

Well-being Indicator Tool for Youth (WIT-Y)



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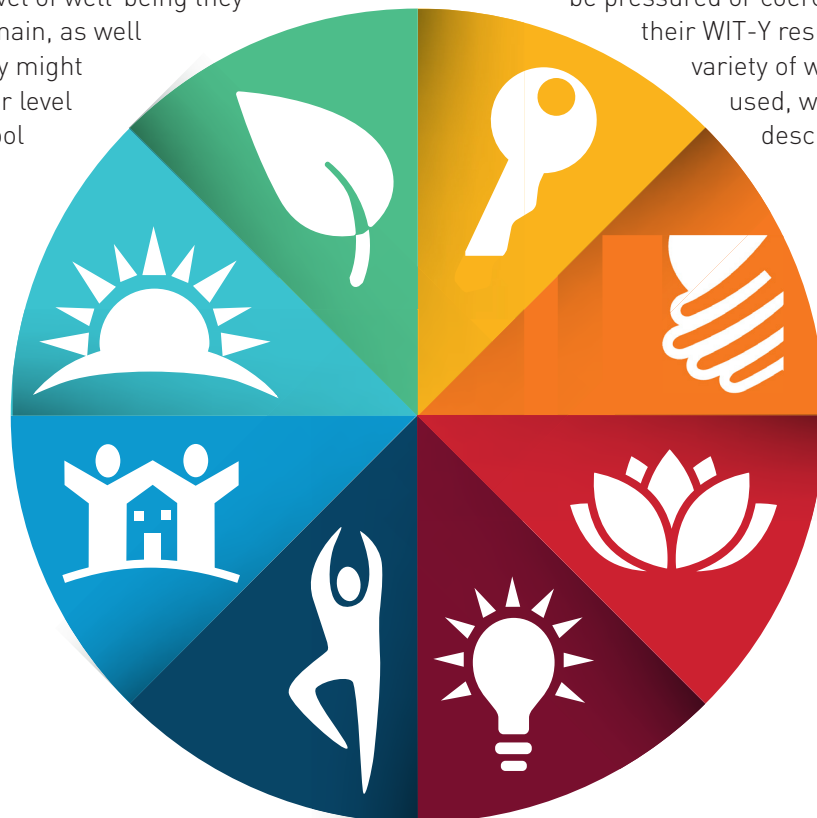
Introduction of the Well-being Tool for Youth (WIT-Y)

The WIT-Y project began as a way to contribute to the national dialogue on well-being in the lives of children and youth involved in child welfare. A number of well-being conceptual frameworks were utilized in the development of the WIT-Y, including the Administration for Children Youth and Families Comprehensive Framework for Nurturing the Well-Being of Children and Adolescents; the National Indian Child Welfare Association Relational Worldview Model; the Foster Care Work Group, a part of the Youth Transition Funders Group, report, *Connected by 25: A Plan for Investing in the Social, Emotional and Physical Well-Being of Older Youth in Foster Care*; and the Center for Spirituality and Healing's Well-being Model. Ten semi-structured focus groups with youth, parents, and professionals were conducted to help inform the examples, anchors and domains of well-being used as the foundation of the WIT-Y. Content and face validity were conducted with a group of interdisciplinary experts for further refinement and feedback on the tool.

The WIT-Y has been designed as an inventory for use as a 'conversation starter' with youth about their overall well-being. It is youth-informed, meaning youth decide what level of well-being they have within each domain, as well as ways in which they might want to increase their level of well-being. This tool is not meant to be used as a form of

measurement, but as a tool for self-assessment. The WIT-Y may be used in partnership between a youth and a professional or caring adult. Conversations with the adult can help youth to understand the importance of balance across well-being domains. In this way, they might discuss how culture, values, and circumstances impact the youths' views of the domains and their level of well-being within each. For example, if certain domains of well-being are not currently understood or valued by the youth, a conversation allows the youth to safely explore the potential these domains can have in the youth's life and the importance of balancing the interaction of all eight domains. Conversation between youth and caring adults may also result in providing youth with helpful resources they can use to increase support or increase their current level of well-being. Youth might also want to develop a plan to help themselves attain their desired level within each domain. These resources are provided within this guide.

