

Portfolio

Section 1

Humphrey (2014) suggest that a leader is an individual who is able to coach, guide, and inspire children and others around them. Leaders in setting are able to motivate teams throughout times where there is pressure and challenging situations, further being able to react appropriately and support other potential leaders and staff throughout their role and progression. Continuing that a generic leader facilitates individuals to uphold teams and to get them working toward shared goals. Often these individuals foster a collaborative culture and lead by example, However, Lonati (2020) suggest that there is a vast difference with a leader compared to a catalytic leader, especially when considering this type of leadership within an early years setting. Duddy (2019) explains that when parents are considering a school or early years setting that they want their children to attend, parents are often looking for an individual that cannot just manage the service and take care their children. Parents are searching for a place where their children can be heard, have their own opinions, understand their inanity, be influenced by powerful role models, and be safeguarded and be protected whilst they do so. Ang, Brooker, and Stephen (2017) highlight that parents and families are taking more observation and evaluation of the staff than the setting, as they are looking for an individual and team that has catalytic qualities, where the leader creates opportunities for their child to grow and develop, with communicates skills and presenting to their child clear purpose and vision for development.

According to Meredith, *et al.* (2018) the definition of a catalytic leader is someone who presents themselves as a strong individual who creates communication opportunities and provides a clear understanding of others and their vision for what they are promoting. However, Gómez-Hurtado, *et al.* (2021) suggest that a catalytic leader is an individual who engages and courage's action in other individuals in provisions for example, empowering and making change happen based on their ideas. Furthermore, Parker (2020) suggest that a catalytic leader incorporates an individual using a multidisciplinary approach across sectors to encourage and inspire an updated way of providing practice that will achieve the highest aspirations of the individual. Sims, *et al.* (2015) has a similar opinion and highlights that a catalytic leader has the individual qualities of knowing how to hold the role of the leader without being taught to do so and empowers community outcomes in line with personal and organisational agendas.

However, Colmer (2017) argues that catalytical leaders in early years are individuals who may start a change inefficient process, enhance new idea for a policies, practice, and opportunities, or most importantly, promote the change and skills in others. Whalley, *et al.* (2019) discovers that in early years sector catalyst leaders are seen to be high-energy, supportive, forward-thinking mentors who demonstrate positive action with the people around them. Furthermore, Clark's (2012) suggest that a sign of a catalytic leader in the early years sector has the qualities to be enthusiastic, or energetic and to have strong minded values.

Boyd, Hirst and Siraj-Blatchford (2018) strongly believes that early year's practitioner are all leaders as they have the approach of demonstrating unique individual values and morals where they are often very outspoken about their practice and what happens in their settings as the importance of the sector is to safeguard and protect young individuals. Davis and Ryder (2016) provide evidence to support Boyd, Hirst and Siraj-Blatchford (2018) suggestions and further explores that individual who are in an early year's sector are often continuing their professional development which can then give them the opportunity to learn new theory and practice where it may empower them to think and develop into a catalytic leader and empower others in using their voice and choices.

Fane and Andrew (2018) imply that defining sociological factors within early years consist of observation of social life, encountering social change, and the social causes children experience including the consequences of their reaction and behavior. However, Gabriel (2017) demonstrates that the summary of definition is that sociological factors of study in early years childhood is a theoretically and practical examination of young children's experiences in human society.

Cosma and Soni (2019) presents that there are many different sociological factors that impact on children's development for example, poverty, relationships with parents and educators, inequality, geographical location, home environment and social media. Arnott (2016) also presents that other forms of sociological factors include teachers Role, parental style, and the peer group that the child is in education with and playing with outside of school.

