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Contents

1. Poster

2. Reference List

Health, Well-being and Lifestyles

Introduction

The purpose of this poster is to support and develop the theoretical concepts of health, well-being and lifestyles. These concepts will be studied and outlined throughout this poster along with discussions of why they are vital within the early years' stages of life. Additionally, this poster will define some fundamental ideas from studies and present significant legislation and guidance. Furthermore, it will discuss connections to the curricula, recognise the holistic environment of health and well-being, and investigate the dynamics that shape health and wellbeing. And lastly, it will conclude by why it is essential to develop and improve health, well-being and lifestyle within early years practice.

Health

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2025), health is a status of overall physical, mental and social well-being and not purely the absenteeism of chronic illness or sickness. Healthy growth of the child is of important significance; the capability to live amicably in an everchanging whole environment is vital towards such development (WHO, 2025). Moreover, Helena Green, (a student practitioner) expresses that taking care of children's health indicates that their essential requirements are met. According to her, they must also be taken care of by family and professionals to grow emotionally and physically at a pace that is appropriate to the child and their setting. (Musgrave, 2017). Helena also believes children's health should be supported holistically and expresses that the individual's health is an essential segment of the child. She sees the environment of children's lives and the provision of families and professionals as being vital to maintaining children's health (Musgrave, 2017). Additionally, WHO (2025) state that safeguarding and refining the health of children is of vital significance. They state that children should be provided with a steady atmosphere in which to flourish, involving good-quality health and nutrition, safety from hazards and access to opportunities to learn and develop. The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (2025) simplifies Article 24 of the UNCRC by stating that healthcare for children must be as good-quality as possible and young individuals have the privilege to be both physically and emotionally fulfilled. Children and young individuals must have sufficient nutrition from their diet and must be able to reside in a secure and healthy atmosphere.

Wellbeing

According to the Department of Health (2013), wellbeing involves a person's experiences of their life; and a contrast of lifetime situations with societal customs and values. Additionally, Musgrave (2017) describes wellbeing as a general view of health, combining emotional, social and mental characteristics. Berlinski and Shady (2015) point out that wellbeing is "the state of being happy, healthy or prosperous" from the Merriam-Webster dictionary. According to Laevers (2005), the greatest sign of well-being is amusement, having enjoyment, taking desire in interrelating with others and in hobbies. The children appear to be content, beam or chuckle effortlessly, participate instinctively in talking or singing. Laevers (2005) states that another sign of wellbeing is energy and liveliness. This can frequently be studied by a person's face: the appearance is energetic and open. They radiate. Their stance similarly conveys a lot: not shriveled or with droopy shoulders but standing, not scared to grab the area they are allowed to. Additionally, wellbeing shows a person is performing fine mentally, is feeling happy with oneself as an individual. A minimal level of wellbeing indicates that a child does not prosper in accomplishing his/her necessities. Laevers (2005) also suggest that a low degree of wellbeing in the longstanding regularly produces emotional issues. A child eludes interaction from themselves and their feelings. The child can act very lethargic, nervous or violent or appears to take a stride back in their growth. Since the foundation of a character is placed throughout the primary phases of life, one cannot pay adequate care to signs representing a minimal level of wellbeing. According to Bradshaw (2016), subjective wellbeing can be comprehended as a person's individual assessments and emotions regarding their life. Zacher and Rudolph (2021) point out that children's mental well-being is just as essential as their physical wellbeing as excellent emotional health aids them to grow the suppleness to deal with whatever life throws at them and develop into mature, strong adults. According to the National Health Service (NHS) (2021) children who encounter a better gist of well-being are inclined to have greater confidence and intensified physical advantages for example, better brain healthiness and attentiveness.

Howard, Burton and Levermore (2020) point out that taking care of one's general health allows them to encounter a healthier life and accomplish their individual aspirations. Early childhood is an important period for growth of later life consequences involving health. Indications display that positive occurrences in the early lifespan are watchfully related with improved performance at school, improved social and emotional growth, better-quality job outcomes, better income and better-quality lifelong health involving lengthier lifespan. Equally, fewer positive occurrences earlier on in life, mainly occurrences of hardship connect diligently to numerous harmful longstanding aftereffects: poverty, homelessness, unemployment, unhealthy behaviours and inadequate emotional and physical health. Marmot *et al.*, 2020)

(Source: Simply Psychology, 2022)

According to Lynch (2016), an excellent P.E school programme should be granted importance over other subjects/ learning areas. An excellent P.E programme performs a central role in the growth of the child from the early years of primary school, and it enhances child wellbeing and the probability of lifetime involvement in physical education. Additional physical activity and less sitting time improve motor skills particularly handgrip strength. Encouraging good-quality sleep and physical activity is vital for the health and growth of children. (Abdeta et al., 2025)

