

***DRAFT May 2011***



<http://www.reservoirfamilywellness.com/services/childrens-wellness.html>

# ***Learning for Well-being: a policy priority for children and youth in Europe***

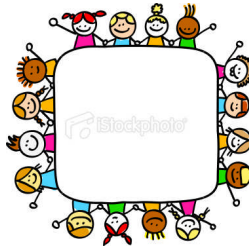
**A movement for change**

***We envision a society that values and enhances well-being***

***Our goal is to inspire and engage people to make all environments more conducive to learning for well-being of children and youth***

***We call for a NEW MINDSET which is based on changing***

- ***how we think about children***
- ***how we think about learning***
- ***how we think about health***
- ***how we think about education***



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##### ***Bibliography***

## **Foreword**

In 2009, convened by UEF, a group of foundations established the 'Learning for Well-being' Consortium of Foundations in Europe to make this vision a reality. They determined to work in partnership with other stakeholders for the purpose of inspiring and engaging people to make all environments more conducive to Learning for Well-being. The founding group are: Bertelsmann Stiftung, Evens Foundation, Freudenberg Stiftung, Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace, Robert Bosch Stiftung and Universal Education Foundation.

The vision of the Consortium builds on key international references which taken together give a definition of 'learning for well-being' that is holistic and gets to the heart of what it is to be human. We refer to the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) because it emphasises children's rights to achieve their full potential and participate in decisions that affect their lives. Our vision reflects the 'four pillars of learning' defined in the 1996 report to UNESCO by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, **Learning: the Treasure Within**, i.e.: *learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together*. It supports the World Health Organization definition: *Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity*. 'Learning for well-being' also supports the Council of Europe's platform for achieving social cohesion through *well-being for all*.

In using the phrase, "Learning for Well-being", we are emphasising the process of fully engaging and expressing who we are within the contexts of our common humanity. It inspires us to find ways for being our becoming – living in our present moment while developing, challenging, and creating ourselves for the future. The Consortium's working definition of well-being – **Realising one's unique potential physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development in relation to self, others and the environment** – stresses that while individual development is central to well-being, it can only be realised through participation with the world around us, most particularly through our relationships. **Learning** for well-being focuses on conditions through which we can enhance our individual and collective capacities to make decisions and actions that serve ourselves, others, and the environments in which we live.

The **European Perspectives on Global Health; A Policy Glossary** supported by the European Foundation Centre and some member foundations, has become a valuable tool for policy making since 2007. Based on this successful example the Consortium decided to launch a similar endeavour for learning for well-being. Professor Ilona Kickbusch (who led the first process) was commissioned to author this policy glossary, designed to provide conceptual understanding for policy makers in Europe. It focuses across sectors (e.g. health, mental health, social affairs, education, etc.), draws on state-of-the-art and multidisciplinary research on well-being and, crucially, it will propose principles for policies and ideas about how to 'make it happen'. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has given a grant to support the drafting process.

In November 2010, an expert meeting was organised as the first consultation about the Learning for Well-being Policy Glossary. A detailed outline was presented to the advisory group who provided feedback and guidance on how best to approach the challenge of drafting a **policy** glossary on learning for well-being. The output from that meeting, which was hosted by the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace, has fed into this first draft. For more information, <http://www.eiesp.org/site/pages/view/60-learning-for-well-being-consortium.html>

**This consultation on the first version of the full text is your opportunity to help us shape this document. We are very grateful for your taking the time to read this text and send us your comments and suggestions.**

### **CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

In reviewing the first draft of this policy glossary: **Learning for Well-being: a policy priority for children and youth in Europe**, we are interested your responses to the following questions:

Do you think that we have addressed the right issues and themes?

What themes or topics do you think are missing?

Are our arguments strong and convincing? What do we need to make them stronger?

We are interested in different examples that you would like to contribute to any of the sections?

**You will find more questions at the beginning of every chapter.**



## ***Introduction***

**Children's well-being** is a key dimension of sustainable development; it is about our present and our future. It requires recognition as a central element of the European policy agenda – but we do not treat our children well enough. One reason for this is because children themselves are not offered the opportunity to have their voice heard and have weak or no political representation. Another is that we are not creative and daring enough in affecting change. We need to radically shift our mindsets and change

- *how we think about children*
- *how we think about learning*
- *how we think about health*
- *how we think about education*

There is no policy maker that does not underline the sentence “*children are our future – we must invest in them*”. Yet the action that is needed rarely follows, despite the negative economic and social consequences for individuals, communities and society at large. Child well-being touches on many sectors of government but in particular it relates to the policy priorities of three of the largest service delivery systems in European welfare states: **social services, education and health**. There is increasing critique that these sectors do not deliver the outcomes that are necessary to ensure a more equitable society, better well-being and a healthy and well educated population – indeed their failure rate is disconcertingly high. New approaches are needed – but while seeking to reform these systems policy makers are challenged by major barriers, due only in part to the impact of budget restrictions and the global financial crisis. Major entrenched interests and the path dependency of the systems concerned also contribute to the resistance to change. **But most of all we require a change in perspective which will lead to a new systems design.**

We need to

- ***consider children as full partners not as objects of care and education***
- ***understand learning not only as a cognitive, but as an integral process with many dimensions***
- ***move from disease and treatment centred healthcare to promoting health and well-being***
- ***move from standardised education to child centred education.***

This policy glossary understands **well-being** as “*realising one's unique potential through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual development ... in relation to self, others and the environment.*” It is based on a view of society in which *all* people have the ability to realize their potential and all parts of society contribute towards child well-being.

**An integral view of well-being** indicates that many sectors and stakeholders are necessary to move a holistic child well-being agenda forward and it is imperative that government reaches out to include civil society and the private sector in such a quest. But many policy approaches and delivery systems in European welfare states are still caught in an “old paradigm” that is focused on deficits rather than resources, is input rather than output oriented and most importantly does not consider clients and users – neither children and parents nor patients and their families - as equal partners in the production of health, welfare and education and thus ultimately well-being. A new approach to enhance and co-produce well-being must be grounded in building **new competencies for learning and for health and engaging in the co-production of learning, health and well-being.**

While policy makers do show concern over the negative developments in relation to challenges such as child poverty, the obesity epidemic, mental health and functional illiteracy there is less willingness to take the policy

action necessary to address the “**causes of the causes**”. These are not only related to the unequal distribution of power and resources as well as life chances even in the richest European countries but also to a model of education, learning and health that is not oriented towards well-being and the challenges of the 21st century. Rather than base long term policies and programmes on an approach that enhances personal and community well-being, empowers families and communities, supports their resilience and allows children to flourish, many countries continue with constant short term “fix it” approaches that frequently prove to be counter productive both in terms of cost and outcomes – for example when we opt for expensive medical solutions rather than engaging in the promotion of health and well-being..

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century governments are faced with many complex challenges which are “wicked problems”. They need to be resolved through **joined up government** action, that is across ministries, as well as through the involvement of many other stakeholders. Many issues that were considered as sectoral responsibilities assigned to specialized professional systems have now moved “up” the policy agenda as social and economic goals of the whole of government, these include the environment and to some extent education and health. The shifts in the global environment have created a new, and in many ways, more complex competition for the global work force and the brightest minds and the demographic developments have made healthy life expectancy not only a humanistic goal but an economic necessity. Climate change is generating the need to protect not just ourselves but support a global public goods approach that benefits all countries and peoples and we are beginning to understand that what benefits the planet also benefits our health.

### ***CHILD WELL-BEING: a policy priority***

**Every society has the option to invest today in happy, safe and flourishing childhoods.**

**To meet the challenge of the EU Treaty “to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples”- in particular its children – we need to base our actions on a new mindset and a new systems design which makes all environments more conducive to well-being. We call such an approach *Learning for Well-Being*.**

The agenda for child well-being brings together three important rationales for action:

- Child well-being is about our present and our future, as individuals and as societies. It supports long term social and economic development. It promotes life course physical, social, mental and spiritual health.
- Child well-being is about the moral imperative of social justice and equitable life chances – it contributes **to a better and more just society and to well-being for all**.
- Child well-being - happy, safe and flourishing childhood - is a **value in its own right**.

The imperative for a sustainable future calls for inter-generational policies with due regard for present and future generations. But we are far from reaching such a goal. Child well-being requires better recognition as a central element of the European policy agenda – not only as an investment in future adults but in the well-being of the children of today.

While many European countries already invest significantly in children they frequently do so in a manner that is not well coordinated across portfolios, does not address the range of dimensions of child well-being and is not well targeted throughout the child’s life cycle. (OECD 2009) Policies and programmes rarely recognize **children as active agents** who can play an important part in shaping their own lives and advocating their own well-being.

We must reframe what we do. A comprehensive approach must begin with a **significant change in the perception** of childhood and child well-being, education and health. **Children are a specific social group** that has commonalities, needs, and value in its own right. (Qvortrup 1993) Yet children also need to be recognized in their diversity. Every child is unique. In addressing child well-being European policy makers need to consider that it is **multi-dimensional** and depends on **many factors**; there are multiple developmental pathways to the same well-being outcome; consequently, there is no single magic bullet intervention, or investment, which addresses all child well-being problems. Evidence indicates that many approaches exist which can provide better outcomes for less resources – if the willingness exists to overcome the path dependency of many programmes.

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By engaging in a process to make all environments more conducive to *Learning for Well-being* of children and youth we will achieve **better outcomes for children and for society as a whole**.

### Six policy imperatives for child well-being

1) Children's present and future well-being must be a **European policy priority** for moral, social, demographic and economic reasons. All parts of society must engage at all levels of policy formulation and implementation.

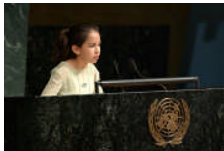
2) European policy measures need to consider the **structural conditions** affecting the circumstances of children's lives (e.g., poverty, inequality; environmental and social resources and assets) as well as the **individual psychological, social and spiritual dimensions** of children's health and well-being.

3) The policy approach to child well-being must be based on a *Learning for well-being* mindset. We propose that is **prioritize early child development, reorient the school and the health care system towards learning for well-being and invest in multiple 21st century literacies**.

3) The centre of government must provide the focus for action on child well-being through an integrated *Learning for Well-being - child investment portfolio*. All policy sectors need to contribute to child well-being and through policy mainstreaming, policies need to be multi-dimensional and pro-active in order to be effective, efficient and equitable.

5) Child well-being must be measured, reviewed and monitored across a range of objective and subjective domains of well-being. It is imperative to include children's subjective viewpoints.

6) Children themselves must be invited to be part of the decision-making process that will shape their destiny – their voice must be respected, considered and represented.



## **Chapter 1: A NEW MINDSET**

### **A new mindset for a new century: well-being as a measure of progress of European societies**

#### **WELL-BEING - A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE**

**The goal: a society that values and supports well-being**

##### **CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

Are the situation, the context and the challenges correctly defined and illustrated?  
Would you add other examples of ground breaking work that has changed perspectives?  
What other examples would you suggest to illustrate measuring well-being?

##### **A temporary halt**

Following the world financial crisis there was a pause. As articles, books, talk shows, web debates and private conversations tried to grasp what had occurred the same kind of questions were asked repeatedly: what kind of world do we want to live in? What is it that European societies should aim to achieve? Had we lost our way? Were we measuring progress in ways that did not really reflect what we value most as individuals, families and society as a whole? Had the focus on economic growth led us to neglect what matters: namely social wealth and social growth as well as individual well-being and happiness? Had the focus on rapid economic gains and GDP growth led us to neglect the concern for our children and the future of the next generation? Have we lost touch with some of the most fundamental values that should guide policy priorities? Does our sectoral and national approach to policies allow us to address 21<sup>st</sup> century problems adequately?

Many of the global challenges are interconnected, and because of this, the solutions are interconnected to a large extent. Most of the solutions are not technically very difficult; they're not "rocket science." Most of the problems are the consequences of bad management and absence of foresight. There is no silver bullet. Many different factors have to be brought into play to deal with the problem.  
<http://www.jamesmartin.com/book/megaproblems.cfm>

##### **A new challenge**

The new challenge is taking form: Europe needs to consider its place in the world and its future path. One contribution to this debate is a discussion of policies that aim to increase well-being and understand economic growth as a means of enlarging people's potential and quality of life, not as an end in itself. **There are now increasing attempts to gain a better understanding of the interrelationship between wealth and well-being and how this knowledge can be translated into policy.** (Diener et al 2009) A significant number of research studies show that despite unprecedented economic prosperity in the last 35 years people do not necessarily feel better as individuals or as communities. While economic output has increased over the last decades in many countries, levels of subjective well-being and happiness have remained flat. How then will our societies cope with economic down turn or other major crisis emerging from the global context such as environmental challenges or migration flow? Will our democracies respond in new ways? Will we as individuals and communities consider other priorities?



A recent study in the UK by the Young Foundation has shown, that the public now sees the non material social kinds of need – our need for others, and for emotional support – as just as important as the material needs for housing, transport or money.

Policy works with a sectoral approach but people do not live in sectors – they view their life in its totality. Studies on subjective indicators of well-being have provided important insights about *“the quality of people’s lives from their own perspective”*. (Diener et al 2009) In democratic societies policy makers should consider this information as seriously as they view economic, environmental and social indicators. The *“politics of happiness”* or Policies for Well-being - as they are framed in some of the recent economic literature - are one possible reorientation of 21<sup>st</sup> century public policy goals (Bok 2010)

## **A) WELL-BEING – A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVES**

Five concepts and approaches to better understand, measure and compare well-being have been developed in the international arena are of particular relevance to the framing of forward looking policies for well-being: *human development, sustainable development, Gross National Happiness, social determinants of health and well-being for all. All aim to introduce new mindsets to overcome policy fragmentation. While all are formulated for an adult society, all are relevant to help us move forward in developing a new vision of child well-being.*

### **1. The United Nations: Human development**

For many organisations, academics or social activists at the global level the focus improving well-being in a holistic manner is not a new idea. Indeed the idea of generating *“social wealth and social growth”* rather than economic growth measurable only in terms of GDP has been on the international agenda for some time. Many of the United Nations recommendations are based on the integral concept of human development which puts people and their capabilities in the center of development.

There are four basic pillars of human development: equity, sustainability, production and empowerment. Equity is the idea of fairness for every person; we each have the right to an education and health care. Secondly, sustainability is the view that we all have the right to earn a living that can sustain us and have access to a more even distribution of goods amongst populations. In addition, production is used to show how the government needs more efficient social programs for its people. Lastly, empowerment is providing people who are powerless to be given power such as women.<sup>HDF</sup>

Since 1990 the United Nations regularly measures the well-being of nations by the Human Development Index with the intention to *“to shift the focus of development economics from national income accounting to people centred policies”*. **The breakthrough for the HDI was the creation of a single statistic which was to serve as a frame of reference for both social and economic development.** Starting with the 2010 report the HDI combines three dimensions: *a long and healthy life: Life expectancy at birth; Access to knowledge: Mean years of schooling and Expected years of schooling; A decent standard of living: GNI per capita (PPP US\$).*

**FIGURE 1.1** Components of the Human Development Index

The HDI—three dimensions and four indicators



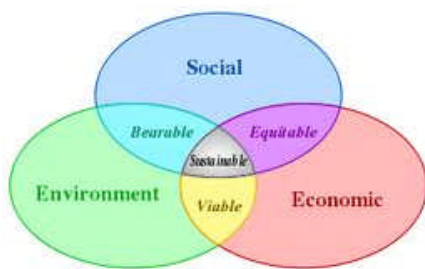
Note: The indicators presented in this figure follow the new methodology, as defined in box 1.2.

Source: HDRO.

**2. The Brundtland Commission on “Our Common Future”: Sustainable development**

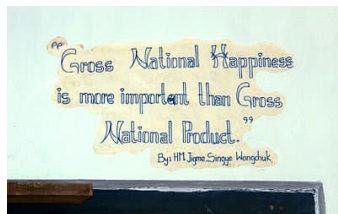
The concept of sustainable development complements human development by introducing a shift from a model of development based on inequity and exploitation of human and natural resources to one that requires new forms of responsibility, solidarity and accountability not only at the national but also at the global level. This approach has frequently been represented as the interaction between three circles: economy, society and the environment. Sustainable development is one of the most demanding policy concepts as it is *both trans national and inter generational* – **the breakthrough of the sustainable development approach was to create a mindset that adds an ecological and futures dimension to concepts of development and well-being.**

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Our Common Future –Brundtland Report, 1987).



**3. The Global Gross National Happiness Survey**

The “**Gross National Happiness Index**” was introduced by the King of Bhutan in the 1970s and began to gain increasing attention over the last decade. This survey of subjective judgments of the population's general level of well-being is based on a survey instrument developed in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. It has 4 pillars and 72 indicators. Policies in Bhutan must pass a GNH review based on a GNH impact statement before they are approved. The index is based on Buddhist principles which underline the interaction of material and spiritual development. **The breakthrough was to present a holistic measure of happiness and well-being with the potential of international adaptability.**



- The four pillars of the Bhutan National Happiness Index are:
- good governance and democratization
- stable and equitable socio-economic development
- environmental protection
- preservation of culture

The Gross National Happiness work has been taken further to develop a first **Global GNH Survey** by the International Institute of Management (IIM). The institute states that its main goal is to produce a public policy white paper to world governments. The Global GNH Survey includes seven dimensions and measures of well-being:

- *Economic Wellness*: Indicated via direct survey and statistical measurement of economic metrics such as consumer debt, average income to consumer price index ratio and income distribution
- *Environmental Wellness*: Indicated via direct survey and statistical measurement of environmental metrics such as pollution, noise and traffic
- *Physical Wellness*: Indicated via statistical measurement of physical health metrics such as severe illnesses
- *Mental Wellness*: Indicated via direct survey and statistical measurement of mental health metrics such as usage of antidepressants and rise or decline of psychotherapy patients
- *Workplace Wellness*: Indicated via direct survey and statistical measurement of labor metrics such as jobless claims, workplace complaints and lawsuits

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- *Social Wellness*: Indicated via direct survey and statistical measurement of social metrics such as discrimination, safety, divorce rates, complaints of domestic conflicts and family lawsuits, public lawsuits, crime rates
- *Political Wellness*: Indicated via direct survey and statistical measurement of political metrics such as the quality of local democracy, individual freedom, and foreign conflicts.

