

Helping Children Achieve

Defining wellbeing with children and young people



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Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland

- Based in the University of Glasgow working with the Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- Supported by the Scottish Government through [Every Child Every Chance: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-22](#), other public and private sector funders
- Working in places where levels of disadvantage are high and focus on improving outcomes for children and young people
- Two areas of focus with activity specific to the local context
 - voice and empowerment of children and young people
 - supporting and helping to connect efforts and activity
- Six sites – four urban, one small town and one rural
- The CNS team - development and research/ evaluation working together

CNS Methodology – why Capabilities?

- **Importance of children’s voices being heard in decision-making**
(UNCRC Article 12; Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014)
- **Broader agenda of including communities in decisions**
(Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015)
- **But CNS early findings suggest that children’s voices are not routinely heard in decisions that concern them:**
 - ‘Children and young people always get the raw deal and decisions are always made for them and not with them.’ (R25, Third sector respondent)
 - ‘their voices are swept under the carpet by adults who think they know better ... regardless of whatever the child has said, the adult still knows better so we need to try and raise some of those voices up.’ (R10, Public health researcher)

Capabilities Approach: Nussbaum's 'minimum core'

CNS CAPABILITY DOMAINS

(Adapted from Children's Measurement Framework, 2011)

1.	Living a long life
2.	Being healthy
3.	Feeling safe
4.	Feeling happy & confident
5.	Having good relationships with family & friends
6.	Being able to learn
7.	Having a job, safe & warm place to live, food & clothes
8.	Being able to get involved in activities
9.	Being able to take part in decisions
10.	Being protected by the law
11.	Being able to play/enjoy leisure time
12.	Having access to nature, animals & pets

CNS Capabilities Research Model (1)

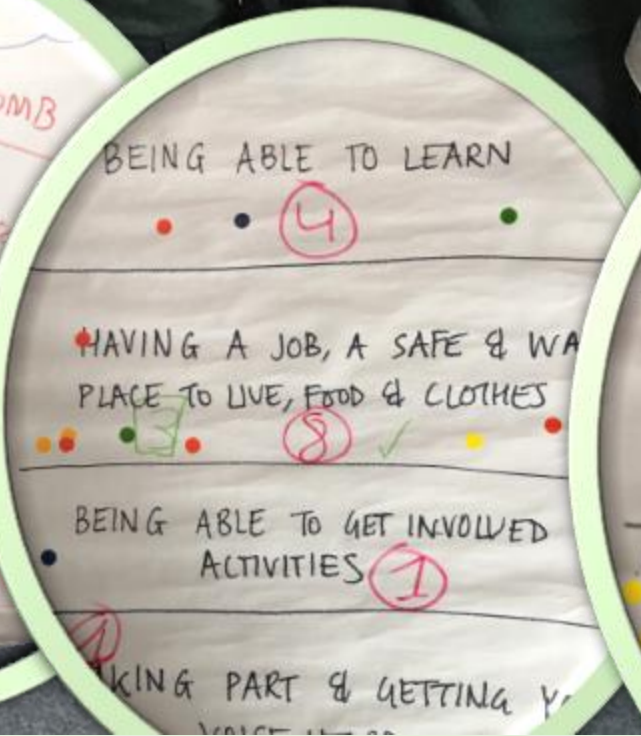
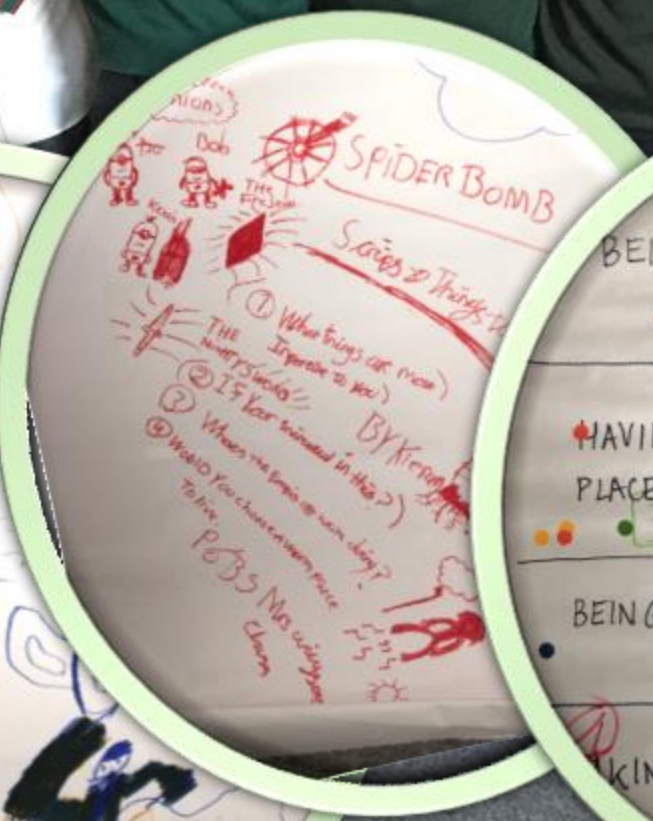
A. Explore Capabilities/Develop research skills

