



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# NYTH/NEST

## Self-Assessment and Implementation Tool

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# Introduction

This tool has been co-produced (designed with interested people including young people) to help use the **NYTH/NEST framework**. It is designed to help services, projects and organisations who support babies, children and young people's wellbeing and mental health.

We recommend everyone involved in the self-assessment completes the **NYTH/NEST awareness training** before beginning.

This tool will help you work out where your service, plans, delivery, or organisation is on its NYTH/NEST journey. The action planning part of the tool gives you a way to plan how you use the NYTH/NEST framework and principles. We recommend redoing your assessment every year to think about your progress and if you have achieved your actions, you can do this using the **Yearly Review Document**.

## Who is this self-assessment for?

This self-assessment tool has been designed for use by any service or project delivering mental health and/or wellbeing services for pregnancy, babies, children, young people and their families. It can also be used by partnerships that oversee or commission (fund) such services. The tool is not designed for use by schools who should instead use the **Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing self-evaluation**.

## Why should we carry out this self-assessment?

Welsh Government believe that every baby, child and young person should be supported to help them feel mentally and emotionally strong.<sup>1</sup> We believe that in order to do this everyone should work together to support mental health and wellbeing. The NYTH/NEST framework is our way of doing this. We hope that this tool is useful for all organisations to reflect and improve the way they support babies, children and young people.

## Who should be involved in the self-assessment?

This tool is designed to be used for discussions and thinking together. We recommend you use the self-assessment as a collaborative (group) exercise. You could bring in decision makers, managers, workforce representatives and key partners from other organisations. It will be useful to have a shared understanding of the NYTH/NEST framework before beginning so we recommend everyone looks at the short **NYTH/NEST awareness training** before starting.

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<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government, Children and Young People's Plan

It is also important that people whose lives are impacted by your service (stakeholders) are involved in this process. You should think about how to involve children and young people as well as their families and how to consider the rights of babies (in pregnancy and following birth), if you work with them. You might want to include stakeholders in your partnership discussions or do separate engagement work to suit their needs. Either way it is important that you co-produce your self-assessment.

### Good Practice Examples

You may find it helpful to look at our compilation of good practice examples of **NYTH/NEST 'in action'**. These examples may help you to learn from existing projects and ideas.



# NYTH/NEST Self-Assessment

Service/Project/Organisation:

Date of Assessment: Date of Review:

We recommend **revisiting your self-assessment and implementation plan every year.**

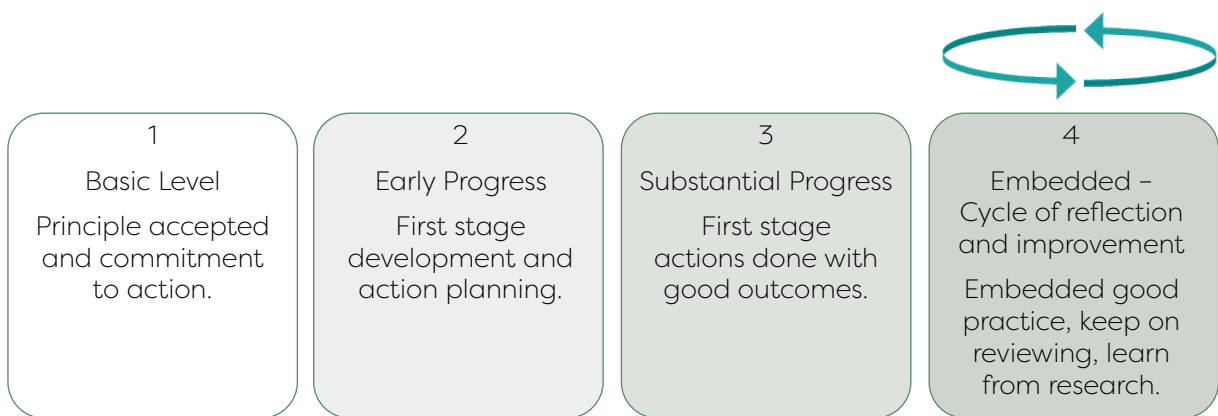
**Who is part of the assessment? Remember to include service users/ stakeholders and the voices of children, young people, and families**