Because this is a youth-driven tool, the WIT-Y can also be used by the youth alone. Youth may not be ready to talk about or share their thoughts about their well-being with adults in their life. Youth should NOT be pressured or coerced into talking about their WIT-Y results. There are a variety of ways the WIT-Y can be used, which this guide will describe.



The Well-being Indicator Tool for Youth: WIT-Y

The WIT-Y was designed for youth aged 15-21 years who currently or in the past have had contact with the child welfare system. The WIT-Y Consists of three components; the WIT-Y Assessment, the WIT-Y Snapshot, and the WIT-Y Blueprint. Each component is described in detail within this guide and helpful hints and instructions are presented for both adults and youth.

COMPONENTS OF THE WIT-Y ASSESSMENT

The guided self-assessment is comprised of eight domains of well-being. Youth can assess their own well-being using five levels in each domain. The WIT-Y Assessment is available through a web-based application or 'app' and functions similarly to a survey where youth select their answer (level of well-being) for eight questions (one for each domain of well-being).

As we know, youth involved in the child welfare system have had a broad range of life experiences. Their experiences certainly encompass great losses, challenges, and traumas, but they may also include great successes and triumphs. As a result, youth who use the WIT-Y will have varying perceptions of the well-being domains and how they 'fit' into the levels provided within this tool. It is unrealistic to think that every aspect of a tool such as the WIT-Y will match each person's experience or perception. Therefore it is important for youth and the adults who may be assisting them to remember that there aren't 'correct' or 'incorrect' answers. As youth select their level of well-being within each domain, they are choosing the level that fits best for them based upon their life experiences and guided by the examples provided. Remember, the examples provided offer only some aspects of well-being within each domain and are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all aspects of well-being in each domain.

If youth believe aspects of two levels represent their level of well-being, and as much as they try they cannot pick the best fit, youth might consider choosing the lower rating, recognizing that they have not yet fully reached the higher level of well-being in that domain. Making this choice could serve to promote growth in well-being and highlight an opportunity for youth to use the WIT-Y Blueprint to plan for an increase of well-being. Youth also have an option for not choosing a level within a particular domain.

LEVELS

There are five levels of well-being within each domain. These levels represent a continuum of well-being. The levels include:



In Crisis



Just Surviving



Doing Okay



Doing Good



Doing Great

If youth report perceived crisis in any domain of well-being, resources for help and support are provided to the youth immediately after completing the tool.

DOMAINS



Safety and Security

Safety and security means youth have stability of and access to the necessities of life, including food, water and shelter. It means youth feel free from emotional and physical harm and have a sense of control over what happens in their surroundings and with the people in their lives.



Relationships

Well-being in relationships means youth are able to form and sustain supportive interpersonal connections with peers, family, and caring adults. This domain includes youths' sense of trust, being able to communicate needs, and manage the influence of peer pressure.



Mental Health

Mental health refers to youths' self-esteem and their ability to cope with adversity and manage emotions in a constructive way, including asking for help when needed.



Cognitive Health

Cognitive Health is youths' intellectual potential and engagement in activities that promote growth, curiosity, and identity development. This domain includes consistent school participation, management of time and responsibilities, and engagement in interests and hobbies.



Physical Health

Physical health is youths' ability to care for their bodies through prevention and management of physical illness, use of health care services, and engagement in healthy behaviors.



Community

Community is youths' sense of belongingness and connection to the people, cultures, and places in their lives. Communities also offer accessible resources that are relevant to overall youth well-being.



Purpose

Purpose is youths' ability and recognition of their place in the world and connection to something larger than themselves. This domain encompasses spirituality, religion, and a future orientation, including career planning and training.



Environment

Environment is youths' relationship and connection with nature. This includes access to clean air and water, exposure to plants and animals, availability of parks and other outdoor settings, and a balance of screen time.

