

Signs and Scale of well-being for Babies and Toddlers

The following information has been produced by kind permission of the Pen Green research Development and Training Base. The Pen Green framework for engaging parents.

The descriptions might be slightly different for young infants. Laevers and his team have developed the following signs and scale of well-being for infants and toddlers:

Well-being for Babies and Toddlers

When children:

- Feel at ease
- Act spontaneously
- Are open to their world and accessible
- Express inner rest and relaxation
- Show vitality and self confidence
- Are in touch with their feelings and emotions
- Enjoy life

We know that they are feeling secure...

| Level | Well-being | Signs |
|-------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Very Low | <p>During the episode of observation a child clearly shows signs of discomfort:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whining, sobbing, crying, screaming etc. • Looking dejected/sad or frightened, panicky • Looking angry or furious • Bodily tension: waving arms and/or stamping feet, wriggling, breaking things, hurting others • Thumb sucking, rubbing eyes • No reaction to the environment, avoiding contact, withdrawing • Hurting himself: banging his head, deliberately falling down on the floor, etc. |
| 2 | Low | <p>The posture, facial expression and actions indicate that a child does not feel at ease. However, the signals are less explicit than level 1 or the sense of discomfort is not expressed the whole time.</p> |
| 3 | Moderate | <p>A child gives 'motionless' impression, had a neutral posture. There are no signs indicating sadness or pleasure, comfort or discomfort. Facial expression and posture show little or no emotion.</p> |
| 4 | High | <p>A child shows signs of satisfaction (see level 5). However, the signs indicating pleasure are not constantly present in the same degree of intensity.</p> |
| 5 | Very High | <p>During the entire observation period there are clear signals indicating comfort, feeling great, enjoying life to the full:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling happy and cheerful, smiling, beaming • Being spontaneous, being oneself, being expressive • Talking to oneself, playing with sounds, humming, singing • Being relaxed, not showing any signs of stress • Being open, being approachable for the environment. • Being lively, radiating, reacting energetically • Expressing self-confidence and self assurance |