

Developing Data to Portray the Whole Child in Context

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TRENDS.
Child

Organization of Presentation

- A framework for measuring the whole child in context, focusing on positive indicators
- Gaps in current federal data collection
- Methodological issues
- Geographic data availability

Expand and Improve Positive Indicators of Child and Youth Well-Being

- What is the problem?
 - Overreliance on deficit model and narrow focus in measurement of child well-being
- Why is it important?
 - Science: to understand the whole child and effects of positive factors on outcomes and their interaction with negative
 - Inform practice about what to focus on
 - Change public perception of youth > investments
- What can be done?
 - Develop and use positive measures of child well-being

Individuals

Physical health,
development, &
safety

Social/emotional
development and
behavior

Cognitive
development &
education

Spiritual
Development

Relationships

Family

Peers

School

Community

Macrosystems

Context

Family

Peers

School

Community

Macrosystems

Individual level child well-being data needs:

Physical development and safety:

- Safety: seatbelts, bike helmets, etc.
- Environmental hazards

Social/emotional development:

- social/emotional/cultural intelligence
- Prosocial values and behavior
- Self-regulation
- Agency and identity

Individual level: continued

Cognitive Development and Education

- Critical thinking and other 21st skills
- Academic self-concept
- Creativity

Spiritual Development

- Moral character
- Purpose
- Connection to Spirit/Life force/Creator/Source

Developmental Stage Data Gaps

- Middle childhood : K-5
 - Play
- Early adolescence/middle school:
 - School experiences
- Late adolescence/high school
 - Competencies, 21st century skills
- Young adults
 - Life skills

Contextual Data Needs

- Family : individual centered data systems impair our ability to describe family unit
- Peer: positive peers
- School: school climate
- Community: community institutions
- Macrosystems: societal value of youth

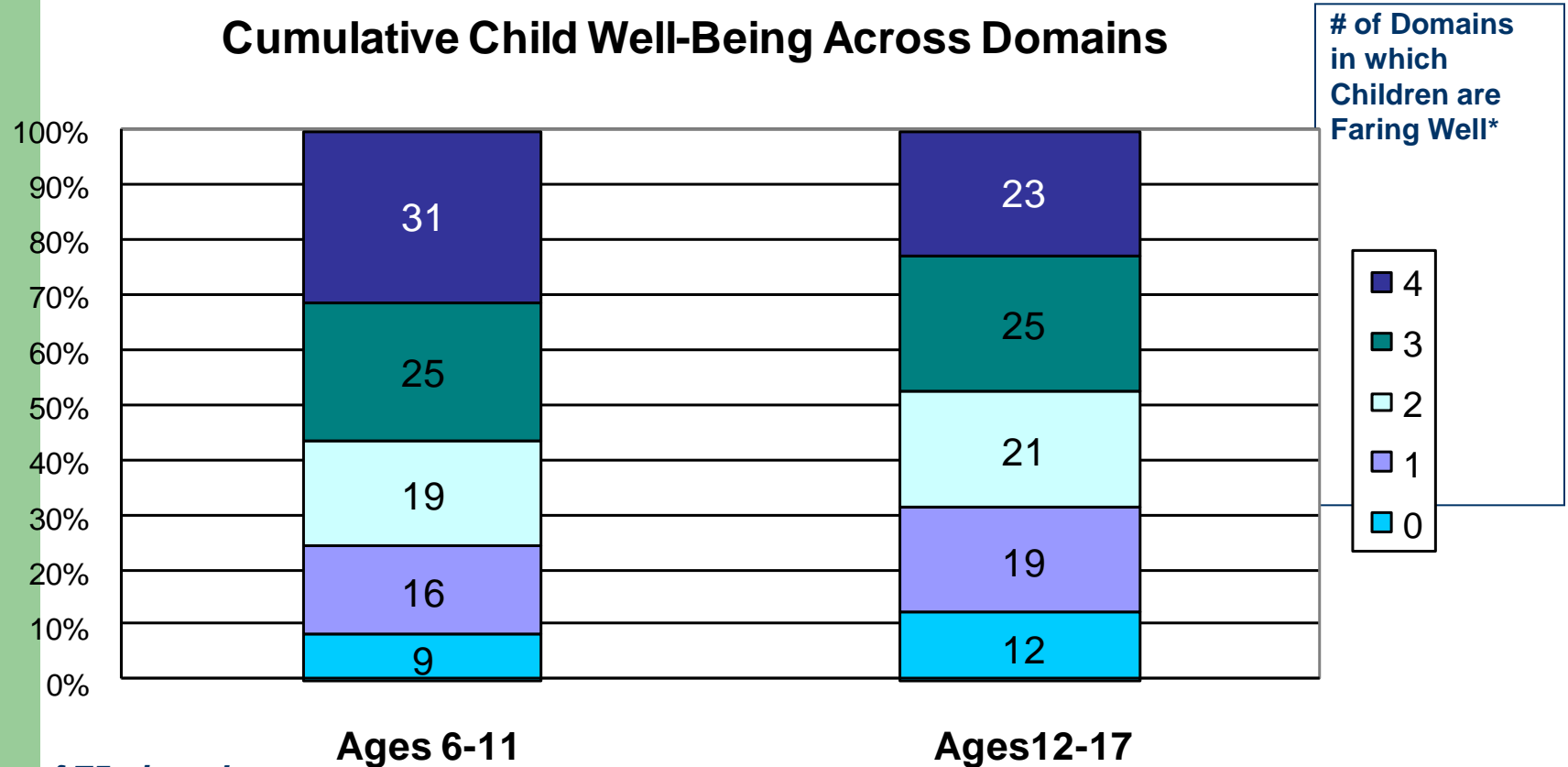
Relationship Quality Data Needs

- Family : sibling relationships
- Peer: supportive peer relationships
- School: student perception of support
- Community: positive relations with non-related adults
- Macrosystem: engaged in positive social action

Methodological Issues for Developing Positive Indicators

- 1) Defining what is a positive indicator
- 2) Involving Children and Youth
- 3) Cross-Cultural and Cross-National validity
- 4) Micro versus macro data
- 5) Surveys versus administrative data
- 6) Identifying best reporters of information
- 7) Periodicity
- 8) Longitudinal data vs. cross-sectional
- 9) Items vs. scales: how short can you get?
- 10) Relative versus absolute measures
- 11) Validity, both concurrent and predictive
- 12) Sub-populations with special needs or perspectives
- 13) Cut points

Micro data present a picture of the actual circumstances experienced by individual children



of Domains in which Children are Faring Well*

- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1
- 0

*Score of 75+ in a do.....

Need Comprehensive National Survey of Child Well-Being for Nation and the States

- What is the problem?
 - No one survey provides microdata for all domains and age groups and the contexts and relationships that exist
 - Measurement and policy/ program needs mismatch
- Why is it important?
 - Need to measure whole child
 - Test relationships of individual, contextual and relationship measures to each other and their influence on outcomes
- What can be done?
 - Fund a periodic survey that fills current gaps in the knowledge base and collaborate across agencies

Internationally Comparable Data

- Need international survey across domains, relationships and contexts using comparable measures
- Currently cobble together data from various surveys focusing on health, education, and conducted in various years.
- Social and emotional well-being a particular gap

Coordinating Data Collection and Dissemination across Federal Agencies

- What is the problem?
 - Interagency forum on child and family statistics is supported by voluntary member contributions
- Why is it important?
 - Concerns with year-to-year continuity resulting from a lack of devoted funding
- What can be done?
 - Secure annual federal funding

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