<http://www.iim-edu.org/polls/grossnationalhappinessurvey.htm>

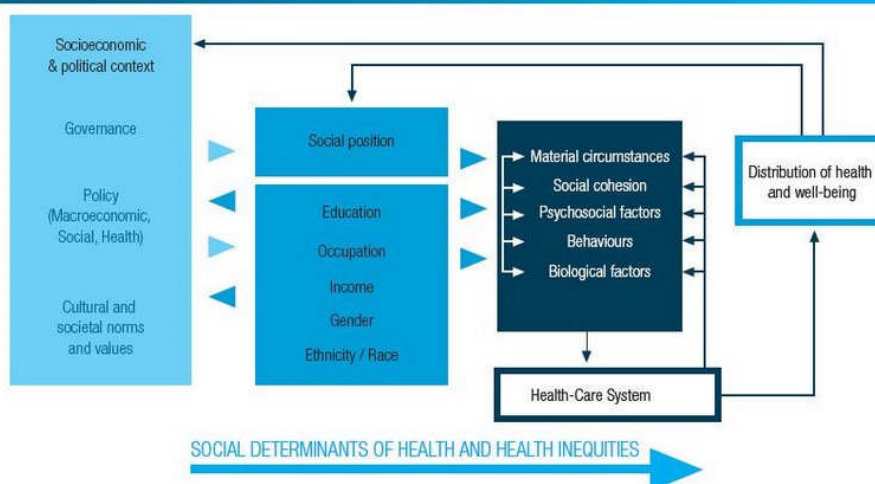
### 4. World Health Organization: Social Determinants of Health

The World Health Organisation has defined health as more than the absence of disease. Health is understood as *physical, mental and social well-being* and is considered a human right. Studies on health and well-being have drawn our attention to how both our way of life and the unequal distribution of life chances and capabilities have led to unacceptable differences in health and life expectancy, increases in chronic disease and a decline in mental health.

The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities - the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries. Social Determinants of Health Report 2009

The major report by the Commission on the social determinants of health (CSDH) draws attention to the fact that the freedom to lead a flourishing life and to enjoy good health is unequally distributed between and within societies. *"This inequity is seen in the conditions of early childhood and schooling, the nature of employment and working conditions, the physical form of the built environment, and the quality of the natural environment in which people reside. Depending on the nature of these environments, different groups will have different experiences of material conditions, psychosocial support, and behavioural options, which make them more or less vulnerable to poor health. Social stratification likewise determines differential access to and utilization of health care, with consequences for the inequitable promotion of health and well-being, disease prevention, and illness recovery and survival."* **The breakthrough has been to take the health debate back to its social and political determinants and link it firmly to other policy sectors that contribute to health and well-being.**

Figure 4.1 Commission on Social Determinants of Health conceptual framework.



**Health is created in the context of everyday life where people live, love, work and play.**  
**WHO The Ottawa Charter 1986**

### 5. The Council of Europe: Well-being for All

In the European context the Council of Europe has built on many of these concepts. It emphasises through its use of the phrase “*well-being for all*” that we need to consider both individual well-being as well as societal and global well-being, making well-being a universal concept and foundation of social cohesion which also extends to future generations. In the revised **Strategy for Social Cohesion** emphasis is placed on the idea that well-being cannot be attained unless it is shared – according to the Council of Europe it is a relational and a participatory concept.: “*The well-being of one part of humanity is unattainable if another part is in a state of ill-being or if it is to be achieved at the expense of future generations who thereby inherit an uncertain world stripped of resources.*” **The breakthrough of this concept is that it takes well-being out of the realm of solely individual preferences into the realm of socially agreed preferences so it can enter the realm of policy making: drawing attention for example to policies that promote social contacts and relationships.** (Farrell 2008) The Council of Europe has developed indicators through a participative methodology which addresses ‘citizens’ in neighbourhoods, towns, enterprises and schools (see insert). The approach is conceived to support citizens’ initiatives to re-think the objectives of social progress and is embedded in the Council of Europe’s *New Strategy and Action Plan for Social Cohesion*.  
([http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/socialcohesiondev/source/Conf%202011/Charter\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/socialcohesiondev/source/Conf%202011/Charter_en.pdf)).

Such a concept of well-being poses challenges not only to the priorities of national policies of all Council of Europe member countries, but also to the policies of the European Union and its member states. The EU in its Treaty sets the goal to promote the ‘*well-being of its peoples*’ but it defines well-being more in reference to an older paradigm of economic growth than a broader one of integrated well-being. This needs to change.

The overall aim of the EEC/EU, since its foundation in 1958, is to promote peace; the values of human rights; democracy; equality; the rule of law; and the well-being of its peoples. These values are the bedrock of the EU’s work and its role in the world.

***In summary:***

***Policy thinking is moving away from an emphasis on economic means towards the underlying values of well-being. Each of these conceptual approaches has contributed towards this shift in thinking about human well-being and development. They have helped compare the progress of countries, drawn attention to major inequalities and highlighted flaws in policy making. In a number of countries these concepts have become part of policy thinking and policy making – in particular the concept of sustainable development.***

***The approach of Learning for Well-being builds on this thinking of the last decades in order to contribute to strengthen approaches that aim to ensure well-being for all as a shared social responsibility.***

**Recommendation for a draft European Charter on shared social responsibilities. (Excerpt)**

**Recommends that the governments of member states :**

- a. acknowledge the urgent need to limit uncertainty over the future and create renewed awareness of public and private responsibilities, by promoting the principle of *shared social responsibility* in order to channel the knowledge and resources of individual and collective players, strong and weak alike, vis-à-vis jointly agreed objectives in the field of social, environmental and intergenerational justice in a long-term vision;
- b. facilitate *processes of innovation and collective learning* to promote behaviour consistent with the European frames of reference in the field of fundamental rights, democracy and the management of common goods; c. promote a new *sharing of social responsibilities* reflecting the societal capabilities of all stakeholders;
- c. encourage and legitimise *new forms of deliberation*, in order to reduce inequalities of power and formulate preferences through reasoning and exchanges of views;
- d. promote and legitimise *new structures of governance* involving stakeholders, the various levels of responsibility and the different sectors of society which will make it possible to engage in democratic deliberation regarding the direction to take and the policies that are lacking, including vis-à-vis future generations;

- e. encourage renewed *criteria for assessing* initiatives in order to provide players with the means of verifying consistency between decisions and their implementation, and the quality of the results;
- f. ensure that learning processes, forms of participation, structures of governance and assessment criteria capitalise on the knowledge and contributions of all stakeholders in accordance with their abilities, roles and resources, paying particular attention to those who have less power, whose voices are less often heard, who have less legal protection and who suffer from the negative consequences of other people's choices;
- g. recognise and actively support the vital role played by local stakeholders, neighbourhoods, cities, towns, villages, cantons, districts and regions in constructing a Europe of shared social responsibilities, especially with regard to the application of the principles of this Charter in more disadvantaged areas .

<http://www.socialjustice.ie/sites/default/files/file/EU/2011-03-01%20-%20Draft%20European%20charter%20on%20shared%20social%20responsibility%20ENG.pdf>

## **b) MEASURING WELL-BEING**

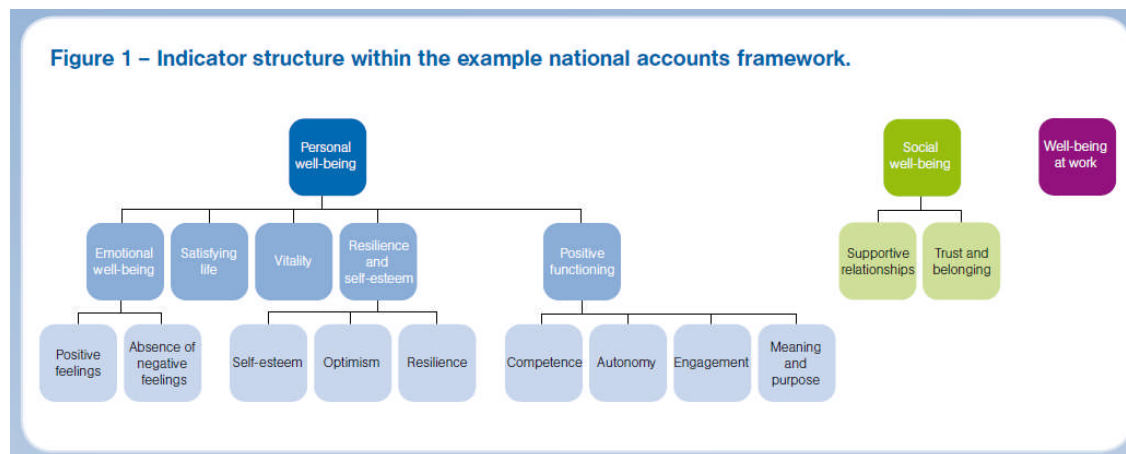
How is the well-being of Europeans defined and measured?

***“In this rapidly changing, globalising world of the 21st century, we find ourselves with a sea of data, but, in some cases, lacking the tools we need to take swift, well-informed and effective decisions that promote the well-being of individuals, of societies, of the planet itself”*** Mr Barroso, president of the European Commission at the beyond GDP conference in Brussels, November 2007 – see <http://www.beyond-gdp.eu/>

*Good governance requires information about well-being in order to set priorities and to formulate and evaluate policies that are aimed at improving well-being.* But in order to accept **well-being as a goal for public policies** we must face a double challenge: the term well-being still requires considerable conceptual clarification and it requires better metrics. This challenge has been addressed by a number of approaches to develop **national accounts for well-being** – all of them focused on adults. At present there is a growing literature that argues that these accounts need to include both objective and subjective measures of well-being. *“In the same way that governments collect systematic measures on many aspects of the economy...they should also collect a variety of measures reflecting individuals’ subjective evaluation of their lives”* (Diener et al 2010) In the following some major approaches to measuring well-being are briefly introduced.

### **European initiatives: National Accounts of Well-being**

The New Economics Foundation has developed national accounts of Well-being based on data by EUROSTAT in the European Social Survey. (nef 2009): in their work they aim to re-evaluate the orthodox ideas of what should collectively be valued, and hence what should be measured. The framework for a National Account of Well-being contains a view of well-being *“as the dynamic process that gives people a sense of how their lives are going, through the interaction between their circumstances, activities and psychological resources or ‘mental capital’”*. It comprises two main elements: feeling good and functioning well. They emphasise well-being to be more than life satisfaction and based on the evidence that, feeling close to, and to be valued by other people is a fundamental need, they postulate to measure a personal dimension and a social dimension. As an example for well-being in a specific life domain well-being at work is added as an additional indicator. The different subcomponents and components, as emotional well-being with its subcomponents positive feelings and absence of negative feelings, are indicators which stand for a specific combination of responses to several questions



**European Union: Quality of life surveys- GDP and Beyond Communication**

*Pan-European Quality of Life Surveys:* The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions has conducted two *pan-European Quality of Life Surveys*, one in 2003 and one in 2007, funded by the European Commission through DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Eurofound uses a conceptual framework around **having, loving and being**. They stress the value of domain satisfaction indicators, over and above life satisfaction, as they are more sensitive to change. The next Quality of Life Survey is scheduled in 2011.

*The “GDP and Beyond communication”* was issued by the European Commission in August 2009. It built on extensive work by a group of partners: the European Commission, European Parliament, Club of Rome, OECD and WWF who together hosted a high-level conference in 2007 “Beyond GDP” which brought together over 650 policy makers, experts and civil society representatives to address the critical issue of how to best measure progress and launch a public debate. The communication presents a road map with five key actions designed to “support the Commission’s aims to develop indicators relevant to the challenges of today”. The actions are:

1. *Complementing GDP with environmental and social indicators*
2. *Near real-time information for decision-making*
3. *More accurate reporting on distribution and inequalities*
4. *Developing a European Sustainable Development Scoreboard*
5. *Extending National Accounts to environmental and social issues*

*Well-being 2030* is a two-year research project investigating the major trends that will determine European policy options for **improving the quality of life** of its citizens in the future. It aims to address questions such as what citizens want, what European policy can do for social conditions and, importantly, how well-being can be measured. The project is run by the European Policy Centre in Brussels and funded by the European Commission, specifically DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

**Recent initiatives by countries:**

The Netherlands, Australia and Canada have already developed measures of well-being at the national level over the last decade. More recently in 2009 the French president Nicolas Sarkozy set up a Commission on the *Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress*, led by two Nobel Prize Winners Joseph E. Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, as well as Jean-Paul Fitoussi, to provide suggestions on how to measure societal well-being, acknowledging the limits of GDP as an indicator of economic performance and social progress. Their report recommends **shifting economic emphasis from simply the production of goods to a broader measure of overall well-being, which would include the benefits of things like health, education, and security**. It calls for greater focus on the effects of income inequality, as well as new ways to measure the economic impact of sustainability, and recommended ways to include the value of wealth to be passed on to the next generation into today’s economic conversation.

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“The whole Commission is convinced that the crisis is teaching us a very important lesson: those attempting to guide the economy and our societies are like pilots trying to steering a course without a reliable compass. The decisions they (and we as individual citizens) make depend on what we measure, how good our measurements are and how well our measures are understood. **We are almost blind when the metrics on which action is based are ill-designed or when they are not well understood.**” Stiglitz & Sen 2009

This thinking has been echoed in the UK by the Prime Minister David Cameron who announced that a new well-being index would be introduced from April 2011 to measure “*our progress as a country not just by how our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving; not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life.*” The Office of National Statistics has begun a national consultation on the new measures of well-being seeking the views of citizens and organisations. In Germany a parliamentary commission on “*Growth, well-being and quality of life*” has begun its work in January 2011 in order to explore how to complement GNP measures with ecological, social and cultural criteria.



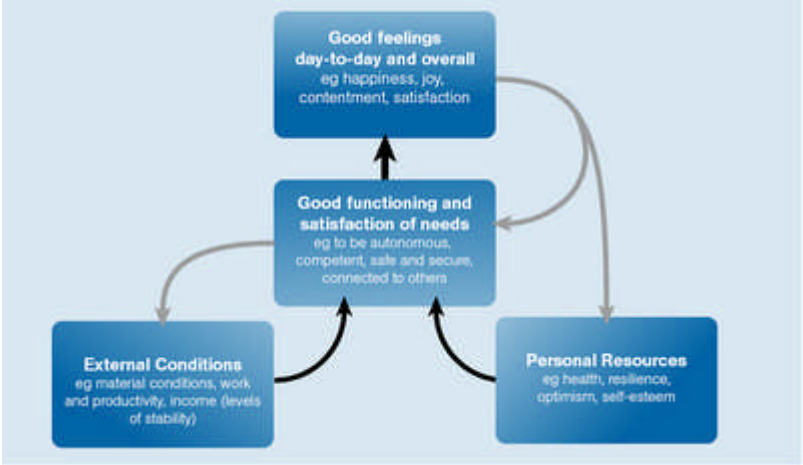
### **Moving forward to produce policy relevant data on well-being for all sectors:**

A consensus is emerging that has been underlined in a recent review conducted by EUROSTAT: the most important characteristics of an overarching model for measuring well-being are its **multidimensional nature** and the **combination of objective and subjective measures**. The EUROSTAT review highlights that **more partial approaches risk missing out on some important policy-relevant issues** – even if the components or measures concerned cannot directly be influenced by policy.

This type of thinking has also been supported by the OECD which stated recently that “*there is a growing consensus that measuring societal progress and quality of life requires a combination of objective and subjective measures for a large range of economic, social and environmental phenomena.*” In consequence the OECD has worked on the relevance and validity of subjective measures of well-being for policy making, also in the context of joint projects with the European Commission. It has further supported the set up of a global platform “*wikiprogress*” which shares information on how to evaluate societal progress including on the OECD-hosted **Global Project on “Measuring the Progress of Societies”**.

The Global Project Mission Statement says that “the project is open to all sectors of society” and the Istanbul Declaration urges “*statistical offices, public and private organisations, and academic experts to work alongside representatives of their communities to produce high-quality, facts-based information that can be used by all of society to form a shared view of societal well-being and its evolution over time.*”  
[http://www.wikiprogress.org/index.php/Global\\_Project](http://www.wikiprogress.org/index.php/Global_Project)

EUROSTAT has underlined that it is critical in policy making to work with a model of well-being that covers “***all aspects of well-being including outcome measures, personal characteristics, external ‘context’ factors, and measures of what people actually ‘do’ with these characteristics and ‘societal’ conditions.***” This is fully in concordance with the position taken by this policy glossary.



New Economics Foundation - dynamic model of well-being

**Chapter 2:**

**CHANGE HOW WE THINK ABOUT CHILDREN**

**Children's well-being is central to a future oriented agenda: it must be a European policy priority to generate and improve child well-being**

**The goal: supporting children and young people to develop their UNIQUE potential**

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Does this chapter include the themes and arguments needed?

Are there other aspects of the EU agenda that should be included?

What other examples would you include for the overall approach and for measuring child well-being?

Are there any major aspects that are missing?

**a) Child well-being in an age of globalization and individualization**

*The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born. UNICEF*

The multi dimensional concept of well-being recognises both the fundamental needs and aspirations of people that exist at individual and community levels as well as the needs and aspirations linked to diverse social and cultural contexts. Child well-being is a global agenda: the health of children in Europe is linked to the challenge of children's well-being at a global level.

In a review conducted for UNICEF in 2001 on "Harnessing globalization for children" **the uneven development of child well-being around the world** is highlighted. In most regions of the world, the last 20 years have witnessed a continuation of the improvements in key child-welfare indicators initiated in 1960-1980, a period that in itself recorded the fastest rate of improvement of the last several centuries. But there has been a slowdown **in the rate of improvement in key indicators of child well-being** and a rise in the levels of relative and absolute child poverty despite the commitment of countries to the Millennium Development Goals.