WIT-Y Assessment

Below you will find a text-based version of the WIT-Y Assessment. To access the actual (web-based) WIT-Y Assessment, please go to z.umn.edu/wityapp

SAFETY AND SECURITY

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
I have no place to sleep tonight.	I am not sure where I will sleep next week.	I have a place to stay, but sometimes it changes.	I have a stable place to live.	I like the place where I live.
Neither my caregiver nor I have any money.	My caregiver or I don't have enough money and sometimes skip meals or don't pay bills.	My caregiver or I have just enough money to get by.	My caregiver or I usually have enough money to pay for both the things we need and want.	My caregiver or I always have enough money for what we need and want.
I am not safe.	I don't feel safe and I often worry about it.	Sometimes I worry about my safety	Most of the time I feel safe.	I consistently feel safe.
I have no control over what happens to me.	I feel like I have little control over what happens to me.	There are some things in my life that I have control over and some things I don't.	I am usually in control over what happens to me.	I feel in control and am confident in my ability to handle what happens to me.

RELATIONSHIPS

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
I am isolated and alone.	I feel disconnected to the people around me.	I kind of feel connected to people around me.	Most of the time, I feel connected to the people around me.	I consistently feel connected to the people around me.
There are no adults in my life that I trust or rely on.	At times, I can rely on at least one adult in my life for help.	I have a couple adults in my life that I trust and rely on.	I'm usually able to rely on the adults in my life for help.	I can rely on adults for help and guidance.
I don't have any friends.	I would like to have friends, but it's hard for me.	I have some friends, but they're not always reliable or trustworthy.	I have friends I can trust and rely on when I need them.	I have reliable and consistent friends who have my best interest in mind.
I avoid communication with others (e.g., talking in person, texting, emailing, social media).	I don't usually feel comfortable communicating with others (e.g., talking in person, texting, emailing, social media).	I can communicate well-enough to get what I need from the people in my life (e.g., talking in person, texting, emailing, social media).	I generally feel comfortable communicating with others (e.g., talking in person, texting, emailing, social media).	I am satisfied with my ability to communicate with others (e.g., talking in person, texting, emailing, social media).
I won't ever fit in with my peers.	I'll do anything to fit in with my peers.	I sometimes do things that peers want me to in order to get them to like me.	I usually don't give in to negative peer pressure.	I am confident about who I am and am not negatively influenced by my peers.

MENTAL HEALTH

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
I can't do anything right.	There are more things I don't like about myself than I like.	I feel okay about myself.	I generally feel good about myself.	I feel good about who I am and am confident in myself.
I am constantly overwhelmed by my stress and emotions.	I often feel stressed and emotional and don't know what to do about it.	I'm learning how to deal with my stress and emotions.	I know how to deal with my stress and emotions in healthy ways.	I consistently use healthy ways to handle my stress and emotions.
To get through the day, I rely on things such as alcohol, drugs, bingeing or purging, cutting, or fighting.	When I'm having a hard time, I use things like alcohol, drugs, bingeing or purging, cutting, or fighting.	I'm trying to learn healthy ways to cope, but sometimes I rely on things like alcohol, drugs, bingeing or purging, cutting, or fighting.	I rarely use things like alcohol, drugs, bingeing or purging, cutting or fighting to cope.	I never use things like alcohol, drugs, bingeing or purging, cutting or fighting to cope.
No one can or will help me when I'm upset or overwhelmed.	I don't ask for help when I'm upset or overwhelmed.	I'm learning that I sometimes need to ask for help when I feel upset or overwhelmed.	I know where to get help if I'm upset or overwhelmed, and will accept help when it's offered.	When I feel upset or overwhelmed, I consistently ask for help, and receive it from those who care about me.

