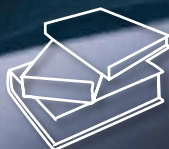


Promoting positive well-being for children

A report for decision-makers in parliament, central government and local areas



The Children's Society



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Decision-makers in public policy aim to raise living standards and improve the quality of life for citizens. For decades the main focus has been on raising living standards, through increasing economic growth, employment and household incomes. This appears to be changing. Before entering government the Prime Minister, David Cameron, made a commitment to broadening our understanding and measurement of the nation's quality of life, or well-being:

'It's time we admitted that there's more to life than money and it's time we focused not just on GDP but on GWB – general wellbeing. Wellbeing can't be measured by money or traded in markets. It's about the beauty of our surroundings, the quality of our culture and, above all, the strength of our relationships. Improving our society's sense of wellbeing is, I believe, the central political challenge of our time.'¹

Once in power David Cameron's interest in well-being and its implications for us all has led to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) conducting a National Conversation² on well-being and publishing a consultation on proposed domains and headline indicators for measuring it.³

In order to understand overall well-being, a focus on children must be included; after all they make up over a fifth of the UK population. Since 2005, The Children's Society has run a ground-breaking research programme examining children's well-being and ways to measure it. The Good Childhood Report 2012⁴ published together with this report sets out our well-being research findings so far and provides a unique overview of children's subjective well-being in the UK.

Our research has highlighted six priorities for improving the subjective well-being of our children. This report sets out each priority and explains why they all matter for children and families. It makes a compelling case for understanding and measuring the subjective well-being of children, and gives advice for decision-makers in formulating and evaluating the impact of policy on children's well-being.

Although well-being will not be the only factor when making decisions – cost, delivery and strategic direction are also important factors – focusing on improving children's life satisfaction will help make the UK a place where every child can look forward to a good childhood.

1. David Cameron (2006) www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2006/may/22/conservatives.davidcameron

2. Office for National Statistics (2011), *Measuring what matters: National statistician's reflections on the national debate on measuring national well-being*. Newport: ONS.

3. Office for National Statistics (2011), www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ONS/consultations/open-consultations/measuring-national-well-being/index.html

4. Rees G (2012), *The Good Childhood Report 2012*. London: The Children's Society

Children’s subjective well-being: what does it mean and why it matters

When talking about social issues the term ‘well-being’ is used to refer to the quality of people’s lives, and covers both subjective and objective aspects. Subjective well-being focuses on how people are feeling, whereas objective well-being focuses on the conditions which affect those feelings, such as health or education. Both of these perspectives are valuable for understanding children’s well-being.

The Children’s Society’s research has focused on the lesser understood of the two, the subjective aspect. Through substantial piloting of techniques, we have developed ways to measure it robustly, and through the evidence we have obtained we have developed a deeper understanding of what affects children’s satisfaction with both their life as a whole and with different aspects of their lives.

Our nationally representative surveys of children aged eight to 15 from across the UK include questions about children’s lives in general, for example ‘How satisfied are you with life as a whole?’, as well as about particular aspects of their lives, for example ‘How satisfied are you with your health?’. We focus our questions on 10 areas of children’s lives, areas that were found to have the greatest impact on their well-being based on our analysis of evidence from the children themselves. These areas combine to form our Good Childhood Index, shown in Figure 1.

Relationships with family

Relationships with friends

Time use

Health

The future

Home

Money and possessions

School

Appearance

Amount of choice in life

Figure 1: The Children’s Society Good Childhood Index

The answers generated by The Good Childhood Index provide a robust, holistic measure of how all aspects of children’s lives, from their personality, to socio-demographic factors, to external influences, combine to determine their life satisfaction.

Why subjective well-being matters for decision makers

Understanding what affects children's subjective well-being is vital if they are to be encouraged and supported to be active participants in society, their community and family. The evidence shows that a low level of subjective well-being is associated with a wide range of social and personal problems. These include: poor mental health, through increased depression; social isolation, through increased loneliness and likelihood of victimisation; and involvement in risky behaviours, such as running away from home and sexual exploitation.

