

# Wellness Education

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## What is Wellness?

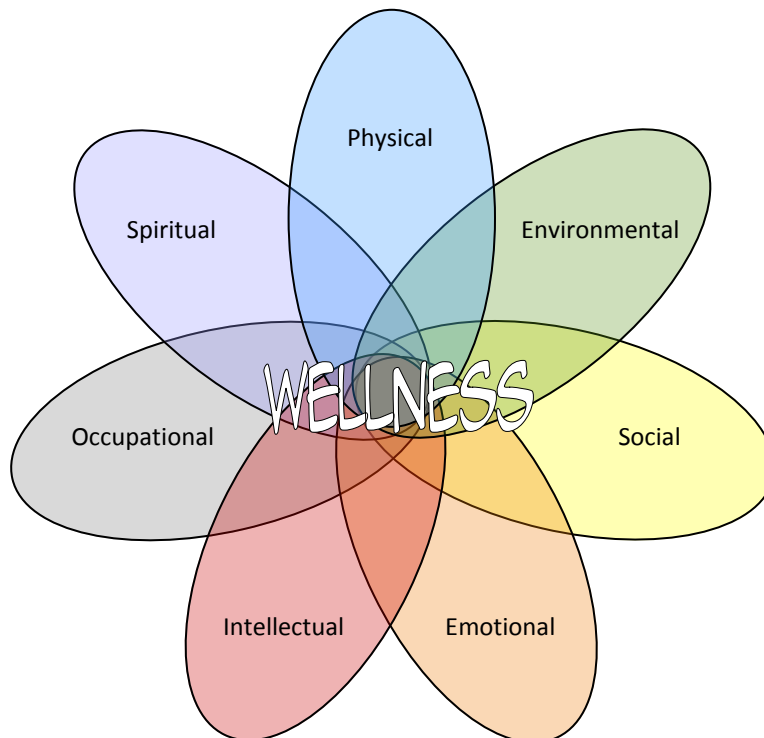
Wellness is an active, lifelong **process** of becoming **aware** of **choices** and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life.

- **Process** means that we never arrive at a point where there is no possibility of improvement.
- **Aware** means that we are continuously seeking to improve.
- **Choices** mean that we consider a variety of options and select those that are in our best interest.

Wellness is made up of seven dimensions. It is about the whole person, about balancing the different dimensions of life and health. These dimensions include: physical, environmental, social, emotional, intellectual, occupational and spiritual. The dimensions are integral and interactive. Improvement in one dimension as a result of a lifestyle change can result increased well-being in the other dimensions. Similarly, decline in one dimension can have a negative affect other dimensions.

We all have the ability to live life to the fullest and to maximize our personal potential in a variety of ways. The responsibility is on the individual. It is a matter of self-evaluation and self-assessment. This process involves continually learning and making changes to enhance our state of wellness.

## The Seven Dimensions of Wellness



## Physical (body)

*A healthy body maintained by good nutrition, regular exercise, avoiding harmful habits, and making informed and responsible decisions about health*

To remain well, **physical wellness** requires that you take steps to protect your physical health by eating a well-balanced diet, getting plenty of physical activity and exercise, maintaining proper weight, getting enough sleep, avoiding risky sexual behavior, trying to limit exposure to environmental contaminants, restricting intake of harmful substances, and seeking medical assistance when necessary.

## Intellectual (mind)

*The ability to gather, process, recall and communicate information; the ability to solve problems effectively and creatively and to maintain a positive outlook on life.*

**Intellectual wellness** involves unbridled curiosity and ongoing learning. This dimension of wellness implies that you can apply the things you have learned, that you create opportunities to learn more, and that you engage your mind in lively interaction with the world around you.

## Emotional (feelings)

*The ability to understand your own feelings, accept your limitations, achieve emotional stability, and become comfortable with your emotions.*

**Emotional wellness** implies the ability to express emotions appropriately, adjust to change, cope with stress in a healthy way, and enjoy life despite its occasional disappointments and frustrations. It is the ability to feel and express the full range of human emotions and to control them rather than be controlled by them.

## Social (family, friends, relationships)

*The ability to relate well to others, both within and outside the family unit.*

**Social wellness** endows us with the ease and confidence to be outgoing, friendly and affectionate toward others. It is the process of forming and contributing to supportive relationships with family, friends, associates and the community.

## Spiritual (values, purpose, intuition, vitality)

*The sense that life is meaningful and has a purpose; the ethics, values and morals that guide us and give meaning and direction to life.*

**Spiritual wellness** implies a search for meaning and purpose in human existence leading one to strive for a state of harmony with oneself and others. Developing a higher awareness of yourself, others and your surroundings. Maintaining strong nurturing relationships with both self and others.

## Occupational (career, skills)

*Preparing and making use of your gifts, skills and talents in order to gain purpose, happiness and enrichment in your life.*

**Occupational wellness** means finding both balance and purpose in how we occupy our time – including work and leisure. It means that we seek a total lifestyle that is satisfying and rewarding. The development of occupational satisfaction and wellness is strongly related to your attitude about your work.

## Environmental (air, water, food, safety)

*The capability to live, work and play in a clean and safe environment that is not detrimental to health.*

The quality of today's environment has a direct effect on personal wellness. To enjoy **environmental wellness** we require clean air, pure water, quality food, adequate shelter, satisfactory work conditions, personal safety and healthy relationships. Taking steps to improve our environment and prevent violence in your community contributes to environmental well-being.