COGNITIVE

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
I am not curious about new things and do not have hobbies or interests.	I am not curious about new things now, but could see myself having hobbies or interests in the future.	Sometimes I am curious about new things and would like to be involved in more activities, but it's hard to find something I'd like to do.	I have a couple interests or hobbies that I like to participate in and I am curious about others.	I am curious about new things and seek out hobbies and activities that help me grow and learn.
I don't go to school.	I am not often in school and don't participate when I'm there.	I show up to school and sometimes participate.	I regularly attend school and participate while I'm there.	I am excited about school and the opportunities education provides.
I don't care about the consequences of my behaviors.	I make decisions and take risks without thinking.	Sometimes I think things through before making a decision, but other times I don't.	Most of the time I think through things before making a decision.	I consistently think about the positives and negatives of my decisions.
I don't care about my responsibilities or making plans.	I know my responsibilities, but I struggle to keep up with them.	I often save things to the last minute and sometimes do not complete my responsibilities.	I complete my responsibilities, but I could be better at time management.	I make plans and manage my time to complete my responsibilities.
I don't think about or care about my identity (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, etc.).	I'd like to learn more about my identity (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, etc.), but I'm not sure how.	I'm starting to think about my identity (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, etc.).	Most of the time I feel comfortable with my identity (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, etc.).	I like learning new things about myself and take pride in my identity (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, etc.).

PHYSICAL HEALTH

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
My health is poor and I don't care.	My health is poor and I don't know how to manage it.	My health is fine and I know how to manage it.	Most of the time I take good care of my health.	I am in excellent health and/or have health conditions that are well-managed.
I don't ever use health care (e.g., going to the doctor, acupuncturist, emergency room, dentist, etc.).	I only get health care if there's an emergency (e.g., going to the doctor, acupuncturist, emergency room, dentist, etc.).	I get health care when I'm sick and not getting better (e.g., going to the doctor, acupuncturist, emergency room, dentist, etc.).	I always get health care when I'm sick and not getting better (e.g., going to the doctor, acupuncturist, emergency room, dentist, etc.) and usually for prevention (e.g., vaccines, yearly physicals, dental care, etc.).	I consistently use health care for prevention and illness (e.g., going to the doctor, acupuncturist, emergency room, dentist, etc.).
I don't have healthy behaviors (e.g., sleep less than 5 hours per night, don't care what foods are good for me, and don't exercise).	Most of the time I don't have healthy behaviors when it comes to sleep, food, and exercise.	I have some healthy behaviors (e.g., sleep 7-8 hours per night, good nutrition, and regular exercise).	Most of the time I have healthy behaviors when it comes to sleep, food, and exercise.	I consistently engage in healthy behaviors like sleeping at least 7-8 hours per night, good nutrition, and regular exercise.
I use drugs, alcohol, and/or cigarettes daily.	I use drugs, alcohol, and/or cigarettes a couple times a week.	I know drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes are bad for my health but I sometimes use them.	I rarely use drugs, alcohol, and/or cigarettes.	I don't use drugs, alcohol, and/or cigarettes.
I have risky sexual behaviors (e.g., multiple partners, no protection).	If I have sex, I often engage in risky sexual behaviors (e.g., multiple partners, no protection).	I know what safe sex is. Sometimes I practice safe sex.	If I have sex, I almost always use safe sexual behaviors (e.g., within a monogamous, committed relationship; use protection).	If I have sex, I always use safe sexual behaviors (e.g., within a monogamous, committed relationship; use protection).
I do not care about or take care of my personal hygiene (e.g., showering, brushing teeth and hair, washing clothes, etc.).	I would like to, but am often unable to take care of my personal hygiene (e.g., showering, brushing teeth and hair, washing clothes, etc.).	I think taking care of my hygiene (e.g., showering, brushing teeth and hair, washing clothes, etc.) is important but sometimes forget to do it.	I make time for and maintain my hygiene most days (e.g., showering, brushing teeth and hair, washing clothes, etc.).	The way I present myself is important, so I maintain good hygiene daily (e.g., showering, brushing teeth and hair, washing, etc.).

