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Children's Social Well-Being in Primary School

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**Centre for Research on the
Wider Benefits of Learning**

Key Questions

- 1 What are the dimensions of social well-being?**
- 2 How does social well-being change in primary school?**
- 3 What are the characteristics of children with high/ low social well-being?**
- 4 What are the predictors of change in social well-being?**
- 5 Are there early markers of children with low social well-being?**

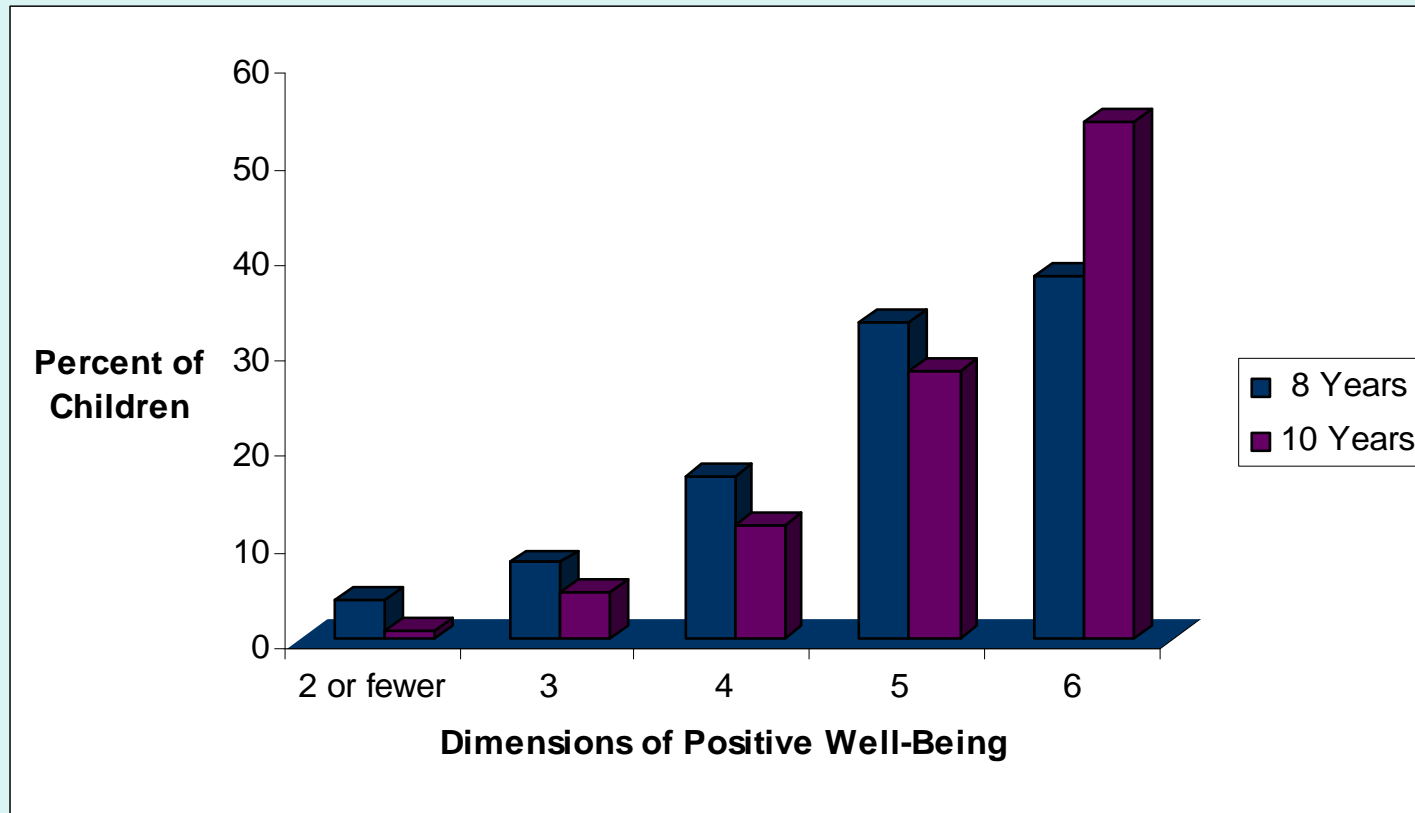
Framework

- **ECM – Enjoying and Achieving**
- **Dimensions: Peer relations, friendships, positive and negative behaviours, school engagement and enjoyment**
- **Social vs. Emotional Well-Being**
- **Data: ALSPAC – primary school children from 8 and 10 years**

Dimensions of Social Well-Being

Outcome	Definition	8 Years	10 Years
Victim	3 + Month	33%	22%
Bully	3 + Month	7%	6%
Antisocial Activities	1 or more	22%	17%
Talks to Teacher	Never	21%	11%
Likes School	No, not much	19%	15%
Happy with Friends	2 + Unhappy	5%	9%

Social Well-Being at 8 and 10 Years



Change in Social Well-Being

	LOW -10	AVER - 10	HIGH - 10	TOTAL
LOW - 8	2.3%	5.7%	3.4%	11.4%
AVER - 8	2.3%	20.4%	25.5%	48.2%
HIGH - 8	3.4%	11.3%	25.7%	40.4%
TOTAL	8%	37.4%	54.6%	100%

