

Promoting a healthy environment for children essay sample



I have collated five pieces of evidence which I believe to describe the role of the practitioner in working towards a healthy lifestyle and environment for children. My first piece of evidence is “ a children’s environment and health strategy for the uk by the health protection agency” (see appendix 1) I have chosen this document because it shows includes a strategy of how to ensure children live healthily in a suitable environment and the things that a practitioner should implement in the daily routine in order to promote a healthy lifestyle, it also includes states which maybe be useful for a practitioner when doing so.

The second piece of research I found was the “ statutory framework for the early years foundation stage” (see appendix 2) this sets the standards for learning development and care for children in foundation stage, this acts as guidance for all practitioners and show the exact roles of practitioners in working towards a healthy lifestyle and environment for children.

The third piece of evidential research I gathered was “ the effective provision of pre-school education (EPPE) project: findings from the early primary years” (See appendix 3). This document shows the impact of a child’s environment and lays out the aims that have come from these findings, therefore shows what the practitioner should be provide in order to meet a child’s care and learning needs and promote and healthy life style, a key part of a practitioner’s role.

The forth piece of research that I found was an article from the early years educator magazine called “ growing healthy food” (See appendix 4); it encourages practitioners to grow vegetables with the children under their

care and talks of the benefits of this. It shows how a practitioner should promote a healthy lifestyle through introducing healthy foods. I think this is a very insightful article as growing healthy foods not only encourages healthy eating but it's a great opportunity for children to learn about the outside environment and get some fresh air which is also a crucial part of having a healthy lifestyle.

The fifth piece of evidence I found that describes the role of the practitioner in working towards a healthy lifestyle and environment is a change for life document called " ready steady go" (See appendix 5). It's focused on early years and includes all sorts of information for those working in early year's settings, it has recipes for fun healthy foods, information on how to handle fussy eaters and exercise based activities, and it is a brilliant resource for all practitioners.

The National Health Service Act 1946 (NHS) provides free health care to all UK citizens, children especially are entitled to free dental care, prescriptions and Optometry care. The NHS also provides a lot of information for parents and carers in how to keep their child healthy and what to do in emergencies, (see appendix 6) which is a leaflet aimed at parents and carers of children from 0 – 16 and describes the precautions that should be taken in the event of a child becoming ill or being injured, it shows the seriousness of different situations and whether it can be dealt with at home or the child should be taken to a GP, a walk in centre or A and E. In general the NHS Act works in supporting the rights of children to a healthy lifestyle by allowing them access to health care whatever financial or cultural situation they are in.

The care standards act 2000 sets out the standards that must be met by settings that care for children. It also establishes a regulatory body for care providers, this is the main purpose of the act, and it includes child minders and day care providers and allows the secretary of state to retain a list of individuals who are unsuitable to work with children. This is a means of safeguarding children which coincides with children's right to safety.

The United Nations convention on the rights of the child (1989) is the main piece of legislation that is in place to protect the rights of children. The UNCRC applies to all children from birth to 18 years; it outlines the basic rights children are entitled to. There are five main areas to the convention, according to

Tassoni P (2007) " the UNCRC endorses the principle of non-discrimination, reinforces the importance of fundamental human dignity, seeks respect for children, highlights and defends the family's role in children's lives and establishes clear obligations for member countries to ensure that their legal framework is in line with the provisions of the convention"

Several articles relate directly to children's right to a healthy lifestyle, for example; article 6

Children's rights alliance for England (2010) " every child has the right to be alive and to be the best person they can be"

I have found a document that summarizes all the articles of the uncrc and outlines the right of children (see appendix 7), article 24 states that " all children have the right to be in the best possible health", all child care

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settings should be aware of this piece of legislation in order to support and protect children's rights to a healthy lifestyle.

New legislation was established on account of the UNCRC being taken on by the UK, the Children act (1989), it focused on the welfare of children, and it covered areas such as parental responsibility and safeguarding children. The act also protected children from discrimination and stated that diversity and inclusive practice was very important, meaning that children's individual needs were to be considered and met.

Bruce T etal (2010) " the act states that the needs of children are paramount (i. e. the most important). Local authorities must consider a child's race, culture, religion and languages when making decisions. Childcare services must promote self-esteem and racial identity"

The Education Act 2002 outlines standards that must be met by all educational facilities; it focuses on child protection, health and safety practice, and promoting overall health and wellbeing for children. It incorporates procedures for identifying and reporting abuse as well as measures to support children who have been abused, for example pastoral support. It states that staff should have training of safeguarding children; this makes them more effective at protecting children. This legislation supports children's right to be protected from abuse and to be physically and emotionally healthy.

There are many factors which may affect children's health and wellbeing at different times in their lives, even before children are born, the poor choices of their mothers can have a massive impact on their health. The mothers
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diet in particular can have an effect on the child in later life, for example the lack of folic acid during pregnancy can be severely detrimental, it can cause spina bifida; A defect of the spine in which part of the spinal cord are exposed through a gap in the backbone. (See appendix 8) certain drugs, legal or otherwise, can be harmful to an unborn baby. Teratogenic is the term given to drugs or other substances that are able to interfere with development of the foetus and cause birth defects. As well as drugs, alcohol has severe consequences for unborn babies. Children born to mothers who drank excessively during pregnancy are at risk of foetal alcohol syndrome. (See appendix 9)

The age span from birth to four years is a crucial developmental period and factors like neglect, poverty (see appendix 10) and poor nutrition can have an especially significant effect on their development and learning. Children whose basic needs are not being met, either through poverty or neglect are not able to advance and progress to their full potential, if a child is hungry or tired how they can be expected to concentrate on learning. Lack of good nutrition can also cause poor growth and development as well as ill health as if a child is not getting adequate vitamins their immune system is likely to be lower. Different types of nutrition also has different benefits for the body and children need good food to be energize and function properly in school. (See appendix 11)

Parents who smoke can also have an effect on their children's health, passive smoking can put children at risk (see appendix 12), when someone smokes, it immerses into the air around which the child then breathes in, due to the fact that children are still growing they are especially sensitive to <https://assignbuster.com/promoting-a-healthy-environment-for-children-essay-sample/>

the resulting effects of passive smoking, they also breathe faster than adults which means they are likely to breathe in more smoke. Passive smoking can result in children being more likely to suffer from bronchiolitis, asthma and chest infections. The increased chance of infection also means that these children are likely to be absent from school more often causing them to be at risk of falling behind and thus affecting their learning the chance of reaching their full potential.