	Learning component	Purpose and methods	Skills development
1.	Introduction to Capabilities Approach	To introduce the Children's Neighbourhoods programme To introduce the Capabilities Approach and why it is a useful way of measuring wellbeing in neighbourhoods	Critical thinking
2.	Map the community	To explore the local neighbourhood using visual research methods Research method: mapping your neighbourhood	Working collectively
3.	Explore identity	To explore what is important in supporting wellbeing Research method: self-portraits	Self-reflection and confidence-building
4.	Vote on priorities	To choose the key priorities for action for CYP in this neighbourhood Research method: basic survey	Dialogue and democratic decision-making
5.	Understand local issues	To explore the complexities of a key local issue or priority through a structured debate Research method: focus groups - gathering data and participating in debate Group discussion on capabilities priorities 1 & 2	Debate and dialogue
6.	Explore local history	To explore the rich history and experience of local people in our neighbourhoods Research method: storytelling Group discussion on capabilities priorities 3 & 4	Listening and analysis
7.	Use digital media	To research digital resources of community information To explore digital research tools Research method: online research/digital tools Group discussion on capabilities priority 5	Digital awareness Analysis skills
8.	Analyse early findings	Analysis of small group priorities and capabilities framework Research method: analysis skills	Listening and analysis

CNS Capabilities Research Model (2)

B. Conducting Research (Co-researcher programme)

	Learning component	Purpose and methods	Skills development
10.	Develop research methods	To develop understanding of different research tools, their potential uses, strengths and limitations To develop a research tool(s) to undertake 25% sample of school/group population (Optional: to undertake qualitative research, e.g. focus group discussion) Research methods: Questionnaire; Focus Group facilitation	Dialogue and deliberation
11.	Fieldwork	To undertake research with a 25% sample of the school/group population Research methods: Questionnaire; Focus Group facilitation	Co-researcher skills: presentation, listening, organisation
12.	Analysis	To analyse research findings and draw out common themes Research methods: Analysis of questionnaires; Analysis of group dialogue transcripts; compiling framework	Analysis: simple statistical analysis Analysis of focus group discussion
13.	Presentation of findings	Presentation of overall school/group capabilities framework and discussion of next steps based on research Research method: Design and production of School Wellbeing Priorities poster	Presentation skills Dialogue on next steps