Supporting Information:

**Children and Young People’s Participation in Wales Good Practice Guide  
Co-production Network for Wales**

## Where are we now?

We think it is useful to think of NYTH/NEST implementation (using NEST) as a journey. We ask you to rate each section of your self-assessment on a scale of 1 – 4 depending on how far you are along the NEST journey. However, the most important part of this self-assessment is the thinking and discussions that you have in order to reach a score.



## Underpinning Values

**All through the self-assessment we would like you to think about the underpinning values of NEST and what they might mean in each key principle.**

### Children's Rights Based

Along with the Welsh Government, all people who care for babies, children and young people have a responsibility to uphold **children's rights**. Children's rights are covered in the **training** that goes with this self-assessment. You should think about all the articles of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** and what they mean to your service/organisation.

More information is in the annex and here: **The Right Way – A Children's Rights Approach**

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The life experiences and protected or marginalised characteristics of babies, children, young people and their families, may mean they are more likely to have mental health difficulties. These characteristics could be:

- race
- ethnicity
- culture
- religion
- gender identity
- sexual orientation
- physical health and disability
- neurodiversity
- additional learning needs
- experiencing hard times
- being a young carer
- being a refugee or asylum seeker
- poverty.

Experience of extra barriers to getting support may happen as a result of racism or bullying, or through organisations and systems not being fair and equal. Babies, children, young people and families who have experienced care may have more complicated needs and organisations should try to meet these needs. Some people find it difficult to get mental health support because they face lots of barriers or have lots of the characteristics listed above. Services should reach out to those who are least likely to get support and make sure their services are designed with them in mind. Services should be **trauma informed** to make sure everyone is included.

### Child development and psychologically informed

Services are often organised around children's ages. This can mean we expect children of the same age to be at the same stage of development which can be a lot of pressure. Instead, we should understand that babies, children, and young people reach milestones in their own ways and at their own times because of a lot of different factors.

It is important adults working with babies, children and young people know about the latest thinking and evidence in their area of work and have time to learn and develop their practice. Those adults should also learn about being **trauma-informed** and how to work with **neurodiverse people**.

## Prompts for Discussion

**The prompts for discussion in the Self-Assessment sections of this tool are designed to help you hold conversations about the topic areas, you do not need to answer all the questions.**

# Trusted Adults



**Article 3:** Everyone should do what is best for the children they work with.



Describes the importance of those closest to the baby, child or young person (or parent to be and new parents) in supporting their mental health and wellbeing. Trusted adults can be parents or carers, wider family members or friends, youth and playworkers, sports coaches, teachers, social workers, health practitioners or anyone else the child or family choose to trust and build relationships with. The NYTH/NEST framework aims to support trusted adults to 'hold on' to babies, children and young people. It is important there is support for trusted adults who care for babies, children and young people. Trusted adults can:

- focus on an individual's strengths
- encourage them to not give up
- celebrate their achievements
- provide the 'everyday magic' of a trusted relationship.

Prompts for discussion:

- How do you learn about the baby, child, young person or parent's trusted adults and value their voice?
- Are people who use your services clear who their workers are, so they can build trust and relationships?
- What time and resources are you giving to staff to help them to build trusted relationships?
- How do you think about trusted adults when getting new staff or working with existing staff?
- How do you make sure there are smooth transitions between services and trusted adults?
- Do you make time for staff supervision, training and reflective practice?
- Do the trusted adults around the child know about and uphold children's rights?

Comments and findings from discussions and assessment:

Rating:

1

2

3

4

What good would look like for us

Supporting Information: What young people in North Wales think makes a trusted adult – **Build it Right recipe book**.  
More information about **trusted adults' roles**.



# Wellbeing Across Education



**Article 28:** Children have the right to an education.



Education including; early education and childcare, schools, colleges, universities, pupil referral units, home schooling and other education settings are a big part of the lives of babies, children, young people and their families.