**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
THE 8 MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

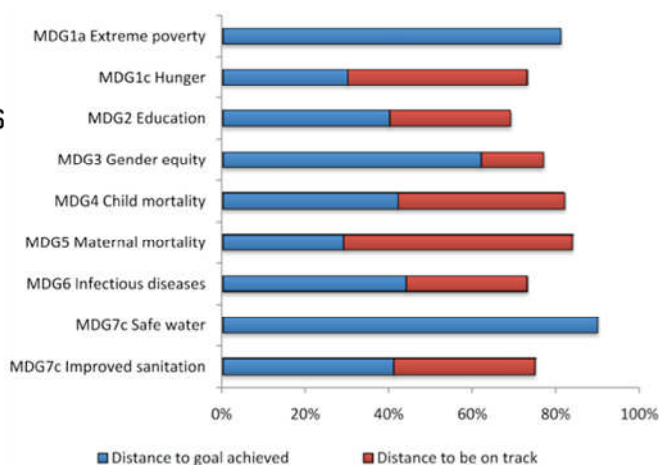


food.education.gender equality.child mortality



maternal health.AIDS combat.environment.globalization

WWW.ROCKEDPHILIPPINES.ORG



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**We are not the sources of problems; we are the resources that are needed to solve them.**  
**We are not expenses; we are investments.**  
**We are not just young people; we are people and citizens of this world.**

### A WORLD FIT FOR US 2002

Most disconcerting is the increasing relative distance of child well-being indexes between countries and regions as well as within countries. The UNICEF report concludes that *“If globalisation is to be child-friendly there is little doubt that its main objective should be to ensure the gradual realization of the rights of children regardless of their country, gender, social class or income level.”* (Cornea 2001) From a child rights perspective well-being is defined as the realisation of children’s rights and the fulfilment of the opportunity for every child **to be all she or he can be**. The degree to which this is achieved can be measured in terms of positive child outcomes, whereas negative outcomes and deprivation point to the denial of children’s rights. Deprivation clearly is more than material aspects. Most important comparative studies on children’s well-being – even though their indicators are usually less holistic than suggested here– show clearly that there is no automatic relationship between levels of child well-being and GDP per capita.

The Innocenti league table of child well-being in European countries covers 29 countries (EU 27 countries plus Norway and Iceland). It was produced by researchers from the University of York. It includes 43 separate indicators, summarised in seven domains of child well-being. Countries with similar levels of GDP do not necessarily have a similar ranking; for example The Netherlands comes top of the table of overall child well-being, followed by Norway and Sweden, whereas the UK came 24th, well below countries of similar affluence.

### Important global agreements

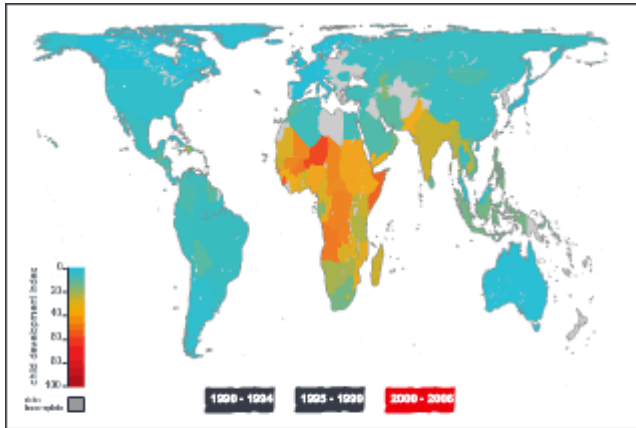
1989: the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It says that children ‘should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations’.

1990: at the World Summit for Children 159 Heads of State and Government and other high-level representatives proclaimed that ‘there can be no task nobler than giving every child a better future’.

2000: the Millennium Development Goals set goals for children’s health and education.

2002: the UN General Assembly devoted its 27th Special Session exclusively to children, and adopted a Declaration committing themselves to seizing ‘this historic opportunity to change the world for and with children’. The resulting plan of action aimed to create a **World fit for children**, one in which all children get the best possible start in life. The UN Special Session on Children itself benefited from the presence of child representatives from all over the world who prepared the children’s declaration ‘**A World Fit for Us**’.

[http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Children\\_and\\_the\\_MDGs.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Children_and_the_MDGs.pdf)



The **Child Development Index** (CDI) is an index combining each country's performance measures specific to children - primary education, child health and child nutrition - to produce a score on a scale of 0 to 100. A zero score would be the best. The higher the score, the worse children are faring.

**The most important MDG of all: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education**

Because: decades of research directly tie the education of girls to the goals of reducing poverty, hunger, under-five mortality, maternal mortality and fighting major diseases; Because: even were the other goals for 2015 to somehow be met without ensuring girls and young women their right to a quality primary education, the achievements could not be sustained with undereducated girls and women; Because: it takes seven years to complete a course of primary schooling, a gradualist approach of small increases every year will not do; Therefore: if the Millennium Development Goals are to be met and sustained, we must rapidly move towards the goal of universal primary education by ensuring every girl her right to education – now.

UNICEF 2003



**What matters:**

The **Learning for well-being approach suggests that engaging the unique potential of each child as he/she navigates the diverse processes and trajectories described above, allow him/her to develop well-being.**

Modern society requires much of the individual: it puts a strong emphasis on individualization and self-referred values - this assumes that every person is able to be self-reliant, yet many structural difficulties hamper the individual's ability to reach well-being (Grob & Kirchhoff, 2008). "Globalisation and modernisation are creating an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. To make sense of and function well in this world, individuals need for example to master changing technologies and to make sense of large amounts of available information. They also face collective challenges as societies – such as balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability, and prosperity with social equity. In these contexts, the competencies that individuals need to meet their goals have become more complex, requiring more than the mastery of certain narrowly defined skills" (OECD 2005).

Factors important for individual resilience - agency, self-efficacy, the mastery system, social support (in particular "hidden" social support) and community acceptance - mirror those that characterise effective child-focused community-based practice.... Resilience therefore emerges from the efforts of the individual child or youth to mobilise people and resources for his or her needs and from the capacity of the environment to

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provide those resources in such a way that there is a “goodness of fit” between the support needed and the support offered. Veale 2010

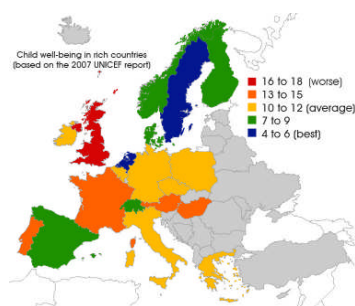
This includes supporting children and young people in developing the capabilities and competences they need in this process. The DeSeCo project, carried out by OECD between 1997 and 2002, was launched with the aim of providing a sound conceptual framework to identify key competences required by young people. It considered “that individuals should be able to achieve their potential and that they should respect others and contribute to producing an equitable society” (OECD 2005). They asked questions as to the demands that today’s society places on its young citizens: what do they need to function well in society, keep employment, cope with technology and shape their world. It classified the key competencies into three broad categories:

1. Ability to use a wide range of tools for interacting effectively with the environment and to understand them well enough to adapt them for their own purposes;
2. In an increasingly interdependent world, individuals need to be able to engage with others and to interact in heterogeneous groups; and
3. Individuals need to be able to take responsibility for managing their own lives, situate their lives in the broader social context and act autonomously.

Individuals have to set their own goals, which implies challenging requirements about self-reliance and for psychosocial resources (Havighurst, 1948). While there is no straightforward cause-effect relationship between the individual and the contextual factors research indicates that the interface can play out at various levels: at the *personal level* (loss of meaning of life, lack of perspectives); at the *social level* (disintegration of families, temporary relationships) or at the *societal level* (anonymisation and functionalisation of members). Increasingly therefore concepts of well-being include the notion of individual and community resilience in order to underline the capacities needed at individual and societal levels to adapt to change and to cope with uncertainties and crisis.

**OECD DeSeCo: Definition and Selection of Competencies:** *The project carried out under the coordination of Switzerland was linked to the development of the PISA programme. It was launched in 1997 and brought together experts from 18 countries, 12 of which contributed country reports that constitute the data for the summary report. The European countries were Austria, Belgium (Fl), Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland. New Zealand and the USA were also included. The experts came from a wide range of disciplines to work with the stakeholders and policy analysts to produce a framework.*

### ***b) CHILD WELL-BEING: A central dimension of the European well-being agenda***



*“The Europe 2020 Strategy sets out a vision for the 21st century of a Europe where the children of today will have a better education, access to the services and to the resources they need to grow up and, one day, lead Europe into the 22nd century.”*

**Every society has the option to invest today in happy, safe and flourishing childhoods** - but what can governments and policy makers learn from the new concern with well-being and happiness in relation to children’s well-being? Though the main focus of well-being research and consequently the public policy recommendations has been on adults, the key issue that emerges is that economic growth can no longer retain such a dominant place on the domestic and the European policy agenda. Particularly if one follows the lead of an understanding of well-being proposed by the Council of Europe then societies need to invest in human flourishing – meaning those fundamental aspects of what constitutes well-being for all. The goal is a society in which all people have the capability to realize their *unique potential through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual development ... in relation to self, others and the environment.*” (UEF)

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The imperative for a sustainable future calls for policies with due regard for present and future generations. Child well-being thus constitutes a common social goal of governments. The United Nations have taken a clear position on the rights of the child: Article 27 of the UNCRC states that participating nations “*recognize the right of every child to adequate standard of living for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development.*” In February 2011 the European Commission has reinforced that the promotion and protection of the rights of the child is one of the objectives of the EU included in Article 3(3) of the Treaty of Lisbon by forwarding *An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child* to the European parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions. Article 3(3) requires the EU to promote the protection of the rights of the child as does the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union in Article 24, which recognises that children are independent and autonomous holders of rights. It also makes the child's best interests a primary consideration for public authorities and private institutions.



*“Governments should ... get better value from their investment in children. And spending early, when the foundations for a child’s future are laid, is key, especially for disadvantaged children and can help them break out of a family cycle of poverty and social exclusion.”*

The OECD report “**Doing Better for Children**” compares public spending and policies for children with key indicators of child-well-being in OECD countries. These include education, health, housing, family incomes and quality of school life. It indicates the directions that such investment should take [http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3746,en\\_2649\\_37419\\_43545036\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_37419,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3746,en_2649_37419_43545036_1_1_1_37419,00.html)

### The EU agenda for child well-being

The overall policy context for the European Union is provided by the **Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union** of 2008 which states in Article 3 that “The Union's aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples”. The three key drivers identified are: creating value by basing growth on knowledge, empowering people in inclusive societies, and creating a competitive, connected and greener economy.

#### The social agenda

The social agenda agreed in 2007, **Opportunities, access and solidarity: towards a new social vision for 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe**, poses as a central question how the well-being, quality of life and common values of Europe's citizens can be best advanced in today's world? The Commission notes that it requires a new approach centred on providing citizens with adequate *opportunities* for self-fulfilment, *access* to education, employment, healthcare and social protection in a context of *solidarity*, social cohesion and sustainability. The challenge defined for education is to strengthen the reform of school systems so that *every* young person can develop his or her full potential through improved access and opportunities, to ensure that every citizen can become an active participant in the emerging knowledge economy, and to reinforce social solidarity.

#### ***“Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child”.***

In its aim to fulfil the challenge of child well-being, the European Commission in 2006 established a basis for promoting and protecting the rights of the child in its internal and external policies with its Communication *“Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child”*. This strategy allowed the Commission to set up structures to strengthen the capacity of EU institutions to address child rights issues. This includes the work of the European Forum on the Rights of the Child.

A renewed commitment of all actors is necessary to bring to life the vision of a world where children can be children and can safely live, play, learn, develop their full potential, and make the most of all existing opportunities. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/children/docs/com\\_2011\\_60\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/children/docs/com_2011_60_en.pdf)

***EU Task-Force on Child Poverty and Child Well-Being***

Social inclusion is a priority theme across all the major policy areas affecting children and young people. The Directorate General for Social Affairs is developing a set of indicators for monitoring the state of child poverty and well-being in the 27 Member States as part of the European Strategy for Social Inclusion. The focus is on developing a set of indicators that reflect the multi-dimensional nature of child well-being suitable for monitoring policies, including non material aspects such as education and health. This initiative was complemented by the establishment in 2007 of the EU Task-Force on Child Poverty and Child Well-Being. In January 2008 the report and recommendations of the EU Task-Force were formally adopted by all Member States and the Commission, and the incorporated into the EU *acquis* in this area. The EU Task-Force recommendations cover six broad areas: 1) Setting quantified objectives; 2) Assessing the impact of policies on child poverty and social exclusion; 3) Monitoring child poverty and well-being; 4) Developing a common framework for analysing child poverty and social inclusion; 5) Reinforcing statistical capacity and improving governance and monitoring arrangements at all relevant policy levels; 6) Improving governance and monitoring arrangements at all relevant policy levels.

The EU Task-Force report identifies seven dimensions of well-being: (i) economic security and material situation, (ii) housing, (iii) education, (iv) health, (v) exposure to risk and risk behaviour, (vi) social participation and relationships, family environment, and (vii) local environment.

**2010 Belgian EU Council Presidency**

In 2010 the Belgian EU Council Presidency in cooperation with the King Baudouin Foundation (KBF), Eurochild and UNICEF Belgium presented a **“Roadmap for a recommendation to fight child poverty”** as part of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. Three main policy areas are identified for action: (a) adequate resources for all children; (b) access to quality services; and (c) active participation for all children and youth. The conference adopted a ***Recommendation to Fight Child Poverty and Promote Child Well-Being*** that includes a recommendation to the Commission that child well-being should be mainstreamed across all policy areas at national and EU level in an integrated and coherent manner with a view to addressing the multi-dimensional nature of child well-being. It was recommended that reporting on child poverty and child well-being should also include an analysis of other dimensions of child well-being in particular a set of indicators of the non-material aspects of child well-being. It also calls for the involvement of children and young people in all decisions that affect their lives.

***EU Strategy for Youth***

The ***EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering, A renewed open method of coordination to address youth challenges and opportunities*** seeks to create favourable conditions for youth to develop their skills and fulfil their potential. It is based on a dual approach. Firstly *Investing in Youth*, which is about putting in place greater resources to develop policy areas that affect young people in their daily life and improve their well-being. Secondly, *Empowering Youth*, which is about promoting the potential of young people for the renewal of society and to contribute to EU values and goals. It calls for greater collaboration between youth policies and other policy areas and for providing young people with an opportunity to have a say and make their voices heard.

**OECD How to invest to enhance child well-being**

The OECD in its path breaking report **“Doing better for Children”** proposes that governments should develop a coherent **“Child Investment Portfolio”**. It would consist of the following components:

**Concentrate spending early in the child life cycle in order to break patterns of intergenerational inequality**

**Risk-load spending disproportionately on vulnerable children at all parts of the child life cycle for reasons of both fairness and effectiveness**

**Structure interventions for children to reinforce positive development across the child’s life cycle and across a range of well-being outcomes**

**Establish targets for child well-being outcomes in order to create positive incentives**

**Regularly collect high quality information on children’s well-being and ensure international comparability**

**Continually experiment with policies and programmes for children and reallocate funding to those that work**



### **c) Measuring child well-being**

A significant number of instruments have been developed to measure child well-being and inform policies. They have been succinctly summarised in the recent literature *“It seems that there is broad agreement among citizens, researchers, and policy makers that indicators of child well-being can provide common goals for society and that social progress can be assessed, in part, on the progress of nations in reaching these goals. In addition, there is widespread agreement that these goals need to be positive as well as negative. In other words, it is important to monitor and reduce negative outcomes such as school failure and substance abuse; but it is also important to identify and increase positive outcomes such as positive peer relationships and school engagement.”* (Lippman et al 2009)

... although advances have been made in terms of the methods used to operationalise child well-being across countries, there remains the need for a clear consensus on which indicators economically advanced countries should use to monitor the well-being of their children. OECD 2009

To measure child well-being in rich countries the Innocenti Report Card 7 identified six dimensions relevant to children’s life and rights: *“In keeping with UNICEF’s mandate to advocate for children in every country, the Centre’s Report Card series focuses on the well-being of children in industrialized countries.”* (<http://www.unicef-irc.org/>) The Innocenti report emphasised that the concept of well-being is guided by the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Though it contains a definition of child well-being which corresponds to the view and the experience of a wide public, areas such as children’s mental health and emotional well-being were considered to be probably underrepresented (UNICEF, 2007). The graph below helps to understand the scope of policy action that is required to ensure and improve child well-being.

Table 1: Dimensions and Components of Child well-being by UNICEF

| Child well-being    |             |      |                   |              |                 |                        |               |            |                               |                  |                |                      |                         |                  |                       |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------|------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Material well-being |             |      | Health and safety |              |                 | Educational well-being |               |            | Peer and family relationships |                  |                | Behaviours and risks |                         |                  | Subjective well-being |                     |                   |
| Child income        | Deprivation | Work | Health at birth   | Immunization | Child mortality | Achievement            | Participation | Aspiration | Family structure              | Family relations | Peer relations | Risk behaviour       | Experiences of violence | Health behaviour | Health                | Personal well-being | School well-being |

*Adapted from the Innocenti Report Card 7*

The dimensions (material well-being, housing and environment, educational well-being, health and safety, risk behaviours, and quality of school life) were selected referring to child research literature, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children and in consideration of the dimensions identified by UNICEF. Even though the methods used to produce this ranking are sufficiently robust, they contain some problems, such as being a primary data-driven selection of indicators. There is a survey focus on specific well-being dimensions rather than on monitoring child well-being overall and the weighting of indicators and dimensions on statistic or *ad hoc* grounds are adolescent-focused which do not make it possible to examine child well-being at different points in the child's lifecycle. A general problem of aggregation of such information is that it infers common priorities by all countries across all dimensions by placing the same country valuation on outcomes. For these reasons OECD presents no single aggregated score.

Four of their six dimensions are the same as those chosen by UNICEF. "Housing and the environment" and "quality of school life" were defined, because they were seen to be more influenceable by policy than "peer and family relationships" and "subjective well-being". All dimensions have their roots in the international standards of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Children, which presupposes the need for adequate policy. Principles for selecting indicators were that all dimensions could be relevant to different age groups, they took account of efficiency and equity considerations (e.g. indicators should reflect the range of differences as well as average outcomes), child well-being for today and the future (sometimes referred to as well-being and well-becoming), as well as a coverage of outcomes within a dimension (e.g. mental and physical health within the health dimension). (OECD 2009)

Because much research on children's well-being defines it in terms of what is negative in children's lives, the consequence is we know more about "what we don't want for our children than what we do want" (Fattore et al 2009). "The other limitation in the well-being literature is the little that is known about what children and young people identify as well-being, what it looks like and the factors which affect their sense of it (Fattore et al 2009). One of the changes in recent years has been an increasing agreement that statistical data only or proxy data (e.g. collected from parents or teachers) are not sufficient to understand child well-being holistically and from their point of view, echoing the UNCRC which includes the right for children to be listened to and their opinions attended to by adults. Hence, there is an increasing number of surveys, in European countries and elsewhere, of children and young people that are undertaken with the objective of understanding their views and being able to develop indicators that reflect their own perspectives of their needs and requirements in the diverse environments in which they live (schools, neighbourhoods, etc;) to grow and flourish. Focusing on how children and young people feel that their learning is supported across these diverse environments is the core of monitoring learning for well-being.

### ***The challenge to define child well-being positively and holistically***

We are the children of the world, and despite our different backgrounds, we share a common reality.  
We are united by our struggle to make the world a better place for all.  
You call us the future, but we are also the present.

