Measuring and monitoring children and young people's mental wellbeing

*****Please complete your pre-course questionnaire if you haven't already done so online*****

Alison Ford
Regional Improvement Support Officer (CORC)

1. Introduction

Our vision is for all children and young people's wellbeing support to be informed by real-world evidence so that every child thrives

CORC
Child Outcomes
Research Consortium

Our **mission** is to promote the meaningful use of evidence to enable more effective and child-centred support, services and systems to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

www.corc.uk.net

Learning Objectives

- Understand why measuring child mental wellbeing matters to schools

- Learn about different ways to measure child mental wellbeing in schools

- Learn from examples of schools currently measuring child mental wellbeing

- Know how to access resources to support you

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What is mental wellbeing?

- Many different definitions
- Mental wellbeing is not simply the absence of mental illness

" Children and young people feeling good, feeling that their life is going well, and feeling able to get on with their daily lives. "
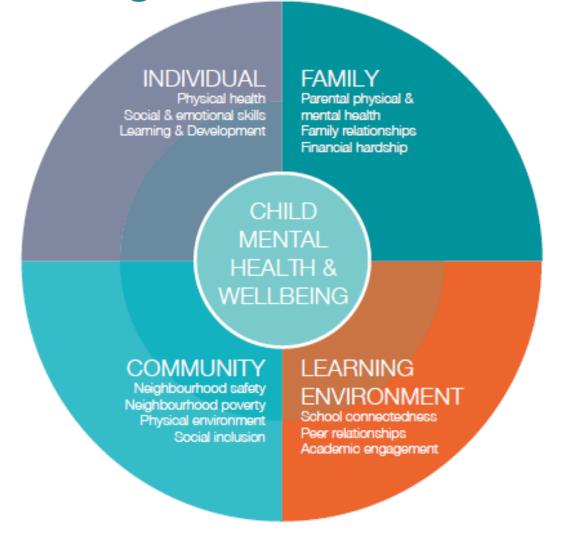
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What informs well-being?

- Individual
- Family
- Community
- Learning environment

Circular diagram with "CHILD MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING" at the center, surrounded by four quadrants:

INDIVIDUAL
Physical health
Social & emotional skills
Learning & Development

FAMILY
Parental physical & mental health
Family relationships
Financial hardship

COMMUNITY
Neighbourhood safety
Neighbourhood poverty
Physical environment
Social inclusion

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
School connectedness
Peer relationships
Academic engagement

Schools as a site for well-being support

How teachers can make a difference to children's mental health

Jessica Deighton
10th October 2016 at 12:30

Share this

'Focusing on wellbeing improves exam results'

He added that a focus on wellbeing and character would improve exam results, whi exam results alone diminished wellbeing and would not necessarily prepare studen because employers also value character.

"Running a university now, it has become even clearer to me that by the time stude the damag Tatler Scho

School league tables 'should show well-being'

By Sean Coughlan
Education correspondent

🕓 10 October 2016 | Education & Family

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Education | School Report | Global Education

Heads warn over pupils' untreated mental health issues

By Hannah Richardson
BBC News education reporter

🕓 8 February 2016 | Education & Family

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Wellbeing | Teaching

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Discussion

- What is the role of schools in child mental wellbeing and child mental health?

- How is it relevant to your work?

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Schools as a site for well-being support

- More and more programmes in existence to support mental health in schools

- But…

  - How do schools get a sense of the strengths and challenges for *their* student population?

  - How do they know who might need more support?

  - How do they know if this support is helping?

2. Measuring child mental wellbeing in schools

Why measure outcomes?

PHE: Formally defining need can inform commissioning decisions for schools, school clusters or local authorities

Evaluating will tell you if activities and interventions actually work to improve wellbeing and whether they are worth the investment

Ofsted: Assessing and responding to learners' emotional health and wellbeing needs, and their impact on the capacity to learn, relates to all key judgement areas

DfE: Schools should collect routine outcome data to assess the impact of counselling on the child or young person and the effectiveness of the service as a whole

Why measure outcomes?

