

**KE206\_1**

**Supporting children and young people's wellbeing**

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## Introduction

This free course, Supporting children and young people’s wellbeing, introduces different ways of understanding wellbeing as well as related concepts such as resilience. There is a wide a variety of practices and services that provide support for children and young people’s wellbeing and this course also explores how they can make a difference to children and young people’s lives. FInally, the course considers how those working with children and young people can know whether they are making a difference or not – what are the ways in which this can be evaluated?

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## Learning outcomes

After studying this course, you should be able to:

* understand some of the principles, purposes and responsibilities affecting those working with children and young people
* critically engage with some of the social issues that affect children and young people’s wellbeing
* interpret and evaluate information and literature relevant to children and young people
* find and use information from a range of sources, making effective use of digital practices, appropriate information and communication technologies.

## 1 Wellbeing in today’s society

During the last decade a number of media reports, newspaper articles and debates on social media have shared alarming statistics, which suggest that children and young people in the United Kingdom are increasingly unhappy and that their wellbeing is potentially at risk. An article published in The Guardian (Weaver, 2019) suggested that children and young people in the UK are some of the unhappiest in the industrialised world.

Start of Activity

**Activity 1 Is the wellbeing of children and young people in the UK in crisis?**

Allow about 45 minutes

Start of Question

Read the article [‘Children in the UK the least happy they have been in a decade says report’](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/aug/28/childhood-happiness-lowest-level-in-decade-says-report) (Weaver, 2019), bearing in mind the following questions:

1. In what ways does this article define or discuss wellbeing?
2. Do you think wellbeing is different from happiness?
3. Do you feel this article provides an accurate representation of children and young people’s lives today?

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

[View discussion - Activity 1 Is the wellbeing of children and young people in the UK in crisis?](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session3_Discussion1)

End of Activity

## 2 What do children and young people think?

While the term ‘wellbeing’ is in common use, it is not necessarily one that children or young people use when talking about their own lives. What do they say? This issue is explored in the next activity.

Start of Activity

**Activity 2 A good childhood?**

Allow about 1 hour

**Task 1**

Start of Question

*[The Good Childhood Report](https://www.careknowledge.com/media/45522/the_good_childhood_report_2019.pdf)* (Children’s Society, 2019) is an extensive survey of the wellbeing of children and young people in the UK. The survey has been developed and repeated, so has built up a detailed picture over time. The whole of the report is relevant to this course, and it is a useful resource to draw on. Here, though, you just need to read from pages 8–27. You’ll be asked to answer a series of questions in the next task, so you might want to bear them in mind as you read.

Please note that a new version of this report is published annually. The 2019 version is being used for the tasks in this activity for consistency, but the report is a useful resource to draw on for your work on this course. The most recent version can be found on the [Children’s Society website](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/good-childhood) and the subsequent versions give more insights into the short- and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 health pandemic, children’s anxieties about the cost of living, and concerns about the future (Children’s Society 2023).

End of Question

**Task 2**

Start of Question

Now write your responses to the following questions. Try to answer each question as fully as possible before reading the discussion.

1. Why did the Children’s Society develop the good childhood index?

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

Start of Question

1. How did the research team ascertain the initial ideas from children and young people? And how were their ideas used to help create the wellbeing survey?

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

[View discussion - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session4_Discussion1)

End of Activity

The kinds of measures used in this report are usually described as ‘subjective’ (data drawn from our own perspective). Another way of trying to gauge the wellbeing of children and young people is to use those commonly described as ‘objective’, such as levels of poverty and measures of health or education, housing conditions or the quality of the environment. Both ways of ‘measuring’ are valid but it is important to think about the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Wellbeing is a broad concept which spans a wide range of physical and mental health as well as emotional and social factors.

## 3 The concept of resilience

You will now start to explore how children and young people’s wellbeing can be supported. In particular, you will look at the concept of resilience and what this means for childhood and youth services.

