

WELLBEING FOR LEARNING AND LIFE

A framework for building resilience and wellbeing in children and young people



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Position statement

The Department for Education is committed to giving every child every chance to have the best start in life.

Supporting children and young people's development and wellbeing requires a commitment from the whole of society. The Department for Education works together with other government agencies, community and local government partners to support wellbeing in education and health, the home and community environments. This partnership recognises children and young people and their families as central partners and active agents in their own lives and the lives of others.

Wellbeing means having good or satisfactory conditions of existence – in health, happiness and prosperity. It is a complex set of interrelated factors and not a tangible thing that exists in isolation. Wellbeing is about how we are doing and how we feel. Are we healthy? Do we feel safe? Do we feel like we belong? Do we have a positive sense of identity? These are some of the factors that make up our wellbeing.

A holistic approach to children and young people's development sets the trajectory for lifelong wellbeing outcomes. It encompasses many sides of life: social, cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual.

A state of wellbeing is enhanced by positive psychology (the scientific study of the strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive) and by building protective factors and resilience that helps to respond to adversity and enjoy fulfilling life experiences.

“ Learning and wellbeing are closely linked. Children and young people with good wellbeing are more engaged and successful learners. Likewise gaining a good education is a key contributor to positive lifelong wellbeing outcomes. ”

Principles

The principles underpinning the Wellbeing for Learning and Life framework are:

Child-centred – Incorporating the voices of children and young people at all stages of development in our education and care settings will inspire participation and decision making for learning success

Strengths-based – Strengths-based approaches effectively engage and support children, young people and their families, enabling growth and learning

Learning success – Participation in learning and experiencing learning achievement is integral to wellbeing. Promoting wellbeing and high expectations will empower successful learning.

Relationships – Respectful relationships enhance wellbeing. Building trust and care will inspire and engage children, young people and their families to learn, grow and achieve.

Inclusion – Valuing diversity, individual capabilities and unique interests will empower children and young people to have equal rights and opportunities in all contexts of life.

Wellbeing and learning

The Wellbeing for Learning and Life framework is applicable across all areas of children and young people's lives but also recognises the significant impact of education and care settings with links to the Australian Curriculum, SACE and Early Years Learning framework provided within the document.

Wellbeing is a critical part of how young people learn and grow. Research shows that children's wellbeing affects their ability to engage with their education. It is also a lifelong outcome of learning – those that engage more with education are more likely to experience greater wellbeing as adults.

Learning that is intentionally designed to challenge and stretch learners enhances their wellbeing. When learners are supported to see a perception of 'failure' as an opportunity to learn they will feel safe to experiment, to question, and to challenge themselves and others in their learning.

Every South Australian child and young person deserves the opportunity to be their best in life. The Department for Education supports the learning and life opportunities of all children and young people, and seeks to help make them strong, creative and resilient learners, to set the trajectory for lifelong wellbeing.

A commitment to inclusion

We aim to improve wellbeing for all of South Australia's children and young people regardless of their age, abilities, geographical location, gender identity, sexuality, religion, culture or means of participation. This means giving special attention to those who live in priority circumstances. This might mean living with disability, with mental health issues, living in out-of-home care or being homeless, or identifying as refugees or asylum seekers.

Priority circumstances also include young people incarcerated in the juvenile justice system, living in poverty or low socio-economic circumstances, learning English as an additional language, living with domestic violence and abuse, who have experienced trauma or compounded disadvantage or who are under the guardianship of the Minister, and those who are young and very young.

Celebrating Aboriginal children and young people

We recognise that South Australia's Aboriginal peoples are part of the oldest continuing cultures in human history and the cultural and linguistic heritage of Aboriginal children and young people must be honoured, celebrated and respected.

Aboriginal children and young people in South Australia are over-represented in experiencing serious and widespread barriers to learning and wellbeing.

The principles described in this framework aim to redress the inequity Aboriginal children and young people experience in child protection, health and education.



We will promote the wellbeing and resilience of children and young people by inspiring, engaging and empowering.

Experiences ●

Create fulfilling learning and life opportunities.

Children and young people are engaged as active agents in their own lives and the lives of others.

We help provide fulfilling learning, life and holistic development opportunities according to individual abilities and interests through all ages and stages of life from birth through to adulthood.

