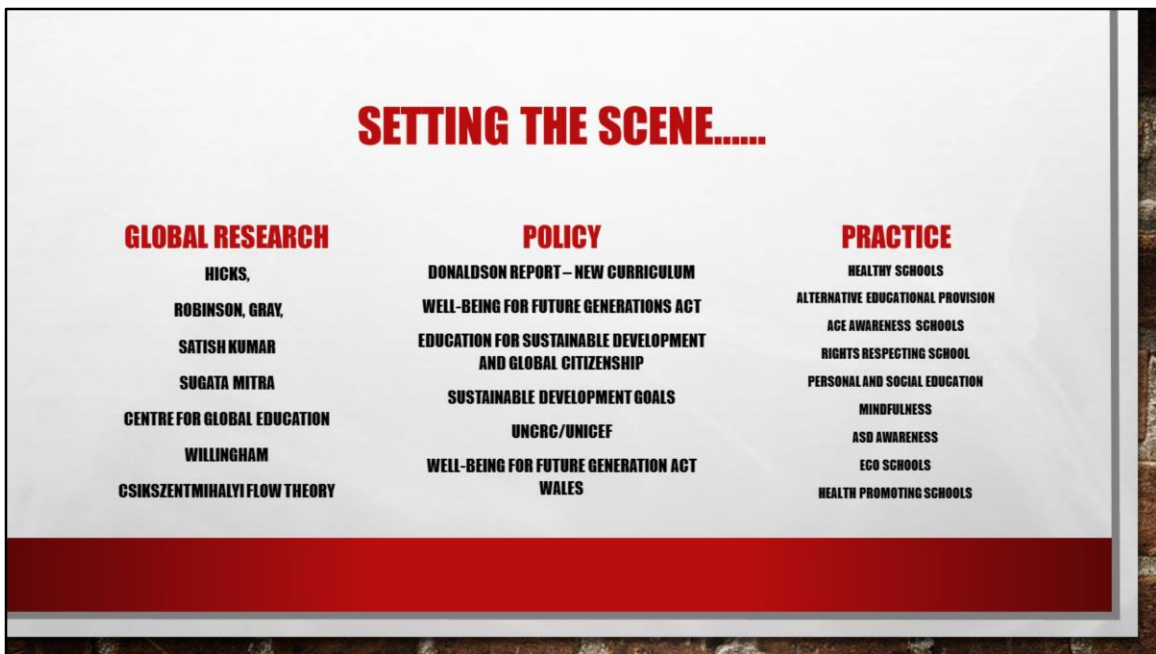


**WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM GLOBAL
RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE WHICH
MIGHT ENHANCE EDUCATION FOR THE HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING OF THE CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE OF WALES?**



SU CROWTHER



The question asks

“What can be learned from global research, policy and practice which might enhance education for the health and well-being of the CYP of Wales?”

This presentation will present evidence to say that it is the current education system, which was designed for a different age, itself that is causing many of the problems we are seeing today and how making radical changes to the system will enhance education and lead to better health and well-being.

Gray (2013) argues saying that schools are a product of history not based on scientific research into how CYP learn.

My presentation will include alternatives ways to do ‘education’ and some advice to teachers and schools.

I will also be discussing how Rights Respecting schools initiative is a good way of improving the HWB

I haven’t focused much on what HWB is as my argument is that if you change how we do education this will lead to better HWB.

However, I will mention that we have seen an increase in the rates of CAMHS referrals, CYP self-harm, suicide and eating disorders etc, WG recently investing

approximately 7 million into CAMHS provision? when this could be invested in designing an education system which support the HWB of CYP? An interesting fact apparently the rates of anxiety and depression among CYP were lower during the Great Depression, World War 11, and the Cold War than now (Twenge)

So why is it important that we get school right?