**A World Fit for Us 2002**

#### ***What policy makers need to consider:***

***Too easily when formulating policies we focus on negative factors:*** Many of the child and youth indicators still track negative outcomes and negative environments – government programmes tend to focus on prevention and remediation of problems rather than on promoting strengths. Reasons are the high costs (monetary and non-monetary) that deficits generate and concerns of equity for less well-off children. But focusing only on deficits neglects children's strength on with society must build to enhance well-being (OECD, 2009). More recent research includes research and measurement of positive traits such as caring, confidence, compassion and resilience. Many of the existing measures are also not culturally sensitive and this has significant influence on their validity (Brown 2008):.

***We do not sufficiently consider the holistic dimensions:*** No single dimension of well-being stands as a reliable proxy for child well-being as a whole. An optimal package of dimensions has to be considered. The development and expression of all these multiple dimensions is influenced by the environmental context. Even biologically-based aspects of well-being require a social context to induce their full and appropriate expression (Bornstein, 2003) Well-being is a state of successful performance throughout the life course integrating physical, cognitive and social-emotional functions that results in productive activities deemed significant by one's cultural community, fulfilling social relationships, and the ability to transcendent moderate psychosocial and environmental problems. Well-being also has a subjective dimension in the sense of satisfaction associated with fulfilling one's potential (Bornstein et al., 2003).<sup>1</sup>

***We do not focus enough on subjective dimensions:*** Children play an active role in creating their own well-being. Thus children's personal resources –their 'health' and 'subjective well-being' – are simultaneously the most basic outcomes and the very basis of achieving well-being. This is emphasised by research developments which call for increased investments in measuring children's own perspectives, especially also giving voice to vulnerable groups of children. EUROCHILD has drawn attention to the fact that child-specific data is still limited. It advocates to involve and engage with children and young people in the development of indicators and in ensuring that indicators can include information on children's views and perception.

In this perspective the individual processes are crucial and overall life satisfaction permeates the positive valence of the judgement of every dimension within the whole well-being (Bornstein, 2003). Thus it is critical to ask children directly about their well-being. This self-reported subjective well-being of a child is rarely taken into account because of limited theory, data and the adult scepticism about younger children's ability to respond to such questions. (WHO Europe (2007)



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The Surgeon General's (1999) definition of mental health and Thomas Weisner's (1998) definition of well-being both contributed aspects to our definition.

## **Chapter 3: CHANGE HOW WE THINK ABOUT LEARNING**

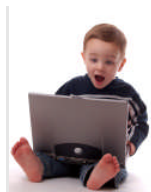
### **Learning for well-being: Learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together**

#### **The goal: a flourishing individual**

##### CONSULTATION QUESTION

What examples would you add to illustrate learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and new understandings of learning?

#### **a) Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**



“Today's kindergarteners will be retiring in the year 2067. We have no idea of what the world will look in five years, much less 60 years, yet we are charged with preparing our students for life in that world. Our students are facing many emerging issues such as global warming, famine, poverty, health issues, a global population explosion and other environmental and social issues. These issues lead to a need for students to be able to communicate, function and create change personally, socially, economically and politically on local, national and global levels.” (<http://www.21stcenturyschools.com>)

*How do children learn to live in the rapidly changing present? How do they learn to be able to participate fully in the future – indeed to shape it? Everything might change – we must question what is a school or a curriculum, who is a teacher and a learner.*

*Three basic principles of human-centred education have been defined as a sign post for the learning for well-being approach:*

- (1) Education ought to respect the child fully as a person, and not treat them instrumentally, i.e. as a means to an end, be it academic, social, political or economic;
- (2) The main aim of education ought to be the well-being and flourishing of the child as a human being, developing their autonomy, self-awareness, positive attitudes, self-direction, and more;
- (3) Education ought to be directed at the child as a whole, nurturing their diverse qualities and virtues as well as their inner integrity and harmony (Gill & Thomson, 2009).

In an optimum state of well-being, children engage readily with learning (DECS, 2007). A human-centred approach to education allows the focus of learning to be on nurturing the child's human qualities - it is essentially about being and becoming more fully human within given socio-cultural contexts, rather than merely acquiring knowledge and skills. **Learning is central for well-being and well-being is central to learning, so there is a strong and mutual interconnection between well-being and learning. Well-being is integral to the learning process.**

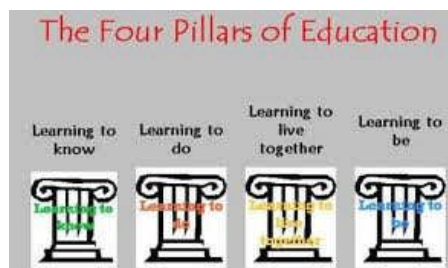
“Young people need a wider range of competences than ever before to flourish, in a globalised economy and in increasingly diverse societies. Many will work in jobs that do not yet exist. Many will need advanced linguistic, intercultural and entrepreneurial capacities. Technology will continue to change the world in ways we cannot imagine. Challenges such as climate change will require radical adaptation. In this increasingly complex world, creativity and the ability to continue to learn and to innovate will count as much as, if not more than, specific areas of knowledge liable to become obsolete. Lifelong learning should be the norm.” (EU Commission, **Improving Competences for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2008**)



At the beginning of this century we are experiencing a technological revolution that is changing the way we organize our lives, our relationships and the way we learn. Information technology, the internet, social networks, wikis all contribute to a new approach to information and sharing of knowledge – in short to a new feeling of community. The founder of Wikipedia has expressed his vision as *“to create and distribute a free encyclopedia of the highest possible quality to every single person on the planet in their own language.* The design of Wikipedia is the design of community.”

Schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will move away from the factory model and be much closer to engaging students in addressing real-world problems, issues important to humanity, and questions that matter. We offer the following new definitions for “School”, “Teacher” and “Learner” appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century: **Schools** will go from ‘buildings’ to ‘nerve centers’, with walls that are porous and transparent, connecting teachers, students and the community to the wealth of knowledge that exists in the world.” **Teacher** - From primary role as a dispenser of information to orchestrator of learning and helping students turn information into knowledge, and knowledge into wisdom. The 21<sup>st</sup> century will require knowledge generation, not just information delivery, and schools will need to create a “culture of inquiry”. **Learner** - In the past a learner was a young person who went to school, spent a specified amount of time in certain courses, received passing grades and graduated. Today we must see learners in a new context.

Just as no one would have envisaged the extraordinary growth of this form of knowledge sharing so nobody could have envisaged the spread of social networking through the web. No longer are knowledge and relationships bound locally and physically – they are shared around the globe in new participatory ways in virtual dimensions. The many uncertainties that tax the ingenuity and foresight of decision-makers in government, enterprise and civil society, raise questions about how new generations of technologies and interfaces will continue to reshape access to and delivery of learning; about the supply-demand equation and critically about the *locus* of learning as it moves away from the traditional institutions of education. They open up new potential in relation to the four pillars of education as defined by UNESCO (1996): *‘learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be’*. (1996) They constitute a new integrative framework for a global agenda for holistic education for the twenty-first century – calling for an education that must contribute to the all-round development of each individual – mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, personal responsibility and spiritual values’.



**Learning for well-being of children and young people, as well as that of their communities, should become the central goal of the education and health systems. UEF**

Children and young people have always learned in the diverse environments in which they live, but the advent of internet and social networks has exploded their access to a variety of sources stimulating desires to learn “where you want, how you want and when you want”. When we look at the complexity of the real world as well as all opportunities and choices with which children are already confronted, there are two main challenges they have to face: transfer and decision-making. These both have to be managed by every child all the time and each in their own way, based on their own abilities, needs and goals. So it is important to enable children to meet these challenges in a way that fit with the uniqueness of each child. Can we then expect dramatic changes in the ways we organise and transmit knowledge between generations? Increasingly when questioned young people say that they learn more from the internet, television and their peers, than in school.

To be competitive in a global job market, today’s students must become comfortable with the complexities of ill-defined real-world problems. The greater their exposure to authentic disciplinary communities, the better

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prepared they will be “to deal with ambiguity” and put into practice the kind of “higher order analysis and complex communication” required of them as professionals. (Lombardi 2007)

### The EU response:

The recent Communication (17<sup>th</sup> February 2011) on ***Early Childhood Education and Care; providing all our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow*** does not refer specifically to well-being but to conditions that underpin it in so far as it emphasises that since children’s earliest experiences form the basis for all subsequent learning, high quality early childhood education and care can make a strong contribution to empowering all children to reach their full potential and we must, therefore, offer all our young people the chance to develop their talents to the fullest possible extent. The Communication is responding to a request from the Member States to launch a process of cooperation to help them raise the quality of their services building on a joint vision of the role of ECEC, underlining that these services should be designed to meet all children’s full range of needs, cognitive, emotional, social and physical and, in particular, that acquiring non cognitive skills are essential for all future learning. The Communication emphasises the need for strong collaboration between the different actors, such as education, health, social policy and employment, working with a coherent vision that is shared by all stakeholders and includes parents.

The updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET 2020”) adopted by the European Council in May 2009 aims to contribute to lifelong learning, equity, social cohesion, creativity and innovation. A key communication for education is ***Improving Competences for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation on Schools***, that situates curricular reform within a holistic approach to the education of children and young people. It states that schools should promote the health and well-being of pupils and staff and active citizenship, underlining the fact that every learner’s needs differ and every classroom is a place of diversity (of gender, socioeconomic groups, ability or disability, mother tongues and learning processes).

Some authors outline the vision of a “*second enlightenment*” which moves away from the fragmented learning of the past towards an integrated framework of learning with the goal to “sustain human aspiration in an interconnected world”. (Carneiro 2010) We are faced with a unique opportunity where the three forms of human progress as defined by Albert Schweitzer can come together in a new vision for learning for well-being: ***progress in knowledge and technology; progress in the socialisation of man; progress in spirituality.***

“So the challenge is to ask, how do we re-think and re-enact the world in our lives, in such a way that instead of thinking of the world as a collection of objects, we think of it as a ***communion of subjects.***” (Carneiro 2010)

#### *Six major thrusts in the changing patterns of education and learning:*

- Learner-centred self organized learning rather than teacher-centred learning;
- Encouraging variety, not homogeneity: embracing multiple intelligences and diverse learning styles;
- Understanding a world of interdependency and change, rather than memorising facts and striving for right answers;
- Constantly exploring the theories-in-use of all involved in the education processes;
- Reintegrating education within webs of social relationships that link peers, friends, families, organisations, and communities;
- Overcoming the knowledge fragmentation that is typical of a first enlightenment mode of understanding in favour of more holistic and integral ways of knowing;
- Favouring an increasing role to non-formal and informal learning. (Carneiro 2010)

## **b) New understandings of how we learn: the interdependence of cognitive, emotional, social and environmental factors**

*The many dimensions of learning:* We are beginning to understand the many dimension of learning, which take us far beyond the cognitive dimensions. *Learning is a social endeavour, it has important emotional and spiritual components, it is related to cultural context as well as individual learning styles and it occurs not only in our*

*brain but in every part of our body.* We are in the early stages of opening up the black box and understanding more about learning from a neuro-scientific perspective. The learning sciences are in an early stage of development but already they demonstrate the validity, on the basis of evidence drawn from brain research, of observations some teachers have always held to be true: for example children who are unhappy or hungry cannot learn as well or as effectively, fear does not stimulate learning, etc. Thus the cumulated wisdom of educators is in some cases being verified.

*The experience of well-being is unique for each child.* The challenge for all societies is to close the gap between what we know about the determinants of children's well-being and their ability to learn and what we do to enable them to flourish. Moral maturity is a product of long ongoing learning processes. Cognitive learning processes lead to expertise (function competence) and influence moral learning processes. Social learning processes leads to social competence and influence as well moral learning processes. These competences together with moral learning processes lead to moral maturity. Knowing how to learn and having the capability to explore the ways in which you learn directly effects your sense of well-being.

*Holistic approaches* recognise the close interdependence of physical and intellectual well-being and the close interplay of the emotional and the cognitive – they focus on minds and bodies together and reinforce the possibilities of taking advantage of the brain's plasticity facilitating the learning process (OECD 2007). They also highlight how critical nurturing is to the learning process. These finding indicate what we must look for if we are to create appropriate learning environments for well-being. Learning environments should be flexible and capable of meeting a wide range of individual differences and they should incorporate multiple means of representation, assessment and engagement to meet the various learning needs and interests of children and adolescents. (Hinton and Fischer 2010,)

In 2007 OECD published their second book about brain research and learning, **Understanding the Brain: The Birth of a Learning Science**. It is a synthesis of the results of seven years of trans-disciplinary research, studies and seminars led by the Centre for Educational Research and Information (CERI) of the OECD in cooperation with teams of scientists, experts, research centres and ministries from a number of countries across the world. The project which started in 1999 set out to encourage collaboration between the learning sciences and brain research and also between researchers and policy makers. The result is a fascinating set of observations, questions and pointers which begin to open up some new areas of reflection for education policy design and practice, and to supply evidence to support some very familiar notions about learning, while neatly refuting others. It suggests ways in which neuroscience can contribute to our thinking about education (formal and informal). In contributing to building a real "learning science", educational neuroscience is both generating new knowledge and therefore opening up very new avenues for research while it is also building on what we felt we knew already but needed to understand better (moving from correlation to causation) through providing the evidence.

*The brain:* The brain is dynamic and academic abilities can be built through many different learning pathways. In recent years, brain imaging technologies have made it increasingly possible to observe the working brain. The resulting research provides helpful insights into perceptual, cognitive and emotional functions which contribute to our understanding of the processes of learning and could help in structuring nurturing learning environments for people of all ages. The plasticity of the brain and "sensitive" (rather than "critical") periods for learning can be considered the two key messages of this research. Plasticity is a core feature of the brain throughout life as some neuronal connections will be created or strengthened, while others are weakened or eliminated as part of adapting to environmental demands and giving the brain flexibility to respond to environmental demands and changes significantly over the lifespan. The degree of modification will depend both on the type of learning taking place and the period in life. Research also shows that, though there are no "critical" periods for specific types of learning, there are "sensitive" periods. Thus scientists have documented sensitive periods for certain types of sensory stimuli such as vision and speech sounds or for emotional and cognitive experiences (e.g. language exposure) but other mental skills such as vocabulary acquisition which do not appear to pass through sensitive periods. Therefore we now know that even if the development of the macroscopic structure of the brain is to a big part finalized at birth, there are areas in the brain which are developed at different ages fully and that learning really is a lifelong activity and the more it continues the more effective it is. (Hinton et al, 2008)

*Emotions:* It has long been thought intuitively that emotions have an effect on learning. Brain research is demonstrating that they have a real effect, including on the neural tissue. The power of positive emotions and

the pleasure of learning can be seen in so far as brain imaging shows that the brain reacts well to the illumination that comes with grasping new concepts! Similarly managing one's emotions has often been felt to be a key skill for functioning in society. Research shows (something that many teachers observed) that emotions can direct or disrupt the psychological processes such as ability to focus, solve problems, etc and so are one of the key skills to being an effective learner (OECD 2007) In their article, "We Feel Therefore We Learn: The Relevance of Affective and Social Neuroscience to Education", Mary Helen Immordino-Yang and Antonio Damasio (2007) explore how the connections between emotion, social functioning and decision-making have the potential to "revolutionize our understanding of the role of affect in education. The authors emphasise that recent findings underscore "the critical role of emotion in bringing previously acquired knowledge to inform real-world decision-making in social contexts, they suggest the intriguing possibility that emotional processes are required for the skills and knowledge acquired in school to transfer to novel situations and real life". They conclude by saying that when "we educators fail to appreciate the importance of students' emotions, we fail to appreciate a critical force in students' learning."

*Spiritual dimensions:* It is difficult for the educational model of the first enlightenment - which is based on rationality and on knowledge based on authority - to move towards a model which includes spiritual dimensions. Too frequently such spiritual dimensions are linked to religious values – but recently spirituality has begun to be recognized as a construct distinct from religion (Ingersoll, 1998). The right to a sense of spiritual well-being is firmly embedded in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and a clear duty is placed on all those involved to ensure that a child or young person's spiritual well-being is nurtured along with his or her physical and intellectual well-being. The UNESCO Report (1996) introduced the concept of the four pillars of learning: learning to know; to do; to live together and to be. In its exploration of learning to be, the UNESCO report includes a focus on that learning that is beyond knowledge and information – the essence of spirituality. (Chittenden, 2000).. Spiritual dimensions of well-being often refer to something larger than oneself, they can encompass an individual's relations to self, others and to the environment, as well as feelings of inner peace, strength, interconnectedness and meaning to life. Spirituality refers to something fundamental in the human condition, which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and/or expressed in everyday language. Spirituality can of course be understood differently in different cultural contexts. In modern societies the 'new spirituality' is concerned with discovering new and better ways of life and community. (DECS SA 2006) The deepening awareness of spirituality that so many researchers and writers have identified is potentially an important vehicle for change in education.

*Natural Environmental dimensions:* Playing in a natural environment has cognitive as well as psychological benefits for children (Wells, 2000); also the way children relate to each other can be influenced by the types of natural environments. They are attractive to children because of the diversity and the feeling of timelessness (White and Stoecklin, 1998), Three types of environmental learning can be distinguished learning about the environment (learner gains knowledge about the environment), learning for the environment (learner is able to act in a adequate way in the environment), and learning in the environment (learner is encouraged to interact and make experiences in the environment) (Malone & Tranter, 2003). Schoolgrounds are outdoor classrooms and therefore have a rich potential as resource for formal learning and are important for children's development of social and cognitive skills (Malone & Tranter, 2003).



The Garden of the Senses

In the model (below) by the Australian government different types of well-being are shown as related and interdependent – together they provide the basis for healthy development. By including all aspects it becomes clear how complex the system of children’s well-being and well-becoming is. The challenge is to create a positive cycle and reach an optimal developmental climate for children’s learning for well-being.





### **c) The Vision: ‘Learning for Well-being’**

Learning for Well-being implies developing and sharing a **new story** of what we can create together through **imagining new possibilities**. It asks: How can we find a way of doing and being that will inspire us, build on existing knowledge and information, and allow us to make different choices for the well-being of children and youth?

**Learning for Well-being** is the process of fully engaging and expressing who we are as individuals within the contexts of our common humanity. It inspires us to find ways for *being our becoming* – that is living in our present moment while developing, challenging and creating ourselves for the future.

