



The ToWe Project - Supporting Toddlers' Wellbeing

Enhancing Opportunities for Toddlers' Wellbeing

<http://www.toddlerswellbeing.eu/>

Manual

The supporting toddlers' wellbeing manual supports the practice of Early Years Practitioners and Teachers (EYPTs) to enhance the education and wellbeing opportunities for disadvantaged toddlers. It underpins EYPTs' knowledge and understanding of the different dimensions that impact on toddlers' wellbeing.

The aims of the toddlers' wellbeing manual are to:

- Familiarise EYPTs with the theoretical background, dimensions and aspects of wellbeing and how these can be used to evaluate practice;
- Increase EYPTs awareness of the complexities of the dimensions and aspects of wellbeing of toddlers;
- Provide EYPTs with a Wellbeing Audit Tool to evaluate and help them improve the quality of their current provision and practice;
- Help EYPTs distinguish effective strategies of good practice for toddler wellbeing identified by the Setting Partner EYPTs through their action plans, strategies, shared practice and reflective dialogue.

Audit Tool

The audit tool supports EYPTs in the self-assessment, evaluation and reflection of their provision, practice and the toddlers' individual needs. It is an evaluative tool that is not about rating/ranking the settings provision but identifying what is done well and what could be developed further to improve on the opportunities and experience for disadvantaged toddlers. This tool helps EYPTs to identify areas of strength and areas of development to assist in improving the quality of EYPTs provision and practice. Audit identifies key questions for the different dimensions of wellbeing for EYPTs to reflect upon and identify strategies for improvement;

Indicators 3.4 Staffing	Areas of Strength and/or Comments	Areas for Development	Strategies	Actions – Setting Development Plan
Key Person Approach How is your environment set up to support a toddler's sense of belonging? How are toddlers' intimate care needs met? How are key persons/ carers selected or chosen by the toddlers? How do EYPTs establish a positive and trusting relationship with the toddlers that they work with?				

Identification of the Priority - Aim	Targets - Objectives	Key actions – Actions to be taken	Who is responsible and by when	Date Achieved and date to be reviewed
To develop the key person (KP) approach within the setting to support the settling in process and attachment of toddlers within the setting.	To review the KP approach To rewrite the policy To provide staff training on the importance of theorists around KP approach Introduce to parents	Review policy at team meeting looking at legislation and theory Add new statements to the policy making links to legislations In-house training on the importance of the KP approach and theorists Produce an information leaflet for parents	EYPT and/or manager leads team meeting EYPT and/or manager delivers to staff EYPT and/or manager EYPT and/or manager	

The International Context of Wellbeing

The discussion around wellbeing has come to the fore with the publication of UNICEF's first Innocenti Report Card (2000) which provided league tables regarding poverty in the industrialised world. The report 7 and 11 (UNICEF, 2007, 2013) recognised wellbeing universally with 29 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) participating with the UK being ranked 16th, Norway 2nd and Spain 19th (UNICEF 2013:5)

The EURYDICE (2009) document *Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe: Tackling Social and Cultural Inequalities* identified how effective preschool education can promote life-long learning and provide opportunities to increase equality by supporting children in reaching their full potential. At the turn of the century the European Union called for "specific targets to be established as part of an effort to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty" (UNICEF, 2000:5). The United Kingdom was identified as committing to halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020. This has been a political driver for European countries to focus on poverty and disadvantaged families.

National Context for England, Norway and Spain

The United Kingdom (UK) government has provided a national context for England by identifying its commitment to halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020. Wellbeing can be seen reflected within this starting with the Every Child Matters agenda (DfE, 2003) and continued with:

- the Children Act 2004, and the Childcare Act 2006
- Effective Provision of Pre-School Education Project (Sylva, 2004)
- Key Elements of Effective Practice (DFES, 2005)
- The Allen Report (2011)
- The Tickell Report (2011)
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DfE, 2012)
- The EYFS framework (DfE, 2014, 2017)
- Through Early Years Entitlement, Early Years Pupil Premium and Free Early Education and childcare for Two year olds (FEET) (DfE, 2014, 2015).
- Wellbeing in four policy areas - Report (All Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics, 2014)
- Mindful Nation UK Report (All Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics, 2015)

Norway

Norway is ranked as one of the best countries in the world to live in; there is also a growing proportion of children in Norway who are living in poverty. In 2015, all 4 and 5 year olds living in households with a low income received the right to 20 hours' free attendance at a kindergarten per week. From 1 August 2016, the scheme will be extended to include 3 year olds. The amount considered to be a low income will be decided by the ministry on an annual basis. All kindergartens will also offer a reduced fee, if the fee for the kindergarten is higher than 6 % of the household's combined income. These subsidies are intended to help improve not only the wellbeing of all children, but also their development and abilities. In other words, participation in kindergartens will help to even out social differences.