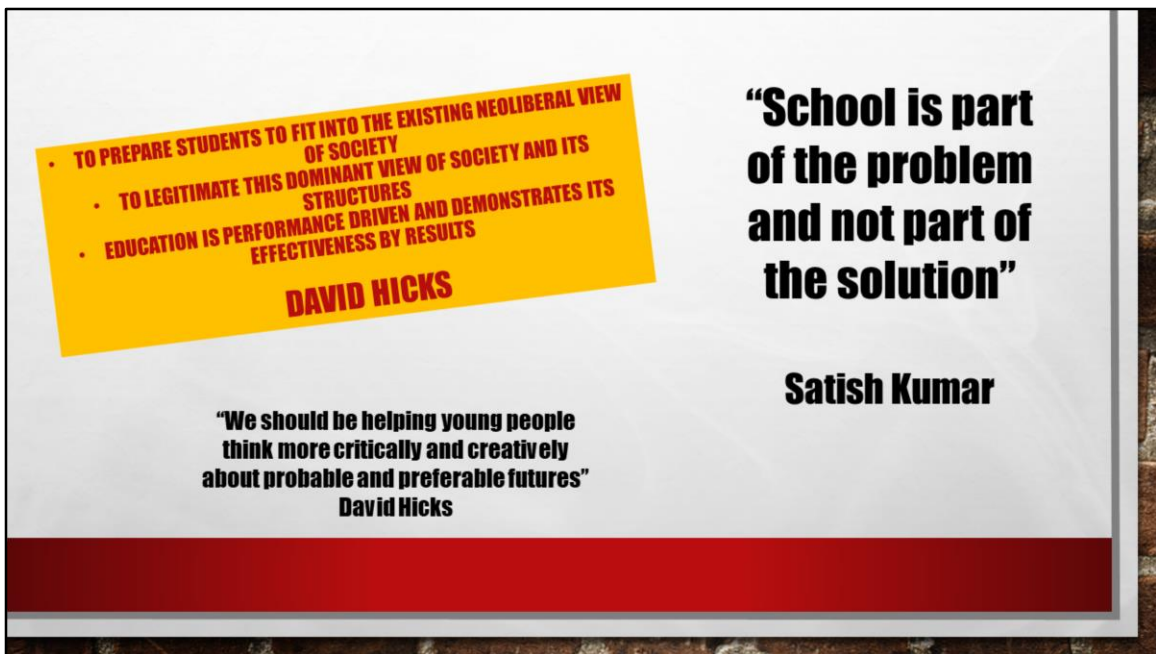
We spend approximately 11 years in school, this equates to 110 months and 2090 days over the whole period.

Not long if you imagine that the average life span in Wales is 82.3 (ONS 2010-12) However, it is in school that our future path is usually set out before us. This will depend on a number of factors such as ACE agenda, socio-economic background, poverty and other factors.

Education takes place at the most crucial time of a child's development...

Dewey (1916) wrote that the school exists to provide a special environment for the 'formative' period of human life.

He argues that school is a consciously designed institution with the sole concern of which is to educate the child.



Some argue school is about keeping 'social control', David Icke (2014) I know he's a conspiracy theorists, but he calls schools prisons of the mind, schools are not about educating CYP but programming them.

Many believe that (schools) education is reproducing health inequalities, keeps the divide between the social classes, keeps the status quo.

Kumar believes that school is part of the problem and not part of the solution.

Satish Kumar explains that it's the intelligent people that design weapons and cause the wars in the world.

Kumar's educational philosophy is that CYP should be encourage to question and find the true value of learning, education should be about the understanding of oneself.

Kumar is responsible for setting up the Small School in 1982, when he became disillusioned with the mainstream schools system. He wanted an environment which nurtured the whole child.

Kumar is on the board of Our Future Planet, vice-president of the RSPCA and continue to teach and run workshops including holistic education.

David Hicks stance is that we should be teaching CYP about the future, empowering them to make right choices. Maybe that's where the (RRS) comes in.

His research after 40 years in education, cites that education is based on a

technocratic, managerial and performance driven view of teaching and learning which is controlled by politicians rather than professional educators.
We should be helping young people think more critically and creatively about probable and preferable futures.

**"The truth is that schools don't really teach anything except how to obey orders".
Gatto (1990)**

**Schools are state mechanisms for control.
(Peterson, 1984)**

"Education systems within capitalist societies are a form of 'ideological state apparatus' designed as a means of social control" (Althusser (1971) cited in Pollard et al, 2008).

- EMPHASIS IN SCHOOLS ON 'CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT' IS MORE ABOUT DISCIPLINE AND LESS ABOUT LEARNING. IT'S A WAY OF GETTING STUDENTS TO CONFORM TO SOCIETY'S EXPECTATIONS.
- CURRICULUM – PRESCRIBED KNOWLEDGE WHICH IS THE ACCEPTED 'TRUTH' OF A SUBJECT
- WHO DECIDES WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED?
- THE 'HIDDEN CURRICULUM' – REPRODUCING SOCIAL CONFORMITY?
- THERE IS MORE OF A CONCERN ABOUT THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF WORK IRRESPECTIVE OF PURPOSE.