The Council of Europe has described well-being as a universal human right, using the phrase “well-being for all” to encompass individual well-being as well as societal and global well-being, extending to future generations. In alignment with this strategy, the L4WB Consortium has chosen to focus on **Learning for Well-being** as a process through which well-being can become available to all, with particular emphasis on children and youth.

As a vision for both individuals and for society, **Learning for Well-being** aims at realizing our unique and full potential through developing our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects in relation to self, others, and the environment.

This vision refers to the *United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) in its emphasis on children’s rights to achieve their full potential and participate in decisions that affect their lives. It reflects the ‘four pillars of learning’ defined in the 1996 report to UNESCO by the International Commission on Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, *Learning: the Treasure Within*, i.e. **learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together**. It aligns with the *World Health Organization* definition: **Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity**. ‘Learning for well-being’ also supports the *Council of Europe’s* platform for achieving social cohesion through ‘**well-being for all**’.

Learning for well-being means children can develop holistically, in diverse environments that support well-being for all. Children who are nurtured and grow in this way are far more likely to nurture and take care of themselves, other people, and the environment, which will make all the difference in how we live as individuals and in our shared environments.. Through the ‘Learning for Well-being’ perspective, we can invest in children and young people, empowering them to build their competence in an integrated way, capable of stimulating change towards a society that puts well-being for all at the centre of all our systems.

**Policies and programmes that promote learning for well-being must include the following key components:**

1) *Take the child’s perspective*: shift from an adult perspective on child well-being to a child perspective, with broad acceptance for children’s subjective perspectives on their own well-being and for children as reporters as a preferred method of assessing their well-being. (Ben-Arieh 2008).

2) *Develop unique potential*: take account of how children can develop their full potential by relating to the concept of thriving and flourishing, to successful coping and resilience, and to a recognition of how children/young people can understand and express their unique ways of communicating, processing information, and learning in order to enhance the qualities that provide meaning, purpose and direction to an individual’s life.

3) *Focus on assets*: be explicitly strengths-based, focusing on cultivating children's assets, positive relationships, beliefs, morals, behaviours, and capacities to give children the resources they need to grow successfully across the life course.

4) *Be transdisciplinary*: make use of the knowledge gained through the convergence of the cognitive sciences, brain physiology and neuroscience and new understandings which point to the importance of acknowledging diversity and uniqueness in human functioning (Berns & Erickson, 2001; Battistich, 1999).

5) *Be holistic*: the learning to learn concept has moved beyond teaching intellectual skills and has embraced a host of emotional, social, and cognitive aspects that are needed for lifelong learners, such as perseverance, curiosity, self-knowledge and collaboration (Claxton, 1999; 2004). The concept is not about the content of what one learns but about how one learns.

Let us now look at this vision in action!

## **Chapter 4: CHANGE HOW WE THINK ABOUT HEALTH AND EDUCATION**

### ***LEARNING FOR Well-being: a new imperative for education, health and the social sphere***

**The goal: to make all environments more conducive to Learning for Well-being of children and youth**

#### **CONSULTATION QUESTION**

What other examples would you include on learning for well-being in the health and education sectors?

#### **a) Learning for well-being in the education and health sector**

It is essential that established systems – in particular systems such as the education and the health sector – reorient their approaches and above all enable children to participate and improve their well-being. Both the health and the education system need to become learning environments for well-being. This can be done in many ways using the setting of the school or the health care sector as entry points for well-being. In both systems children are still frequently seen as objects and many of the procedures of care and education are standardised, rather than centred on a child's unique needs. As outlined above learning is so much more than a cognitive process - it includes many other dimensions and does not only happen in learning institutions but everywhere.

The same is true for health. The WHO definition of health already guides the way to a new thinking. It defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." So in many ways it includes the same integral components as a holistic approach to learning for well-being. The concept of health promotion has further explored how health is woven into the fabric of our lives and states: health is created in the context of everyday life, where people live, love, work and play.

**Health promotion** The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986) has defined health promotion as a "process of enabling people to increase control over and to improve their health". It identifies five key health promotion strategies: building healthy public policy; creating supportive environments; strengthening community action; developing personal skills reorienting services toward promotion, prevention and early intervention.

In particular a health promotion approach highlights the need for supportive environments for health, which allows people to participate, enables healthy choices and addresses vulnerabilities. The approaches in mental health promotion are particularly close to the mindset of Learning for well-being. **Mental health promotion aims to enhance the capacity of individuals and communities to take control over their lives and improve their mental health. Mental health promotion uses strategies that foster supportive environments and individual resilience, while showing respect for culture, equity, social justice, interconnections, and personal dignity.** (Joubert et al. 1996) The concept of **resilience** gains particular importance.

**Resilience has been defined as "the ability to manage or cope with significant adversity or stress in ways that are not only effective, but may result in an increased ability to respond to future adversity" ([Health Canada, 2000, p. 8](#)). Resilience is influenced by risk factors and protective factors.**

While the health system has a long tradition of identifying and counteracting risk factors it has not yet developed a deep understanding of protective factors. But it is particularly in relation to the protective factors that learning for well-being becomes central for a new understanding of and approach to health. Protective factors buffer a person in the face of adversity and can moderate the impact of stress on social and emotional well-being, thereby reducing the likelihood [that] disorders will develop" ([CDHAC, 2000, p. 13](#)). Protective factors may be internal (e.g., temperament, cognitive abilities) or external (e.g., social, economic or environmental supports). They enable a person to protect his or her emotional and social well-being and cope

with everyday life events (whether positive or negative). Protective factors act as a buffer against stress and may be drawn upon in dealing with stressful situations.

[http://www.camh.net/About\\_CAMH/Health\\_Promotion/Community\\_Health\\_Promotion/Best\\_Practice\\_MHYouth/theory\\_def\\_context.htm](http://www.camh.net/About_CAMH/Health_Promotion/Community_Health_Promotion/Best_Practice_MHYouth/theory_def_context.htm)

**Resilience:** Studies suggest that resilience is reflected in the ability to respond over time as various things change in one's life. It is dynamic rather than static and it has a direct effect on a person's coping process. Resilient children and young people believe they can cope with adverse events because they have some control over what happens and are able to give deeper meaning to the adverse event (Silliman, 1994). People who have high resilience (i.e., have the capacity to "bounce back" after adversity) are still vulnerable to adverse events and circumstances (CDHAC, 2000). However, a person's level of protective factors—regardless of the number of risk factors—has been shown to lower his or her level of risk (Resnick et al., 1997, cited in CDHAC, 2000). Protective factors also reduce the likelihood that a mental health disorder will develop, by either reducing the person's exposure to risk or reducing the effect of risk factors, or both.

Programmes that focus on such an integral well-being and resilience-based approach can be found in many countries and many institutions but rarely are they brought to scale, too frequently they remain pilots and experiments, often dependent on motivated health professionals or teachers. One such exception is the *DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework Programme* in South Australia which is implemented in schools throughout the state and has become fundamental to the educational approach. Some exemplar approaches of how change can be effected through applying a new mindset in health and education are described below.



### **Example 1: health promoting schools**

Initially launched by the World Health Organization the approach of health promoting schools has since been applied throughout Europe to improve children's health and well-being in an educational setting. The concept is holistic and dynamic: ***a health promoting school is one that constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working.***

#### **A health promoting school:**

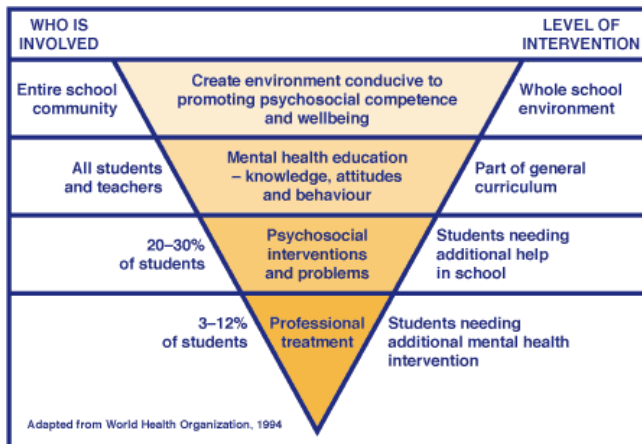
- Fosters health and learning with all the measures at its disposal.
- Engages health and education officials, teachers, teachers' unions, students, parents, health providers and community leaders in efforts to make the school a healthy place.
- Strives to provide a healthy environment, school health education, and school health services along with school/community projects and outreach, health promotion programmes for staff, nutrition and food safety programmes, opportunities for physical education and recreation, and programmes for counselling, social support and mental health promotion.
- Implements policies and practices that respect an individual's well-being and dignity, provide multiple opportunities for success, and acknowledge good efforts and intentions as well as personal achievements.
- Strives to improve the health of school personnel, families and community members as well as pupils; and works with community leaders to help them understand how the community contributes to, or undermines, health and education.

#### **Health promoting schools focus on:**

- Caring for oneself and others
- Making healthy decisions and taking control over life's circumstances
- Creating conditions that are conducive to health (through policies, services, physical / social conditions)
- Building capacities for peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable ecosystem, equity, social justice, sustainable development.

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- Preventing leading causes of death, disease and disability: helminths, tobacco use, HIV/AIDS/STDs, sedentary lifestyle, drugs and alcohol, violence and injuries, unhealthy nutrition.
- Influencing health-related behaviours: knowledge, beliefs, skills, attitudes, values, support.



### Example 2: Child friendly health care settings:



The health care sector is a sector that in general is not very participatory – patients in most countries do not have sufficient opportunities to participate. This applies in particular to children – who are even more frequently seen as not being able to contribute within the health care sector. A number of recent studies are now indicating that this must not be so – and that children’s involvement in decision making can lead to better outcomes in terms of health and well-being. A recent study (Kilkelly/Donnelly 2006) in Ireland has drawn the following principles from **Best practice in communicating with children in the health care sector**:

- a. The child must be involved in treatment decisions as far as possible, bearing in mind his/her capacity to understand and willingness to be involved.
- b. The patient’s parents or carers must be involved in treatment decisions.
- c. The views of children must be sought and taken into account.
- d. The relationship between health professional and child should be based on truthfulness, clarity and awareness of the child’s age and maturity.
- e. Children must be listened to and their questions responded to, clearly and truthfully.
- f. Communication with children must be an ongoing process.
- g. Training in communication skills with children is an essential component of appropriate professional education.

In this study children of all ages readily identified the characteristics of a good doctor as one who spoke to them and explained things to them in language they could understand. For example, Larry, aged 8, described that a good experience at the doctor’s was ‘*when they ask you stuff*’ (CGI 6). Harry, aged 11, noted that a good doctor ‘*asks the children questions*’, while Emmet, aged 10, said a good doctor ‘*explains things to children, tells them what’s wrong with them*’ (CGI 6). Trevor, similarly, noted that a good doctor ‘*explains stuff to you*’ (CGI 12).

Some hospitals and child care institutions are now taking up this kind of thinking – one example is GOSH which is both Britain’s first children’s hospital and a pioneering child health institution (along with its partner the Institute for Child Health). Another is the Child Friendly Healthcare Initiative (CFHI) is a two-year pilot project with a multi-agency base which seeks to promote child and family-friendly standards, establish a straight forward and universal assessment tool to guide practice development, and improve the care received by children and their families, wherever possible within the bounds of existing resources. **Child Friendly Healthcare – A manual for health workers is available from [www.paediatricnursing.co.uk](http://www.paediatricnursing.co.uk)**



GOSH: We aim to create less stressful, child friendly surroundings, which are relaxing and engaging, while actively supporting creativity and learning amongst patients, visitors and staff.



### **Example 3: best practice guidelines for mental health promotion**

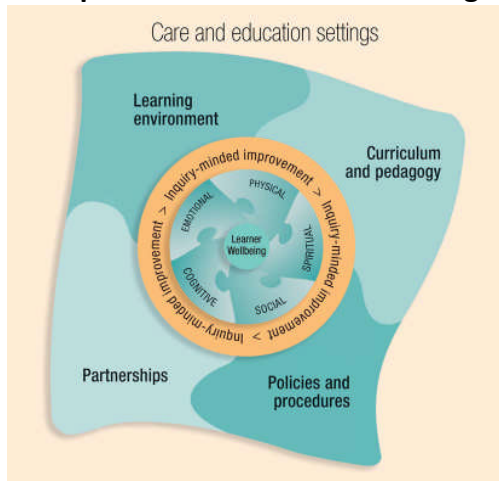
#### **Best practice guidelines for mental health promotion programs: Children and Youth**

- Address and modify risk and protective factors that indicate possible mental health concerns
- Intervene in multiple settings, with a focus on schools
- Focus on skill building, empowerment, self-efficacy and individual resilience, and respect
- Train non-professionals to establish caring and trusting relationships
- Involve multiple stakeholders
- provide comprehensive support systems that focus on peer and parent-child relations, and academic performance
- Adopt multiple interventions
- Address opportunities for organizational change, policy development and advocacy
- Demonstrate a long-term commitment to program planning, development and evaluation
- Ensure that information and services provided are culturally appropriate, equitable and holistic
- ([http://www.camh.net/About\\_CAMH/Health\\_Promotion/Community\\_Health\\_Promotion/Best\\_Practice\\_MHYouth/theory\\_def\\_context.html](http://www.camh.net/About_CAMH/Health_Promotion/Community_Health_Promotion/Best_Practice_MHYouth/theory_def_context.html))

Mental Health Europe has developed a directory of projects of mental health promotion for children up to 6 years. It recommends to pay particular attention to vulnerable children, such as - children with health or psycho-social vulnerabilities (e.g. premature, disabled or chronically ill children, children with developmental or early behavioural problems); - children within a vulnerable family environment (e.g. abused or neglected children; children of single or teenage parents; adoptive/foster children; conflictive families; children from mentally ill or addicted parents); - and children with socio-cultural vulnerabilities (refugees, immigrants, unemployed parents).

<http://www.camhee.eu/images/default/source/attachments/useful/MH%20promotion%20for%20children%20up%20to%206%20years.pdf>

**Example 4: DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework**



The DECS framework identifies well-being and learner engagement as key directions for educators. It acknowledges the strong and mutual interconnection between well-being and learning and states that **child well-being is more than the absence of problems**. It recognizes that the influence of continuous and rapid change upon today's learners and the consequent complexity of their lives require educators to inquire into new ways of working that support the well-being and learning connection. The DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework supports educators to build upon and improve on current effective practice through the use of an inquiry approach. It is consistent with the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1959) and the Adelaide Declaration on Healthy Public Policies (1988). The dimensions of well-being need to be considered in the context of four domains within the site or service as a whole. **The learning environment, curriculum and pedagogy, partnerships, and policies and procedures interact and are interdependent.** What is learned through the curriculum will be practised in the learning environment, supported by partnerships with family and other agencies, and made explicit in the policies and practices of the site.

[http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/learnerwellbeing/files/links/link\\_72840.pdf](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/learnerwellbeing/files/links/link_72840.pdf)

Introduce other examples from consultation process

## **b) The co- production of services and social capital**

“Services do not produce social outcomes; people do”. Children’s services – be it health, education or welfare – need to be considered with a new mind set. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century these sectors will work increasingly with the concept of “**co production**”. A recent guide by the NEF underlines this type of approach: *There has been increasing interest in co-production as a mechanism for embedding more participatory approaches in service delivery in recent years. Co-production takes a slightly different tack to normal engagement practices. It focuses less on identifying and responding to a child’s ‘need’ or ‘problem’ in favour of a reciprocal approach, which builds on a child’s interests, knowledge, experience, skills and support networks.*(NEF 2009)



Cummins/Miller 2007

**Social outcomes** – well-being, a sustainable environment, community safety, preventative health, managing chronic disease and educational attainment – are being co-produced through the joint efforts of service users and services. A co-production approach sees the purpose of engagement to provide children and young people with the opportunity to ‘be the change’. To achieve this, it focuses on **children as part of their own solution**. The professional changes his/her role from the fixer to the facilitator. There are four key principles of a co-production approach to service delivery: 1. Valuing children and young people as assets; 2. Celebrating children and young people’s contribution; 3. Reciprocal working which includes shared responsibility and a sharing of roles; 4. Growing social networks in which children engage with other children and the community at large. Co-production is embedded in a system of social capital – this is best described as a set of networks to which people belong, within which they are engaged and whose values they share. Trust is a critical component of social capital.

Co-production already exists; it does not have to be created. The real challenge for the public sector is how to make it visible, both to themselves and to the public; to develop it with communities; and exploit its exist. There is much learn.

One such critical outcome is **social cohesion**, defined by the Council of Europe as “*the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding polarisation. A cohesive society is a mutually supportive community of free individuals pursuing these common goals by democratic means*”. *Social cohesion is co produced* – it is a responsibility for all sectors of society. We are learning that the well-being of all must become a goal shared by all social actors, the State, business and the individual.

**Example:** When parents are respected as partners in the education of their children, and when they are provided with organizational support which enables them to channel their interest to the benefit of the school, the entire culture of the organization can be transformed. Parents have knowledge of children's lives outside of school, which teachers typically do not have, and that knowledge can prove helpful in developing effective pedagogical strategies (Ladson-Billings 1992; Spindler and Spindler 1988). More importantly, the familiarity between school and parent that develops as a result of such partnerships, can also begin to generate social closure and transform urban schools from alien and hostile organizations, into genuine community assets. (*Noguera Transforming Urban Schools 2009*)

***Can you hear me?***

Currently there are few examples of formalised consultation with primary school children or children in early years education and care though there are examples of practice, for example, in the work of the Bernard Van Leer Foundation (Lansdown, 2005) or the resource packs for improving participation of 0-10 year olds developed by the Participation Consortium in Wales. There is a general acceptance in policy and research spheres, however, that this is a major gap. In the Working Paper published by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation in 2005, *Can you hear me? The right of young children to participate in decisions affecting them*, Gerison Lansdown, firmly supports the idea that there is no lower age limit imposed on the exercise of the right to participate and that very young children are capable of both holding and expressing views, as long as appropriate forms of expression are used. She says: *“In other words, children, from birth, start to develop the skills and competences for participation. However, the responsiveness and respect they receive from caring adults and their surroundings will enhance and support the development of these competencies and characteristics.”* Respecting their right to be heard *“necessitates a preparedness to create the space to listen to their views in ways appropriate to them – through music, movement, dance, story-telling, role play, drawing, painting and photography, as well as through more conventional dialogue. This requires the provision of time, adults willing to listen, and environments in which they feel safe and comfortable”* Furthermore a growing body of evidence suggests that participation helps children to develop. (Lansdown, 2005).