Improving levels of subjective well-being and preventing the resulting negative outcomes will reduce the personal impact to children and their families, and help ensure every child growing up in the UK has a good childhood, and positive life chances. It could also avoid the wider social and economic costs of low subjective well-being.

Over the past few years there has been growing recognition from prominent political^{5,6} and intellectual⁷ leaders that measuring quality of life is as important as measuring standard of living or economic growth alone. What has been less clear for decision-makers is how supplementing objective indicators, such as income or health, with subjective ones, will improve the design and implementation of policy, and ultimately result in positive outcomes.

One common myth⁸ is that people's life satisfaction does not change significantly over time, or that their external environment does not have a part to play. Evidence from international research,⁹ and our own,¹⁰ proves otherwise. Exercise, bullying and school attainment are factors that, amongst many others, significantly alter children's subjective well-being and can be targets for policy interventions.

Focusing on subjective well-being does not mean that objective indicators should be forgotten; both are valuable and should complement each other. However, subjective well-being provides a unique, holistic perspective on children's satisfaction with life as a whole, or in specific areas of their lives.

Some policies solely impact on one aspect of life. However, most policies either aim, or indirectly impact, on multiple outcomes, such as a policy to increase children's learning through play also resulting in improvements to the physical health of the children who participate.

It can be extremely difficult to measure the relative impact of complex policies on multiple outcomes. Subjective well-being captures the impact of all of the changes in children's lives in a single measure, enabling decision-makers to assess the impact on the multiple outcomes that their policies, and others, are having. Improved subjective well-being can be the link which provides a unifying goal for different service areas affecting children.¹¹

5. David Cameron (2010) www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2006/may/22/conservatives.davidcameron

6. New Economics Foundation (2011), *The Practical Politics of Wellbeing*. NEF: London

7. OECD-Stiglitz Commission (2009) www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/documents/rapport_anglais.pdf

8. Pople L (2011), *How happy are our children: measuring children's well-being and exploring economic factors*. The Children's Society: London

9. OECD-Stiglitz Commission (2009) www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/documents/rapport_anglais.pdf

10. Rees G, Goswami H and Bradshaw J (2010), *Developing an index of children's subjective well-being in England*. The Children's Society: London

11. Local Government Association and New Economics Foundation (2011), *Making it happen: wellbeing and the role of local government*. LGA: London

The evidence: what we know about children's subjective well-being

The Children's Society's unique national set of data on children's subjective well-being has been generated through two nationally representative surveys, and a succession of quarterly surveys. We have now asked well-being questions to over 30,000 eight to 16 year olds across the UK. The key findings so far are shown in Figure 2.

From our research, and external evidence, we now know that subjective well-being is both an outcome in itself, and a key factor determining other positive outcomes in children's lives.¹² For example, improving children's mental health will increase their levels of subjective well-being. However, increasing levels of subjective well-being through other factors, such as children having a greater say in decisions that affect them, could lead to improvements in the child's mental health.



One in 11 children (over 500,000) aged eight to 15 in the UK has low subjective well-being at any one point in time.

Family relationships and amount of choice and autonomy have the most significant impact on well-being for children in the UK.

Overall children in the UK are most happy with their family life and their health, and least happy with their level of choice and autonomy, their appearance and the outlook for their future.

Socio-demographic factors explain some, but not the majority, of the variations in subjective well-being experienced by children.

Household income matters – because of the impact it has on whether children themselves feel materially deprived. The lack of items and experiences, such as an outdoor space to play in, or regular trips out with their family, impacts on well-being.

External factors, such as life events, sudden changes to circumstances, relationships with others and children's involvement in decision-making, have a major impact on changes in well-being.

Low levels of subjective well-being have been found to be associated with a wide range of problems including poor mental health, social isolation and participation in risky behaviours.

Figure 2: Key facts about children's subjective well-being

12. Foresight (2008), *Mental capital and well-being*. Government Office for Science: London

13. All evidence from The Children's Society well-being programme www.childrenssociety.org.uk/well-being



Figure 3: The six priorities for children's well-being

The six priorities for children's well-being

Our research evidence has enabled us to identify six priorities for children's well-being (Figure 3).¹³ Factors affecting these six aspects of children's lives determine their well-being. They are all influenced to varying degrees by the external environment, including policy changes.

