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Creating the NEST framework (mental health and wellbeing)

Background on how the NEST framework was created and what it aims to do.

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Overview

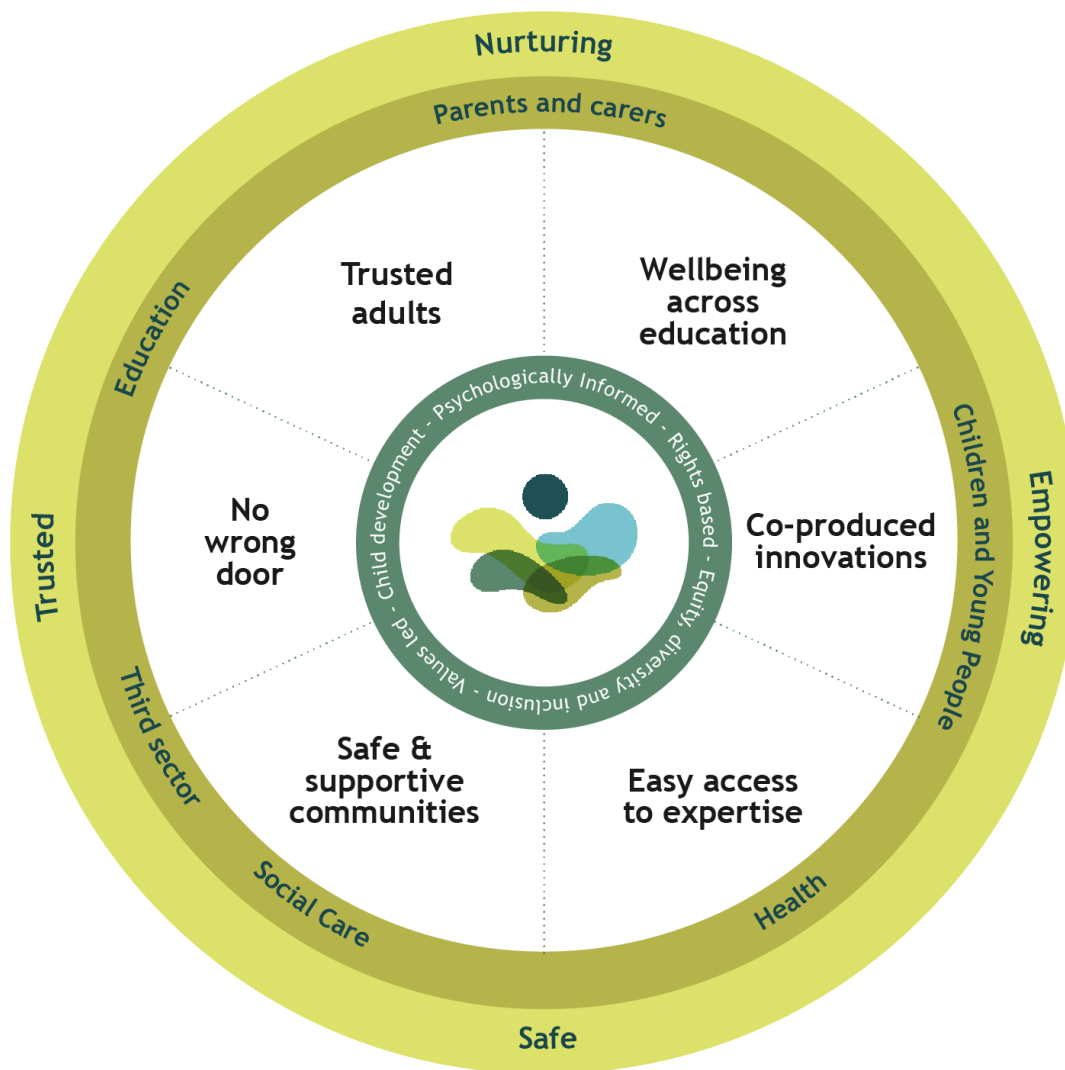
The NEST framework is a planning tool for improving mental health, wellbeing and support services for:

- babies
- children
- young people
- parents
- carers
- their wider families

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Why we call it NEST

The idea of a NEST felt like a good way to describe the things that can help our mental health and well-being most of all.

A NEST:

- feels safe and protects from harm
- helps you to grow strong and aim high
- is somewhere you can return to whenever you need to if things get hard
- is different for everyone and special to you.