**Introduce other examples from consultation process**

## Chapter 5: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

***Taking action on learning for well-being: the approach must be multi-dimensional and pro active and include all sectors of society***

***The goal: All policy arenas contribute to children's well-being***

### CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

How can we best illustrate the multi-dimensional and pro-active approaches?

Are the arguments for the need for all society to contribute sufficiently strong and well-illustrated? What would you modify or add?

Are there missing aspects to the components of child well-being?

“Childhood becomes a social space in which children learn to explore their own environment and to experiment with their agency” (James & James, 2004)

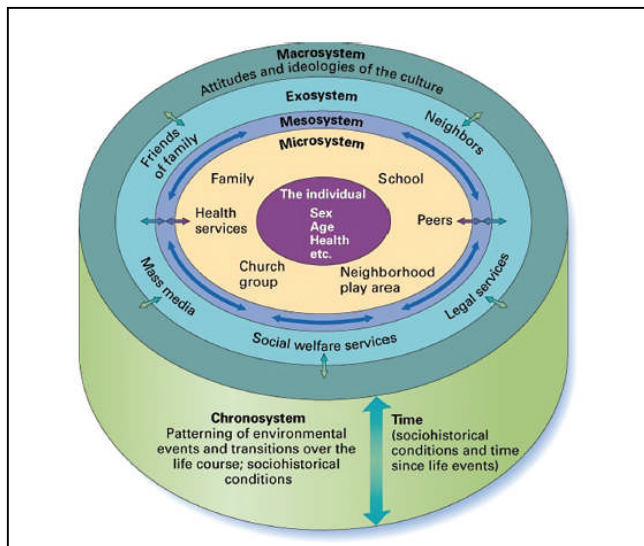
### ***a) The need for all of society to contribute***

Children learn everywhere: just as health is not created in the health care system so is learning continuously taking place, no matter where children are and what they do. The statement from the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion “health is created in the context of everyday life: where people live, love, work and play” can just as well be applied to learning for well-being. In the publication of OECD *Doing Better for Children* a range of policies to improve child well-being are reviewed. It echoes the statements from well-being research: “Child well-being encompasses quality of life in a broad sense. It refers to child’s economic conditions, peer relations, political rights, and opportunities to development. Comprehensive interventions for young children and families which improved children’s physical, psychological and social development have shown to be as cost-effective for individuals as for society overall (Eickmann et al., 2003, Watanabe et al., 2005) More?

Many different sectors and stakeholders in society need to work together in order to promote learning for well-being. The family and social networks are as important as is the workplace and as are formal services and policies that provide opportunities and supportive environments. **The importance of multidimensional policies** has been underlined by many in particular the coordination between and within ministries, as well as at local and regional level need to be enhanced, and gaps bridged between the measures taken at national and international level. (Eurochild, 2010)

Whole of government denotes public service agencies working across portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues. Approaches can be formal and informal. They can focus on policy development, program management and service delivery. Australian Public Service Commission 2004

There are many facets of a child’s learning environment, the individual’s personal strategies interface with family and societal systems and values, neighbourhood security, quality and affordability of the health system, institutional practices, provision of basic needs, and economic considerations. Only by taking all of these environments into account, can a child’s ability to develop positively be fully appreciated (Bornstein et al., 2003). It is not just individual behavioural processes that determine child development but also the continuity of adverse environmental factors. (Sameroff, 1998). Children with increased multiple risk factors in their social and family environment predict worse outcomes in cognitive and social-emotional competences than children with less multiple risks (Sameroff et al. 1987). **Learning for well-being prioritizes the promotion of factors for positive development.** (Bornstein, 2003).



Bronfenbrenner (1977) proposes the ecological model of child development, where development occurs through processes of reciprocal interaction that are progressively more complex between children and all levels of environmental influences. This process is affected by relations a child experiences within and between these settings, informal as well as formal. Risk factors as well as protective factors interact with each other in each domain (Buchanan & Hudson, 2000). Compensatory experiences to a stressful event can also be experienced in another system of the child's life. Such a protective experience can also compensate some negative effects, when they occur before or after the "risk situation".

### ***b) Children and youth must be part of the policy process***

It's been suggested that in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the agency and voice of children and young people will preoccupy agendas in the way that listening and participation did in the first decade (Kellet, 2011). This is crucial to learning for well-being, which is about children and young people being empowered through their learning in diverse environments to be able to make the decisions in their lives that will support themselves in everything they do, in their health, their relations, and the decisions they make about others and the environment.

On the one hand facilitating participation, engagement and therefore agency needs child- and youth-friendly structures. On the other hand they can only work if the shifts in how we think about children, learning, health and education are real – in people's minds, attitudes and practices. Only in this way can the unique potential of every child be nurtured. The UNCRC sets the baseline.

#### **Article 12**

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Implementing this involves a profound and radical reconsideration of the status of children in most societies and the nature of adult/child relationships. It requires us to begin to listen to what children say and to take them seriously. It requires that we recognise the value of their experience, views and concerns. It also requires us to question the nature of adult responsibilities and behaviours towards children. Adults need to learn to work more closely in collaboration with children to help them articulate their lives, shape their learning, develop strategies for change and exercise their rights. The ***Consolidated Version of the Treaty of the European Union*** (the 'Lisbon' Treaty) has integrated the promotion of the rights of the child, as well as the well-being of all people living in the Union.

***"Let's put the decision-makers in school for a few days to live the normal life of a child."*** (Member of the Finnish Children's Parliament)

Policy formulation must start from a focus on the subjective/personal experience of the child - i.e. how the child experiences all the factors affecting their lives. From this follows the requirement to involve children in the policy process – from formulation to evaluation. Children must be considered as full participants, which means that adults learn to listen to them with curiosity, be responsive and create true partnerships that take account of the inner diversity of functioning and learning of every child and young person.

In recent years this has led to the development of structures, mechanisms and projects to ensure children and young people can have their voices heard in decision-making processes, but also, critically, it has led to more support for youth-led initiatives and organisations and includes supporting children as researchers on their own lives, e.g; at EU level there is support for youth-led initiatives through the Youth in Action Programme. As the EU/Council of Europe Youth partnership states, greater understanding of youth is of paramount importance for policy making and should be based on comprehensive knowledge and well-researched understanding of young people's situations, needs and expectations.

[http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/BGKNGE/Better\\_Understanding.html](http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/BGKNGE/Better_Understanding.html)).

“Young children are instinctive communicators. Unfortunately, not all adults are instinctive listeners. But if adults working with and for young children are to fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, listening must become part of their role. Participation enhances children’s self-esteem and confidence, promotes their overall capacities, produces better outcomes, strengthens understanding of and commitment to democratic processes and protects children more effectively. It provides the opportunity for developing a sense of autonomy, independence, heightened social competence and resilience.” (Gerison, 2005)

## **c) Policies for child well-being: five defining components**

**Child well-being and respect for children’s rights is a litmus test for a vision of Europe where employment and the economy are at the service of social progress and overall well-being. EUROCHILD**

Based on the research undertaken in the last 20 years a significant shift in the understanding of children and of child well-being has taken place. *For policy makers committed to improving child well-being five defining components can provide orientation.*

*Five defining components of child well-being policies*

- a. The interdependence of children’s well-being and children’s rights*
- b. Child well-being is a condition for as well as a product of human development.*
- c. Well-being is a whole child experience*
- d. Well-being is based on the unique potential of each child within diversity*
- e. Well-being is relational and contextual*

### **1. The interdependence of children’s well-being and children’s rights**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child lays emphasis on well-being as a key to the realisation of the child’s rights (Innocenti Report Card 7, 2007).

The UN Convention specifies that the realisation of the child’s rights is connected with his or her well-being and development ‘*physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity*’. It lays out a radical shift in perspective: children are considered social actors, whose experiences must be taken into account (Prout, 2004). As of November 2009, 193 countries have ratified, accepted, or acceded to it (some with stated reservations or interpretations) including every member of the United Nations except Somalia and the United States.

Article 6 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

- States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.
- States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child. (UNICEF, 2006)

The Convention sets out the obligations and responsibilities of *all* in respecting the right of the child, including parents, other adults in the society, institutions, governments, and international agencies and also that of the child him or herself and the obligation to ‘assure to the child the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child’ and to ensure that ‘the views of the child be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child’ (Article 12, UNCRC, 1989). Unlike with any of the other conventions of the United Nations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child does not just listen to governments. The Committee also invites NGO’s and child-led organisations to submit reports. These are known as the alternative reports.

**Example:** Funky Dragon is the Children and Young People’s Assembly for Wales. This young people led organisation was established as a charity in 2004 with the main aim to provide an opportunity for 0 – 25 year olds to get their voices heard on issues that affect them. Funky Dragon is a way for young people in Wales to

speaking directly to the Welsh Assembly Government and other policymakers. In February 2006 Funky Dragon started discussing the next round of U.K reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and in November 2007, on International Children's Rights Day, it launched '**Our Rights, Our Story**'. In order to produce this report, Funky Dragon consulted, over period of 18 months, with over 12,000 young people aged 11-18 and over 2,000 children aged 7-10 in Wales to make sure that the reports were full of correct information, reflecting how children and young people are claiming their rights in Wales. In line with the ethos of Funky Dragon, from the outset the project was run by young people. "One of the many challenges we faced when carrying out this project was that for the vast majority of young people we spoke to, this was the first time they had discovered they had rights. You will see in the report that **only 8% of young people had heard of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).**"

The report was hailed a success and a brilliant insight on the issues covered - education, participation, information, health and specific interest. It was taken to Geneva by the steering group and delivered to the United Nations personally!

Adapted from the Funky Dragon website and the Introduction to **Our Rights, Our Story** (<http://www.funkydragon.org/attachments/article/98/Our%20Rights%20Our%20Story.pdf>)

## **2. Child Well-being is a condition for as well as a product of human development.**

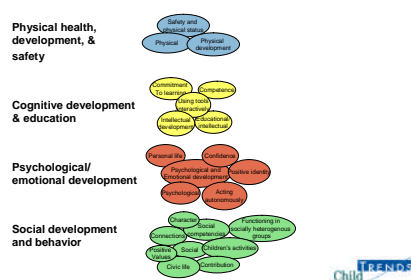
Well-being is not merely an outcome, but 'a state of being that arises from the dynamic interplay of outcomes and processes' (McGregor, 2006, p. 3).

Well-being is a condition for development (Flammer, 1986). How to reach well-being and what it is differs individually, culturally and at different stages of life (Grob & Kirchoff, 2008). Well-being as flourishing acknowledges the necessity of taking into account the contexts and circumstances of the lives of children and their reports of their own well-being. Recent research points to the critical importance in addressing both present well-being of the child and engaging in learning to enrich their future circumstances (Fattore et al, 2009). A child who is realising his or her own unique potential is one who can be said to be flourishing. For a person's life to flourish, the activities and experiences that comprise that life have to fit the unique nature of the individual as well as being appropriate for the social and cultural context in which one lives (White, 2007). Learning for well-being builds on this constant interaction between the individual with others and with the social and natural environment.

### **Example: Invest in the very early years and parenting**

Children need a lot of responsive individual attention in their first years, preferably from their parents. Cost-benefit analyses show that investment in the age group 'zero to three' will repay itself many times over, due to reduced health, education and social costs in the future. Parental leave should be extended to cover at least the first two years of a child's life. This could be taken by either parent, or potentially shared between them. High-quality childcare should be subsidised for those parents who need, or wish, to work. Parents should also be actively supported to be the best parents they can be. This will require a mixture of community support, good local facilities, and education.

"As children grow up in this challenging environment, as new families form, and governments create policies to minimize the negative impacts on well-being, it is imperative for governments to understand the mechanisms by which children and youth flourish, how to maximize human and economic potential, and how to assess and facilitate that flourishing". (Lippman et al 2009) Such policies will contribute to overall societal development in a myriad of positive ways.



### **3. Well-being is a whole child experience**

*Well-being involves multiple facets and aspects of being and becoming human, including the unfolding of one's unique potentials and the capacity to pursue life meaningfully within the larger social, cultural, political and economic contexts of which the child is a part (UEF, 2008).*

This definition provides an integral understanding of the whole person which is very different to the compartmentalised approach common to many perspectives, policies and interventions – indeed UNICEF highlights that *“A holistic approach to Early Child Development, first and foremost, is the child's right.”* (Unicef, 2006) The elements of each domain of life and self have impact on one another, this constitutes ‘reciprocal influences on the development of the elements of well-being both within and across domains’, and the strengths from these interconnected domains ‘reverberate in synergy’. (Zaff *et al.*2003). recent research has highlighted the importance of emotions in development and advances in neuroscience and the development of early brain scanning have shown that feelings, empathy and emotional understanding are hard-wired into our brains through our early relationship experiences in the first years of life.

*“Children's well-being is a dynamic process, in which a child's external circumstances (e.g., their socioeconomic background, family circumstances, physical surroundings) are constantly interacting with their individual characteristics (e.g., their personality, cognitive ability and so on) to satisfy – to a greater or lesser extent – their needs and thus build psychological resources, capabilities and positive interactions with the world around them.”* nef guide 2010

A positive and holistic approach to defining well-being lets us focus on human potentials that enable individuals to be well and to flourish - children's assets, competencies and capacities (Pollard & Rosenburg, 2003). By moving away from a deficit perspective to a focus on the positive attributes of children, it is possible to identify determinants that enable children to flourish (Pollard & Lee, 2002). Such an approach to well-being allows for actions through which the benefit for children can become maximised while taking into consideration its individual characteristics (dispositions, abilities, environment, family).

#### **Example: Applying a strengths-based approach:**

**“Health is created in the context of people's everyday lives: where they live, love, work and play”  
Ottawa Charter for health promotion 1986**

The World Health Organisation defined health “as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of a disease or infirmity” (World Health Organisation, 1983). The common view about health in society is still related to the thinking about illness. In a strength-based approach the focus is no longer on preventing illnesses, it changes the focus to cultivating children's assets, positive relationships, morals, and capacities that give them the resources they need to develop successfully across the life course. The difficulty is that there exist a lot of separate disciplines which focus on different aspects of child development. And most of them reflect a deficit orientation. Further they address the biological and environmental influences separately. So there is not one unified discipline which has to change its focus. To assess on different points which work and operate highly independent is a challenge and a protracted process.

- Strengths can be defined age-specifically.
- Early developmental influences are critical to the development of strengths.
- Strengths can, and do, appear, even they aren't explicitly named and cultivated.
- This approach requires a longer period from program initiation to the measurement of the results.
- It's a difficult challenge to evaluate such programs, because there are till now just a few indicators
- Combining strength-based and prevention-based programs can be quite useful

### **4. Well-being is based on the unique potential of each child within diversity**

*Well-being is “realising one's unique potential through physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and social development ... in relation to self, others, and the environment. UEF*

Unique potential refers to a connection to one's specific gifts, which includes the sense of personal identity, innate temperament, and the expression of life purpose and meaning (UEF, 2007). It represents both the essential nature of one's evolving self and the ways in which individuals learn, communicate, and grow, which reflect the diverse processes of each child. This uniqueness appears in every human being as a particular way to develop or to flourish fully.

The first principle of all living systems (whether natural ecologies, social communities, individual human beings, etc) is self-organisation. All individuals define and sustain their own unique identity, even as they constantly adjust and adapt themselves to their internal needs and to the forces and conditions in their environments. The dynamic balance of this capacity for self-organising provides stability and integrity to the individual. (Johnson 2000),

Connected to this unique way of self-organisation, but distinct from it, is the consideration of diversity – the ways in which each individual is different from some or all other people (O'Toole). Based on research on diverse ways of thinking and knowing and on individual processes of learning the *inner differences* in how children learn, communicate, and solve problems require greater attention from researchers and policy makers (Bergstrom, 2004.).

**Example: Student Well-being and Cultural Diversity Project:** Preston Girls' Secondary College, Melbourne Australia

The idea of the project was to bring together clinical and teaching experience to develop a class room resource within the mental health promotion framework, which made sense in reaching and making connections to migrant and refugee students, and also to impact on students generally. Belonging in a community teaches people about relationships and values, and enhances connectedness and resilience. In this sense it is a protective factor in mental health. Gaining experience of diverse communities enhances resilience in that it can enrich our understandings about difference, and makes it less threatening. School communities can create environments for their students which are inclusive and able to accommodate diversity and racism

## 5. Well-being is relational

Relationships are extremely important to the development of children (and adults) and are described as the most important aspect of their well-being by children, (Lippman et al 2009)

In a well-being framework the individual dimensions, children's physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects are in interaction with themselves, others and the environment. These interactions take place in the different contexts family, peers, school, community, and the macro system as the level of policies. It is critical to differentiate relationships from the contextual factors in order to fully grasp their relevance to child well-being.

Proposed framework for L4WB:

| Individual | In Relation to: | Context     |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Physical   | Self            | Family      |
| Emotional  | Others          | Peers       |
| Mental     | Environment     | School      |
| Spiritual  |                 | Community   |
|            |                 | Macrosystem |

Laura Lippman, Domains of Positive Child Well-being, presentation to the policy glossary expert meeting, Marrakesh, 2010.

At the individual level promotional factors in social and emotional domains include temperament and personality traits, which are especially difficult to change. Cognitive abilities such as strategies to act are more responsive for intervention and change. Mutual respect and responsiveness seem to be important factors for positive, nurturing, and supportive relationships which further lead to the development of trust, autonomy, and empathy. Additionally each individual has another manifestation of each element of well-being and also another combination of elements with different manifestations (Bornstein, 2003).

Example: The **European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being**, launched on 13 June 2008 by the European Commission with the support of the World Health Organisation, calls on the EU institutions, the Member States and key actors and players to cooperate and take actions on priority areas for the promotion of the mental health and well-being of the population. It recognises that mental health promotion in educational and community settings can play an important role in reaching youth and determining their level of mental health.

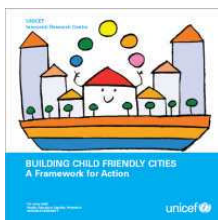
The European Parliament Committee for Health and Environment is due to vote on the motion for a resolution on Mental Health. Taking forward the commitments taken in the Mental Health Pact, the report calls on the Member States to organise support programmes for school personnel to develop a healthy school climate, as well as to build relationships between school, parents, health service providers and the community in order to strengthen the social integration of young people.

