

A red vertical bar is on the left side of the slide. In the top-left corner, there are several overlapping red circles of varying sizes. The main title is centered in a large, bold, dark red font.

Engaging Children and Young People in Shaping their Learning Environments

Universal Education Foundation

‘Education by All for the Well-being of Children’

www.uef-eba.org

Eurochild’s 6th Annual Conference , Limassol, Nov. 2009

Universal Education Foundation

Foundation established in NL in 2004

Global & Operational Partners: *include* United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, Education Development Centre (USA), EIESP (FR), SYNERGOS (USA)

Regional Partners:

Middle East: Palestine: Ministries of Education & of Health, ICT sector, UNWRA, University of Al Quds, Arab Foundations Forum, etc.

Europe:

- Wales (UWIC, Funky Dragon, Children in Wales);
- European Foundations Centre (Bertelsmann, Bosch, Evens, Freudenberg, Guerrand-Hermès, Gulbenkian);
- Networks & programmes (Eurochild, YEPP)

UEF is focused on:

- Engaging children & young people in the transformation of their learning environments
- Developing tools for capturing their voices – **Voice of Children**
- **Diversity**: recognising and responding to people's diverse ways/patterns of learning and being
- Developing **indicators based on the inner perspective of the child/young person** for monitoring and encouraging the conscious nurturing of their well-being
- Developing a **common language** for well-being across disciplines, sectors, government depts., etc.
- Working with **partners from multiple sectors of society**
- Advocating a perspective based on **wellness and vitality**, not on a deficit model

Working Definition of Well-being

Realizing one's unique potential
through physical, emotional, mental,
spiritual, and social development

... in relation to self, others,
and the environment

Well-being

- Depends on internal state of body, mind, emotions, spirit ...

and

- influenced by external circumstances, life events

Core issue

How do we encourage learning environments to be more conducive to the well-being of children and young people?

Consortium of foundations: ‘Education by All for the Well-being of Children’, Europe

Purpose: We, members of the Consortium, will inspire and engage policy makers, foundations and other stakeholders in Europe to listen more to children and young people, and to take more initiatives with them for their well-being in their learning environments (as underlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

Workplan includes:

- Indicators of “subjective well-being”

Key aspects

- Defining well-being positively and holistically
- Listening to children as a central theme
- Considering both well-being and well-becoming
- Engaging the unique potential and diverse processes of each child
- Integrating multiple learning environments

UEF domains for investigation

- Physical Healthiness
- Safety: physical & emotional
- Emotional Self-management
- Healthy Relationships
- Confidence in Capabilities
- Joy in Learning
- Inner Vitality & Spirit
- Sense of Connection with All of Life
- Overall sense of satisfaction

Focus groups in 2009

- Wales
- Chicago
- Ramallah

Wales – ‘extremely’ important

Family – a place to call home – and (close) **friends**

Illustrated, depending on the groups, by:

- Having someone to talk to
- Being loved and sense of security, being taken care of
- Feeling wanted
- Trust
- Being treated with respect

Also:

- Fulfilling your dream
- Happiness
- Health – (including mental health & how one feels emotionally)
- One’s own sense of well- being
- Making your own choices

Wales – about school

In both extremely and very important:

Highlights:

- Important because you spend so much time there & for your future
- School has an influence on your health (activity, stress, perennial school canteen!)
- Enjoyment of friends, having a laugh. Need time with friends - lunchtime

Issues raised:

- Can be a place of stress (unbalanced workload, in some cases bullying)
- Teachers influence how you learn, can make you feel small, *versus* teachers who respect students
- Teachers who help you achieve goals, encourage you, make you feel positive about self.
- Learn best when it's fun, interesting and relevant to your life

Chicago – ICT/media

- Safety – in urban environment: get help, record injustice, find someone using the mobile phone
- Relationships – real friends are deep and personal – not technology based
- Contribution to learning – opportunity – move at own pace
- Media/Internet – finding out about yourself, your history, making connections without bias
- Technology – bridge to others
- Technology is not responsible for deceit, etc – it depends on values and upbringing
- Technology and self-esteem – write music, rapping

Ramallah

Self-esteem

- Internet can take over your life
- TV can be way of learning or negative influence (violence), deforms facts
- Mobile phones – pranks have a negative effect on person's self-esteem

Relationships

- Family and parent relationships
- Tension between keeping in touch and hiding behind screens
- TV: positive for relationships – viewing together

Schooling & education

- Learning more fun with more use of technology
- Issue of technology and the role of teachers – neglected
- TV can teach stuff that school can't ...

