Developing a ‘classroom as community’ approach to supporting young children’s wellbeing

Teachers need to understand the difficulties faced by chronically stressed children, and know how to create supportive learning environments. Providing support for the idea of community in this process, researchers Schreiber and Valle (2013) and Ciani, Middleton, Summers and Sheldon (2010) found that enabling autonomy and building trust within groups assists children to be more available for learning. Furthermore, there is evidence that a community-based approach supports children’s learning motivation via a peer-shared culture that fosters children’s sense of autonomy (Lash, 2008; Scully & Howell, 2008).

Those who experience difficulties within the group are not excluded, but rather invited into a process of communication to enable the community to accommodate and adapt to meet members’ needs. The term ‘community’ in The Wellbeing Classroom project was thus positioned as a context for children’s learning, relating, healing and development.

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References