The six priorities are not mutually exclusive, for example a policy may target outcomes such as stability, safety, fairness or participation, which will cut across these six areas. Where this is the case decision-makers will need to consider which of the six priorities apply and to what degree.

There is significant overlap between what affects the well-being of both children and adults. However, some aspects, such as having positive, loving relationships with their family and having the right conditions to learn and develop, matter even more for children than for adults.

1. The conditions to learn and develop

Children need to be given the conditions to learn and develop. This includes cognitive and emotional development, fostered through access to play in the early years and high quality education in school, and physical development, for example through a nutritious diet. School is a key area of children's lives where experiences vary greatly and negative experiences have a significant impact on well-being.

- The majority of children enjoy school activities (63%) and feel that they learn a lot at school (72%). However one in 10 children is unhappy about their relationships with teachers, and one in six is unhappy about the amount they feel listened to at school.
- Children who felt they had been unfairly treated by their teacher on more than one occasion were four times more likely to have low levels of happiness at school than children who did not feel unfairly treated.

- Children are twice as likely to rate their health as bad or very bad if living in poorer households. Children who self-report having a long-standing illness or disability are twice as likely to have low well-being than those who do not.

2. A positive view of themselves and an identity that is respected

Children need to see themselves in a positive light, and deserve to feel, and be, respected by all adults and other children. Our evidence shows that how children feel about their appearance, whether they are being bullied, and whether they believe that their voice is being heard and opinions respected, are key drivers of their well-being.

- Feelings about appearance are strongly associated with well-being. Children who do not have clothes to fit in with their peers are over three times as likely to have low well-being.
- Children who were bullied two or three times in the space of a few months were nearly four times as likely to have low well-being as those who had not been bullied.
- Children who feel their views are taken seriously and that they are treated fairly in key areas of their lives have a more positive view of themselves, resulting in greater well-being.¹⁴

3. Have enough of what matters

Children's well-being is affected by 'having enough' and 'fitting in' rather than being rich or accumulating material goods purely for its own sake. Family circumstances, household income, and parental employment are key factors which determine whether children have access to those items and experiences.

- We developed a child-centred 10-item deprivation index by asking children what they needed to lead a 'normal kind of life'. The items and experiences in the index with the strongest association with well-being were having access to a garden/outdoor space, clothes to 'fit in' with friends, and monthly trips out with their family. Children lacking three of the 10 items were three times as likely to experience low well-being.

- Children who have a lot less, or even a lot more, pocket money than their friends have lower levels of well-being. They need enough to 'fit in' and participate in activities with friends, but no more.
- Children who live in poorer households, households experiencing sudden shocks to their economic circumstances, such as an adult losing their job, or households with uncertainty about their economic future are twice as likely to have low well-being as children who live in households that are more economically stable.

4. Have positive relationships with family and friends

Children want and need positive, loving relationships with the people closest to them. Overall, the strongest driver of low subjective well-being is where children experience weak and uncaring relationships with their family or carer. The structure of the family itself has only a small effect on a child's well-being. Children also need positive, stable, relationships with their friends, with social isolation a strong driver of low levels of well-being.

- The quality of relationships between children and their families is 10 times more powerful in explaining levels of well-being than specific family structures.
- Children having an active say in decisions that affect them within the family is also a key driver for their overall life satisfaction.
- Children who feel isolated from their friends are four times as likely to have low well-being as those who do not. Friendships become more important as an aid to social and emotional growth as children reach adolescence.¹⁵

14. Goswami H (2011) 'Social relationships and children's subjective well-being' *Social Indicators Research*, Online First, 26 May 2011.

15. Goswami H (2011) 'Social relationships and children's subjective well-being' *Social Indicators Research*, Online First, 26 May 2011.

5. A safe and suitable home environment and local area

Children need safe and suitable environments at home and in their local area. Where children are unhappy in these environments, often through feeling unsafe, feeling that they have a lack of privacy, or feeling that their home or local area has inadequate facilities, this has a strong association with lower levels of well-being.

