

Signs of Well-Being

Openness and receptivity

The child:

- is receptive to their environment
- their expression is alert, open and direct
- is receptive to stimuli given by others: they listen, often responds
- is aware of people around him; doesn't cut himself off from new situations or people, but shows a willingness to explore them
- can accept both verbal and non-verbal attention from others: a cuddle, a compliment, a word of comfort, encouragement

Flexibility

The child:

- readily adapts to the environment (especially noticeable in situations new to the child)
- is not (or only very briefly) confused or upset
- easily accepts new situations, therefore experiences them to the full.
- doesn't dwell on problems and frustrations; is willing to consider various alternatives or to make compromises

Self-confidence and self-esteem

The child:

- is able to express himself and lets himself be seen or heard
- sees himself in a positive light ('I'm a nice person and worth knowing.')
- When faced with new challenges they will tackle them head on: try them out, risk the possibility of failure.
- When failing at something, they manage to get over it quickly and doesn't associate them with their entire being ('I'm useless, I'm, worthless.')
- looks for challenges at their level: neither too easy nor too difficult
- is willing to admit there are things they cannot do yet without feeling inadequate

Being able to defend oneself, assertiveness

The child:

- Adopts an assertive attitude to their environment: wants to be respected for who they are
- Stands up for own wishes, needs and desires; is strong enough to ask for what they need
- Objects to injustice
- Does not respond to orders or suggestions that interfere with own needs

Vitality

The child:

- is full of life and energy, a zest for life
- Facial expressions and composure expresses vitality: eyes glistening, sits upright, shows readiness for action (no slowness in their movements), amongst the first ones to stand up and go
- shows clear contrast with children who often seem tired, yawn, stare in front of them, last to stand up...etc

Relaxation and inner peace

The child:

- is relaxed: facial expressions are natural (no twitches), muscles are not tight or tense, movements are flexible and smooth
- keeps up normal speech tempo and vocal volume
- doesn't bottle up tension, doesn't experience emotional unrest
- is able to relax quickly and effectively after and exciting, active game
- Children who are in the state of well-being generally give the impression of being relaxed, but at the same time remain active.

Enjoyment

The child:

- is in their element; is happy and takes pleasure in what he's doing/experiencing
- no restraints in their enjoyment
- enjoys the right things, the right way – enjoyment is authentic
- Some children enjoy themselves with much visible and audible enthusiasm, some in silence.

Being in touch with one's self

The child:

- is in close contact with their inner self: own needs, wishes, feelings, thoughts and admits them
- doesn't turn away from these sensations but works through them
- is 'at peace' with himself: feels united with other people, animals, nature, immediate environment