Start of Activity

**Activity 3 Examining the term ‘resilience’**

Allow about 30 minutes

**Task 1**

Start of Question

What does the term ‘resilience’ mean to you? If you were asked to describe a ‘resilient young person’, what qualities, behaviours and skills might you refer to? Spend about 15 minutes reflecting on these questions and making notes below.

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

[View discussion - Task 1](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session5_Discussion1)

**Task 2**

Start of Question

Write down some key points below on why you think developing resilience is so important for children and young people.

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

Start of Question

End of Question

[View discussion - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session5_Discussion2)

End of Activity

## 4 Resilience and wellbeing

What, then, are the implications for children and young people’s everyday lives, and how can practices and practitioners support and perhaps even enhance wellbeing?

Start of Activity

**Activity 4 Understanding resilience and wellbeing**

Allow about 30 minutes

Start of Question

Considering Mind's description of resilience from the Activity 3 feedback, plus your own ideas generated in response to previous activities, spend some time now reflecting on your understanding of the concept of wellbeing. Consider too the links between resilience and wellbeing. Use the following questions to help structure your note taking.

1. What does it mean to be ‘well’?

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

Start of Question

1. Describe some of the everyday challenges and influences that children and young people face and that might impact on their wellbeing.

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

Start of Question

1. What do you think are the connections between resilience and wellbeing?

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

[View discussion - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session6_Discussion1)

End of Activity

Resilient behaviours, such as the ability to endure and adapt to stressful life experiences, are clearly important qualities and they are associated with self-confidence, emotional intelligence and social competence. Yet there are clear differences in how children react to stressful situations, and psychologists question why it is that some children appear more able to bounce back from life’s challenges and show fewer signs of anxiety than others. Even children raised in the same family can demonstrate startling differences in how they react to and cope with stressful events.

While some children may appear more naturally predisposed to displaying resilient behaviours from a young age, there are ways in which resilience can be supported and developed. Close bonds and positive school experiences as suggested by Daniels and Wassell (2002) are things which can be developed and there are a number of practices, and professional roles that can provide sources for support – a topic you will explore in the next activity.

## 5 Supporting children, young people and families

Children and young people may encounter stressful events and face challenges at different points in their lives. This might include complex and challenging domestic circumstances, economic difficulties, mental health issues as well as problems at school or in education. There are many roles and responsibilities that are important in influencing children and young people’s capacity to develop resilient behaviours. At this point you are going to focus on one particular type of service as an example: family centres.

## 5.1 Family centres

Family centres are community contexts that provide local support to parents, carers and children. Hedgerows Family Centre (‘Hedgerows’) supports a local community in Milton Keynes designated as one of the most deprived areas in the UK. Hedgerows offers a range of targeted services spanning health, parenting, childcare and community learning to support diverse family needs. In the next activity you will listen to the manager from Hedgerows talking about resilience and how they as a centre work with families.

Start of Activity

**Activity 5 Hedgerows**

Allow about 30 minutes

**Task 1**

Start of Question

Watch the following video. Tina, the manager from Hedgerows, talks about her understanding of the term ‘resilience’ and how this concept is central to the work of the family centre. In the next task you’ll be asked a series of questions, so you might want to bear these in mind as you watch the video.

Start of Media Content

Video content is not available in this format.

Tina Price talks about resilience

[View transcript - Tina Price talks about resilience](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session7_Transcript1)

Start of Figure



End of Figure

End of Media Content

End of Question

**Task 2**

Start of Question

Based on what you have just watched, make notes using the following questions.

1. How does Tina describe adults from Hedgerows becoming resilient; what markers does she use to gauge this?

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

Start of Question

1. What behaviours, qualities and skills does Tina refer to when defining a resilient child?

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

[View discussion - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session7_Discussion1)

End of Activity

## 6 Multi-agency practice

The work of family centres builds on the premise that targeting early support for families facing difficulties provides opportunities for parents and carers to deal with life’s challenges. In the next activity you will explore in more detail the range of services that are available at family centres such as Hedgerows and the range of professionals involved in delivering them.