1. Understand what is happening in your school
2. Demonstrate effectiveness
3. Continuous improvement
4. Support individual interactions

What kind of outcome measures are used in mental wellbeing?

- Questionnaire based

- Measure specific things

- Validated and standardised

Measuring mental well-being

Measuring mental well-being

Figure 2:
7 steps for implementing mental health and wellbeing measurement in schools and colleges

1 **Why** ...is the approach taken being?

2 **What** ...needs to be measured?

3 **Who** ...provides the information?

4 **When** ...is the information collected?

5 **Where** ...is the information collected?

6 **How** ...is the information collected?

7 **What next** ...sharing and using the information collected

Choosing the right measure

- What are you trying to achieve / understand?

- How & which measure(s) will help you achieve this?

- What support is needed in order to use the measure?

- Is this support available or does this need to be resourced?

Choosing the right measure

- Getting different perspectives: child, parent, practitioner

- Practical considerations
  - e.g. length of questionnaire
  - how frequently it will be collected

- Considerations specific to a particular group
  - How will they respond to the language in the measure
  - Certain groups have specific needs, e.g. YP with Learning Disability

3. Different approaches to measuring child mental wellbeing in schools

Purposes for measuring mental well-being

1. **Evaluation:** to consider the impact of whole-school/college support and targeted interventions

2. **Identification:** to identify individual students who might benefit from early support

3. **Snapshot:** to understand needs on aggregated basis, provide evidence for Ofsted and to plan whole-school/college support

1. Evaluation

- This approach is used to ensure the support you have put in place is helping the children and young people involved

- Findings can be used to reflect on and improve practice

- They can inform future funding decisions

- It generally involves looking at how outcomes have changed as the result of an activity –measuring them before, after, and sometimes during an intervention
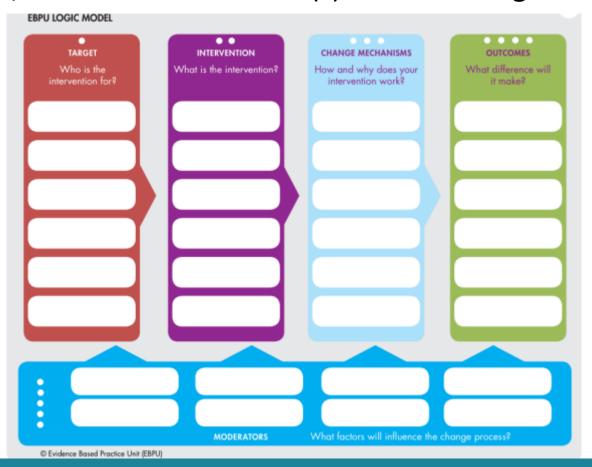
Evaluation: how to approach it

A logic model is helpful in mapping out what your intervention aims to achieve, and the best measure(s) for evaluating it

Evaluation: key to consider from outset

- What information will tell you if your intervention is achieving what it is meant to achieve?
  - The mental wellbeing measure may be only part of the picture
  - You may want to consider different people's perspectives

- Practical considerations
  - At what time points will you capture data to see if the intervention has made a difference – when is the start/ end?
  - Who will capture and collate the information and how?

- How will you analyse the data
  - Are there comparison groups?

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Evaluation, example in practice

Rochdale Healthy Schools

- Evaluated the impact of their intervention 'Wise Ways to wellbeing' using the **Stirling Children's Wellbeing scale**

- Used the scale at the beginning, and then with their target group after support activities, and looked at change in scores

- Case study highlights the need for

  – resources needed to administer (collate and score)

  – explanations for the young people (and parents) involved about how the information would be used