As stated by Railean (2016) In relation to Bronfenbrenner ecological theory, there is clear evidence to suggest that it focuses on the quality and nature of the child's

environment. Within Bronfenbrenner's study he presents that as a child grows up and develops further, the interaction within these environments becomes more challenging depending on what the child has experienced to this point. Diab, Palosaari and Punamaki (2018) has a similar opinion to Railean (2016) and discusses that the theory states that there is often a lot of complexity with challenging opportunities where things will change within the child's life whilst growing, this could arise at any point as the child's physical and cognitive structures grow and mature.

Burman (2020) highlights that Children who develop good social relationships tend to experience greater self-esteem than those who have not had the opportunity and are children who are less likely to experience mental health and wellbeing issues. There is also evidence that pro-social behavior during childhood leads to better psychological health in adulthood, so the less sociological factors that a child experiences within their lifetime the better the child's development will be. Entwisle (2018) implies that the generic surroundings and the geographical location of the place the child's home is at, can affect the child majorly as there could be many of crimes being committed, also it could be too far away from accessing services also the area may be experiencing poverty.

Aubrey (2016) suggests that the role of the catalytic leader when minimising the impact and risk of these factors, is to provide guidance, knowledge and to empower children to understand their rights in context when understanding poverty, relationships, inequality, and media. Catalytic leader within an early years setting should be able to recognise when children are experiencing sociological factors, this is where they are able to speak on behalf of the children as an advocate and provide services to support them, this could vary from helping them receive free food, clean clothing and the right to be heard.

Guzzetti and Lesley (2016) demonstrate in relation to a sociological factor such as media, it may be more challenging to deal with the complex factors for example, children seeing and taking part with inappropriate behaviors, or looking up to the wrong individual including the role of cyberbullying. Sullivan, Lantz, and Sullivan (2020) suggest that signs of these issues are hard to recognise with technology today, as children are easily influenced by media ranging from how you look to, what you eat and what values to think or have.

Hadfield, Jopling and Needham (2015) suggest that there may be difficulty with being a catalytic leader and providing change as this type of leader shows a vast amount of interest in their own beliefs and others, they do this by examining other values in various ways, such as coaching or mentoring. A catalytic leader has the ability to transform a person's vision into reality. This simply can be done by having the intangibles that come from heart, passion and empowerment. However, Campbell-Barr and Leeson (2016) highlights that this can be an unrealistic view as others may not have the same opinion, or views enabling sharing and advocating their voices difficult.

As Jacobs, *et al* (2020) implies a catalytic leader would find it difficult to provide immediate change to any of the sociological factored stated as anyone can be a leader that is empowered by something that they believe in. However, according to Walk (2023) this is where complications with providing change as a catalytic leader because prominent, a catalytic leader within the early years often does not have any power to be able to make high and effective decisions that can prevent the sociological factors from impacting children. However, McKibben, Umstead and Borders (2017) demonstrates that a catalytic leader can advocate on behalf of the children, uphold and empower their rights so that school, local authorities and other service understand that they are experiencing sociological effects and need help and support.

Section 2

After exploration and context is viewed of the child commissioner and the history is discussed there is a document that has been put into practice called 'The right way' framework (2017) which has been centered around providing rights to all individual in an educational setting which was approved and proceeded by the child commissioner. This upholds Canning and Reed (2010) also Blandford and Knowles, (2016) study guidelines of leading a child enabled approach where reflective practice can be used for the best needs of the child.

According to Welsh Government (2021) the right way framework is based on an approach that considers the human rights which means that all areas of discrimination in the relation of rights must be prevented and restrained. However, Hansen, *et al.* (2021) considers that this approach also highlights that priority should be provided to

individuals in a vulnerable situation who have experienced barriers to using their rights and how they can be protected (Welsh Government, 2021).

This document is offering the opportunity to practitioners in line with the Education of department (2022) that it is guidance or instruction for educational settings to follow and ensure that the rights of individuals are met, to encourage a human rights approach throughout education. Also, this varies to anyone in education for example, primary school, secondary, college and university (Education of department, 2022).