Start of Activity

**Activity 6 Services working together**

Allow about 45 minutes

**Task 1**

Start of Question

Watch the following video, ‘Hedgerows Family Centre’, which introduces the broader work of the centre. As you watch, try to identify the different services available for children, families and young people that Hedgerows provide, as you’ll be asked to make a note of them for the next task.

**Note:** the ‘EYFS’ mentioned in the video refers to the ‘Early Years Foundation Stage’, which is a statutory framework in England.

Start of Media Content

Video content is not available in this format.

Hedgerows Family Centre

[View transcript - Hedgerows Family Centre](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session8_Transcript1)

Start of Figure



End of Figure

End of Media Content

End of Question

**Task 2**

Start of Question

Use the following table to record the different services available for children, families and young people at Hedgerows.

Start of Table

Table 1 Services available at Hedgerows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Service users** | **Services** |
| Families | *Provide your answer...*  |
| Children | *Provide your answer...*  |
| Young people | *Provide your answer...*  |

End of Table

End of Question

[View discussion - Task 2](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session8_Discussion1)

End of Activity

The focus on multi-agency practice is an important theme. As a family centre, Hedgerows is a multi-agency setting that works with different service providers spanning health, education, care and legal services. This provides for infants, children, young people and their families (even grandparents). Furthermore, Hedgerows provides support for children and young people in care as well as unaccompanied minors seeking refuge in the UK.

## 7 Making a difference

This course considers the kinds of practice that might make a difference to children and young people’s wellbeing but also how we can evaluate whether any difference has been made. In this next activity you will look at the ways in which practices can be evaluated.

Start of Activity

**Activity 7 Evaluating practice: why and how?**

Allow about 1 hour and 30 minutes

**Task 1**

Start of Question

At this point, think about what to evaluate and how by answering the following two questions.

1. Why might it be important to know whether practice is having an impact on children and young people’s wellbeing? Try to think of at least two different examples.

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

Start of Question

1. Taking the example of a family centre such as Hedgerows, what would you try to evaluate and how? Again, try to think of at least two different examples.

End of Question

*Provide your answer...*

[View discussion - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session9_Discussion1)

**Task 2**

Start of Question

Listen to Tina talking about evaluating services, and note what she says about the need for the centre to demonstrate its effectiveness. As you watch, focus on the different measures they use at Hedgerows to evaluate impact.

Start of Media Content

Video content is not available in this format.

Tina Price talks about evaluating practice

[View transcript - Tina Price talks about evaluating practice](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session9_Transcript1)

Start of Figure



End of Figure

End of Media Content

End of Question

**Task 3**

Start of Question

Now use Table 2 below to note down the different measures used at Hedgerows to evaluate impact for both adults and children. You should be able to identify at least four areas of evaluation.

Start of Table

Table 2 Impact measures at Hedgerows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What is Hedgerows trying to evaluate?** | **How is Hedgerows measuring this?** |
| *Provide your answer...*  | *Provide your answer...*  |
| *Provide your answer...*  | *Provide your answer...*  |
| *Provide your answer...*  | *Provide your answer...*  |
| *Provide your answer...*  | *Provide your answer...*  |
| *Provide your answer...*  | *Provide your answer...*  |
| *Provide your answer...*  | *Provide your answer...*  |

End of Table

End of Question

[View discussion - Task 3](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session9_Discussion2)

End of Activity

## 8 Test your knowledge

During this course you have learned about the different and interconnecting features of children and young people’s wellbeing and the significance of practices and services. Check your learning now by completing the following quiz.

Start of Activity

**Activity 8 Quiz on the key issues and concepts in this course**

Allow about 15 minutes

Start of Question

Try to answer each of the following questions by indicating which answers are correct. Some questions have multiple correct answers. When you have completed this quiz you can check how many questions you have answered correctly.