Statements	Never	Not Much of the time	Some of the time	Quite a lot of the time	All of the time
I think good things will happen in my life					
I have always told the truth					
I've been able to make choices easily					
I can find lots of fun things to do					
I feel that I am good at some things					
I think lots of people care about me					
I like everyone I have met					
I think there are many things I can be proud of					
I've been feeling calm					
I've been in a good mood					
I enjoy what each new day brings					
I've been getting on well with people					
I always share my sweets					
I've been cheerful about things					
I've been feeling relaxed					

The **Stirling children's wellbeing scale** - this is a holistic, positively worded scale, developed by the Stirling Educational Psychology Service, that is suitable for educational professionals looking to measure emotional and psychological wellbeing in children aged eight to 15 years

Evaluation - discussion and reflection

- Are you already doing some of this?

- How can you see this working at your school?

- What are the barriers and how can we overcome them?

2. Identification

- This approach is used for identifying individual students who might benefit from support

- Typically done using screening tools that pick up mental health problems

- Not recommended to use a single measure in isolation for this purpose

- 'Check in' conversations with young person highly recommended

Identification: key to consider from outset

- Whether to use the screening questionnaire with a whole cohort or with specific identified students

- Training for staff who are using the questionnaire,
  - introducing the questionnaire
  - interpreting the answers given
  - awareness about ethical issues, e.g. consent

- Be clear what you are going to do with or about the information

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Identification, example in practice

Cheltenham College, Gloucestershire

- The Welfare Management Team use the **Warwick and Edinburgh Emotional Wellbeing Scale**, alongside their own assessment of the problem and context

- Used to identify issues with students, in order to put in place appropriate support

- Case study highlights the value of

  – Using the measure in discussion to ensure the correct level of support is in place

  – Also being able to use the measure to monitor progress

Note: DfE recommend the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to identify issues..

Warwick and Edinburgh Emotional Wellbeing Scale

STATEMENTS	NONE OF THE TIME	RARELY	SOME OF THE TIME	OFTEN	ALL OF THE TIME
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
I've been dealing with problems well					
I've been thinking clearly					
I've been feeling good about myself					
I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5

The scale has been validated for use with children aged 13 and above, but has been used with children aged 11 and above

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
I try to be nice to other people. I care about their feelings	☐	☐	☐
I am restless, I cannot stay still for long	☐	☐	☐
I get a lot of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	☐	☐	☐
I usually share with others (food, games, pens etc.)	☐	☐	☐
I get very angry and often lose my temper	☐	☐	☐
I am usually on my own. I generally play alone or keep to myself	☐	☐	☐
I usually do as I am told	☐	☐	☐
I worry a lot			
I am helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill			
I am constantly fidgeting or squirming			
I have one good friend or more			
I fight a lot. I can make other people do what I want			
I am often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful			
Other people my age generally like me			
I am easily distracted, I find it difficult to concentrate			
I am nervous in new situations. I easily lose confidence			
I am kind to younger children			
I am often accused of lying or cheating			
Other children or young people pick on me or bully me			
I often volunteer to help others (parents, teachers, children)			
I think before I do things			
I take things that are not mine from home, school or elsewhere			
I get on better with adults than with people my own age	☐	☐	☐
I have many fears, I am easily scared	☐	☐	☐
I finish the work I'm doing. My attention is good	☐	☐	☐

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

DfE suggest using the *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* - suitable for completion by children aged 11 - 17, or by parents or teacher for those age 2 and up. The measure has with five subscales looking at emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity/ inattention, peer relationship problems and prosocial behaviour.

Questionnaire, scoring sheet and accompanying notes are available for free, from www.sdqinfo.com: scoring sheets provide overall scores considered normal, borderline and abnormal

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Identification – discussion and reflection

- Discussion: can you see this adding value in your school?
  - How do staff currently identify issues?
  - What tools do they use to share and discuss concerns with other professionals? E.g. in child mental health services
- Would it be more suitable across a whole cohort or with individual children/ young people?
- What are the barriers and how can we overcome them?