- Almost a quarter (23%) of children who had moved home more than once over the past 12 months had low levels of well-being, compared to the average of around 10% in the survey.
- Children who experience a change in the family members or carers that they live with are twice as likely to have low well-being as those that have stable living arrangements. However, in circumstances of change and upheaval, quality of relationships remains a strong driver of well-being.
- Around 14% of children aged 10 to 15 who shared a bedroom had low levels of well-being, compared to around 9% of those who had their own bedroom. This impact increases with age; 14 and 15 year olds who share a bedroom are twice as likely to have low well-being as those that do not.

6. Opportunity to take part in positive activities to thrive

A healthy balance of time use is as important for children as it is for adults. The need for a balance that suits the individual needs of children means that they should be actively involved in decisions about how they spend their time.

- Children who do not have access to a garden or local outdoor space to play in are over three times more likely to report low well-being than those that do.
- Nearly a third (30%) of children who were not satisfied with any of the six aspects of time use (time with family, friends, to themselves, being active, doing homework, helping at home) had low well-being, compared to only 1% of children who were satisfied with all six of these aspects.
- Choice and autonomy is vital for well-being in all aspects of children's lives. Children who have greater deprivation of experience, for example no access to a garden or outdoor space to play, experience lower levels of choice than other children, compounding lower levels of well-being. Those children who lacked four experiences and items from our child-centred index of material deprivation are also four times as likely to be unhappy with their level of choice.



Promoting positive well-being for children: time for a re-think

Decision-makers can take some simple practical steps to promote positive well-being for children. We have used research underpinning our six priorities for well-being to develop a simple checklist to understand the impact of policy on children's well-being. We also provide examples of existing and potential new policies, which could enhance children's well-being, and then introduce questions that can be used to measure policy impact.

The Children's Society has already begun to work with schools and local authorities to put this research and understanding to good use and will continue to do this in the future.

Using the six priorities in decision-making

Figure 4 provides a quick checklist that decision-makers can use to understand whether their policy could impact on children's well-being – and if so, how. The checklist sets out the six priorities for children's subjective well-being, and for each priority, the three key factors that determine improvements for well-being in this area of a child's life.

A policy may affect one priority, multiple priorities, or them all. Decision-makers should review the checklist to identify which priorities their policy will affect, and then as a next step access the supporting evidence, via the evidence and references presented in this report and on The Children's Society website.¹⁶

This framework applies to all children, but can be easily adapted when focusing on specific groups. For example, to ensure a disabled child has a safe and suitable home environment (priority five), the key driver of living in good quality housing would include individualised adaptations to their home.

What do children need?	How can they get it?	Policy effect Positive/Neutral/Negative
1) The conditions to learn and develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have opportunities for free play • Get high quality and appropriate education and care • Have positive relationships with teachers 	
2) A positive view of themselves and an identity that is respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be comfortable with their appearance • Be physically and mentally healthy • Are respected and valued for who they are 	
3) Enough of what matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the items and experiences that matter • Have some financial autonomy through pocket money • Live in a household which is economically stable 	
4) Positive relationships with their family and friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be active participants in decisions that affect them • Have caring, loving relationships • Spend time with their family and with friends 	
5) A safe and suitable home environment and local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be, and feel, safe at home and in their local area • Live in good quality housing • Have space at home that is theirs for privacy 	
6) Opportunity to take part in positive activities to thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a say in how they use their time • Have affordable activities in their local area • Have access to outdoor spaces for play 	

Figure 4: Understanding the impact of decisions on children's well-being

16. www.childrenssociety.org.uk/well-being

Current policy gives mixed messages for children's subjective well-being

Our evidence on the six priorities for children's well-being, and their key drivers, suggests that the existing policy landscape will have a mixed impact on children's outcomes. This is not surprising in a decision-making environment where children's well-being has not been a determining factor.

Over the past year the government has introduced a number of initiatives, which positively address one or more of the six priority areas. These include investment in online and telephone family support services, establishing a free offer of parenting classes to parents of under-5s, producing guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and introducing Junior ISA savings accounts.

