

Cover Sheet

For this assessment I have submitted the following:

- An Academic Poster exploring Wellbeing, Care and Healthy Lifestyles.

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work.

What is Health?

Musgrave (2017) explains, the meaning of health is difficult to define as there is no explanation of health that fits all. The World Health Organization (1986) believes promotion of health enables a person to recognise their own needs and gives them the ability to adapt and cope with their surroundings. It suggests, health is to be looked at holistically, considering physical and social health, looking at overall wellbeing. It can be seen how this explains health as a focus on the overall person and their being, rather than just treating an illness. Rieser and Mason (1992) view this as the social model of health, where the person is valued as a whole. They compare this to the medical model of health, where the focus is on the illness and fixing it. When compared, Rieser and Mason (1992) feel the social model focuses more on prevention, which would enable a more positive future for others. An example of this could be, medically, a child with a bad chest is regularly treated. However, socially, the issue is looked at more broadly which shows the child's chest is bad due to poor housing. If the child was moved, this issue could have been prevented. Referring to The World Health Organization (1986) and its definition of health, Musgrave (2017) links this to the Early Years by suggesting the role of the adult is to support children with health conditions by recognising their need for adaptation in an ever changing environment.

Marmot (2010) states, it is 'crucial' for every child to have the best start in life in order to reduce their changes of health inequalities in their future. Going on to explain, what happens in the early years of a child's life, could bring on health issues such as, obesity and poor mental health.



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Early Intervention

Bronfenbrenner believes the environment and those surrounding the child all have an impact on the child's development. When looking at the ecological system, it is suggested how the immediate family of the child have the closest link and have a direct influence on a child's life (Hayes, et al., 2017). From this, it can be seen how supporting families can potentially have an impact on the child and their future health. Musgrave (2017) say early intervention can begin from the moment of conception by promoting the health and wellbeing of baby and mother. Particularly for mothers in vulnerable situations, support can be given to help build attachment between mother and baby. Long term, this will improve the mental health and wellbeing of the child as they grow older. This is supported by NSPCC (2021) who state parents and babies begin to form a bond before birth. They suggest that there may be times where developing a bond may be difficult, this could be due to lack of support or mental health issues. The World Health Organization (n.d.) say, in order for a child to develop healthily, they need to be nurtured by their caregiver. It believes in order to do this, the caregiver need to be supported by local services and the community. Hayes, Halpenny and O'Toole (2017) share the value of the early years practitioner (EYP) and their role within Bronfenbrenner's model, suggesting the EYP falls into the mesosystem of the model, where the EYP is interconnected with the child and their family. They consider the importance of those involved in the model, learning from each other and developing a combined knowledge of the child. With this understanding, an EYP may be able to refer a parent or offer support if they feel the parent or child is struggling with issues such as mental health. MIND (2024) state there is more to be done by the government in regards to mental health, suggesting the Government need to do more to address that factors that cause mental health issues, Such as poverty. Welsh Government seem to be attempting to tackle the issue of food poverty in Wales, Hutt (2024) say Welsh Government were committed to adding 1.7 million on top of 2.8 million to the 22 million already allocated to support those in food poverty. This was to be split between local authorities who would use multi agencies to ensure the money goes to those who need it most. There has also been the introduction of free school meals for all primary children within Wales (Welsh Government, 2024). This could help many parents who are struggling with mental health. It could provide one less worry, knowing their child is being fed a healthy meal, during term time, particularly for those that may not have fallen into the category for free school meals previously.

Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner developed the idea of the chronosystem, suggesting, childhood changes due to historical changes of beliefs and values. Following on with an example of the early twenty-first century where the role of children's input into their own learning has since become more involved (Hayes, Halpenny, and O'Toole, 2017). It can be seen how historical changes have impacted childhood such as, the early years. In 2022, Welsh Government (n.d.) made changes to Early Years care, sharing that research has shown, investment in children in the early years has a positive impact on physical and mental health. Furthermore, Welsh Government say the devolution of Wales enabled the country to commit to early years, supporting a holistic approach to learning, through policies, legislation and guidance (Welsh Government, n.d.).

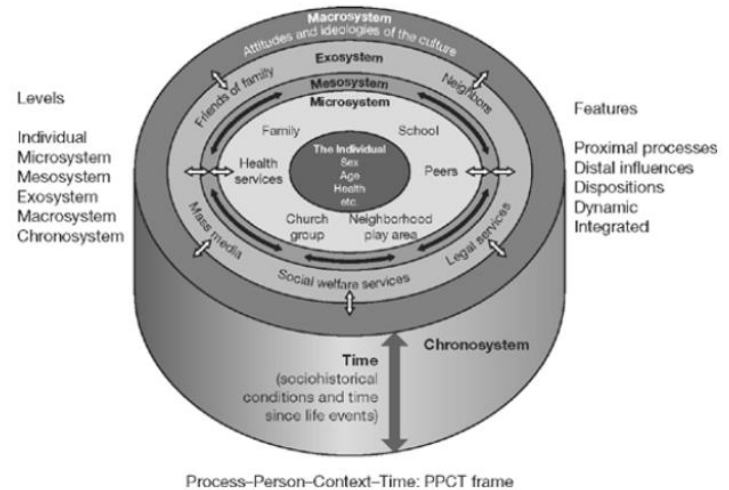


FIGURE 2.1 Bioecological model of development

Hayes, Halpenny, and O'Toole, 2017

Wellbeing

Anna Freud, Mentally Healthy Schools (2020) say mental health is combination of emotional, psychological and social wellbeing, explaining it can change over months or years dependant on different factors. It believes mental health should be cared for just as much as physical health, as good mental health enables a person to cope with stressful and challenging times. This idea is supported by Reilly and Boone (1977) who state that stress had become one of the dominant problems in society which linked to heart issues, drug use and alcoholism. Progression of time seems to have shown little improvement, with Welsh Government sharing findings between 2022-23 of declining mental health in Wales. This included lower wellbeing rates for young people and those with poor physical health (MIND, 2024).