It is important that non-education services work with education to ensure support put in place wraps around the child and family in every setting and everyone works together. Education and childcare settings should work with everyone else who are supporting their learners.

You may want to find out more about; **the whole school approach, the new curriculum, five ways to wellbeing, and the Additional Learning Needs code for Wales, Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme.**

Prompts for discussion:

- How do you identify and work with relevant education colleagues?
- How do you support and promote wellbeing and mental health links between education and childcare and the wider health and social care system?
- How do you plan with education and childcare and other people supporting children (the wider health and social care system)?
- How do you support babies, children and young people who are transitioning between childcare / early education / school placements?

**Comments and findings from discussions and assessment:**

**Rating:**

1

2

3

4

**What good would look like for us**



## Co-Produced Innovations



**Article 12:** Children have the right to be heard and listened to on all matters affecting them.



Babies, children and young people have a right to have their opinions heard and acted upon. This is according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12.

The NYTH/NEST framework says co-production should be at the heart of delivering all services that support mental health and wellbeing. We use the phrase; ‘nothing about you, without you’.

All engagement work should be underpinned by the **National Participation Standards** which say organisations should:

- provide information in an accessible way
- listen to what people have to say
- feedback on how and why they make decisions.

You should consider where co-production is possible and where engagement or other participation may be better.

Prompts for discussion:

- Are there co-production opportunities? If so, what are they, for example groups that already run? If not, how can you create them?
- Who are you co-producing with? Are you including babies, children, young people, parents, carers, and other people supporting children?
- How do you give resources and time for co-production?
- How are you making sure co-production is part of everything you do?
- How do you feedback actions that come from co-production to the people who are involved?
- How do you make sure co-production methods suit the communication needs of the people you work with?

**Comments and findings from discussions and assessment:**

**Rating:**

1

2

3

4

**What good would look like for us**

References for support: **Definition of co-production/Co-production Network for Wales/Co-producing with babies and early years/ National Participation Standards.**



## Easy Access to Expertise



**Article 13:** Children have the right to freely express themselves.



The NYTH/NEST Framework wants to make help and advice more available for all trusted adults supporting babies, children, young people and families to give them the understanding and confidence to continue their support.

Prompts for discussion:

- How do you promote (advertise) your service?
- How do you work with other stakeholders to offer your expertise?
- How do you use existing ways of sharing information to share your expertise and learn from others? (e.g. forums, networks, training)
- How do you understand what information and expertise your service users and their trusted adults need from you and when?
- Do you have clear and easy to use pathways to expertise and support?
- How do you make sure the information you give out suits the communication needs of your service users? (e.g. for people who are visually impaired/low vision, speak different languages, have not got access to electronic devices etc.)

**Comments and findings from discussions and assessment:**

**Rating:**

1

2

3

4

**What good would look like for us**



# Safe and Supportive Communities



**Article 31:** The child's right to relax and play.



Lots of different things are important to mental health and wellbeing. When they are not available then babies, children, young people and their families are likely to struggle. These can include:

- Work and access to jobs that pay well.
- Safe places to live.
- Time, space and permission to play and socialise.
- Opportunities to exercise and take part in sport.
- Healthy food.
- Arts and leisure activities.

These are problems that can't be 'fixed' in clinics. Their importance is often under-estimated when looking to improve mental health services. We want those delivering services that support mental health and wellbeing to consider these factors. Where there are wider issues services should help to address and acknowledge them.

Prompts for discussion:

- How do you understand what the people you work with see as safe and supportive communities?
- How do you connect to the wider community?
- How do you advertise what community and voluntary support is available to your service users?
- How do you consider the wider issues around a person's mental health, including inequalities, in assessments and support plans?
- Are there opportunities to work with other organisations on finding funding for services?