However, at the same time elements of the government's welfare reform programme are likely to impact negatively on children's subjective well-being. For example, freezing the lone parent and couple elements of Working Tax Credits will reduce real incomes for low-income families, impacting further on the opportunity for those families to provide children with the items and experiences that they need.

In addition to individual decisions, broad policy direction will also have an impact. Our evidence shows that positive, loving relationships between children and their families or carers play a greater role in their well-being than the structure of the family itself, and that stability throughout all aspects of a child's life, including their family life, is vital. It shows compellingly that the impact of family life on children's well-being is complex, requiring a carefully balanced policy approach. Simply concentrating on family structures, as has been suggested by some Government ministers,¹⁷ could result in misplaced investment and unintended policy consequences.

Figure 5 provides illustrative policy examples both at a local and central level, which could increase children's subjective well-being. Some of these policies already exist and could be maintained or strengthened (in green and italic); others are new and could be introduced (in purple).



17. Iain Duncan Smith, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in a recent BBC interview on the Today Programme stated: 'We have been ambivalent about family structure in Britain for far too long'.

	Education	Health & Social Care	Criminal Justice	Welfare	Other Public Services
The conditions to learn and develop	Ensure all children have access to extended school provision	When adults are assessed by social care their child/children's needs should also be assessed	Provide access to full-time education for all children serving either community or custodial sentences	<i>Extend provision of high-quality childcare for under-5s</i>	<i>All 15 and 16 year olds to have access to two weeks' work experience each year</i>
A positive view of themselves and an identity that is respected	Reform PSHE curriculum to teach pupils about children from different cultural backgrounds	A child and adolescent mental health service worker or child psychologist attached to every school	Child psychologist in every youth offending team	<i>Cashless payment for all recipients of Free School Meals</i>	Implement the Bailey Review recommendation to develop a code of good practice on retailing to children
Have enough of what matters	<i>One cultural school trip per year for every child</i>	Each young person in transition from the looked after system into adulthood to have a dedicated key worker	<i>Housing needs assessment for all young offenders to address deficit in suitable living arrangements</i>	Payment of Universal Credit to the main carer	Social housing guarantee that children have the personal space required at home, including need for separate bedrooms for older children
Have positive relationships with family and friends	Introduce positive relationship education, including awareness of domestic violence and sexual exploitation	<i>National roll-out of free parenting classes for parents with children under five</i>	A statutory right to advocacy/befriending for every child in custody	Out-of-work families receive benefit support which reflects their individual household circumstances	Increased funding for relationship advice and sexual health services for teenagers
A safe and suitable home environment and local area	Reform legislation to ensure that, when children are searched, a witness is always present	<i>Adherence to Foster Carer's Charter, ensuring greater stability of care placements</i>	Apply national minimum standards and regulations for children's homes to young offender institutions and secure training centres	<i>Maintain sufficient levels of local housing allowance</i>	<i>Ensure 20mph speed limits and other traffic calming measures outside schools are enforced</i>
Opportunity to take part in positive activities to thrive	Introduce a student council in all schools, with council members part of participatory budgeting	All disabled children have a support buddy to help them take part in activities, such as trips out and physical activities	Every youth offending team and youth custodial institution to have a children's council	Replace Severe Disability Premium within Universal Credit to help young carers reduce their burden of care, and so can engage in social activities	Design new residential developments to ensure children have safe access to primary health care, schools and play areas

Figure 5: Illustrative policy examples – those that already exist and could be maintained and strengthened (in green and italic); others that are new and could be introduced (in purple)

Measuring and evaluating the impact

Once policy decisions are taken, it is important to establish an evaluation, which starts when the policy becomes active. The Children's Society has developed a range of indexes and questions for benchmarking and tracking children's overall life satisfaction, satisfaction with key aspects of their life, and satisfaction in particular domains, for example in their school life.

Measuring children's overall life satisfaction

Use a five item index of overall well-being for eight to 15 year olds which consists of the following statements:

- 'My life is going well'
- 'My life is just right'
- 'I wish I had a different kind of life'
- 'I have a good life'
- 'I have what I want in life'

Young people are asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with each statement on a five point scale from 'Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree'. The scale produces a total life satisfaction score in the range from zero to 20.