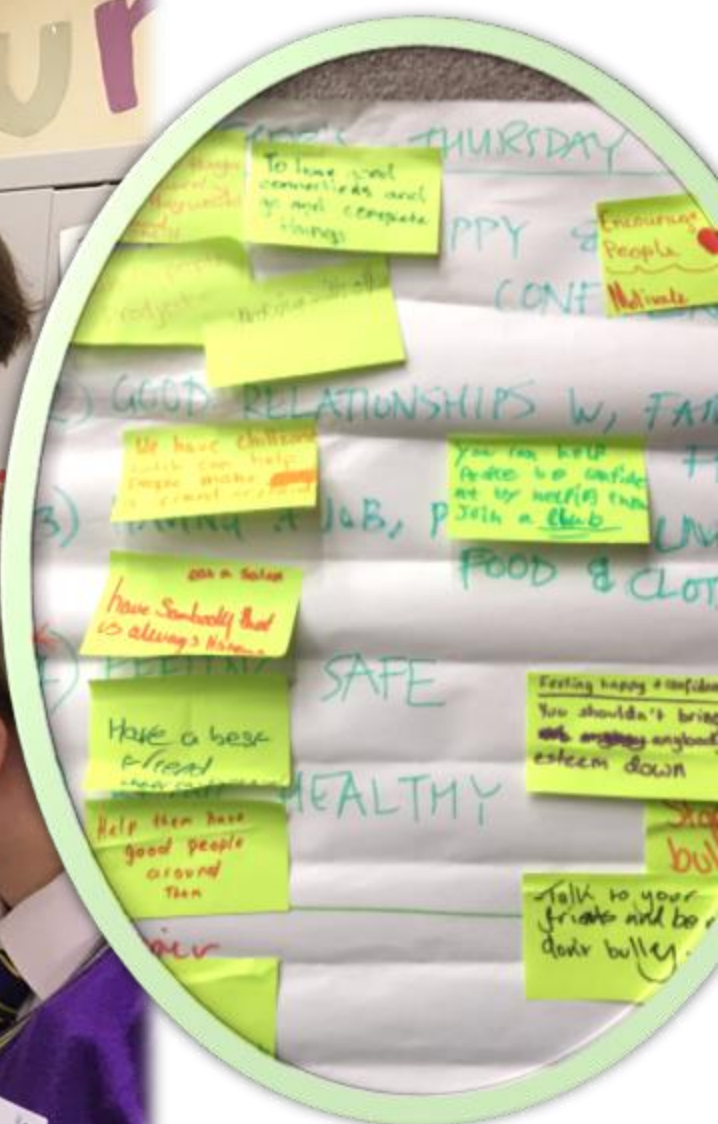


Initial findings – CYP priorities – SCHOOL 1

CAPABILITIES DOMAIN	FUNCTIONINGS	
1. BEING HEALTHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sport & Healthy eating ○ Mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pets
2. HAVING A JOB, SAFE & WARM PLACE TO LIVE, FOOD & CLOTHES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Being able to get a good job/awareness of what's available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Getting a good education ○ Being able to do a job you enjoy
3. FEELING SAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having someone to look after you, being loved by your family ○ Having a safe place to live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having a safe space to go when you're upset
4. LIVING A LONG LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having good food ○ Feeling free ○ Having supportive friends and family to look after you, and not feel lonely ○ Having pets for companionship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Living on a sustainable planet ○ Sustainable, healthy transport ○ Being able to avoid smoking and drugs ○ Having good support for vulnerable people
5. HAVING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Being supported emotionally by family, being able to love and feel loved ○ Having friends, people to keep you company, laughing and smiling, being able to confide in others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Feeling safe and protected ○ Being looked after, well-nourished and having clothes ○ Having pets, being able to tell them things you can't tell anyone else