The development of empathy, conflict resolution skills, and social support is critical. There is also a range of promoting factors at the interpersonal levels. These include the quality of the interaction itself and interactions among individual characteristics of the people involved such as showing empathy. The quality of interaction is mirrored in way the participants are understood by one another. UNESCO highlights education should adopt two complementary approaches. From early childhood, it should focus on the discovery of other people in the first stage of education. In the second stage of education and in lifelong education, it should encourage involvement in common projects. This seems to be an effective way of learning to build relationships.

#### **d) Multi-sectoral approaches: examples of action at the various levels of governance**

A key defining factor of policies that support learning for well-being is joined up policy making. This requires the policy makers involved to “reach across traditional divides, define shared goals, align their strategies and share control over their programmes” (Brown et al 2010) The recognition of the interdependence of factors and social determinants that create child well-being and shape environments that support learning for well-being indicate that new forms of policy design and implementation need to be considered at all levels of governance local, national, European and global. Some such examples are described in the following:

##### **Action at the local level**



The need for joined up policies and whole of government approaches is gaining ground in many areas of policy action. In particular at the local level there have been exciting initiatives that aim to bring the whole of city government (and frequently other stakeholders) together for a common goal – such examples include sustainable cities, healthy cities, age friendly cities and more recently **child friendly cities**. The latter identifies the steps to build a local system of governance committed to fulfilling children’s rights

##### **Child friendly cities (UNICEF)**

*Goal:* Support implementation of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on communal level by promoting to improve fondness for children in communities and enabling a siting.

UNICEF CFC Secretariat developed a framework which contains the process needed to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by national governments into a local government process. With nine blocks the local governments are guided and supported with checklists to achieve a child friendly city

- Children’s participation; “promoting children’s active involvement in issues that affect them; listening to their views and taking them into consideration in decision-making processes”
- A child friendly legal framework; “ensuring legislation, regulatory frameworks and procedures which consistently promote and protect the rights of all children”
- A city-wide Children’s Rights Strategy; “developing a detailed, comprehensive strategy or agenda for building a Child Friendly City, based on the Convention”

## DRAFT 3 May 2011 with consultation questions

- A Children's Rights Unit or coordinating mechanism; "developing permanent structures in local government to ensure priority consideration of children's perspective"
  - Child impact assessment and evaluation; "ensuring that there is a systematic process to assess the impact of law, policy and practice on children – in advance, during and after implementation"
  - A children's budget; "ensuring adequate resource commitment and budget analysis for children"
  - A regular State of the City's Children Report; "ensuring sufficient monitoring and data collection on the state of children and their rights"
  - Making children's rights known; "ensuring awareness of children's rights among adults and children"
  - Independent advocacy for children; "supporting nongovernmental organisations and developing independent human rights institutions - children's ombudspeople or commissioners for children – to promote children's rights"
- <http://www.childfriendlycities.org/>

### Actions at the workplace:



### Strategies to ensure work-family balance

Employed people are often confronted with difficulties to ensure work-family balance.

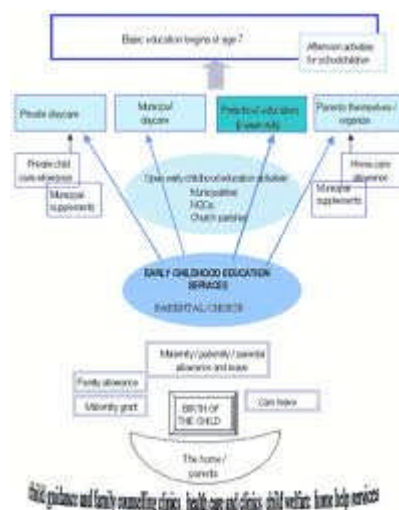
1. Parents may have difficulties to spend sufficient quality time with their children or it is difficult to ensure their children's care, especially when both are employed. This affects children directly.
2. These work-family conflicts impact on mental and physical health and health behaviour of both the parent and the children.

Possible Initiatives:

- Flexible work-time arrangements (part-time job, home-office)
- Vacations (Time to care for ill children, maternal and paternal leave)
- Childcare facilities at work
- Provide general resources (social support) (Frone, 2003)

### Multi-sectoral Action at the national level:

#### FINLAND: The Child Centred Society



The Finnish policy programme for the well-being of children, youth and families covers broad-based intersectoral issues and is divided into three areas: a child-oriented society; well-being of families and prevention of social exclusion. Gender equality and multicultural aspects are cross-cutting themes that are brought to force in each area and action of the policy programme. **The Child centred society** themes are:

- Developing a knowledgebase on well-being
- Designing evaluation of the impacts of policy on children
- Improving information on the rights of the child

## DRAFT 3 May 2011 with consultation questions

- Providing a safe media and reinforcing media literacy of children and youth
- Reinforcing of civic skills and participation

The Finnish government is particularly oriented towards giving children and young people more opportunities to participate and influence their environment, their opinions should be heard when planning various services as well as in the daily practice in schools and at municipal level. State administration, too, should develop ways of hearing the opinions of children and young people. An assessment of the impacts of decisions on children is recommended as are surveys about children's own opinions.



### IRELAND: The National Children's Strategy

The National Children's Strategy, *Our Children — Their Lives*, was published in November 2000 after extensive consultation with parents and groups working with children, as well as with children themselves. The strategy is a 10-year plan of action, which calls on the statutory agencies, the voluntary sector and local communities to work to improve the quality of all children's lives. It includes a range of actions across such areas as giving children a voice so that their views are considered in relation to matters that affect them, eliminating child poverty, ensuring children have access to play and recreation facilities, and improving research on children's lives in Ireland. The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs was given responsibility for overseeing implementation of the National Children's Strategy and coordinating Government policy on children in order to maintain the policy coherence achieved through the publication of the strategy. The National Children's Office (NCO) was established in 2001 to lead and oversee the implementation of the National Children's Strategy.

#### Multi stakeholder Network Activities:



#### PlayEngland

Play England has launched a [Manifesto for children's play](#) and is calling for policy makers to make play a priority.

We are asking the government, MPs, councillors - as well as individuals and organisations - to make **three simple pledges** for all children and young people to have the freedom and space to play enjoyed by previous generations:

1. To make all residential neighbourhoods child-friendly places where children can play outside
2. To give all children the time and opportunity to play throughout childhood
3. To give all children somewhere to play - in freedom and safety - after school and in the holidays



**Together Let's Prevent Childhood Obesity** is a methodology designed to involve all relevant local stakeholders in an integrated and concrete prevention program aimed at facilitating the adoption of healthier lifestyles in the everyday life. The programmes developed on the basis of the EPODE framework are long term, aimed at changing the environment and thereby the unhealthy behaviours. The approach is 'positive, concrete and stepwise' learning process with no stigmatization of any culture, food habits, overweight and obesity. The first EPODE programme was started in France in the 2003 and EPODE now extends to nearly 1,8 million inhabitants in 167 French cities, 20 cities in Spain and 8 cities in Belgium. Success to date is measured by a large field mobilization in the pilot cities and by the encouraging evolution of the BMI of children in France within the pilot cities. EPODE is about to be implemented in Greece, Québec (Canada) and in Australia



#### UK Healthy Start

## **DRAFT 3 May 2011 with consultation questions**

Healthy Start provides a nutritional safety net and encouragement for breastfeeding and healthy eating to around 600,000 women and children in over 450,000 very low income, and disadvantaged families across the UK. It offers vouchers that can be put towards the cost of milk, fruit and vegetables in any one of around 30,000 individual participating retail outlets, including small shops and businesses as well as major supermarkets. Following a recent public consultation from April 2011 families on Healthy Start can also buy plain frozen fruit and vegetables such as plain frozen peas, carrots, beans and raspberries with their vouchers. The aim is to encourage low income families supported by Healthy Start to eat more fruit and vegetables through increasing the choice of products available.

### **Insert examples from the Foundations and their partners**

## CHAPTER 6: TAKING ACTION

### Three priority areas of a 'Learning for Well-being' child investment portfolio

#### CONSULTATION QUESTION

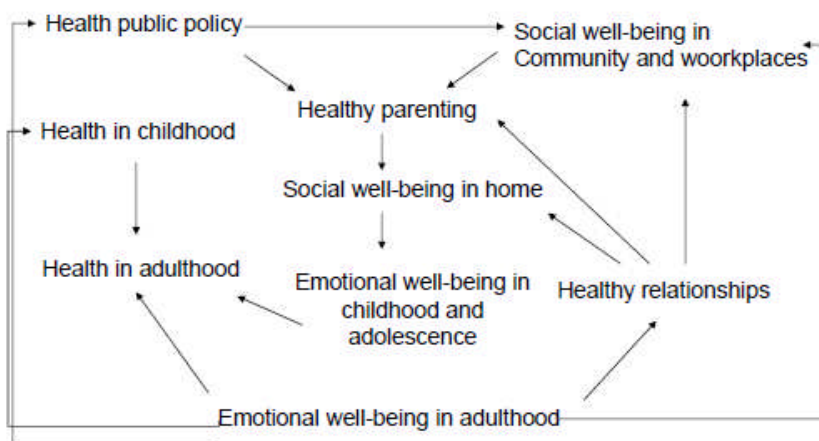
We would like your views and suggestions on these priority areas.

The Learning Environment involves both the people and the space in which children develop and learn. Any environment child is in can be viewed as a learning environment so when taking into account the child's/young person's perspective, the multitude of environments are all environments where one learns. Children's identities are constituted in and through particular domains and spaces. These have become more complex in view of new interfaces between the physical, emotional and virtual worlds. The framework of learning for well-being can provide direction to policymakers that aim to improve child well-being. It will be essential the programmes and policies aim to address individual, relational and contextual aspects in an integrated manner.

**The goal of an integrated policy approach is learning for well-being:** policies must ensure stimulating physical environment and social environments, where children feel safe, cared for and relaxed and which provide the opportunities to explore, learn and develop with the support of peers or sensitive, knowledgeable adults. **Three priority domains for policy action are proposed:**

- *strengthen children early – critical support to early child development*
- *make children's formal learning environments – in particular the school – more conducive to their well-being*
- *create a supportive social environment (consumer world, ICT, media, virtual worlds)*

These domains all require **integrated systems based approaches** – frequently they need to be grounded both in **multi sectoral and multi stakeholder policy engagement** and **action at the community level**. This interconnectivity is well represented in the well-being model below:



Adapted to Buchanan & Hudson, 2000

The Learning for Well-being approach proposes that all policies, programmes and initiatives are considered with the three dimensions of well-being as illustrated below in mind: individual flourishing, positive relationships and a supportive context.

|            |                 |         |
|------------|-----------------|---------|
| Individual | In Relation to: | Context |
|------------|-----------------|---------|

|           |             |             |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Physical  | Self        | Family      |
| Emotional | Others      | Peers       |
| Mental    | Environment | School      |
| Spiritual |             | Community   |
|           |             | Macrosystem |

**1. Learning for well-being requires: Strengthen children early – investment in early child development is critical**

The concept of **sustainable development** has drawn our attention to the need for intergenerational responsibility – the concept of **learning for well-being** complements this orientation to future generations to include their well-being here and now. The need to invest early in children and to give them an equitable start in life is gaining increasing attention – research has now clearly shown that the earliest three years are the most critical for children’s growth and development. A consensus is emerging in OECD countries that spending should be concentrated in this phase of the life cycle – in particular in relation to vulnerable groups of children. **This is the critical first priority when constructing a learning for well-being - child investment portfolio**

This is reflected in the communication issued by the European Union in February 2011 entitled *Early Childhood Education and Care: Providing all our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow*. Like many EU countries it positions **Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)** as the essential foundation for successful lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability. The communication states clearly that the focus so far has been on the quantity rather than the quality of ECEC: the goal now is to ensure within the EU access to universally available, high-quality inclusive ECEC services is beneficial for all.

This Communication responds to the requests from Member States to launch a process of cooperation which will help them address the two-fold challenge outlined above: to provide access to child care and education for all, but also to raise the quality of their provision through well integrated services that build on a joint vision of the role of ECEC, of the most effective curricular frameworks and of the staff competences and governance arrangements necessary to deliver it.

The **Learning for Well-being** approach finds its entry point in the recognition by the EC that *“acquiring non-cognitive skills (such as perseverance, motivation, ability to interact with others) in early years is essential for all future learning and successful social engagement, so the content of the ECEC curriculum should extend beyond cognitive learning, and encompass socialisation and a range of non-cognitive aspects. Integration between care and education is therefore necessary.”*

A first step for most European countries will be **to change investment patterns**: in OECD countries children receive 24% of the whole amount of child spending in the first third of childhood, 36% in the middle childhood and around 40% during the last third of their childhood. But the most variation is found in the earliest years. Social spending in early childhood can be favourable with a view to outcomes at a later stage of childhood, in particular in reducing inter generational inequality. Yet the quality and impact of investment must be carefully considered: too frequently early child development investment is concentrated on medical and health system interventions. The OECD report warns of *“Over investment in universal post natal care and under attention to risk.”* (2009) The social risks often outweigh the medical risks and the two need to be addressed through **integrated early years systems**, such as a number of countries like Denmark have developed

The EC communication highlights the strategic priorities needed to develop and implement **a systemic approach to ECEC services**:

- the strong collaboration between the different policy sectors, such as education, employment, health, social policy,
- a multi stake holder approach including parents,
- a coherent vision that is shared by all,
- a common policy framework with consistent goals across the system, and
- clearly defined roles and responsibilities at central and local levels.

**Example: AUSTRALIA** The Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care (OECECC) aims to achieve a nationally consistent, accessible, affordable and high quality early childhood education and child care system for all Australian children and families. The OECECC is located within the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and was launched in March 2008. The **Early Years Learning Framework** is part of the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) reform agenda for early childhood education and care and is a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care. It undpins universal access to early childhood education and will be incorporated in the National Quality Standard in order to ensure delivery of nationally consistent and quality early childhood education across sectors and jurisdictions. The Early Years Learning Framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. **The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development.** The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

## **2. Learning for well-being requires: invest in making schools more conducive to children's well-being**

Schools need to become organisations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which enable learning for well-being and that respect the individual development of each child. The function of schools is changing from a narrow responsibility for cognitive development to a much broader responsibility for enabling **learning for well-being**. Schools need to become learning communities that are well integrated into the broader community. They can no longer see themselves in isolation. In a globalized world this also includes being better prepared for diversity and integrating it as a positive dimension rather than as a threat. International comparisons such as PISA have measured cognitive knowledge and skills, surveys such as the Health Behaviour and School Children Study have helped understand children's physical and mental health and their health behaviours. But in general we still do not know enough about children's well-being in their school environment. (Bradshaw 2009) - which is probably why in schools today a lot of intervention and prevention programs are introduced but often fail to meet the expected success. **Programs that promote learning for well-being as a long term integrated curriculum effort have to become a central mission of schools** and need ongoing observation, evaluation and improvement by administrators. *"...school-based prevention and youth development interventions are most beneficial when they simultaneously enhance students' personal and social assets, as well as improve the quality of the environments in which students are educated."* (Greenberg et al. 2003, p.467) This is the critical second key area when constructing a learning for well-being – child investment portfolio.

*The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has the goal to implement high quality and evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs. These focus on changes in school environment, changes in the person itself or multiple approaches. Positive effects are found if the programs followed two strategies simultaneously: skill building and environmental or organisational change. "Key strategies that characterize effective school-based prevention programming involve the following student-focused, relationship-oriented, and classroom and school-level organizational changes: (a) teaching children to apply SEL skills and ethical values in daily life through interactive classroom instruction and providing frequent opportunities for student self-direction, participation, and school or community service; (b) fostering respectful, supportive relationships among students, school staff, and parents; and (c) supporting and rewarding positive social, health, and academic behavior through systematic school–family–community approaches."* (Greenberg et al. 2003, p.470). [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)

### **1. A whole school approach**

More recently, a **whole-school approach** has been widely advocated. A whole school approach is one that involves all the members of the school community (students, staff, parents and carers, and other community members), and works across all the areas of school life. It implicitly acknowledges that learning occurs not only through the formal curriculum, but also through students' daily experience of life in the school - and beyond. Whole-school approaches seek to engage all key learning areas, all year levels and the wider community. They include many aspects of school life, such as curriculum, culture, teaching practices, policies and procedures. Advocates of whole-school approaches understand that real learning and sustainable change is most likely to occur when a common vision is widely shared throughout the

school community, and when all members of that community are supported to operate in ways that are consistent with it. Possibly the most critical thing to understand about a whole-school approach is that the “process a school community engages in to develop a program is as important as what they finally put into action.

[http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/resources/nssfp/A\\_whole\\_school\\_approach.doc](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/resources/nssfp/A_whole_school_approach.doc)

## 2: The future school, Oulu, Finland

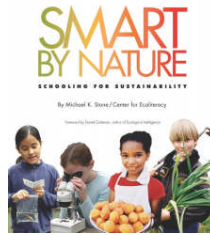
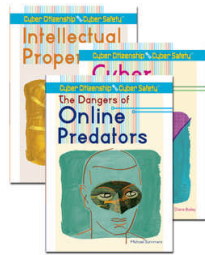
The future school in Oulu "wigwam"

- Homebase - learning areas**
- The Classroom of the Future**
  - The learners of the future achieve knowledge, skills and capacities to survive in the Information society and their future works.
- Learning arrangements**
  - Responsibility from education lies in the parents, school and the community around the pupil – responsibility for learning lies further to the adults, teacher and school
  - People with new job descriptions
- Learning process**
  - Inquiry learning, problem based learning, project based learning
- Learning approach**
  - Surrounding world and neighbourhood
  - curriculum
- Learning technology**
  - Using the most modern technology like mobile devices innovative way
  - Ubiquitous virtual learning environments
  - Real need and pedagogy behind the use

The aim of the **School of the Future programme** is to guide traditional schools, school buildings and learning environments into the 21st century. The focus is on pupils' ability to learn and the functional entities that support this. The pressure for change is particularly directed at the role of teachers, leadership, educational support services, technology and spatial and learning environment solutions. The architectural plans made in the programme display the latest ideas of building and renovation of public premises. Functional aspects based on agreed values and the new operational culture based on the 21st century ideas of learning and learning environment control the use of space. Pupils, teachers and auxiliary staff working in the 'nest' form a learning community. The pedagogical framework relies on investigative, project- or event-based learning methods, learning from creative problem-solving or communal learning processes. The usage of space and activities are based on an open learning environment which utilises movable walls and flexible structures. It is also important that small-scale lessons can be arranged anywhere in the area. In a good school environment, furniture and technology are designed keeping the users' needs in mind, and these are designed to work together as effortlessly as possible. *Pasi Mattila 2010*

### **3) Learning for well-being requires: invest in multiple (digital, ecological and consumer) literacies**

The learning environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is radically different from even the turn of the century. Information technology provides access to information and social contacts as never before – but it also creates new pressures, new understandings of learning and privacy and a new mindset in relation to time and distance. Children need early on to be able to manage and navigate a consumer and an IT world that is both enabling and invasive, that bears both enormous potential and significant risks. New types of literacy are emerging that need to be considered part of the Learning for Well-being spectrum: they include Ecoliteracy, Cyberliteracy, Media literacy and consumer literacy. They will be essential in their interface with key dimensions of learning for well-being. This is where not only government policies are relevant but where a wide range of stakeholders need to be involved and where corporate social responsibility becomes a key dimension for action. **Multi-stakeholder approaches** aim to ensure participation in identifying, debating and resolving the challenges at hand of all those who are affected by such challenges.