POLLARD ET AL, 2008

I have collated a number of opinions from various academic sources which emphasise this neoliberal viewpoint of our current education system.

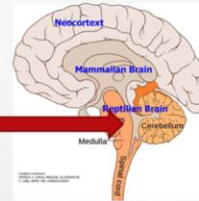
However, the idea that teachers are the only ones to do this is now a question we should ask.

Mitra (1999) set up The Hole in the Wall experiment, where he literally cut holes in walls and placed computers and recorded what happened.

From this research he found out that CYP can teach themselves.

Mitra, suggests that traditional classrooms can be turned into SOLEs (self-organising learning environments) based on what he found out about how CYP learn.

HOW DO CYP LEARN?



- **THERE IS EVIDENCE FROM NEUROSCIENCE THAT THE REPTILIAN PART OF OUR BRAIN, WHICH SITS IN THE CENTRE OF OUR BRAIN, WHEN IT'S THREATENED, IT SHUTS DOWN EVERYTHING ELSE, IT SHUTS DOWN THE PREFRONTAL CORTEX, THE PARTS WHICH LEARN.**
- **PUNISHMENT AND EXAMINATIONS ARE SEEN AS THREATS.**
- **WE TAKE OUR CHILDREN, WE MAKE THEM SHUT THEIR BRAINS DOWN, AND THEN WE SAY, "PERFORM."**
- **WHAT HAPPENS TO CREATIVITY IN OUR AGE? WE NEED TO SHIFT THAT BALANCE BACK FROM THREAT TO PLEASURE.**

• MITRA (2013)

So how CYP learn?

So we know much more about how the brain works and according to neuroscientists this is how the brain reacts to being punished or before a test or examination.

Refer to the diagram and Explain about the reptilian part of the brain, this is what is happening in schools to many of our CYP.

Mitra argues that we should be turning this 'threat to pleasure', and to bring back the love of learning.

He believes that a better education system is where you don't make learning happen but allowing it to happen.

He has created something called SOLE's self-organisation learning environments. CYP given a problem which they need to solve using the internet.

From this he developed the School in the Cloud., he says that schools as we know them are obsolete and outdated.

Mitra wants to create a positive learning environment where CYP are excited about learning, in turn, I argue, will lead to better HWB for CYP in Wales.

Gray (2013) says that schools are not a place where critical thinking is being nurtured, that the method of teach and test is motivated by a system of rewards and punishment.

HOW DO CYP LEARN?

**“CHILDREN ARE
BIOLOGICALLY
DESIGNED TO EDUCATE
THEMSELVES”**

• GRAY (2013)

**“IF YOU CAN LIGHT
THE SPARK THEY
WILL LEARN
WITHOUT THE NEED
FOR ASSISTANCE, AS
CHILDREN ARE
NATURAL LEARNERS”**

ROBINSON (2013)

Furthermore Gray and Robinson also support much of what Mitra is alluring to.

Peter Gray (Psychologist)

Says CYP are naturally playful and curious. He believes that forcing them to do school work kills off their desire to learn.

He believes that our current education system is inflicting serious psychological damage because of the control over their learning.

He supports the theory of self-directed education which should replace the coercive system we currently have. He says that anxiety and depression correlate strongly with individuals sense of control over their own lives.

Gray has done extensive research into children who are allowed to learn outside of the school system. Studies of children who were able to follow a method of self directed education show motivated joyful learners. Where children have been able to follow their own interests and take part in unlimited play their individual interests and passions can often be seen to lead to lead directly or indirectly to careers.

Julian Rotter research focused Internal versus external control of reinforcement, in the 1950s. Basically the loss of feeling of control in their lives can lead to anxiety and depression. There are intrinsic and extrinsic goals, in schools children work for grades and praise (extrinsic goals) these depend on other peoples judgment and free play,

for example which is seen as an intrinsic goal.

Ken Robinson (International Adviser on education and arts)

Believes CYP are natural learners.

He says the dominant culture of education is focused on testing not teaching and learning.

He says that compliance has replaced curiosity.

We live in a culture of standardisation which is based on the industrial process.

Gray adds if we cared about our CYP we should allow and encourage their independence and direct their own learning, which is what Mitra has been researching with his SOLE and the Hole in the Wall experiment.

“Research has shown that people of all ages learn best when they are self-motivated, pursuing questions that are their own real questions, and goals that are their own real-life goals. In such conditions, learning is usually joyful.”