However, there are many recommendations made by the child commissioner in this documentation in accordance with Verhellen (2015) study where educational settings providing a more resilient human right approach. This is so that children can understand their human rights and to promote the use of them when needed and why they are used also, this can be implemented and experienced throughout their education. Furthermore, as Murray and Clark (2012) states a catalytic leader can be any individual that empowers -children and often individuals influence child to learn the skills to present as a catalytical leader.

Regardless of Verhellen (2015) study, Kosher and Ben-Arieh (2020) study sympathies with the approach that is used in the document in the 'right way framework' as it is there so that all children are given the opportunity to make the most of their talents and potential. This document also suggests that children often do not know they have rights which means they cannot use them in situation s that may affect them (Kosher and Ben-Arieh, 2020).

During the framework there is mention of the individuals that make the recommendations and decide on the final document with the commissioner, consisting of a group of experts, however, Farley, Brock, and Winterbottom (2018) questions what makes an individual an expert in their field or subject to be able to justify the importance of finalising the recommendations and framework. Child rights connect (2020) presents that the committee consists of eighteen individuals that are involved with children's right to undertake evaluation and reviews. This is done under policies and procedures to provide action for victims of child rights and violations of these rights. In spite of that, the committee are a group of professional with experienced and qualifications that enable them to be able to be appointed for the position to set

framework and recommendation up and present them to the commissioner to be approved and produced (Child rights connect, 2020).

When considering an all-based evaluation of the document and the recommendations there are many different approaches within the document that agree and are in conjunction of Starkey and Osler (2017) where often individuals have a difference in opinion in society, how they would like to do things or how they want their child to experience thing, this may not align with beliefs or points of human rights and may be difficult to implement and suit all (Starkey and Osler, 2017).

Another recommendation that is in line with Welsh Government (2022) the Wales education is changing information document supports that the right way framework consists of stating that human rights must be embedded into the curriculum this could cause issue in implementing the framework as educational settings can influence and change the direction that it is viewed from depending on their perception of the written principles (Welsh Government, 2022).

Also in line with Estyn (2021) the document considers the recommendation that governments want to be centered approached to each individual child in education however, according to the legislation government in conjunction with the curriculum and assessment Wales (2021) highlights that educators must attain the knowledge of human rights however, again the difference in new and old teaching staff could provide a whole unique learning experience for the child they are working, this is also where practitioners should be using Legalisation Government (2011) Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure, so that issues do not arise due to their own setting following their own systems with each child where they are closer to the child and could possibly view the approach differently depending on the child and their needs.

The recommendations are in line with Hodgman (2012) study where empowering children in educational settings should enhance the capabilities and potential as an individual so that the child can develop to understand how to use the rights to their advantage and have a say in what affects their lives, possible issues with this could arise as not all adults in education may find ways to do this without influencing the children in to thinking or feeling the same as views or beliefs (Hodgman, 2012). Watson and Fawcett (2016) also states how important it is within the early years to promote the ideas of the 'unique child' and how their own choices and opinions should be

valued when making their own decisions regarding their education, health and well-being. As stated within the Equality act (2010) all children should not be treated the same but should always be given the same opportunities to thrive without discrimination.

The recommendation also highlights the same principles of the Estyn (2022) policy and procedures For Safeguarding where participation and accountability is aimed, where children should be listened to and their views should be taken seriously when making decisions. Continuing that this statement is open to argument as Garvey (2017) suggests that it is not tested or recorded how children are confronted with issues regarding their life, the document also does not show evidence of how settings can be accountable where authorities should be responsible for ensuring children are involved with actions involving their entitlements and rights.

The recommendations based in this document 'the right way' is a supporting document that compliments the Welsh government's idea of human rights and in accordance with the human rights act (1998), including working in cooperation with UNICEF (2022) the United Nations convention rights of the child presents, it tends to form a pattern that links in to education and how it should be put in practice however, this is open to critique as it is not a direct ruling, policy or legislation so staff do not have to follow the suggestions as its not compulsory, its generally only given settings advise. There is a vast amount of evidence in this guidance that shows it's not a document that has to be followed as the phrases that are used for example, 'should', 'implement', 'ensure' and 'aim to' are consistently used which suggest that is not mandatory to be undertaken by any single person or setting.

