcium, iron, and vitamin B12 from plant-based sources (British Dietetic Association, 2021)

Health

Lifestyle

Socioeconomic factors that affect a child's wellbeing can be financial difficulties, parental education level, limited to no healthcare, and educational trips, play a crucial role in shaping the development of children and adolescents. These can significantly affect a child's development, from their physical and mental health to their educational attainment and future socioeconomic status. Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to experience developmental delays, have poorer health outcomes, and achieve lower educational attainment compared to their peers from more affluent backgrounds.

Family income is a critical socioeconomic factor that influences child development, and poverty has been consistently linked to poorer outcomes in child development, including developmental delays and poor health outcomes.

Access to healthcare and nutrition is also fundamental for healthy child development, and financial stability is essential for adolescent wellbeing.

Parental education level is associated with better child development outcomes, and parental involvement in education is critical for a child's academic success.

Access to quality education and opportunities is a critical socioeconomic factor that influences child development, and socioeconomic factors have a profound impact on educational attainment.

Understanding the impact of socioeconomic factors is essential for developing effective strategies to support the healthy development of children and adolescents.

(Cattan et al., 2024; St Martin's, 2025).

Children's wellbeing in school is influenced by their emotions, relationships, resilience, and the school environment (Langford,2025;Smith *et al.* 2021).Schools have a role in preventing wellbeing problems, identifying pupils who need help, and working with specialist services (National Governance Association, 2020).However, factors outside of school, such as poverty, also have a significant impact on wellbeing. Certain groups, including young carers, pupils with special educational needs, and children who have experienced trauma, are at a higher risk of low wellbeing Feeling a sense of belonging at school is important for protecting children's mental health, and poor wellbeing in school can have long-term effects,(Allen and Kern, 2019)



Physical activity plays a vital role in a child's health, according to Langford(2025), regular exercise helps a child's mental wellbeing and lowers the chance of chronic diseases. children who exercise regularly maintain a healthy weight and create strong bones and muscles. The NHS(2025) recommends health guidelines for physical exercise a day is 60 minutes this can also help children's emotional development.



According to Don (2025), Social and cultural influences plays a vital role in shaping a child's development, beliefs, and behaviours from birth. These forces include, family traditions, community expectations, media messages, and broader societal norms, this creates the foundation for how children understand themselves and their place in the world (Bronfenbrenner,1979)

Parenting styles can vary across cultures, with Western cultures emphasizing independence and Eastern cultures prioritizing interdependence. Also, extended family can also play an important role in shaping a child's development, offering different perspectives, support , and life experiences.Schools and communities also impact children's social and emotional development, with exposure to diverse cultural backgrounds and social norms influencing peer relationships and cultural understanding. Children's identity develops through their family's culture through interactions with parents and other family members, school, and community, and social media can enhance social skills when balanced with in-person relationships. Cultural messages in media can shape children's perceptions of themselves and the world, and parents can help by discussing media messages, choosing diverse content, and encouraging critical thinking (Rideout,2017). Creating cultural awareness and building cultural resilience in children requires a thoughtful approach, open communication, opportunities for different cultural learning, respect for diversity. Embracing different cultures, parents. caregivers or educators can promote environments that enhance children's development (Gay,2018)

CONCLUSION

Children's health and wellbeing are influenced by physical, emotional, social, and environmental factors.

Access to nutritious food, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, and appropriate healthcare support healthy physical development and reduce the risk of illness.

Emotional and mental wellbeing are also crucial, strengthened by secure relationships, positive attachments, and supportive environments at home and school.

Social connections, play, and a sense of safety and belonging contribute to resilience and healthy development, making it essential to provide children with safe environments, nurturing relationships, and opportunities to thrive for lifelong health.

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