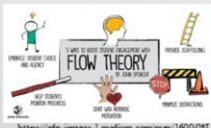
FLOW THEORY

Fulfillment/rewarding

Love of Learning

Ownership

Well-Being



https://cdn-images-1.medium.com/max/1600/0*L7ZG1X-gtoUa4Pn.png

“...being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost.”

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi



<https://positivpsychologyprogram.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Csikszentmihalyi-Flow-Chart.jpg>

What contributes to a life worth living?

Following on from how CYP learn the Hungarian psychologist, developed the FLOW Theory in the 70s and 80s.

This is a wonderful , slightly unrealistic and to some perhaps a bit ‘hippyish’ theory but in an ideal world would contribute to the HWB of CYP in Wales, here’s why...

In his Tedtalk Flow, the secret to happiness, he explains in a very round about way that he found in his research that:-

Increase in material well-being do not seem to affect how happy people are but lack of basic material resources contribute to unhappiness but the increase in material resources do not increase happiness!) FLOW – (basically is linked to intrinsic motivation)

How is this related to the HWB and education of the CYP in Wales?

Enhance education for the HWB of CYP in Wales by the following the principles of the FLOW theory:-

CYP need to feel empowered and Own the creative process

Engage in deep and meaningful work (How many times do we hear ‘What's the point of doing this? it has no meaning in my life’)

What does this mean for schools?

- 1.Find tasks that CYCP want to do – they should be intrinsically rewarding
- 2.Embrace student choice – own their own learning (which can be linked to

Summerhill school)

3. Provide right scaffolding this could be teacher led
4. Minimise distractions (how achievable is this)
5. Fewer tasks, done better because you have allocated more time.
6. Help CYP to monitor their own progress by teach them to set goals, make a task child-led, reflect on progress
7. Tasks need to be clear and with immediate feedback (pedagogy)

Not achievable in mainstream education too many constraints on the curriculum, time ability of staff to achieve.

The more I read about this theory the more I realised that this is exactly what occurs for those that home educate and choose a child-led/centred educational philosophy I have also experienced being in the FLOW during much of my research where I have lost all track of time!

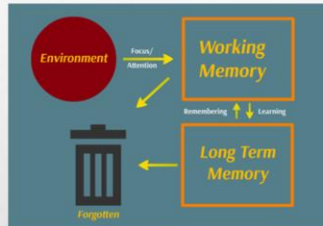
Daniel
Willingham's

9

**PRINCIPLES
OF THE MIND**

WHY SOME STUDENTS LEARN EASILY
AND OTHERS DON'T

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS



The process of developing sufficient surface knowledge to then move to deeper understanding such that one can appropriately transfer this learning to new tasks and situations

Why Don't Students Like School? By Daniel T. Willingham

[illegible]

Willingham supports the idea of the FLOW theory in as much as the content of a lesson is pitched at the correct level, not too easy or too difficult.

SO WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

STEINER (WALDORF)

MONTESSORI

SMALL SCHOOLS

STUDIO SCHOOLS

CTLG (EOTAS)

FOREST/WILDERNESS/MUDDY

CHARTER (USA)

HOJSKOLE: AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

HOMESCHOOL/EDUCATING (EHE)

SUMMERHILL

**SOLE (SELF-ORGANISING LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS, MITRA)**

DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL

SUDBURY

CUSHMAN

So what is the alternative to school?

Home education/schooling (EHE) called many different names usually according to your educational philosophy.

When a parent/carer makes the decision either never to enrol a CYP on a school roll or they decide to remove them from a school roll.

There are many reasons for this, all very different, however we have seen an increase of approximately 40% in Carmarthenshire. Off-rolling has increased and many of these are due to school phobia, mental health/self-harm health issues which in turn affects attendance. Schools do not have the skills set/time/money to cope with these CYP. The self-directed learning environment is what works best here.

Studio Schools, England

The Young Foundation came up with the concept in 2006. By 2010, two schools had been opened as pilots. Four schools were approved the next year, and a further 14 the year after that. There were political changes, the momentum began to dissipate, and cracks started to appear.

The UK's education system has two longstanding problems. One is the disengagement of some students who don't see their education as relevant to their lives. And the other is employers' dissatisfaction with the job-readiness of school leavers — even if

they had the grades.

The Studio School was designed to address both of these issues.