Jones, Welch and Welch (2018) suggest that the difficulty with implement this framework for the individuals trying to empower, could result in difference with views, opinions and express of recommendations due to being educated in an old fashioned manner or be influenced by their own perception of how it should be taught or presented. However, Crutchley (2018) study highlights that implementing this framework in curriculum for children could have possible faults as the document consistently mentions that it is not compulsory, which children will begin to think about when learning about this framework, during this discovery children could choose not to follow or take part in this approach Crutchley (2018).

In order of Legalisation government (2022) in relation to the Education act (2011) From concluding the evidence this document presents and has pointed out that by implementing the changes from the framework it could be an easy task when complying to the frameworks recommendations for the children being educated. Counting that in consideration to early years education it can be used through the way that their settings educate them, in the curriculum and be highlighted during teaching activities and play as underlined in Welsh Government (2022) Implementation plan. Also in line with Welsh Government (2022) early years setting could make their own policy or procedure with a way of incorporating the recommendation from the document with providing group training to staff for the approach to be more efficient, evaluated and record. Setting would also then be able to see what works, how it works and look at different strategies of making it work. Furthermore, during settings completing implementation they could also collect data and evaluate by asking for feedback from pupils, via a questionnaire or 1-1 conversations to consider their thoughts, as advised and also completed in document by Estyn (2022) and Care Inspector Wales (2022) inspection of setting policy where they complete their inspections of early years settings. Furthermore, in consideration to Cottle and Alexander (2012) study it presents that the individuals who are educated in early years may find it to be a simple task to incorporate the framework recommendations as this moral and value-based documents is often how this area of practitioners are trained to think and empower, including experiencing it during their time in education or training to be in an early year setting (Cottle and Alexander, 2012).

Section 3

According to Karatekin and Hill (2019) Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACE is defined as a traumatic events that occurs in early years, typically between the ages of 0-17 years old, it is a common identified sociological aspect that effects children and often adults too, it is seen to challenges them individually and can control their life from early years furthering on to adulthood.

Brady and Lester (2018) suggest that ACES can vary from a child experiencing neglect, violence, abuse, and often a home environment where family members may suffer with mental health or substance use problems. Hays-Grudo and Morris (2020) highlights that the research into children who have suffered from ACES show signs of

toxic stress which can affect how the brain develops and how the body may respond and deal with stress. Brooks (2019) study has proven evidenced that aces are linked to mental health illness, chronic health issues and can lead to substance misuse when developing into teenage years and further to adulthood.

According to Asmundson and Afifi (2020) study, when children are being evaluated for aces, they are marked on a tally system with different forms of abuse, neglect, and other areas of an unsettled childhood. Often when you've experienced more than one aces or a unsettled childhood, the higher your score is likely to be and the higher your risk for later health.

However, according to Someshwar, et al. (2020) during the screening of ACES the importance of assessing, is to identify individuals who are at the most risk for toxic stress, the purpose of this is to provide intervention as soon as possible and to prevent further complications in adult life, and for those who develop into having their own family.

Children's Commissioner for Wales (2017) demonstrates that throughout their research there has been consistent evidence of early years practices becoming increasingly aware of the effect that adverse childhood experiences are having on an individual as it is generally happening a lot more within families.

Estyn (2020) highlights that as a result of aces becoming more known the government have funded many projects which will help professionals when working with children, adults and also to try tackle and use prevention to limit the experiences of aces. However, Welsh Government (2021) shows discovery of presenting that the child commissioner also recommended that policies and rights that protect a child should follow an aces model. This is so that it builds towards a group understanding and impact of the child after experiencing their life and will also improve services for these children. Continuing that by using the aces model it is considered to be a powerful new tool that is a way of providing child centered approach, also the use of the model in practice could provide room to achieve improvements of change (Welsh Government, 2021).