Wellbeing is discussed in a number of ways on the national information website of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. The term is never defined, but material has been prepared to inspire the nurseries in their work of fostering the wellbeing of all children. The guidance booklet "Children's wellbeing – adults' responsibility. Preventive work against bullying starts in kindergartens" emphasises the responsibility of the staff for the psychosocial environment, children's relationships and friendships during play, and also the cooperation between home and kindergarten (Foreldreutvalget for Barnehager, FUB) (2016).

Spain

The term 'wellbeing' is not frequently used in official documents. It is implicitly included in the

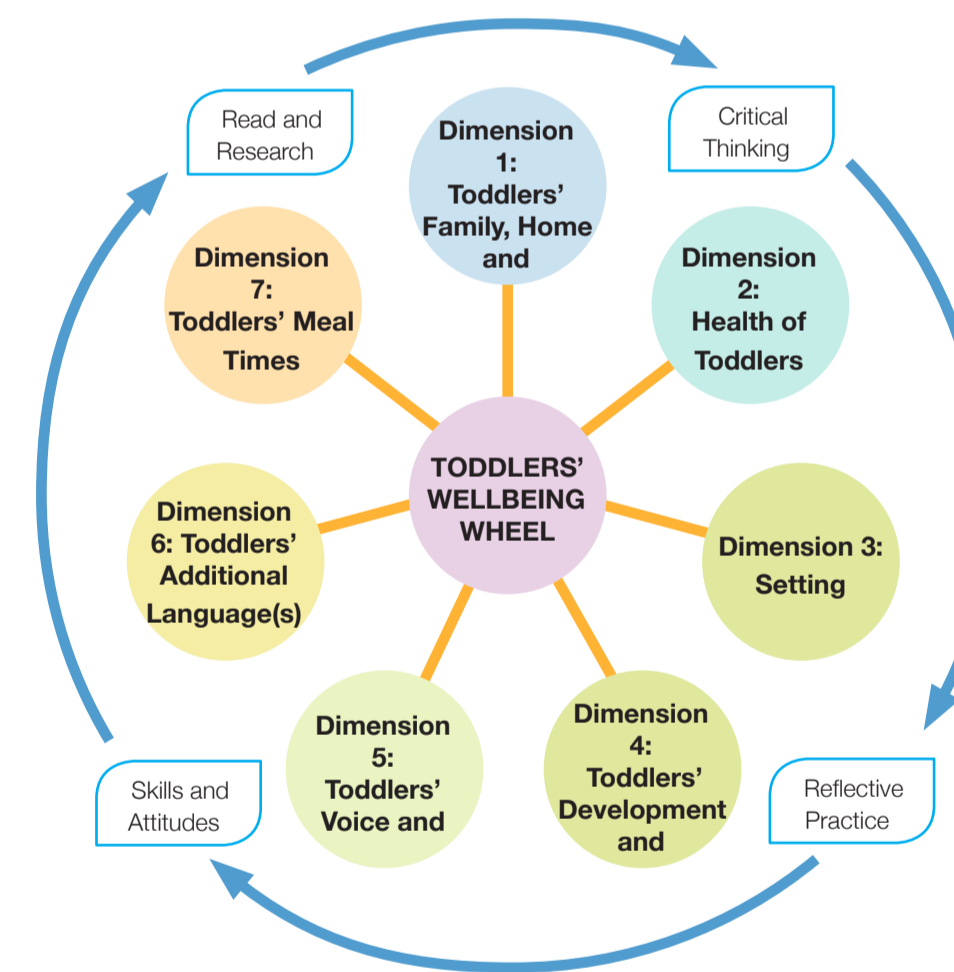
main goals of Early Childhood Education in Spain. However, the description of the aim of Early Childhood Education (0-3) in the Catalan curriculum (Departament D'Educació, 2010) clearly relates to this concept, and states that the aim of Early Childhood Education is:

"to contribute to the children's development at the emotional and affective, physical and motor, social and cognitive levels, by providing a comfortable atmosphere where they feel welcome and which generates learning expectations" (Departament D'Educació, 2010).