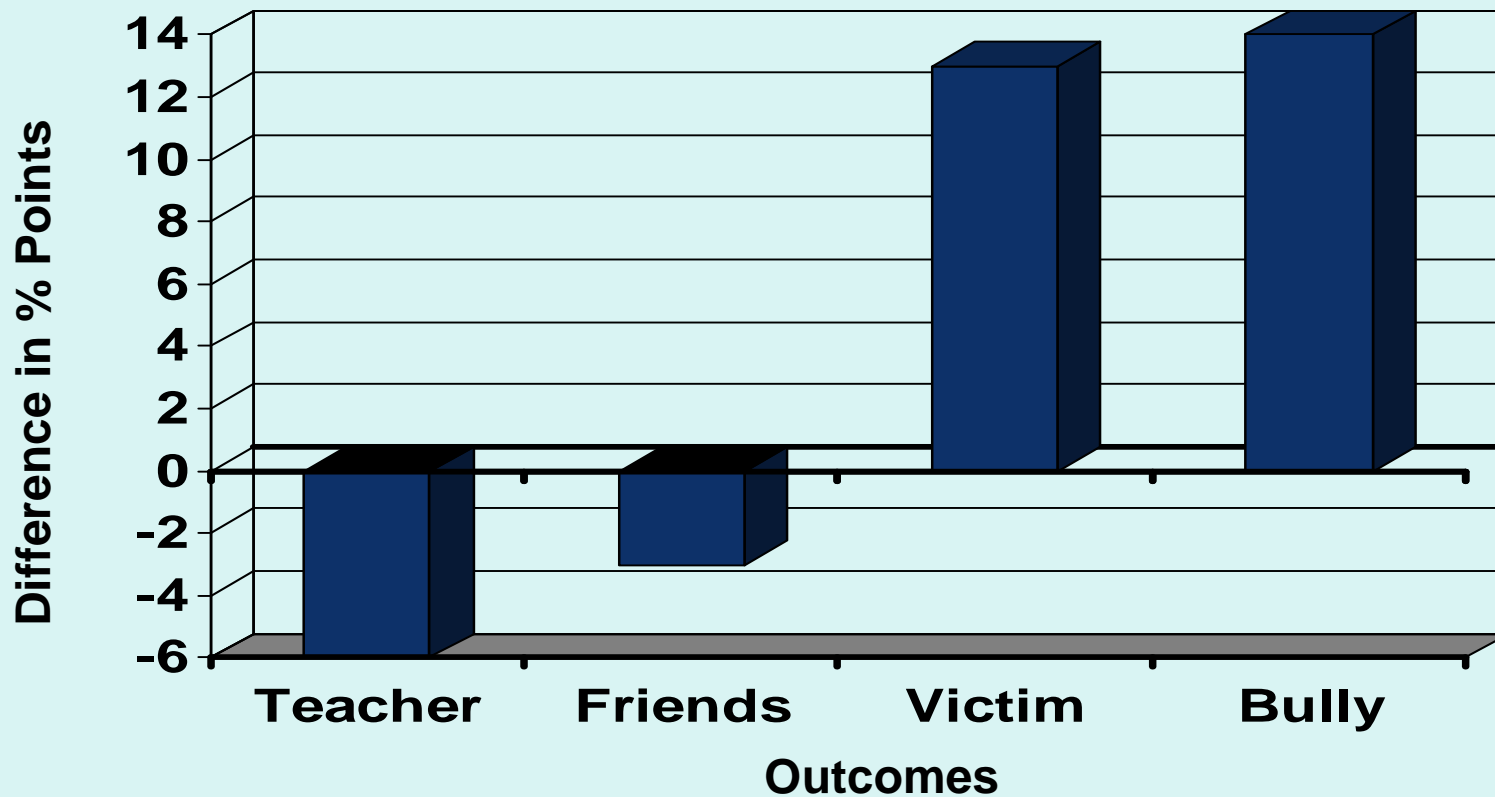
Characteristics of Social Well-Being

- **Children with low social well-being are more likely to:**
 - be depressed
 - have less self-esteem
 - have less satisfying friendships but more antisocial friends at a later point in time
 - experience more symptoms of personality disorder at a later point in time

Predictors of Change in Social Well-Being

- **School achievement predicted change in negative/positive dimensions of social well-being**
 - Higher English KS1
 - Liking School
 - But not Math KS1
- **Feeling less control over one's life predicted change in negative/positive dimensions**
- **Males were more likely to experience negative changes**
- **Socio-economic factors did not predict change**

An 8 year old bully: Age 10 outcomes compared to non-bullies



Are there early markers for children with low social well-being?

- Children who are designated as victims and/or bullies at ages 8 and 10 were more likely to have:
 - lower language and social development,
 - more emotional and conduct difficulties,
 - more hyperactivity,
 - fewer pro-social behaviours at age 4 than children not designated as victims and/or bullies.

Conclusions and Implications

- **Most young people have positive social well-being.**
- **For one in five young people, there is a trajectory of problematic social relationships which may begin at an early age.**
- **Early intervention is important to prevent later difficulties in developing and maintaining social well-being.**
- **Particularly important may be supporting early language and communication skills.**
- **Promoting school engagement may also deter further involvement in negative behaviours and promote more social well-being.**

Any questions?

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