Comments and findings from discussions and assessment:

Rating:

1

2

3

4

What good would look like for us

Supporting Information: What young people in North Wales say safe and supportive communities mean to them: **Build it Right recipe book**. For those working in prenatal, infant and early years services; **Parent Infant Foundation’s securing healthy lives report**. And **Public Health Wales’ Public Health Approach to supporting parents**.





# No Wrong Door



**Article 6:** Children have the right to life, survival, and development.



Families who seek support for a range of needs sometimes find that they have to use a very complicated system. Sometimes they are told they are too old or too young or are on waiting lists for a long time and are then told they were waiting in the wrong queue, or have been knocking on the wrong door all along. We want families to get the right help at the right time and in a way that is right for them.

All services with a role in supporting mental health and wellbeing need to come together to work out how best to meet the need. These services can be from health, education, social services or the third sector. All have something to offer depending on a family’s circumstances.

Services should think about babies, children, young people and families who need support from many services to address different issues. For example, it is important that services supporting mental health and wellbeing deliver in a way that is suitable for neurodivergent service users.

Prompts for discussion:

- What barriers might babies, children, young people and families experience when trying to get support from you?
- How flexible are you to adapt to the needs of service users?
- How do you make sure babies, children, young people and families don’t experience ‘wrong doors’ and can access the support they need when they need it?
- If service users must be referred to access your services and/or wait for them, is there support available whilst this is happening?
- Do you work with other organisations to create a connected system of support? (you could think about; working together on funding, working from the same place as other services, sharing data and shared referral pathways)
- How do you make sure the place(s) you deliver your service from is inclusive and supportive?

**Comments and findings from discussions and assessment:**

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**Rating:**

1

2

3

4

**What good would look like for us**

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## Action Planning

Trusted Adults		
Action	Timescale	Partners Involved
Wellbeing Across Education		
Action	Timescale	Partners Involved
Co-Produced Innovations		
Action	Timescale	Partners Involved

Easy Access to Expertise		
Action	Timescale	Partners Involved
Safe and Supportive Communities		
Action	Timescale	Partners Involved
No Wrong Door		
Action	Timescale	Partners Involved



## What next?

It is recommended that you share your completed self assessment with your **Regional Partnership Board** using these email addresses.

This self-assessment tool is made to help you to use the NEST framework. It is a reflective tool. It is not made for other people to assess or judge you with. Because of this we won't respond to every self-assessment that is returned. But it is really useful for your region and Welsh Government to see your self-assessment and your NEST journey rating so we know the kind of problems and solutions organisations are coming up with when they use NEST. We will use the information from your self-assessments to create national reports on how NEST is being used and to give help where it is needed.

To help you with your self-assessment and to share ideas and problems we have a national meeting about the self-assessment tool every 6 months. You can find information about this on our **website**.

### Regional Emails:

Cardiff and Vale  
(Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan):  
**nyth.nest.CAV@wales.nhs.uk**

Cwm Taf Morgannwg  
(Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil  
and Rhondda Cynon Taf):  
**CTMNYTH-NEST@rctcbc.gov.uk**

Gwent  
(Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly,  
Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen):  
**ABB.PartnershipPMO@wales.nhs.uk**

West Wales  
(Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion,  
Carmarthenshire):  
**wwrpb@carmarthenshire.gov.uk**

North Wales (Gwynedd, Ynys Mon, Conwy,  
Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham):  
**northwalesnythnest@denbighsire.gov.uk**

West Glamorgan  
(Neath Port Talbot and Swansea):  
**west.glamorgan@swansea.gov.uk**

Powys (Powys):  
**nythnest@powys.gov.uk**

# Annex

## Aligning other agendas/ frameworks

Whilst completing the self-assessment tool you might note similarities and crossovers with other frameworks or agendas that your service/organisation is implementing or aware of. In this section of the self-assessment guide we aim to offer you guidance on how NYTH/NEST complements these other agendas.