NUR



School

Jessica

Jordan

Melfort Park

Town Hall

Initial findings – CYP priorities – SCHOOL 2

CAPABILITIES DOMAIN	FUNCTIONINGS
1. HAVING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Being able to get support and help, having someone you can trust, mutual respect, having someone's attention, being able to have good communication, being able to make up after an argument ○ Being able to have company, not be lonely, being able to see family and not be prevented by physical distance from them ○ Being able to see friends, even when they live further away ○ Being able to have positive relationships, not made negative by social media, which 'can be good and can be bad', being able to protect yourself when using technology
2. HAVING A JOB, SAFE & WARM PLACE TO LIVE, FOOD & CLOTHES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Important for stability, career progression, if you want to have a family ○ Need to focus in school, 'not act up', get good exams results ○ Additional tutoring, study skills ○ Provision of affordable housing by Local Authority or Housing Associations, being able to afford bills and keeping up with bill payments so you don't get evicted ○ Being able to afford transport, bus passes ○ Being able to access good local shops, discounted healthy food ○ Being able to access cinema, leisure, clubs
3. FEELING HAPPY & CONFIDENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you aren't happy and confident, this is a significant barrier to achievement and social activity and can create fear and paranoia, can make you stay inside and make things worse ○ Good relationships with family and friends support young people to be happy and confident ○ Confidence gets you noticed ○ Confidence shows in body language: this is a way to notice if your friends are struggling

Initial findings – CYP priorities – SCHOOL 2

CAPABILITIES DOMAIN	FUNCTIONINGS
4. FEELING SAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Feeling physically safe, in your own home and out and about, feeling safe in school, not being worried about people fighting or bullying○ Feeling emotionally safe, being able to trust others, friends, parents, teachers○ Feeling safe when using technology, not being subject to bullying on social media or online○ Being able to access counselling and support
5= BEING ABLE TO LEARN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Important for getting a job○ Quality of provision is important: inspiring teaching, provision of local activity in the community○ Location can get in the way – affordable transport important, outreach opportunities○ Mental health can get in the way of learning: problems with friends or family might impact on ability to learn○ Problematic behaviour in school can also a barrier to learning - for self and others○ Lack of sleep is a significant barrier to learning; most young people keep phones on all night, to use as an alarm, to check for messages, and to listen to something as a distraction
5= BEING HEALTHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mental health vital for all other aspects of health○ Being healthy affects all the other capabilities○ Bullying can have a big impact on mental health

Initial findings – Ideas for action– SCHOOL 2

IDEAS FOR ACTION: PROPOSAL TO SCHOOL/COMMUNITY

1. HAVING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS

- **Peer counsellors** in every year group
- **Training in talking skills** with young people
- Being a good friend
- **Support for parents** in talking to your young person

2. HAVING A JOB, SAFE & WARM PLACE TO LIVE, FOOD & CLOTHES

- **Role-play different jobs**, based on expert advice from employers.
- Opportunities for **supported study** so you can achieve the grades you want
- Peer support to **check young people are coping** with school work and achieving what they can/want.
- **Raising money/donating** food for those in need in community

3. FEELING HAPPY & CONFIDENT

- Hold a **big event to highlight the issues around feeling sad/happy**
- Make a survey to **check how happy/sad young people are** and take action to support the sad people
- Carry out research on **what has helped young people with depression to improve**
- Put up noticeboards with motivational posters/inspirational quotes on them
- Raise awareness of being **kind and supportive**

4. FEELING SAFE

- **Create support groups – small groups to help young people** feel safe; People of the same age group; Have a therapist/teacher/counsellor there to supervise
- **After school club: different topics** – each month/exams/subjects

5. BEING ABLE TO LEARN

- Make **learning groups/small tutoring groups** with young people
- Offer clubs
- **Offer transport to school/community activities**
- **Support young people with disabilities** to attend activities
- Develop opportunities to **work on the curriculum online and/or to music**
- Increase opportunities for **outdoor learning**

Summary

- **Children & young people have a vital role** in defining and measuring wellbeing
- Nussbaum's 12 domains offer a tried-and-tested means to discussing critical issues – **time & legitimacy**
- Capabilities offers a framework that includes **personal, social and structural concerns** in one framework for wellbeing policy and practice
- Capabilities is a coherent way to define wellbeing **with CYP voices at the core** – both prospective & evaluative

Next steps

- New context – impact of Covid-19
- Current research cycle – complete study, develop and evaluate action research projects
- Test and refine the capabilities research model
- Develop research in new CNS sites

Resources

- [CNS Capabilities Literature Review](#)
- [Capabilities Research Model](#)
- References

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Any questions?