Implications for indicators of well-being

- Family & friends – a place to call home,
- Relationships – real friends are deep and personal – not technology based
- Being loved and security, taken care of
- Being treated with respect, listened to
- Health and happiness, including emotional health
- Self-esteem

Implications for indicators of well-being

- Teachers have a positive or negative influence on how you learn
- School has an influence on your health, can be a place of stress
- Relationships with friends, having a laugh, time together
- Joy of learning: learn best when it's interesting and relevant to your life
- Safety
- Finding out about yourself, self-esteem
- Relationships – technology as a bridge

What do these highlights tell us?

- Relationships, feeling safe, loved, trusted, respected – rated more importantly than material circumstances
- Different aspects of school have several effects on present and future
- ICT/media – young people are very aware of opportunities and threats

Participation and subjective well-being

Research in Australia

- Agency
- Security and belonging
- Positive sense of self

- Perception of neighbourhood / space
- HBSC questions
- Is education only achievement & participation?

Issues for indicators development

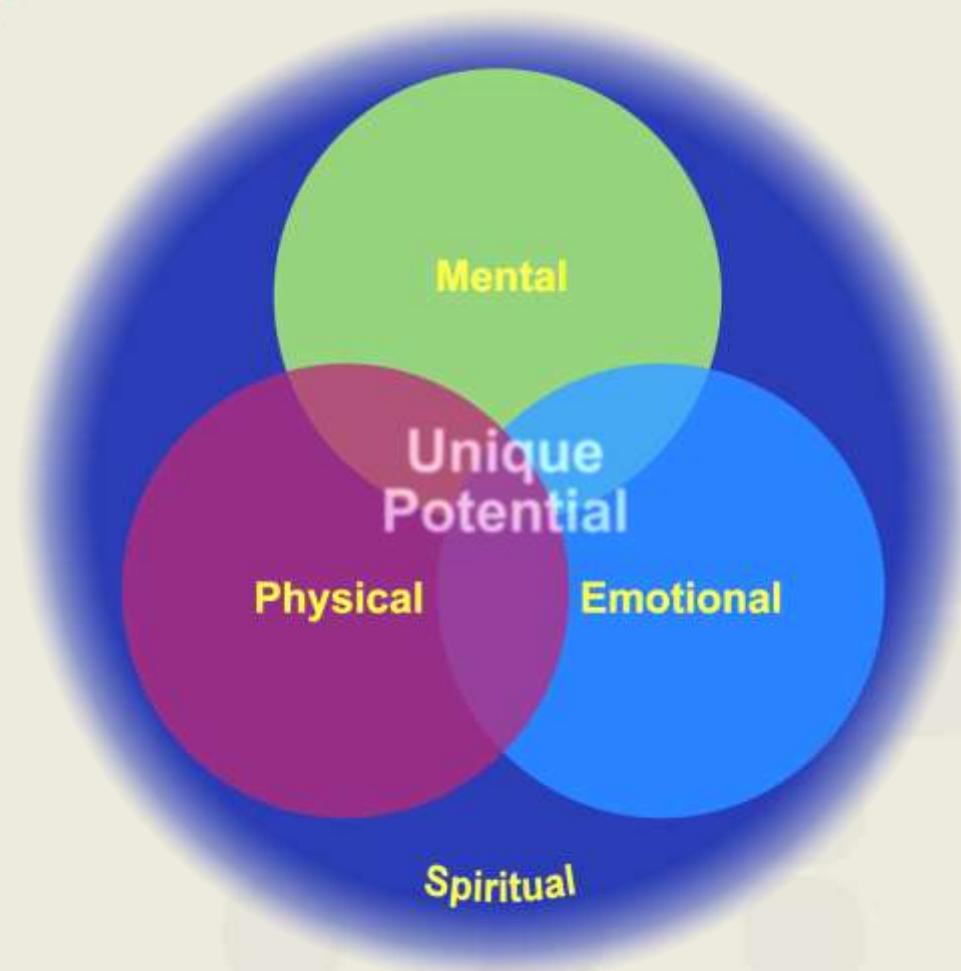
What do children and young people want to see change in their world?

Relationship between:

- Rights of the child, well-being and the child's voice
- Inner perception of the child (subjective point of view) and external circumstances

Children's perception of self.

Well-being is realising one's unique potential through physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and social development.



In relation to...

SELF

OTHERS

ENVIRONMENT