### United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Children's Commissioner for Wales has created a framework and resources for embedding children's rights into your work. The 5 principles of a children's rights approach are:

- Embedding children's rights – do your strategic plans explicitly link to specific articles of the UN Convention?
- Equality and non-discrimination – do your strategic plans have a clear commitment to promoting equality and tackling discrimination against children, and against specific groups of children?
- Empowerment – do children have accessible information about how to exercise their rights when using your services?
- Participation – how do you currently listen to children and young people, and use the information they give you?
- Accountability – how do you ensure everyone understands their responsibilities to children, and how do you feed back to children and young people in your region?

### Corporate Parenting Charter

The Corporate Parenting Charter sets out the expectation on local authorities and other public bodies when considering the needs of care experienced children and young people.

The Charter is based around a set of principles including equality, eradicating stigma, working together, inclusive support, fulfilling ambitions, nurturing, good health, a stable home, education, thriving in the future, after care support and aligns to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It encourages all public bodies to sign up to these principles and the 9 promises that set out how care experienced children and young people will be treated, listened to, and involved in decisions that affect them.

### Early Years Maturity Matrix

The Early Intervention Foundation's (EIF) maternity and early years maturity matrix has been developed to support local areas to take a system-wide approach to improving outcomes for children and families. It is a self-assessment tool to support local partners to understand the position on early childhood intervention, identify areas for improvement, and work together to deliver positive change.

Organisations that are using the Early Years Maturity Matrix will be well placed to combine their work with the NYTH/NEST self-assessment tool as many of the principles align including trusting relationships, access to expertise, the importance of psychologically and child development informed practice and wellbeing in early education.

## First 1000 days

Those organisations working in the perinatal and early years will be aware of the importance of the first 1000 days for infants, their families, carers and supporters. The First 1000 Days is a health improvement programme led by Public Health Wales (PHW). It was established in response to strong evidence that suggests the period between conception and a child's second birthday offers the greatest potential for impact in both improving outcomes and reducing inequalities.

A key aim of the programme is to support the system to understand and act on the best available evidence. PHW have developed a report to describe a public health approach to supporting parents during the first 1000 days. The model brings together the latest theory, evidence and insight into the lived experience of parents and professionals in Wales. It identifies the key building blocks that need to be in place to support parents to give their child the best start in life. It will be relevant for anyone with an interest in improving outcomes for children in Wales, in particular, policy leads, key professional groups such as midwifery and health visiting, and local strategic partnerships.

If you are working in this field you will want to consider this report alongside your consideration of the NYTH/NEST framework, in particular the trusted adults and safe and supportive communities principles.

## Public Service Board Wellbeing Assessments

Public Services Boards (PSBs) improve joint working across all public services in each local authority area in Wales. Statutory members of each PSB include; local authority, local health board, fire and rescue authority, Natural Resources Wales. Each board must carry out a wellbeing assessment and publish an annual local wellbeing plan. The plan sets out how they will meet their responsibilities under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

When considering your whole system you may wish to look at your local PSB's wellbeing assessment to help inform your understanding of the wider system and the context of the wider wellbeing need you are operating in.

## Regional Partnership Board Population Needs Assessments

Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs) have been established as part of the **Social Services and Well Being Act** to improve the wellbeing of the population and improve how health and care services are delivered. RPBs are a partnership of health boards, local authorities, education, third sector and other stakeholders. All RPBs must undertake a Population Needs Assessment (PNAs) which contain two elements: an assessment of need, and an assessment of the range and level of services required to meet those needs. The clear focus of the PNA is to assess the health, care and support needs of the population and is the foundation on which RPB planning and commissioning is built. The PNA will inform regional planning and decision-making through a reliable, clear and specific evidence base of needs and service provision.

When considering your whole system you may wish to look at your region's PNA to help inform your understanding of the wider system and the context of the wider population need you are operating in.

### **The Right Way – A Children's Rights Approach**

**The Right Way – A Children's Rights Approach in Wales** is a framework for working with children, grounded in the UNCRC to help public bodies integrate children's rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice.