Hong, Ra and Jang (2015) developed a study on children's ideas of happiness. They found most of the young children, aged 3, 4 and 5, chose engaging in their favourite play and being with their favourite person as an occasion of when they felt happy. The children's explanations of happiness are supported by Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. who believed a humans physiological needs, such as food and love, need to be met before the person is able to potentially reach self-actualization (Pichere and Cadiat, 2015). This could suggest that basic needs are to be met in order to build good wellbeing, and with good wellbeing follows the confidence to reach full potential. Though it should also be considered that happiness is transient, what may make one person happy may not make another happy. This is shown by the range of answers from the children within the research by Hong, Ra and Jang (2015).

Although it has been mentioned that prevention is better than cure, Maslow continued to critique and develop his research, talking of a plateau experience, which is seen as a constant state of calm rather than feeling big highs of happiness. He believed it could be a learnt state of mind using mindfulness and being thankful in the present moment (Buckler, 2025). It can be considered how mindfulness can be taught later on in life to bring a sense of calm and mental wellbeing to a person's life, however, Buckler (2025) continues, by suggesting criticisms of this idea, saying that Maslow's only explanation of learnt mindfulness comes from his own personal experience. There is some agreement from Marmot (2010) who believed that later interventions are important but can be less effective than giving a child the best possible start.

Hong, Ra and Jang (2015) go on to say, when children aged 3, 4 and 5 were asked to explain the meaning of happiness, the highest answer was 'I don't know'. This showed children were yet able to explain the meaning of happiness but, were able to describe happy experiences, suggesting that observation and listening to children will enable the adult to understand a child's feelings of happiness. Within the Early Years, the practitioner could help develop understanding of feeling, by using books or songs that use sound and language to describe a feeling. This idea is supported by Mainstone-Cotton (2017) who believes using emotional vocabulary helps children to understand their emotions. They describe circle times within different nursery settings that spend time talking to children about what they are feeling and naming it, such as a fluttery tummy or fast heartbeat.

Lifestyle

Bandura (1979) argues that babies are not born as a blank canvas, they are reciprocal, with an active and thinking brain. They suggest as a child grows, they are learning from their experiences and building knowledge from their environment. This can be seen as a valuable source, as it could imply a child's lifestyle is a learnt behaviour from the family surrounding them within their home. This links to the theory of Bronfenbrenner who saw the home environment as a key influence on a child's behaviour and development, explaining the proximal process as a core mechanism which happens in the child's key environment with the repeat of two way interactions, objects and symbols (Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000). Estyn (2017) state that 'The promotion of healthy living is a key objective of the Welsh Government.' It sets out guidance for schools to follow in an attempt to develop a healthy start for children, including educating children on the importance of healthy living and fitness.

Schmeer and Yoon (2016) say poor conditions within the home can affect the stress levels of children, suggesting the home environment is important for their physical and social development. They go on to say, interactions between the family members may be affected if there is little space due to overcrowding of the home. With this and Bronfenbrenner's theory being considered, an overcrowded house may impact interaction between parent and child due to noise and stress levels. Welsh Government (2025) state that 3,000 children are living in B&B's or temporary accommodation, outlining the pandemic and cost of living crisis as factors affecting the living standards of families. From this, it should be considered how, though the lifestyle of the child is determined by the family or caregiver, the family may have no choice but to live the lifestyle they have, such as living in an overcrowded house.

Flying Start was set up by Welsh Government to support families of children under 4 years of age, this includes access to 12.5 hours of funded childcare for children aged 2 years. It places emphasis on quality care for children, referring to 'Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care' (Welsh Government 2026). Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care sets out a plan for Early Years to support 0-5 year olds. It advises the importance of working with families to support the child and create an environment that builds on familiarity and belonging (Welsh Government, 2024). For those living in poverty, access to Flying Start may be welcomed as the child has space to explore and play. However, when established in 2007, Flying Start was a program that was offered to those in targeted areas (Welsh Government, 2024). This could mean that some children and families who needed the support were missed. The guidance goes on to state that authorities are able to provide outreach to those children they feel are vulnerable (Welsh Government, 2024). In addition, as of April 2026, all children in Newport, aged 2, are able to attend flying start settings. Councillor Deb Davis stated 'They will be getting a great start by learning through play and it is known that regular attendance in good quality childcare can significantly improve their outcomes' (Welsh Government, 2026).

Multi-agency working

The Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care plan highlights the collaboration of agencies and families. Stating that services should work together to support children, particularly children that are more vulnerable (Welsh Government, 2024). Within Newport Flying Start areas, parents are able to access health visitors, speech and language support and childcare, which all work collectively (Newport City Council, 2026).

Wilson (2024). say it can be difficult for parents to talk about issues they may be having. Positive relationships between the practitioner and the family will give the parent more confidence to open up, the practitioner is then able to refer and reassure that referrals to other agencies, such as parenting groups, can be beneficial. Gasper (2009) believes that partnership working not only depends on that of the practitioner and the parent but also the other agencies involved. It requires commitment from all involved and good relationships between agencies. Also suggesting that when agencies work well together this enables a family to access services at one time rather than having to navigate agencies separately. It can be considered how, particularly for a parent who may be struggling, the process may be more smooth and less stressful if there is good communication between all involved.

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