As individuals ●

Enhance individual practices.

Staff inspire children and young people to thrive through their professional practices.

We support children and young people to feel respected, valued, have life aspiration and believe in their own potential.



ATTACHMENTS

Putting the wellbeing framework into action

Staff and services that we provide foster wellbeing by displaying a number of characteristic in their day-to-day activities at school, preschool, childcare or health services.

Inspiring

Key characteristics we demonstrate as individuals

Modelling behaviour	Evidence-based and reflective practices	Partnerships with families and communities	Holistic approach	Integrated practices	A 'life course' approach
Consistently demonstrate support for the wellbeing of children and young people through our own behaviours.	Promote and implement practices informed by evidence that enable optimal developmental pathways and improved wellbeing for all children and young people.	Recognise and build upon family, school and broader community protective factors that are significant determinants of current and future wellbeing outcomes. This includes the adult(s) in the life of the child or young person.	Promote and support a 'whole-child' approach with consideration given to the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual dimensions of wellbeing.	Facilitate collaboration and coordination between different service agencies in order to provide the broadest coordinated opportunities for positively impacting on wellbeing outcomes.	Recognise the importance of an integrated life pathways approach to promoting wellbeing and resilience of children and young people through all ages and stages.

Key characteristics we demonstrate when working together

Access	Equity	Participation	Effectiveness	Performance	Quality
Removing the barriers that prevent young South Australians achieving optimal learning and life opportunities so that all children and young people can reach their greatest potential and personal goals.	Supporting all children and young people's learning, health, safety and wellbeing outcomes, with a commitment to equal opportunities for children and young people living in priority circumstances.	Building the capacity of all South Australian children and young people to learn, work, engage and have a voice by fostering choice, opportunity and individual capability.	Delivering quality, accessible and safe services and programs, recognising that the ultimate measure of effectiveness is the lifelong outcomes realised by children, young people and society as a whole.	Delivering outcomes through a high-performing system with measurable performance indicators and harmonisation of corporate, partnership level and service delivery planning.	Undertake continuous improvement, self-review and accountability to provide high quality education, care and health services in a safe and nurturing environment.

Engaging

The experiences we create with children and young people

Education	Safety	Health	Active participation	Belonging	Play and leisure
Educational access, opportunity and achievement are supported for children, young people, their families and the wider community.	Children and young people access services and programs in safe and supportive environments.	Children and young people's physical and mental health is supported by integrated health support and services.	Services and programs listen to, engage with and respond to children and young people.	Children and young people develop a sense of belonging to a home, family, friends, learning environment and a community.	Children and young people access appropriate play, leisure, rest and independent mobility opportunities.

The 6 'Experiences' have been developed for and are consistent with the Community Goals from the The Department for Education Child Friendly SA Implementation Guide: A step by step guide to gaining UNICEF Australia Child Friendly Recognition, Government of South Australia. They are also consistent with The Nest national plan for child & youth wellbeing developed by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY).

ATTACHMENTS CONTINUED

Empowering

The capabilities we build and connections we promote, linked to the Early Years Learning framework and the Australian Curriculum

Both the Early Years Learning framework (EYLF) and the Australian Curriculum recognise the importance of wellbeing and the link to personal and social competence, health and literacy and numeracy. The EYLF explicitly includes wellbeing in Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing. This includes promoting children to become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing; and children taking increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing (see pages 30-32 of the EYLF for further guidance). The Australian Curriculum builds on the learning outcomes of the EYLF and supports students to make decisions that enhance and promote personal health and wellbeing as part of the health and physical education learning area.