(Source: Pinterest, 2018)

Lifestyles

According to Bagordo *et al.* (2017), lifestyles are customs of living based on individual patterns of behaviour that are controlled by the interaction between an individual's personal distinctiveness, social communications and socioeconomic and environmental living circumstances. In addition, lifestyles deeply control the quality of a person's health and life since their childhood and lifetime quality and health in adulthood frequently varies on the living habits implemented since early years. Farhud (2015) also points out that lifestyle involves everyday behaviours of people in jobs, activities, fun and diet. Marques *et al.* (2019) points out that living a healthy lifestyle will support a child's general health and wellbeing. If a child does not live a nourishing lifestyle, then this could have harmful outcomes on their health and well-being. They will be at greater danger of sickness or life-threatening illness. Their emotional health may also be at jeopardy due to strain or anxiety. According to Barnardos Family Space (2024), a healthy lifestyle entails numerous things consisting of decent balance of nutrition, positive sanitation and exercise, both physical and mental. Having a healthy connection with food and drink is a crucial role of preserving a healthy lifestyle for both children and adults. Nurturing healthy mannerisms early in life will permit the child to create positive choices as they mature.

Application to Early Years Practice
(Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs)
(Care Learning, 2024)

Physiological needs in early years:

Nutrition: Offering balanced meals and snacks suitable for a child's age.
Sleep: Forming recurring sleep schedules that coordinate a child's growing phase.
Health Care: Frequent medical inspections and immunisations to stop diseases.
Comfort: Guaranteeing a relaxed physical atmosphere, such as having suitable dressing for the weather.

Safety needs in early years:

Safe Environment: Child-proofing areas to stop collisions, guaranteeing harmless toys and play area apparatus.
Routine and Consistency: Preserving predictable routines to deliver a sense of dependability and safety.
Emotional Security: Growing trustful connections with caregivers to construct self-assurance in their surroundings.
Health Safety: Educating straightforward sanitation practices such as handwashing to stop the spread of germs.

Love and Belongingness needs in early years:

Warm relations: Developing affectionate connections with caregivers, parents or friends.
Group tasks: Including activities that inspire collaboration and assistance.
Inclusive Environment: Producing a comprehensive environment that embraces different upbringings and nurtures a sense of society.
Attachment bonds: Supporting safe attachment connections via constant and receptive supervision.

Esteem Needs in early years:

Positive reinforcement: Using commendation and reassurance to identify accomplishments and determinations.
Nurturing independence: Letting children create decisions for instance choosing task activities or assisting in preparing for a class.
Skill growth: Helping children to attempt new ideas and offering chances to achieve in task activities.
Respectful Communication: Hearing children's ideas and viewpoints, letting them articulate themselves.

Self-Actualization needs in early years:

Creative expression: Offering chances for painting, songs and creative play.
Curiosity and exploration: Encouraging answers and investigating responses, developing a passion for being taught.
Personal Interests: Encouraging interests or talents, for instance introducing a promising musician to distinct instruments.
Holistic learning opportunities: Providing task activities that produce numerous learning techniques or areas, for instance outside play or nature adventure.
Early years settings should remain designed to provide all stages of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs efficiently by offering nutritional programmes, nutritious food and drink and dinners. They should also offer structured routines. For example, providing constant everyday timetables that help children feel safe. They should also provide social interaction opportunities. For instance, they should plan group task activities which endorse communication and collaboration. They should provide skill-building exercises which include activities to grow fine and gross motor abilities. Syllabuses should consider a balance of task activities which support every part of growth. For example, whole child approach: mixing social, mental, physical and intellectual growth in class strategies. Play-constructed learning: Using play as a main method of being taught to construct social abilities and information. Parent participation: Occupying parents in learning policies and programmes to strengthen growth while at home. However, meeting the different requirements of young children entails tailored methods that can be challenging because there are restrictions on supplies; there are not enough workforce or resources to deliver personalised care. There also social distinctions as diverse cultural traditions and hopes from families.

Conclusion

The importance of health and wellbeing in early childhood shapes the foundation of a child's growth. These fundamentals not only promote emotive and intellectual growth but also lead the path for a rewarding and successful future. Professionals in early childhood education should constantly measure their practices. By incorporating health and wellbeing, teachers can guarantee that every child's sole requirements are met, enabling optimal development. Holistic wellbeing in early childcare development is a joint responsibility. Whilst teachers, families and societies operate together, they will produce a happier and more comprehensive future for every child.

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