### Example 1: competencies



Increasingly we understand that schools need to support not only cognitive learning but a wide range of **competencies and literacies** which allow the individuals to participate well in society. A competence based approach enables students not just to acquire subject knowledge but to understand, use and apply it within the context of their wider learning and life. It also offers students a more holistic and coherent way of learning which allows them to make connections and apply knowledge across different subject areas. This must also include becoming multiliterate in a digital learning environment. The RSA, which aims at 21<sup>st</sup> century enlightenment, in its “Opening Minds” project has suggested five key 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies that schools need to promote: *1. Citizenship 2. Learning, 3. Managing information, 4. Relating to people, and 5. Managing situations.*

The OECD has presented a new understanding of literacy which is related not only to personal development, but also to positive educational, social and economic outcomes. While this work on literacy has focused on adults it can be applied in a Learning for well-being framework for children and young people. The new concept of literacy highlights the new skills that are needed in a modern knowledge-based society. This work defines literacy:

“Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society”. PIAAC, OECD

### Example 2: Literacies

Increasingly the emphasis is placed not on what children and young people (or adults) need to learn but the capacities they can be supported in developing to understand and live optimally in diverse situations.

***Health literacy entails the ability to make sound health decisions in the context of everyday life – at home, in the community, at school, at the workplace, in the health care system, in the market place and in the political arena. It is a critical empowerment strategy to increase people’s control over their health, their ability to seek out information and to take responsibility.*** Schools and care settings have opportunities to develop children’s health literacy through the curriculum, through the actions of the professionals and the supportive environments they provide. Some definitions of health literacy are very close to the learning for well-being framework: the meaning of health literacy to children is “to perform physical and psycho-social activities with appropriate standards; being able to interact with people; cope with necessary changes and demand reasonable autonomy so as to achieve complete physical, mental and social well-being”. Many of the healthy schools programs aim to achieve this. (Fok/ Wong 2002)

### BODY IMAGE

Body image is how a person views, thinks and feels about their body. Often a person’s perception of their body doesn’t match the reality of what their body actually looks like. Body dissatisfaction is a source of distress and is associated with depression, poor self esteem, anxiety and suicide. Research has shown that body image dissatisfaction predicts the development of disordered eating and depression. In Australia an increasing number of schools are implementing programmes that deal

with body dissatisfaction through a holistic approach that strengthens self esteem and overall well-being. Peer education programs such as REBEL and the Boulder Youth Body Alliance are promising approaches to creating a positive body image.

#### ECOLITERACY: GREEN SCHOOLS

Green schools prepare students to become leaders and citizens who understand how the natural world works, see the patterns that connect human activity to nature, and have the knowledge, values, and skills to act effectively on that understanding. Some places to begin:

- Start a school garden.
- Compost kitchen scraps, and use them in the garden.
- Increase the fresh, seasonal, locally sourced food served by the school.
- Trace the paths food takes from seed to plate and identify all the people whose efforts are needed to bring them their food.

**CYBERLITERACY:** Cyberliteracy means being able to sort fact from fiction, to detect extremism from reasonable debate, and to identify gender bias, commercialism, imitation, parody, and other aspects of written language that are problematic in online communication. Active reading skills are essential in cyberspace, where hoaxes abound, advertising masquerades as product information, privacy is often compromised, and web pages and e-mail messages distort the truth. Students are enabled to understand the new language of the Internet, and protect themselves from its hazards.

**CONSUMER LITERACY:** Studies indicate that consumerism is more than a simple act. Instead, it is an identity-defining extension of a self. Buying behavior is a social practice of identity maintenance and management. Even in routine behaviors, such as ordering at a restaurant, buying is guided by a desire to preserve self-esteem and dignity. Findings suggest that consumer education must expand beyond disseminating information to include developing consumers' confidence and abilities to engage socially when their needs are being denied, thwarted, or opposed. (Ross Adkins and Ozanne XXXX)

Both are closely linked to **media literacy** which helps students to be better able to decipher the complex messages they receive from television, radio, newspapers, magazines, books, billboards, and signs, packaging and marketing materials, video games, and the Internet. Media literacy skills can help one understand not only the surface content of media messages but the deeper and often more important meanings beneath the surface. Media literacy education seeks to give media consumers greater freedom by **teaching them to analyze, access, evaluate, and produce media**. [http://www.medialiteracy.net/pdfs/intro\\_ml.pdf](http://www.medialiteracy.net/pdfs/intro_ml.pdf)

## Chapter 7: CREATING A MOVEMENT

### Envisioning a learning for well-being movement: children and young people as leaders in the policy process - the role of global civil society

**The goal: A culture of engaging children and young people as change agents in making all environments more conducive to Learning for Well-being**

#### CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Do we cover the main issues concerning children's and young people's participation?  
What other aspects would you include?  
What other examples would you include?

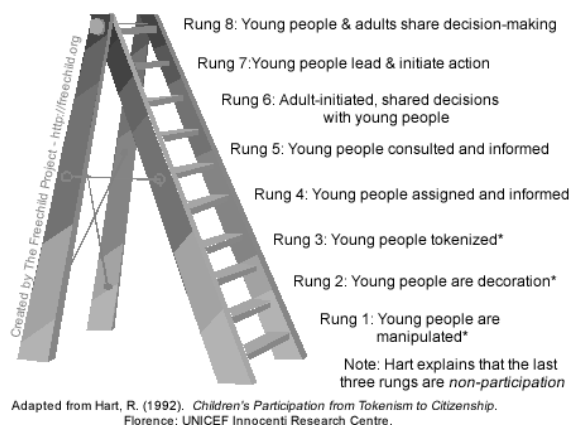
#### Participation and engagement for learning for well-being

"In most countries throughout the world, there is a continued perception of young children as passive recipients of care and protection. Their capacities for participation are underestimated, their agency in their own lives is denied and the value of involving them is unrecognised. Yet there is a growing and persuasive body of evidence to challenge these barriers. This evidence needs to be promoted and shared. Understanding of participation needs to be re-constructed to incorporate and respect the forms of expression and communication used by young children." (Gerison, 2005)

All proposals in this policy glossary must be further developed through child and youth engagement. Over the last decade a number of mechanisms have developed that can take the Learning for Well-being of children and young people further by children and young people themselves. Only then will the central premise of this glossary be taken seriously – that we need to think differently about children and young people. To enable children's and young people's voices to be heard in a way that reinforces their agency must be founded on supporting them in learning for well-being, i.e. supporting and nurturing an awareness of one's particular gifts and contributions; awareness of one's own unique potential; and assessing their ability to make decisions that support one's unique developmental path.

This core is embedded in the "Ladder of Children's participation" developed by Roger Hart, (<http://freechild.org/ladder.htm>)

#### Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Increasingly organisations committed to the genuine participation of children and youth are developing **guidelines** and **principles**. Save the Children, as an international organisation, has produced a set of Practice Standards to help understand what "meaningful participation" looks like:

**Standard 1:** An ethical approach: transparency, honesty and accountability

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**Standard 2:** Children's participation is relevant and voluntary

**Standard 3:** A child-friendly, enabling environment

**Standard 4:** Equality of opportunity

**Standard 5:** Staff are effective and confident

**Standard 6:** Participation promotes the safety and protection of children

**Standard 7:** Ensuring follow-up and evaluation

Save the Children

At country level, Funky Dragon has produced a set of principles for Wales that say:

IF YOU WANT CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE EFFECTIVE YOU WILL NEED TO CONSIDER AND BE COMMITTED TO THESE PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATION

- Showing Respect
- Involving us in deciding/ organising what/ when/ where
- Making sure adults don't take over the consultation
- Having Fun - making the consultation more interesting – making things fun
- Not making it too intense – making activities user friendly –facilitating change
- Paying attention and taking notes – don't talk: listen
- Liaising with decision makers
- Finding ways to make us heard in public
- Letting us know what is going on
- Talking afterwards and explaining things
- Evaluating and learning from your experience

<http://www.funkydragon.org/attachments/article/60/Breathing%20Fire%20into%20Participation.pdf>

This shows an evolving commitment to including young people's voices in matters of policy that concern their lives. They are not yet sufficiently widespread or systemic,, nor are they founded on a commitment to learning that emphasises inner diversity; relationships and communication; engagement and participation; and self-organisation. This observation reinforces the need for all sectors of society to work together in this endeavour.

### **a) Agency through youth-led organisations**

The European Youth Forum is the largest youth-led organization in Europe with over a 100 member organizations, some of which are national or international coordinating bodies. It is an independent, democratic, youth-led platform that works to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives, by representing and advocating their needs and interests and those of their organisations towards the European Institutions, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. (<http://www.forumjeunesse.org/en/>). Their strategy on education considers that:

Education is of prime importance to young people as it gives them the possibility to ensure their personal and professional development and their active participation in all spheres of society, thus increasing their job opportunities and contributing to the prevention of social exclusion ... People learn throughout their life in very different environments such as family, media, youth organisations, etc. ... The European Youth Forum believes that education policy should look at education in a holistic way, by recognising and supporting quality formal education, non-formal education (education taking place outside formal institutions, in alternative structures such as youth organisations) and informal learning (day-to-day learning from friends, media, work, etc).

... The main focus of the YF's work is building a real life-long and life-wide learning society, in which all learning is valued, where young people can take ownership over their own educational paths and where youth organisations are recognised as the most important providers of quality non-formal education for young people.

Smaller youth-led organisations pursue specific objectives. EPTO, the European Peer Trainer Organisation (<http://www.epto.org>) educates youth leaders to discuss issues related to **prejudice and discrimination**; to lead workshops that **challenge stereotypes**; and to **become activists** against exclusion within their youth organisations and schools. EPTO coordinates a network of peer trainers from a dozen European countries working in the belief that young people deliver a message to their peers that is often more credible and efficient than when it is delivered by authority figures. They see youth as "ready-made experts" who have a "unique perspective on the issues that affect youth" and can often "make things happen", which is an important message for policy makers. Other initiatives support youth empowerment through providing the infrastructure for youth in specific towns or localities to address social challenges and improve the lives of children and young people at risk, such as the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) that aims

“to enable disadvantaged children and youth to take control of their lives and to contribute to their local communities as equals alongside community leaders so that they become active citizens of Europe and their national societies”. (<http://www.yepp-community.org/yepp/cms/index.php>)

***“In the YEPP leadership training I learned how to get people to listen to me.”***, Muamer, aged 15 from Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Youth-led organisations, usually for young people between the age of 15 and 25 (or up to 30) years-old, bring that invaluable direct expertise of children and youth into the conversation at all levels and over a range of crucial societal issues. The challenge is for mainstream institutions and their staff to accept these organisations as full partners in the policy process, going beyond tokenism and establishing mutually respectful and co-creative relationships that allow the young people to be genuinely engaged on the basis of their special expertise in their own lives.

### ***b) Involve children and young people as recruiters and researchers***

Over recent years there have been some experiences of children and young people being included in recruitment processes for staff who will be working with them, e.g. teachers or social services staff. This may be through children sitting on the selection panel or having a separate interview panel parallel to the adult one but methods and tools are always adapted to the age, ability and interest of the children and young people involved who must know what is required of them, what their role is and what influence they will have on the outcomes. While quite often it is reported that both the adult and youth panels share the same ideas about applicants, one young person stated that *“We can dig deeper and get to know sides of the candidates the adults don’t see. Adults don’t truly know what children and young people think unless they ask and involve us. They don’t see what we see and they can learn from us”*. (Eurochild 2010)

In recognising the expertise of children and youth in their own lives, researchers are exploring how they can be supported to take a leadership role in deciding what they want researched, how it should be conducted and disseminated (Mason and Danby, 2011)

In February 2006 Funky Dragon (see presentation below) started discussing the next round of U.K reporting to the Committee on the Right’s of the Child. There was a clear commitment from all the young people involved that Funky Dragon should do its best to gain the views of as many young people in Wales as it possibly could.

In November 2007, Funky Dragon launched '**Our Rights, Our Story**'. Funky Dragon consulted, over period of 18 months, with over 12,000 young people aged 11-18 and over 2,000 children aged 7-10 in Wales to make sure that the reports were full of correct information, reflecting how children and young people are claiming their rights in Wales. In line with the ethos of Funky Dragon, from the outset the project was run by young people. The steering group, made up of members of the Grand Council, recruited the staff for the project, wrote the questions for the survey, designed the activities for the workshops, analyzed the findings and decided on the content of the report. The role of the staff within this project was to support, inform and give the young people on the steering group the necessary skills to carry out their work. Adapted from the Funky Dragon website and the Introduction to ***Our Rights, Our Story***.

(<http://www.funkydragon.org/attachments/article/98/Our%20Rights%20Our%20Story.pdf>)

### ***c) Establish Children and Youth Parliaments***

At the national level in some European countries children’s parliaments (e.g. the Finnish Children’s Parliament, Cyprus Children’s Parliament, Funky Dragon in Wales) have been established with a consultative and advocacy role to represent the interests of children and young people in all the areas that affect their lives and to make known their views, opinions and proposals towards national and local government as well as towards all the different bodies and agencies whose work affects their lives (e.g. social services). In most cases the delegates to these parliaments are over the age of 14/15 years (Gordon et al, 2010). Two examples follow of Children’s and Young people’s Parliaments:

**Funky Dragon** is the Children and Young People’s Assembly for **Wales**. This young people led organisation was established as a charity in 2004 with the main aim of providing an opportunity for 0 – 25 year olds to have their

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voices heard on issues that affect them. Funky Dragon is a way for young people in Wales to speak directly to the Welsh Assembly Government and other policymakers. The "Grand Council" is made up of 100 young people from across Wales, representing the views of a wide range of both voluntary and statutory organizations. In order to stand the young people have to be aged between 11 and 25 and only young people are able to vote. The election must be a fair and democratic process. The management committee (trustees), who are elected at the AGM by the Grand Council Members, is composed of members of the Grand Council: four young people aged 18 or over and four under the age of 18. They are elected at the AGM by the Grand Council Members. Including young people under 18 on the management committee was ground breaking for charities in the UK.

Every year the Grand Council representatives meet with Welsh Assembly Ministers to question them on issues that are affecting young people across Wales. The questions are decided by the Grand Council, youth forums, specific interest groups and any other groups of young people wishing to ask a question and obtain an answer from Assembly Members. For Funky Dragon, making participation effective is very important. They consider that consultation is most effective when children and young people are empowered, have fun and feel valued - that is when they really participate. This needs to be backed by effective communication, real influence, feedback and evaluation. Enabling young people to make decisions on how to conduct every stage of the consultation also ensures that they are empowered by your consultation. <http://www.funkydragon.org>

### **Finnish Children's Parliament:**

*"To me, involvement means that I am one of everybody" -Aleksi, 12 years old.*

The Finnish Children's Parliament was founded in 2007 in and aims to develop a sustainable, national children's organ, thereby having a positive impact on the establishment of local parliamentary activities for children. 372 representatives and deputy representatives from municipalities throughout Finland took part in the first session in 2007. The activities are intended to promote interaction between children and adults, in a way that encourages children to value themselves and their parents, and adults to value themselves and the children. The activities serve as a tool for the meeting of minds between children and decision-makers. The Finnish Children's Parliament is comprised of children, and operates as a community for mutual interaction between the children themselves. The main aim is to help to create a culture of democracy for the comprehensive schools.

**How does it work?** A virtual parliament building has been constructed online for the use of the Finnish Children's Parliament providing representatives with a place, independent of time and location, to interact and further their activities. The Board and Committees meet weekly online in chat rooms, and discuss issues and prepare for future plenary sessions. The members discuss issues online in their own discussion forums, respond to surveys submitted by decision-makers, and hold a two-week long online plenary session. The Board and all the children also meet in person, and the next physical plenary sessions for all the children involved will be held in five cities.

Every child:

- should be heard, get information about the matters which concern him/her
- should be able to participate and influence decision making
- should learn the principles of how to influence in a democratic society
- should experience how to be important and respected in his/her own community.

"By enabling children's voices to be heard and supporting children's growth, we aim to support the development of independent and independently-thinking citizens who believe that they can affect the society around them.

[http://www.lastenparlamentti.fi/in\\_english](http://www.lastenparlamentti.fi/in_english)

*"The Finnish Children's Parliament can take initiatives all the way the European Parliament, with the help of Finnish MEPs." -Tapio, 13.*

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The challenge remains, as Cathrine Skarr (KREM, Norway) states: *“Increasingly children and young people are being heard, but this does not necessarily mean that services and policies are adapted to what they say”*. (Eurochild, 2010)

|                                  | Consultative   | Collaborative  | Child-initiated, led or managed  |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Situation analysis               | Children’s views are solicited but the design and process for information gathering as well as the analysis are undertaken by adults | Children are invited to contribute to the design the methodology, their views are sought for both the data collection and the data analysis  | Children undertake their own research with other children to identify issues of concern                        |
| Strategic planning               | Planning takes account of the issues raised by children in the identification of key issues  | Children are involved in contributing to what programmes are to be prioritised and developed   | Children identify and determine what programmes they would like to see developed                               |
| Programme development and design | Children are consulted on ideas conceived by adults  | Children work with adults on the design of the programme, and deciding what activities will take place and who should be involved  | Children work together to design their own programme   |
| Implementation                   | Children are invited to participate, for example, delivering a peer education programme,   | Children work with adults are involved in the implementation of the programme, for example, communicating what the programme is seeking to achieve, taking part in programme activities  | Children organise and manage the programme and have full responsibility for its implementation                 |
| Monitoring and evaluation        | Children are consulted on whether the programme has been successful in achieving its objectives                                      | Children collaborate with adults in developing the criteria for evaluating the programme and they are consulted on whether the programme has been successful in achieving its objectives | Children determine what should be evaluated and, with adult support, undertake the evaluation of the programme |

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**Final page or insert:**

**CALL TO ACTION**

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