1. Although objective and subjective measures of wellbeing may overlap, generally speaking what are two subjective measures of children and young people’s wellbeing? (Select two answers)

End of Question

a. How well children do at school in their exams

b. Children’s physical health

c. Personal wellbeing

d. Where children and young people live

e. Quality of relationships

f. Economic circumstances

[View answer - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Interaction1)

Start of Question

1. What are some of the factors that children and young people refer to as preventing a good life?

End of Question

a. Lack of leisure time.

b. A small and crowded home.

c. Bullying.

d. Not having pets.

[View answer - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Interaction2)

Start of Question

1. What does the term ‘resilience’ mean? (Select one answer)

End of Question

a. The ability to do well

b. Personal success

c. The capacity to deal with life’s challenges

d. Endurance

[View answer - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Interaction3)

Start of Question

1. What are the strengths of multi-agency practice for supporting children and young people?

End of Question

a. Practitioners sharing the same professional setting.

b. Different practitioners and services from different professional areas working together to provide support holistic support for children and young people.

c. Practitioners having the opportunity to talk to other practitioners.

d. Practitioners sharing the same ethical codes of conduct.

[View answer - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Interaction4)

Start of Question

1. Why is it important that children and young people’s services are evaluated?

End of Question

a. To provide information for service users and funders.

b. To look at practitioner performance.

c. Use feedback and evidence to improve practices and services.

d. To find ways of reducing practice and service costs.

[View answer - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Interaction5)

End of Activity

## Conclusion

This free course, Supporting children and young people’s wellbeing, has looked at children and young people’s wellbeing as well as some of the services and practices that can support children and young people. The range of activities have allowed you to explore the links between wellbeing, happiness and resilience. Drawing on examples of holistic practice you have reflected on the value of multi-agency services which can support children and young people in diverse ways. Finally you considered why it might be important to evaluate such services and how settings try and find different ways in which they can show they are being effective and making a difference to the wellbeing of children, young people, and the families they live in.

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## Acknowledgements

This free course was written by Andy Rixon. It was first published in July 2019 and updated in January 2024.

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## Solutions

## Activity 1 Is the wellbeing of children and young people in the UK in crisis?

#### Discussion

The newspaper article uses the terms ‘wellbeing’ and ‘happiness’ interchangeably to describe children and young people’s experiences in the UK during the twenty-first century – you will consider the differences between these two terms in a later activity. It draws on longitudinal research so provides an insight into changes across time. These and alternative measures of wellbeing will be discussed further in this course.

Whether you felt this was a fair representation of the UK might depend on your own experiences and those of young people you know. There are frequent media reports claiming the mental or physical health of children and young people today is getting worse and their wellbeing is in crisis but they are not always well-substantiated. We can also look at international comparisons which are periodically published by UNICEF (see for example [this report](https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/Report-Card-16-Worlds-of-Influence-child-wellbeing.pdf) where the UK appears in 27th place in a league table of child wellbeing outcomes.

This article was of course written just before the COVID-19 health pandemic which will also have had an effect on some young people’s mental health.

[Back to - Activity 1 Is the wellbeing of children and young people in the UK in crisis?](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session3_Activity1)

## Activity 2 A good childhood?

### Part

#### Discussion

1. The Children’s Society argue that in the past parents or teachers were asked to assess wellbeing on behalf of children but that ‘research has shown that children’s and parents’ responses to the same sets of questions about emotional and behavioural difficulties are not the same’. Therefore, they believed it was important to work with young people to develop their own index of measures of wellbeing.
2. Rather than use the term ‘wellbeing’, the researchers asked open-ended questions about what makes a ‘good life’ for young people and what the barriers to a good life are. The ideas were initially generated (see p. 14) with eight thousand 14- and 15-year-olds, and then piloted and expanded so the survey now covers the 8–17 age range.

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session4_Part3)

## Activity 3 Examining the term ‘resilience’

### Task 1

#### Discussion

You may have referred to some of the following terms:

* the ability to cope
* self confidence
* inner resolve
* self-esteem
* grit.

These are just a few of the terms that are commonly used when talking about resilience and, of course, you will have ideas of your own, and these may be based on your own experiences. You may have included terms such as self-confidence and inner resolve, for instance, as behaviours that can develop throughout life or be strengthened.