Measuring children's life satisfaction with key aspects of their lives

Use The Good Childhood Index to measure satisfaction in key areas of children's lives:¹⁸

- Family
- Friends
- Health
- Appearance
- Time use
- The future
- Home
- Money and possessions
- School
- Amount of choice

Young people are asked to rate their happiness with each of these aspects on a scale from zero to 10 (zero meaning 'Very unhappy' and 10 meaning 'Very happy'). The scale produces a total index score in the range from zero to 100.



18. Rees G, Goswami H and Bradshaw J (2010), *Developing an index of children's subjective well-being in England*. The Children's Society: London

Understanding satisfaction in a particular domain

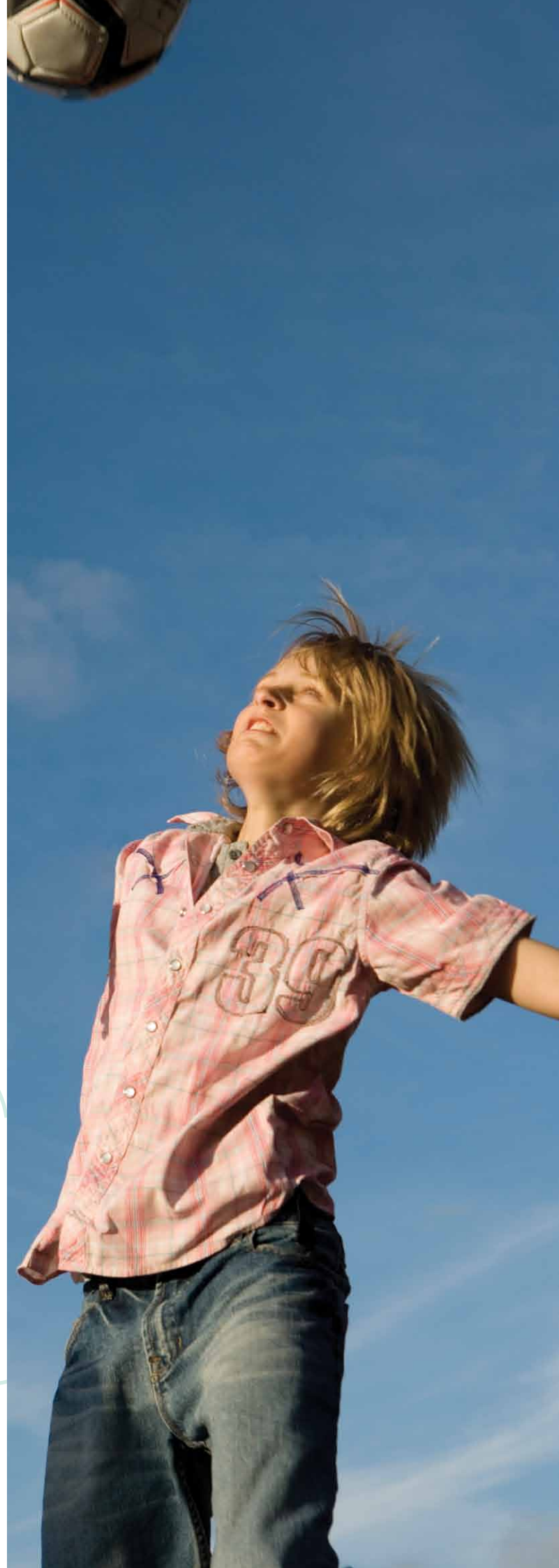
Use a number of questions about a particular aspect of a child's life, and combine to create a scale for that domain. For example in school life:

- How happy are you with how safe you feel at school?
- How happy are you with how you are doing with your school work?
- How happy are you with your relationships with other young people at school?
- How happy are you with your relationships with your teachers?
- How happy are you with how much you are listened to at school?

Young people are asked to rate on a 10 point scale from zero 'very unhappy' to 10 'very happy'. The answers combine into a 50 point scale across the domain.