Explicitly, the term 'wellbeing' is only mentioned once in the Curriculum (Departament D'Educació, 2010), in which it is related to physical (not emotional) wellbeing. However, a new document published in 2012, in which guidelines to be followed in the first cycle of ECE (0-3) are described in detail, includes a number of requirements that must be met in order to ensure children's wellbeing (Generalitat de Catalunya Departament d'Ensenyament, 2012).



Dimensions of Wellbeing

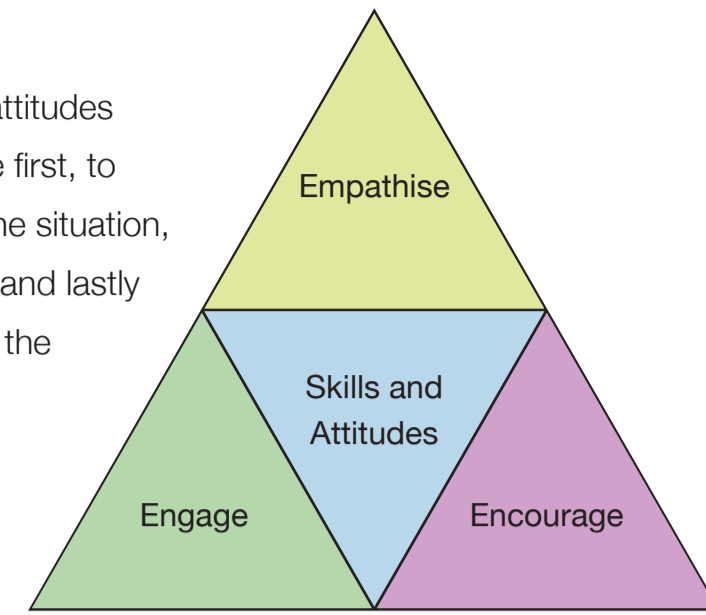


Four Pedagogical Characteristics:

- Critical Thinking**
Critical thinking is the active process of making logical connections between differing concepts and ideologies. This process involves the application of the knowledge, analysis of the concept and synthesis of the understanding achieved and the new understanding, values and beliefs developed and applied through this learning.
- Read and Research**
Read and Research is a key skill that provides opportunities to engage with current sources of information, literature, theory and research in order to develop critical thinking and to enhance knowledge and understanding.
- Reflective Practice**
Reflective practice is about the thoughtful consideration of experiences and the application of the knowledge gained in practice. This is an active process that links to critical thinking and can also be defined as "being willing to engage in continuous self-appraisal and development in order to better understand the reasoning behind a concept and why that concept is held, whereas routine action is guided by tradition, habit and authority" (Sutherland and Dallal, 2008).

4. Skills and Attitudes

The three main building blocks of skills and attitudes for EYPs in supporting toddler wellbeing are first, to **empathise** by having an understanding of the situation, then to **engage** with improving the situation and lastly to **encourage** those around to support with the improvement of the situation.



Supporting Wellbeing Dimensions content

Dimension 1 - Family, Home and Environmental Factors

- Environmental Factors
 - Housing
 - Safe and Stimulating
- Family
 - Demographics of Family and Life Style
 - Home Language and Additional Languages

Dimension 2 - Health of the Toddlers

- Physical and Mental Health
 - Health and Childhood Illnesses
 - Needs and Abilities
 - Factors that Inhibit Wellbeing
- Health Checks

Dimension 3 - Setting Environment - Current Practice and Provision:

- Opportunities for Play and Learning
- Health and Safety
- Learning Environment – Development and Learning:
 - Physical Environment
 - Social Environment
 - Emotional Environment
 - Cognitive and Language Environment
- Staffing
 - Practitioner training, experience and qualifications
 - Your Professional Role
 - Key Person Approach

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