What you may have found when doing this activity is that the concept of resilience is actually quite difficult to put into words; it is not definitively one thing or another but a complex interplay of behaviours, skills and qualities. The concept rose to prominence through the work of developmental psychologists such as Emmy Wener (1990) and Michael Rutter (1985). But why do you think developing these skills and qualities are considered so important?

[Back to - Task 1](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session5_Part1)

### Part

#### Discussion

In describing resilience, Mind – a UK charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people – suggests that avoiding life’s challenges completely isn’t possible, but developing the skills to deal with them effectively when they arise will help to guard against potentially catastrophic consequences. Mind suggests that ‘resilience is something that can change over time’ and furthermore, ‘can be taught, and learned’ (Mind, 2017). One might consider resilience as an important life skill linked to wellbeing. Resilient behaviours and qualities can act as buffers that protect children and young people from further stress and anxiety.

The concept of resilience is very broad and includes a number of skills, qualities and behaviours.

Daniel and Wassell (2002) have proposed a wide range of factors from individual characteristics (such as empathy and problem solving skills) to family factors (such as a close bond to at least one person), through to those that are community wide (such as good a school experience and extended network of support).

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session5_Part3)

## Activity 4 Understanding resilience and wellbeing

### Part

#### Discussion

1. The term ‘wellbeing’ is used to capture a broad understanding of what it means to be ‘well’ and includes physical, emotional, psychological, and social factors that affect children and young people. Understanding wellbeing cannot therefore be seen in isolation from social contexts. This might include the nature of children and young people’s relationships in families and care contexts. It might also reflect where children and young people live as well as economic and domestic circumstances. The term can also be used generally to denote quality of life experiences.
2. Children and young people’s wellbeing may be influenced in a positive way by good physical health or material wealth, for example, yet undermined by poor social relationships; similarly, while relationships may be very positive, physical health can be undermined by living in conditions of poverty. The variety of factors that influence wellbeing across the lives of children, young people and families highlights the many points of contact there are with practitioners and the potential for them to play a role in supporting and enhancing wellbeing.
3. Many children and young people face challenges and potential threats to their wellbeing, which they may find very difficult to cope with. These may include dealing with a family health crisis, and can also include relationship issues at home, such as divorce and changing family circumstances, as well as difficulties experienced in school, such as bullying and friendship issues.

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## Activity 5 Hedgerows

### Part

#### Discussion

1. Tina describes ‘resilience’ as being at the heart of the work at Hedgerows. She explains how important it is for parents to learn how to draw on their own strengths in facing and solving life’s problems. Tina suggests that, for some parents, this might mean seeking employment, returning to work, taking an educational course or coming off medication such as antidepressants.
2. Tina describes ‘a resilient child’ as one who is engaged and fulfilled but also able to share emotions. In a similar way to describing resilience for adults, she also suggests that a resilient child is able to face everyday challenges and issues rather than try to avoid them or be defined by them.

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session7_Part3)

## Activity 6 Services working together

### Task 2

#### Discussion

Many of the services and professionals available for children, young people and families at Hedgerows are summed up in the completed table below (you may have identified others).

Start of Table

Table 1 Services available at Hedgerows (completed)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Service users** | **Services** |
| Families | * Health visitors
* Parenting sessions
* Midwives – baby clinics
* Employment counsellors
* Citizens Advice Bureau
* Domestic violence counsellors
* Community debt counsellors
* Art therapy
* Mental health practitioners and organisations such as Mind
 |
| Children | * Early years professionals
* Play therapy
* Parent and toddler sessions
 |
| Young people | * Youth partners
* Community practitioners
* Leaving care group
* Group for unaccompanied minors
 |

End of Table

[Back to - Task 2](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session8_Part2)

## Activity 7 Evaluating practice: why and how?

### Part

#### Discussion

It might seem obvious that we want to know if practice is having an impact on children and young people’s wellbeing, but there are several perspectives on this, including to:

* improve practice (some approaches could be dropped and others enhanced if it was apparent which ones were effective in their impact)
* demonstrate that services are fulfilling their main purpose
* demonstrate that a service is providing value for money – whoever is providing the money may want evidence of what impact it is really having.