An additional index, which measures children's well-being relating to their local area, has also been established.

To apply the indexes and questions contact Gwyther Rees, Director of Research, at research@childrenssociety.org.uk



Conclusion and recommendations

Well-being is not a new concept for policy. However in recent years, and as a direct result of The Children's Society's unique research, our understanding of the key components and drivers of subjective well-being has advanced substantially. A significant minority of children in the UK has low levels of well-being, which will have severe negative consequences for their childhood and life chances, as well as for the families and communities around them, and the agencies who support them.

We also now know that something can be done about this. Personality and socio-demographic factors alone explain only a part of children's subjective well-being. External factors play a major role in determining children's life satisfaction and life chances. From our evidence we know that there are six priorities for well-being for children that can make a real difference to their lives:

1. **The right conditions to learn and develop.**
2. **A positive view of themselves and a respect for their identity.**
3. **Enough of the items and experiences that matter to them.**
4. **Positive relationships with their family and friends.**
5. **A safe and suitable home environment and local area.**
6. **The opportunities to take part in positive activities that help them thrive.**

Decisions taken at central and local level will impact on children's well-being, and policies that improve one, or more, of the six priorities will help promote positive well-being for all children in the UK.

We need all government ministers and politicians, officials across central and local government, Local Health and Wellbeing Boards and the new police and crime commissioners to use this framework to improve the impact that their decisions will have on children's subjective well-being, as well as positive objective outcomes.

We propose four key recommendations that can be implemented in the short term and will begin to improve the well-being of our children:

1. The new **Local Health and Wellbeing Boards should undertake a survey of the subjective well-being of children in their area**, to set a baseline against which progress in enhancing children's well-being in their area can be monitored.
2. The **Department for Education and Ofsted should incorporate measures of subjective well-being related to school life into school inspection frameworks and performance measures.**
3. The **Office for National Statistics should lead an immediate cross-government review of existing surveys to integrate questions on children's subjective well-being** where possible.
4. All **central and local government work streams on well-being should integrate children's subjective well-being** within their overall programme of work, so that the focus is balanced between adults and children. In central government this includes the Cabinet Office's well-being programme and the cross-departmental analytical Social Impacts Taskforce.

Providing the six priorities for subjective well-being is critical for our children's future. In 2007 UNICEF¹⁹ found that children in the UK have lower subjective and objective well-being than any other developed country. It was backed up by further research in 2011 comparing the well-being of children in the UK, Sweden and Spain.²⁰ This is unacceptable and must be addressed.

Promoting positive well-being for children requires a radical new approach, using the six priorities to make decisions which work for children. This will help make the UK the best place in the world for children to grow up, with every child having a good childhood and a positive outlook for their adult lives.

19. UNICEF (2007), *An Overview of Child Well-being in Rich Countries*. UNICEF: Florence
20. UNICEF (2011), *Child Well-being in the UK, Spain and Sweden*. UNICEF: Florence

What to do next?

To understand the evidence base behind the six priorities for well-being for children visit www.childrensociety.org.uk/well-being, or contact our well-being research team at well-being@childrensociety.org.uk

To understand the impact for your policy area please contact Enver Solomon, Director of Policy, at policy@childrensociety.org.uk

To apply the indexes and questions to measure children's subjective well-being contact Gwyther Rees, Director of Research, at research@childrensociety.org.uk





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The Children's Society wants to create a world where all children and young people are respected, valued and heard. We believe that childhood should be happy and that young people deserve to reach their full potential.

That's why we work hard to transform the lives of over 44,000 children and young people in England each year.

Our priority is children who have nowhere else to turn. We protect young runaways from the dangers of life on the street. We give disabled children a voice and more control over their lives. Our work helps young refugees start afresh in new communities, and gives young carers time and energy to enjoy their childhood.

With over 75 programmes and children's centres throughout England, we offer care, respite, legal support and mentoring schemes that help turn lives around.

Through our campaigns and research, we seek to influence policy and perceptions at all levels so young people have a better chance in life.

To find out more about what we do visit
www.childrenssociety.org.uk