**The Right Way** guides for public bodies were developed by the Children's Commissioner for Wales with expert advice from the Wales Observatory on Human Rights of Children and Young People. It encourages public services across the country to commit to the UNCRC and to improve how they plan and deliver their services for children. The framework is based around the 5 principles of a children's rights approach: Embedding children's rights; Equality and non-discrimination; Empowering children; Participation and Accountability.

The NYTH/NEST framework is underpinned by a rights-based approach, and there is a legal duty on Welsh Government to uphold children's rights. The Right Way framework supports organisations to promote and protect children's rights to meet this duty. The framework is also accompanied by a self-assessment tool and case studies to support organisations with practical examples of how to achieve this.

### **Trauma-Informed Framework and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**

#### **The Trauma-Informed Wales Framework**

is an all-society framework to support a coherent, consistent approach to developing and implementing trauma-informed practice across Wales, providing the best possible support to those who need it most. The Trauma-Informed Framework supports organisations to be trauma and ACE informed.

In most organisations delivering mental health and/or wellbeing support all staff should have an understanding of trauma and trauma-informed practice in accordance with the principles and practice levels set out in the Trauma-Informed Framework. Trauma-informed practice and an understanding of ACEs will have a profound effect on the trusted adult relationships being built within services as well as ensuring that the underpinning values of NYTH/NEST are delivered.

The Trauma-Informed Wales framework defines the importance of the individual's experience of trauma-informed services and goes beyond this to include an ambition of a trauma-informed wider society. In order to achieve a trauma and NYTH/NEST informed approach we recommend that mental health and wellbeing services use the two respective self-assessment tools.



## Whole-school approach to emotional health and wellbeing

Because of the significance of school in children and young people's lives the Welsh Government have created the whole-school approach to emotional and mental health and wellbeing (WSAEMHWP). The WSAEMHWP aims to improve wellbeing across the whole school community through promoting wellbeing and mental health, identifying need, creating action plans and bringing in specialist services such as CAMHS in-reach or counselling. The WSAEMHWP aims to provide school staff with the knowledge, understanding and confidence to 'hold on' to their pupils and support them within the school environment whilst knowing where to go for specialist help when it is needed. The WSAEMHWP is one part of the whole school approach to health and wellbeing and is supported by the **Welsh Network of Health and Well-being Promoting Schools**.

The NYTH/NEST framework has wellbeing across education as one of its core principles and implementing the whole-school approach is education's way of delivering on this principle. If an education setting is implementing the whole-school approach, they will be delivering on the principles set out in NYTH/NEST.

By using the WSAEMHWP as the implementation mechanism for NYTH/NEST in schools, it is important that all school staff understand the principles of the whole school approach and the actions being taken by their school to improve learner's, and their own, emotional and mental health and wellbeing. Most staff will not need

to know about the NYTH/NEST framework in addition to the whole school approach. However, we do recommend those with a responsibility for liaising with external agencies (for example; CAMHS, charities working with the school, school nurses, healthy school co-ordinators etc) have an understanding of the NYTH/NEST framework and the language used to help them in their conversations and ensure consistent messages and practices are carried out in line with the NYTH/NEST principles.

If you work very closely with schools you may want to ask them about their whole school approach plan.

## Young Carers

An unpaid carer is a person who provides or intends to provide care for an adult or disabled child. This could be caring for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act was introduced in 2014 to reform social services law with a key focus on improving the wellbeing outcomes for people who need care and support and carers who need support. The act introduced new rights for unpaid carers which are detailed in **Welsh Government's Charter for unpaid carers** and the **youth friendly version**.

# Thanks and Acknowledgements

This self-assessment tool was co-produced with the NEST self-assessment working group and the National Youth Stakeholder Group.

Thanks also goes to the following for their input:

Children's Commissioner for Wales Office

National NEST Steering Group

NHS Wales Executive

Public Health Wales

And to the organisations who piloted the tool and offered comments and improvements:

Flying Start, Powys County Council

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Schools In-reach

Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities, Flintshire County Council

Regional Family Service, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Council

Homestart Cymru

Emotional Wellbeing Resilience Service, The Behaviour Clinic