Hopefully you came up with some ideas about what a family centre might do to evaluate practice. The next short video will highlight some of the things they do at Hedgerows – see how they compare to your own ideas.

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session9_Part2)

### Task 3

#### Discussion

The completed table below shows some examples, although you may have identified others:

Start of Table

Table 2 Impact measures at Hedgerows (completed)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What is Hedgerows trying to evaluate?** | **How is Hedgerows measuring this?** |
| The impact of the services at Hedgerows on the local community | Numbers using the centre and accessing different sessionsLevels of engagement with ‘priority’ groups |
| Whether it is helping achieve change with individual families | Using an assessment tool (‘Family Star’) and individual action plan |
| Whether Hedgerows is helping children prepare for the transition to school effectively (school readiness) | Data from schools about success at end of foundation year |
| Whether it is making a difference to children’s health | Health data, including dental decay and obesity measuresEnhanced healthy eating and lifestyle |
| Whether it is improving the ability of adult family members to secure employment | Numbers securing employment |
| Whether it is enabling adults to engage with educational opportunities | Numbers signed up to courses |

End of Table

Tina mentions many different types of measures here including more anecdotal examples of making a difference – such as social networks helping with a mental health issue - which she sees as important in enhancing the wellbeing of the whole family but which are more difficult to demonstrate explicitly.

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## Activity 8 Quiz on the key issues and concepts in this course

### Part

#### Answer

**Right:**

c. Personal wellbeing

e. Quality of relationships

**Wrong:**

a. How well children do at school in their exams

b. Children’s physical health

d. Where children and young people live

f. Economic circumstances

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Part1)

### Part

#### Answer

**Right:**

c. Bullying.

**Wrong:**

a. Lack of leisure time.

b. A small and crowded home.

d. Not having pets.

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Part2)

### Part

#### Answer

**Right:**

c. The capacity to deal with life’s challenges

**Wrong:**

a. The ability to do well

b. Personal success

d. Endurance

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Part3)

### Part

#### Answer

**Right:**

b. Different practitioners and services from different professional areas working together to provide support holistic support for children and young people.

**Wrong:**

a. Practitioners sharing the same professional setting.

c. Practitioners having the opportunity to talk to other practitioners.

d. Practitioners sharing the same ethical codes of conduct.

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Part4)

### Part

#### Answer

**Right:**

c. Use feedback and evidence to improve practices and services.

**Wrong:**

a. To provide information for service users and funders.

b. To look at practitioner performance.

d. To find ways of reducing practice and service costs.

[Back to - Part](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session10_Part5)

# Tina Price talks about resilience

## Transcript

TINA PRICE

Resilience, for me, is about everything that we do, really, here at Hedgerows. We are here to support children, families, people in the wider community, but we really want them to come in and, down the line, hopefully they won't come back. I mean that in the nicest way possible. We want them to come back and volunteer. We want to move on and be resilient, and be successful in their own lives, so they can draw on their own strengths that they would have learned through maybe courses or through the support of the staff at the centre or other partners that we work with, so they then can then solve their own problems, their own crises, support their children, and have the confidence to do that, so they don't feel that they're not capable as a parent, that they need, you know, an agency involved in their life, when they may have had that themselves. We have many parents that go on, and children, to be resilient. In terms of parents, it might be about going back to work, being confident to do a training course, or emotionally, signpost themselves to another agency, or actually, know that they might go through a tough time, but they will come out the other side. Maybe, eventually, not take antidepressants, as many of our parents do. That would be a huge sign that they're resilient. Defining a child who's resilient is probably harder, I would say, than defining what it is for an adult. But for me, it would be a child that could actually come in and enjoy a session in nursery, be engaged, be fulfilled, but also be able to share if they're unhappy or share their emotions, so when they go to school and they come up again, it's a problem, that it's not going to define them, that they can face that challenge. So then when they go to secondary school, perhaps they're not missing time out. They're not staying at home, because something is troubling them at school. That they can go in there, face it. They're not going to end up maybe in a different school, and they can be able to complete their exams and hopefully go to university or have the job of their dreams.