Wellbeing pathway Based on research from Professor Lea Waters and Dr Reuben Rusk of the University of Melbourne	Characteristics Key strengths and virtues enable children and young people to thrive based on positive psychology	General capabilities (Personal and social capability) Linked to the Australian Curriculum	Quality teaching and learning practices Linked to the Teaching for Effective Learning – Tfel framework	Demonstrated by Informed by the Early Years Learning framework – particularly Learning Outcome 3 - and strands of the health and physical education learning area of the Australian Curriculum
Empowering: Capabilities we build				
Paying attention The moment-by-moment control of attention, to be in the present moment and focus on certain stimuli while filtering out others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attention • awareness • mindfulness • meditation • focus 	<p>Self awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand themselves as a learner <p>Self management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-discipline and set goals 	<p>Learners understand and are self-aware of their strengths, preferences for learning and areas for improvement</p> <p>Learners identify what they don't know, in order to expose themselves to new ideas and experiences</p> <p>Learners are self-determined, can develop their own goals and challenge themselves to achieve their personal best</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing wonder and interest • Showing curiosity and enthusiasm for learning • Investigating, imagining and exploring ideas
Understanding your emotions This includes present moment experiences of emotion, identifying of emotions and emotional associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive and negative emotion • positive affect • mood • facial and emotion expression • reactivity 	<p>Self awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise emotions <p>Self management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express emotions appropriately 	<p>Learners know and understand strategies for thinking, learning and problem solving. They understand the notion of 'productive struggle' and they see their mistakes as important aspects of learning</p> <p>Learners are willing to 'step in' and have a go at complex unfamiliar tasks and find multiple ways to problem solve and develop their conceptual understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing an increasing capacity to understand emotions • Self-regulating emotions • Understanding the feelings and needs of others
Coping with stress The ability to cope effectively with adversity and skills to support this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resilience • coping • post-traumatic growth • adversity • hardiness • adjustment 	<p>Self management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become confident, resilient and adaptable • Express emotions appropriately <p>Self awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition of warning signs 	<p>Learners have a belief in themselves, they use their strengths to have a go and say 'I can do this!'</p> <p>Learners look forward to getting feedback from others to help them take the next step</p> <p>Learners develop skills for learning in different ways, they talk with others about how they learn best, and share tips that work well when they are facing a challenge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting challenges • Making choices • Managing change • Coping with frustrations • Dealing with the unexpected

Wellbeing pathway	Characteristics	General capabilities	Quality teaching and learning practices	Demonstrated by
<p>Setting goals and healthy habits</p> <p>This includes goal-striving, motivation and habitual behaviours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goals • persistence • engagement • grit • flow • perseverance • growth mindset • habit • self-regulation • exercise • achievement • behaviour 	<p>Self awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop reflective practice <p>Self management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-discipline and set goals • Make decisions 	<p>Learners set their own learning goals, with the support of their peers, parents/caregivers and teachers</p> <p>Learners challenge themselves to manage their time and work hard to achieve their goals, they aim high and use persistence</p> <p>Learners ask for help when they need it – so they can achieve their goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking out and accepting new challenges • Making new discoveries • Celebrating own efforts and achievements and those of others • Experiencing and sharing personal success • Initiating opportunities for new learning • Showing an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition
<p>Using your strengths</p> <p>The awareness of your own strengths and regularly applying them to achieve goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • character strengths • virtues 	<p>Social management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively (teamwork) • Develop leadership skills <p>Self awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand themselves as a learner • Recognise personal qualities and achievements 	<p>Learners are confident to talk about their hopes and their dreams, fears and concerns</p> <p>Learners talk about their problems with others rather than being silent</p> <p>Learners are prepared to use their strengths to help others learn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding strengths and abilities • Recognising individual achievements • Asserting capabilities and independence • Contributing individual strengths to collaborative activities • Celebrating successes and accomplishments
<p>Empowering: Connections we promote</p>				
<p>Good social skills</p> <p>The connection to peers, teachers and parents, prosocial behaviours, perception of significant relationships and connectedness to community – a broad range of social interaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpersonal relationships • attachment • social relationships • gratitude and empathy • friendship • altruism 	<p>Social management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively • Negotiate and resolve conflict • Work collaboratively <p>Social awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand relationships • Appreciate diverse perspectives 	<p>Learners understand that learning happens everywhere, and try new activities to develop themselves</p> <p>Learners play their part in teamwork and take on different roles</p> <p>Learners encourage others when they've done a good job</p> <p>Learners are good listeners and learn from others' expertise</p> <p>Learners value other peoples advice, and keep reflecting on how they are going</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working collaboratively with others • Connecting to others • Demonstrating awareness of needs and rights of others • Recognising contributions made to shared projects and experiences • Interacting with others with care, empathy and respect



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