3. Snapshot

- This approach is used to identify needs or strengths within whole cohorts e.g. across a year group

- 'Temperature check'

- Commonly used to

  – plan prevention work

  – inform planning decisions at school/college level or across clusters

  – provide evidence of good practice

Snapshot: key to consider from outset

- Which students will be involved and why

- How to get a big enough number to be able to say something from the results

- Whether the information will be anonymous or not

- How to protect and store the data

- Issues of consent and communication - parents and carers as well as children and young people

- What you will do with the data

Snapshot - example in practice

HeadStart – primaries and secondaries in 6 areas

- Use a Common Measurement Framework that brings together several validated measures

- Approx. 100 questions, completed at year 9, and tracking one cohort across all school years

- To understand overall resilience and wellbeing of school population, and to monitor the impact of the area's HeadStart programmes

  – Survey takes on average 18 minutes to complete

  – Supports conversations between schools and other commissioners about emotional wellbeing

Common Measurement Framework UPDATE!

- We can offer a number of secondary schools free access to the Common Measurement Framework over a three year period

  – Support in administering an 'opt-out' consent process for participating pupils

  – Access to electronic survey

  – Analysis of survey responses from your school, benchmarked with schools from other areas

For more information contact us at corc@annafreud.org

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Snapshot – discussion and reflection

- Can you see this working at your school?
  - Experience of using similar whole school surveys?
- How would you use the information?
- What are the barriers and how can we overcome them?

4. Considerations in introducing outcome measurement in your school or area

Introducing measures to young people

Young advisors said measuring wellbeing can:

- send an important message that wellbeing is being taken seriously

- open up conversations about wellbeing

- give students the language to talk about wellbeing

- enable students to have a broader understanding of wellbeing

Introducing measures to young people

Explain WHY

"We need to know what it's for, who will see it, and what difference it will make."

Choose WHERE carefully

"You don't want to set everyone out in the hall like an exam. Young people need to know this isn't a test, that this is just a way of checking in about how people are feeling so the school can plan the right types of help."

Introducing measures to young people

Be PREPARED

Develop a script for introducing the measures and information for students. Cover:

- Who is being asked to complete it?

- Who will see the information?

- What will it be used for and will we get feedback?

- Who should I talk to?

Logistics

- Have the questionnaire ready and familiarise yourself with it
    - Have a go filling it out
    - Think about possible issues, like difficult words
- Plan how you are going to introduce questionnaire
    - Emphasis on openness and honesty
- Plan how you are going to feed back to the child or young person
    - Generating scores and looking at answers
- Think about how you will respond to risky issues
    - E.g. responses to self-harm/ suicidal thoughts
- Know how you are going to record data
    - Consent and scores

Principles

- No measurement without meaning
  - There should be a plan for how data is going to be used
  - Need to be clear about who's going to see results
- Informed consent
  - Child/Young person should understand why you are using the tool and what will happen to the data
- Welfare of children & YP is paramount
  - In rare cases it may not be appropriate to use measure
- No one information source gives whole picture
  - Neither measures nor professional judgement are absolute fact

Resources

- Measuring wellbeing toolkit

  http://www.annafreud.org/services-schools/mental-health-in-schools/schools-in-mind/resources-for-schools/mental-health-toolkit-for-schools/

- Schools in Mind network

  www.annafreud.org/services-schools/mental-health-in-schools/schools-in-mind/

- Child Outcomes Research Consortium

  www.corc.net.uk

- Youth Wellbeing Directory

  www.youthwellbeing.co.uk

Schools in mind

A network for school staff and allied professionals.

- Termly newsletters and events
- Resources to support schools to measure and monitor the wellbeing of their children and young people
- Innovative new approaches to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people
- Training for school staff
- Opportunities for schools to take part in research
- Ideas to support school staff wellbeing and mental health
- Opportunities to network with other school staff interested in wellbeing and mental Health

Contact us:
- **www.annafreud.org**
- **schoolsinmind@annafreud.org**

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Questions?

Thank you for coming

Please give us your feedback to help us improve

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