[Back to - Tina Price talks about resilience](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session7_MediaContent1)

# Hedgerows Family Centre

## Transcript

TINA PRICE

Hedgerows Family Centre is based on Netherfield. It’s amongst the most 10% deprived areas in the country. People live maybe 10, 12 years less than areas, estates maybe just a few miles up the road in more affluent areas. We’ve got families living in multi-occupancy, some asylum seekers, so people still in poverty.

Morning!

MOTHER

Hello!

TINA PRICE

Hello, how are you? Nice to see you again.

MOTHER

Very well. Good, good.

TINA PRICE

Is it cold out?

MOTHER

It’s freezing, yeah.

TINA PRICE

Oh, bless you.

MOTHER

I’ve come for Toddler Time.

TINA PRICE

Toddler Time? Yes, it’s on today.

Hedgerows has been through a period of change, like lots of centres, but we are still here. And I think, for us, the most exciting thing now is that we are a family centre. So we’ve only been a family centre for the last few months. We have lots of opportunities to reach a wider segment of the community.

[BEEPING]

Morning.

FATHER

Good morning.

TINA PRICE

At Hedgerows, multiagency is at the heart of everything we do. We wouldn’t be able to, and we wouldn’t want to, offer the services to our children and our families if we didn’t work with our other agencies. We will have health visitors on board, on site, and they will be supporting babies, initially, through development checks, baby clinic. We may have midwives that will come in and do some pre-birth checks with families, right on through to sessions to ensure that children meet all their needs around the EYFS.

MOTHER

All right, thank you very much.

MIDWIFE

Good boy!

MOTHER

Yes, yes, yes.

TINA PRICE

We have art therapy, just sessions for children and their parents so they can play together. We also have an on-site day nursery to ensure that when they go into school, they have that school readiness.

[BABY YELLING]

TINA PRICE

But we have our youth partners in Milton Keynes that are part of the council, and they run sessions. So we have, at the moment, we have a group for young people who may be in the country as unaccompanied minors, a leaving care group, but also a youth group that may be running cookery sessions.

[CLASSROOM CHATTER]

TYAN

I started coming more regular, because my son, he had quite strong anger issues, and it was so hard to deal with myself, with my partner working full-time. So I asked for the support from the staff members, and they have supported me through everything I’ve needed, give me little pointers to different things that I could deal with. And it’s just, because they’ve helped out so much, I thought, it’s more of a reason to come and help my child develop social skills, as well as personal independence for me to be able to talk to other adults.

GIRL

Mine.

[CLASSROOM CHATTER]

TINA PRICE

Looking at the needs of the parents, we know what will help the children. But also, we want them to achieve in their own rights. A lot of our parents, not all, have experienced some abuse at some level. Therefore, it’s very difficult for them to, perhaps, parent their own children.

Mental health is a huge thing. Most of our parents are taking antidepressants. And we’re trying to support them through counselling or other avenues, encouraging them to volunteer or get back into work. We run domestic violence support groups, training courses around people that, perhaps, ought to work in child care, volunteering, to improve the skills of parents.

JILL

Monday, I was on a safeguarding children course, and I’ve learned so many things. It’s giving me an access back into education and to retrain into another career that I will find quite rewarding, which I don’t think I’d have come upon if it hadn’t have been for Hedgerows.

TINA PRICE

We worked with our community council, and they will send an adviser to us on a Wednesday. It will help parents with debt or any issue-- custody, anything like that.

[CLASSROOM CHATTER]

JASON

Well, my wife’s been made redundant. And when I actually spoke to one of the members of staff, they actually said, wait a minute, went off, came back, and they had times and dates of when the Citizens Advice person was coming in and when the employees’ person was coming in, so my wife could actually have all the information which she needed.