A NEST is made up of:

- the people who are closest to you
- the things you enjoy and help you grow
- the places you go in your day to day lives
- lots of layers that help you feel good about yourself

Choosing the words to make up NEST

We asked what words best described how these layers should feel if they are to support mental health and well-being.

These words were chosen because they spell out NEST:

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- Nurturing: taken care of and cherished.
- Empowering: feeling strong and listened to.
- Safe - feeling protected and able to be yourself.
- Trusted - reliable and there for you.

How NEST works

The NEST framework helps services work together to make sure babies, children, young people, parents and carers have NEST'S that feel this way.

It expects services to concentrate on the things that matter most.

This is called 'values led' because it is about the things that are valued most of all.

Trusted adults are really important because you can turn to them if you feel sad or worried. They also notice the things you are good at or when you need extra help.

Trusted adults can be:

- at school
- at home
- in your community

They can be:

- school teachers
- sports coaches
- youth club leaders
- dance instructors
- music tutors

They can be the lunchtime supervisor, the lollipop crossing person or anyone you see regularly who makes a difference to your day.

The more trusted adults you have in your life the better. Every person who is kind, who notices, who understands you and who celebrates your strengths will make a big difference to how you feel, and how you see yourself.

The framework talks about this a lot because the relationships we have with others make a very big difference to our mental health and wellbeing.

It is as important for adults as it is for children of all ages. It brings out the best in all of us.

If someone is there for us at the right time, or notices when we have tried hard or sees that we are not quite our self, it can help us more than anything else.

The framework calls this 'every day magic'.

It lifts our mood, gives us confidence, helps us to feel valued and lets us know that someone cares about us. This is at the heart of mental health and wellbeing for everyone.

Children and young people who are feeling very sad, or very worried or

very angry or very left out need this 'every day magic' more than anyone. They need it more of the time too.

We need to organise services so that more of this happens for children of all ages in their day to day lives.

It is also important for parents and carers, and for the people who work in services too.

We all need 'every day magic'!

The framework also talks about how important it is to feel like you belong, whether this is:

- at home
- at school or college
- with your friends
- in your community

Sometimes a child or young person is so sad, worried, angry, or feels so left out, it is hard to know how to help.

The framework says two things are important here:

- having advice and experts close by so that the grown-ups can ask for ideas and help quickly.
- that they don't have to worry by themselves

If the grown-ups that know you best have support and feel confident about what

to do, that is often much better than waiting a long time to see an expert yourself.

They know you much better, they see you more often, and they can help with how you are feeling day to day.

The grown-ups may need to go back to ask for more advice whenever they need it. Or get everyone who knows you together to share ideas in a meeting.

This is especially the case for children and young people who are having a very difficult time. They can feel so sad and angry that they push their trusted adults away.

Experts can help explain why this is happening and offer ideas about how to get around it.

Often staying alongside a young person and not giving up can help the most.

We call this help to 'hold on' instead of 'referring on' in the framework and it is why trusted adults are such an important part of it.

When extra help is needed

Sometimes, of course, extra help is needed. The second thing the framework says is that there should be lots of types of extra help if another service needs to become involved.

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This is called 'no wrong door'.

It is where professionals that offer extra support all come together to work out what and who can help most.

These professionals might work in health, education, social services or the third sector (charities that work with children and families).

They might be support workers, youth workers, health visitors, school health nurses, counsellors, social workers, community nurses, therapists, psychologists or psychiatrists.

They might offer information, ideas, groups, courses or different types of therapy depending on what you and your parents or carers think will help most.

Technology has really helped make more things available to more people and more quickly.

Peer support, meeting with people who are going through the same sort of thing as you or your family, can be especially helpful too.

Co-producing new ideas is part of the framework as well. It's a great way of services making sure they always listen and improve.

We are all different and we all need different sorts of help at different times in our lives.

The framework makes sure there are lots of options available, and that everyone works together so that no one misses out and falls through the gaps because

they don't 'fit' the services.

Improving the NEST framework

As we learn more about what helps we will keep up-dating the framework.

That is why we are always interested in your ideas:

- what do you think of the NEST framework?
- do you think it focuses on the things that are important to help with mental health and wellbeing?
- do you think it helps to make sure that everyone works together?
- do you have ideas that will make it better?

Further Information, contact nest.mentalhealth@gov.wales

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