

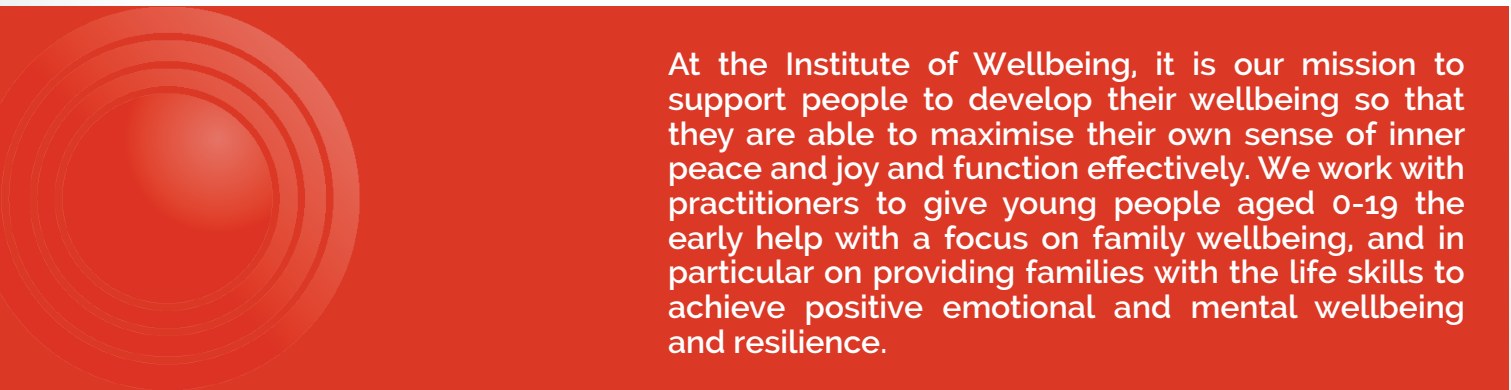
# WELLBEING FACTSHEETS: 01

What has **wellbeing** got to do with inclusive practice and social mobility?



Wellbeing is about promoting a better way of life and equality for citizens. In its simplest definition wellbeing is Being Well. When the basic human requirements are met people are free to have optimistic aspirations, which help them attain a satisfying quality of life and happiness. Ultimately, wellbeing comes from our inner sense of peace and life satisfaction.

Mike Kelly,  
Chief executive, Institute of Wellbeing



At the Institute of Wellbeing, it is our mission to support people to develop their wellbeing so that they are able to maximise their own sense of inner peace and joy and function effectively. We work with practitioners to give young people aged 0-19 the early help with a focus on family wellbeing, and in particular on providing families with the life skills to achieve positive emotional and mental wellbeing and resilience.

# The importance of supporting wellbeing

Supporting wellbeing is about ensuring people have the resilience to deal with life's challenges, by building on the strengths that each person has and working to counter their vulnerabilities. Wellbeing is affected by internal attitudes and by external factors such as health, income, personal freedom, family and friends.

A wellbeing approach helps people to create a better life for themselves. It also promotes community connectedness which can help disadvantaged



## Wellbeing and early intervention

Improving the wellbeing of families, and children in particular, is a critical part of achieving early intervention outcomes. The emerging evidence is unequivocal: investing in wellbeing to improve life outcomes works – there are clear links between levels of wellbeing, inequality and social mobility. Early intervention directly increases the wellbeing of families and their communities and that increase in wellbeing can have a positive effect on a range of other indicators, from children's educational progress to their parents' ability to get into work.

Early years educators can play an important role: by providing high-quality education to children and by supporting parents to nurture and play with their children, actions which can help to mitigate the effects of poverty, low achievement and low-skilled parenting.

# Wellbeing and inclusion

Being inclusive is about valuing equally all children and their families, whatever their ability, gender, language, ethnic or cultural origin. It involves everyone with respect and provides them with opportunities to develop and improve their circumstances.

It does not mean treating everyone the same. By focusing on the wellbeing of children and their families you are more likely to look at the individual needs of each person and to tailor a response that increases that child or family's wellbeing.

A wellbeing approach is important because it allows you to:

- ✓ **move from focusing on what is wrong in people's lives to look at what makes their lives go well**
- ✓ **look at the positive things people bring to their families, situations and communities rather than what they lack**
- ✓ **look further than a family's economic circumstances to their emotional and social needs, resilience and self-management so they can function effectively regardless of life's challenges**

This approach can help you think about ways that people can be empowered to make improvements in their own lives.

## Wellbeing and social mobility

Social mobility describes how easy it is for people to improve their position in society. Studies show it is getting harder and harder for people to improve on the position of their parents.