[CLASSROOM CHATTER]

TINA PRICE

It can also be that we have Mind working with us in partnership, and they’re running counselling sessions for us. We also run sessions for grandparents, so whether that’s counselling, or they might be doing art therapy. We visit families in the homes. We may give out food vouchers or vitamins. But basically, we’re here for anybody who needs our support.

INSTRUCTOR

You ready? (SINGING) Wind the bobbin up. wind the bobbin up, Point to the ceiling, point to the floor--

TINA PRICE

To me, wellbeing is everything for our families and our children. But wellbeing is about supporting families when they come in, ensuring that their wellbeing improves by having that relationship with that family support worker that’s always professional. But we’ll give them lots and lots of support when they need it most.

(SINGING) Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are.

[APPLAUSE]

[Back to - Hedgerows Family Centre](%22%20%5Cl%20%22Session8_MediaContent1)

# Tina Price talks about evaluating practice

## Transcript

TINA PRICE

Hedgerows makes a difference for children, young people, and families in lots of different ways. Some are hard to measure, and some are easy to measure. So if we look at footfall or people that are registered with the centre, even though we support 13 estates, on Netherfield, particularly, we know that 100% of our families have registered with us. So we know we've got that contact with them. We can't say that we make a difference to every person in that household, but they are registered with us. They know that we're there if they need us. But our data shows us that we are engaging very well with young people, with people in workless households, and lone parents, so we know from our data that we are engaging with the right people. When it comes to actually measuring our outcomes, we use different tools. So we use family star, which, on an individual basis, will show the growth of an individual, say, when they come in and they may have an issue, we can measure that in a few months time to see if anything has changed and we would actually know. We would have an action plan that would support how that change has come about. In terms of children being school ready, we would use all the planning sessions we have, the earliest foundation stage, and we have measured with local schools, particularly our key local school, that the children that spend more time at Hedgerows score higher at the end of the foundation year. So we use that as evidence to prove that if they come to Hedgerows, if they absorb lots of sessions, as do their parents, they may have some specialist support, they will go on and achieve hopefully better results at school. We have key performance indicators around obesity, so we use different targets to measure how well we're doing for our families in the local area. Also things like has tooth decay gone down, because of all the dentist comes in or all the prevention work we do with families around sugar being quite damaging to children's teeth and sugary drinks. So we can use those and say, actually, we can show part and parcel here that we have made a difference. Signing up children to the two-year-old funding and nursery, we can link the doors that we've knocked as to whether the take-up's improved. So all those things are really important. For us, we like to look at it also on a personal scale. So when a parent comes in and says, actually, you might not have realised, but when I took part in that aerobics session for weeks on end and met lots of women from different cultures and people that I knew that spoke to me in my own language, that got me through postnatal depression, or that made my mental health better. We also have courses. So we will measure how many parents have taken up education for the first time. In this area, we don't have lots of people that have got qualifications from school. So to say they've got level one, level two, we record how many people have gone back to work with our support or with our partners support. I still believe that whoever comes through the door, I like to see people go on to be successful. And I think some people don't start off, you know, exactly what sure start says, with the same chance in life, and for whatever reason, I think our families they come across barriers all the time, they have had difficult childhoods themself. It's about having high expectations. I believe that we can make a real difference. When we're looking in-depth in families now, there's a lot of what I would call emotional poverty. And I think that's the thing that fascinates me at the moment and really keeps me here is that unless we-- it is about well-being. Unless we help people emotionally, it isn't necessarily the practical elements of poverty, even though that's really hard and impacts massively on people, it's their emotional well-being, it's their emotional needs that have never been met that I think that's the specialist work that we do that I think makes a difference. And when I see-- I think of maybe one or two families where I've seen the most amazing journey that they've been on that we couldn't predict in the beginning, and you see happy, safe children and parents that are achieving. We have a duty to these families to make a difference, and believe in them and have high expectations for them, because they have been, you know, not everybody has.

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