It's an alternative secondary school, for students aged 14 to 19, that includes a curriculum with project-based learning, work with real-world clients, personal coaches for every pupil, and a focus on both academic skills and non-cognitive ones. The idea is that students learn through doing, rather than memorising, and develop workplace skills.

Other alternatives to mainstream are:-

Steiner (Waldorf) pedagogy emphasizes the role of imagination in learning, striving to integrate holistically the intellectual, practical, and artistic development of pupils.

Montessori - Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori based on her extensive research with mentally challenged children and characterized by an emphasis on independence, freedom within limits, and respect for a child's natural psychological, physical, and social development.

Small Schools (USA) (mentioned previously Kumar) movement in the 1970s, more intimate learning environment which saw a reduction in the number leaving high school, CYP feel more connected, although another expensive provision, it is valued added as CYP become citizenship who can then contribute to the economy.

CTLIC (EOTAS)

Summerhill

Forest/Wilderness/Muddy

Korda Institute - Doris Korda (2019) What happens when we do school Better? methods of transforming education which benefits CYP.

Promoted collaborative learning, teaching entrepreneurship, which is more problem solving. To be themselves and to be empowered.

Hojskøle: An Alternative Education

SOLE (Self-Organising Learning Environments, Mitra)

Democratic School

Flexi-schooling

Small School (Satish Kumar)



So I have touched on the research as to how improve the HWB of CYP in Wales
Here are some practices that can support directly and indirectly the HWB of CYP by raising awareness in schools

So if we are not able to attend an alternative provision we need to make the current education environment more conducive to the HWB of CYP in Wales.

However, with an already busy timetable is there room for schools to become health promoting settings?

Does it have to be a discreet subject or like RRS can it be part of the philosophy of the school itself?

This is probably dependent ton the ethos of the school and the head who is usually responsible for driving such agendas.

RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS

'A Rights Respecting School teaches children and young people that they have rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. From this starting point they also learn their responsibility to respect others' rights in all relationships in the community.' (UNICEF)



So why include RRS in this presentation?

The Happy Plant Index shows that what makes people happy is family, friendships and peer approval, a sense of community and having a purpose in life.

And it would seem that the RRS agenda can perhaps deliver on some of these areas.

The rights of a child are law (UNCRC) and therefore there should be more challenge to governments for all rights to be adhered to, such as

Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children

And

Article 28 (right to education) Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and **different forms of secondary education** must be available to every child. **Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights.** Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Also schools have a duty to promote well-being.

In the past anything outside the core subjects have been dealt with on an ad hoc bases however there is much evidence that by adopting the RRS agenda CYP feel there is a general improvement of their HWB , issues such as being listened for example features high on CYP agenda. This goes back to the feeling empowered as discussed earlier.

Without argument RRS agenda delivers on many of the areas of CYP rights and responsibilities it is however sad that in Carmarthenshire I found on the UNICEF website that only one primary school is working towards their Gold award. In the whole of Wales out of the 22 authorities only 13 had the silver award and only 11 have the gold award.

Carol Robinson (2014) explains in her research that some schools reported that the incidences of bullying decreased and there were improved relationships between staff and CYP. CYP reported that in a RRS teachers are rated as fair, respectful, caring and encouraging and peers as co-operative and friendly.

There were positive atmosphere and a sense of community, however one could argue that this could only happen in smaller schools?

This would also rely heavily on the whole school ethos and would need to be driven from senior management.

It was reported that that active learning was the most popular type of learning, and there were more opportunities to learn independently in a RRS.



This presentation is concluding that in order to enhance education for the HWB of CYP in Wales we must rethink the whole system.

Some areas of research which can be further developed are:-

- more play should be introduced in schools
- The redesigning of schools, perhaps the introduction of more SOLEs? Introduce self-directed study
- Robinson talks about the learning revolution, he wants education to become more personalised, considering individual learning styles, that education is a human process and teaching is an art form, teachers should not be constrained by the curriculum, (Its interesting to not that he was made a Sir for his contribution the arts. However he now chooses to live in US, what difference did he make to our system?)
- We need to overhaul the system in order to be prepared for the future and to improve the HWB of CYP, Create an education system which nurtures the whole child, such as self-confidence, social skills, motivation and concentration, and communication skills. To move away from league tables, and standardised testing to a curriculum that considers Individual needs and learning styles and one which will prepare them for the future.
- How are we to realise the Sustainable Development Goals and the Well-Being for

Future Generations Act, without making these changes.

- None of these are new ideas, you can watch hundreds of videos on Ted Talks talking about the same ideas.

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