Walsh, et al. (2019) advocates in line with Karatekin (2019) article that an effect of a sociological factor such as aces, can delay a child's development in all areas. Concluding that this can result in physical, social, cognitive, emotional and behavior

being negatively impacted. Waite and Ryan (2020) suggest that as a result of experiencing ACEs it can lead to children's health undergoing poor outcomes, effecting well-being and mental health and can enhance the child's likeliness of adoption bad habits or health harming behaviors. Thompson, *et al.* (2020) discusses that this can be varied from age for example, younger children will cause self-injury or develop eating conditions and adult often turn to addiction, with alcohol and drugs. Conveying that if the individuals aces experience includes abuse and domestic violence, children may struggle with their identity and personality disorders or becoming the abuser themselves (Thompson, *et al.* 2020).

Blaisdell (2018) adds value to Thompson, *et al.* (2020) study and advocates that Aces is particularly dangerous for children to experience at a young age as it will cause lifelong problems if it is not recognised and provided with the correct multidisciplinary team to provide support, intervention, and prevention.

Jackson, Testa and Vaughn (2021) highlights that in relation to a school's environment there are services in place that include counsellors, home support with emotional development and assigning the identified children a stable key person as Children with high numbers of ACEs need to have an individual that is consistent and dependable to guide them in the right direction. Lipscomb, *et al.* (2021) demonstrates that the local authority also have many preventions that they put into practice for example, family first and the flying start program which is aimed at decreasing the chances of children experiencing aces. Ryan, *et al.* (2011) study argues Crouch, *et al.* (2019) statement and suggests that these programmers are in place to ensure that families are provided with the correct foundations to have a happy, relaxed and aces free home environment, also to support and limit damage if children or parents have experienced aces. Larkin and Park (2012) suggest that family information services (FIS) is also another source of support that can be accessed by children and parents for advice. Lee and Lawton (2022) sympathies with Larkin and Park (2012) study and suggest that this service can also put them in touch with Children and Family Services, the local Childcare team and team Around the Family (TAF) which can provide all sorts of services ranging from support in school, to educational courses/ training for parents and access to family centers and peer groups (Lee and Lawton, 2022).

Himmelstein (2015) presents that there are a few consistent approaches to interventions in relation to supporting aces, these are Interventions aimed at promoting relationships and independence which could be effective in the cooperating of working with an individual to help understand their aces. Kilbourne, *et al.* (2017) highlights the importance of using these qualities during intervention are important as they demonstrable the impact on increasing self-esteem and decision-making skills, reducing stress or anxiety.

Finkelhor (2018) assess key issues where there are significant gaps in evidence on interventions for ACEs, as most approaches used are focused on intense individual psychological behaviors, and often do not address the social aspects which may lessen the negative impacts of ACEs or they do not address the needs if children need further help for example, psychological support. Dube (2018) argues that many negative impacts of ACEs include health behaviors, social relationships, and day to day circumstances, these areas have also not been widely addressed by intervention or prevention studies. Hughes, *et al.* (2017) and Nurius, Logan-Greene and Green, (2012) both highlight in their studies that issues may arise with barriers to supporting aces as many of the programs focus on the sociological issue itself rather than the cause and may not be able to provide immediate action, including presenting that accessing the services may be difficult as awareness of these services may not be known by everyone. Lacey and Minnis (2020) suggest that barriers could occur when trying to attend these services for example, being in poverty and not be able to use a phone or travel, also there is a high chance that the individuals that run the interventions may be parenting groups that have only expressed low grade family issues and may not be able to highlight the support needed for more server experiences or the understand of what aces experienced individuals might have had (Lacey and Minnis, 2020).

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