Existing evidence shows that the increased prevalence of lone parenting, family breakdown and chaotic family life leads to more risky behaviour, poverty and disadvantage, which can result in low attainment and poor wellbeing.

Good education is the key to later opportunities, so ensuring attainment before the age of 18 is vital – and that starts with good parenting and quality early years education.

Where personal resilience and emotional wellbeing have been supported, other paths to social mobility open up.



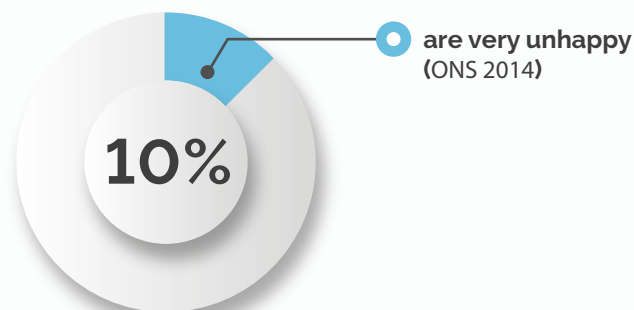
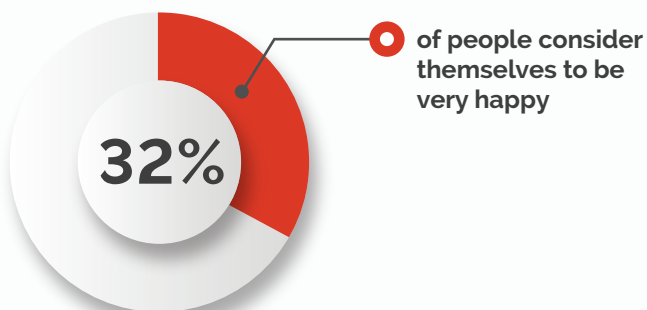
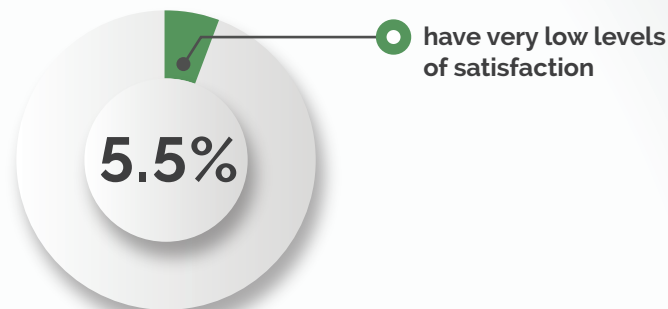
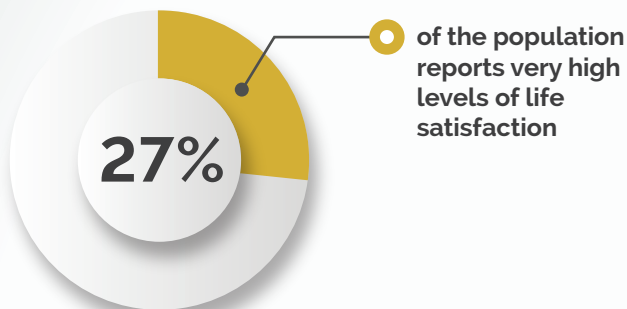
## The benefits of investing in wellbeing in the early years

- ✓ Improving parents' wellbeing, and giving them the tools to help their children, can be key to improving children's life chances
- ✓ The time when most difference can be made to children's potential is between the ages of 0 and three. The role of parents is the most important influence on a child's healthy development and wellbeing. The home learning environment is also crucial
- ✓ Improving parents' wellbeing combined with high quality early education can help in breaking cycles of social disadvantage
- ✓ Giving children access to high quality teaching and learning at all stages, but particularly in the early years, not only ensures they are ready for school but also helps raise their aspirations and develop their own emotional wellbeing

# Wellbeing

## FACTS AND FIGURES

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**1 in every 6 children - 2.3 million** are classed as poor

(Source: Social mobility and child poverty commission, State of the Nation 2014)



## Resources

- Early Home Learning Matters - Kim Roberts, 2009
- Increasing wellbeing and inclusion in early years settings, The Institute of Wellbeing e-learning resource for early years practitioners - [click here](#)
- Supporting families in the foundation years, DfE 2011
- Inclusion in the early years, Cathy Nutbrown and Peter Clough, Sage Publications, 2013
- Foundationyears.org

You may also be interested in other Institute of Wellbeing support services:

- Life Choices (Wellbeing Programme for Adults)
- URSpecial (Family Wellbeing Programme)
- Effective Parenting
- Be Well (App for Faith Leaders)