COMMUNITY

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
I don't feel welcome in my community.	Most of the time I don't feel welcome in my community.	There are parts of my community where I feel welcomed.	I feel welcomed most everywhere in my community.	I feel welcomed and connected with my community.
I don't know any people like me (e.g., culturally, racially) and I don't feel like I belong to a group or community.	I know a couple people like me (e.g., culturally, racially) but I don't usually feel like I belong to a group or community.	Sometimes I feel like I belong to a group or community (e.g., culturally, racially).	Most of the time I feel like I have a group or community with whom I belong (e.g., culturally, racially).	I belong to a group or community like me (e.g., culturally, racially).

COMMUNITY CONTINUED

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
I can't find the things I need in my community (e.g., products, transportation, services, or resources).	It is hard for me to find what I need in my community (e.g., products, transportation, services, or resources).	I can find some of the things I need in my community (e.g., products, transportation, services, or resources).	I can find most of what I need in my community (e.g., products, transportation, services, or resources).	It's easy for me to find what I need in my community (e.g., products, transportation, services, or resources).
I don't hang out or do things in my community.	If I want to hang out in my community, I don't know where to go.	There's one place in my community I feel comfortable hanging out.	There are a couple places in my community where I regularly hang out.	There are a variety of places I like to hang out in my community.

PURPOSE

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
I feel hopeless about my future.	I don't think about the future often because I'm usually just trying to get through the day.	Sometimes I think about my future, but I'm not sure what to expect.	There are a few things I could see myself doing in the future.	I am hopeful about my future and have many life goals.
My life seems pointless.	It is hard for me to believe that my life has meaning and purpose.	I'm starting to feel like my life has meaning and purpose.	Most of the time I feel like I'm heading in the right direction with my life.	I consistently feel like my life is meaningful and I have a sense of purpose.
I don't have anything to contribute to the world.	It's hard for me to see how I could contribute to the world.	I would like to contribute to the world but don't know how.	I have many skills and ideas that can contribute to the world.	I seek out and participate in activities that contribute to the world.
I don't care or know anything about things like faith or my beliefs about something bigger than myself.	I don't think much about faith or my beliefs about something bigger than myself.	I think it's important to have faith and think about my beliefs in something bigger than myself, but I haven't formed my own opinions about them yet.	I'm searching to find a connection or faith in something bigger than myself.	I have faith in and feel connected to something bigger than myself.

ENVIRONMENT

In Crisis	Just Surviving	Doing Okay	Doing Good	Doing Great
There are no places where I feel relaxed or comfortable.	I rarely feel relaxed or comfortable in the places I spend time (e.g., work, school, home).	I sometimes feel relaxed and comfortable in the places I spend time (e.g., work, school, home).	Most of the time, I feel relaxed and comfortable in the places I spend time (e.g., work, school, home).	I consistently feel relaxed and comfortable in the places I spend time (e.g., work, school, home).
I don't see the point of connecting with nature or animals.	I don't have access to nature or any green space (e.g., parks, trees, animals, fresh air).	I see the value of nature, but it's hard for me to find time or a way to connect with it.	I like to do things outside and try to bring nature inside when possible (e.g., house plants, photos, pets).	Connecting with nature is an essential part of my daily life (e.g., house, plants, photos, pets).
I am destructive to my physical environment (e.g., trees, animals, buildings).	I am not engaged in improving my physical environment.	I am interested in learning about improving my physical environment but don't know how or have time to improve it.	I value my physical environment and sometimes make efforts to improve it (e.g., recycling, gardening, picking up trash).	I engage daily or regularly in efforts to improve my physical environment (e.g., recycling, gardening, picking up trash).

Crisis Resources

If youth indicate “In Crisis” on any domain, they will see text on the screen that alerts them to resources which could help them. If youth complete the WIT-Y Assessment with the support of an adult, they may choose to share this information with the adult. If they do not choose to share the resource information, or the youth completed the WIT-Y by themselves, they may choose to utilize the resources provided independently. Regardless of how the youth choose to utilize the resources presented to them, they will be able to send a copy of the resource list to their email address for current and future reference.

FOR IMMINENT DANGER OR AN EMERGENCY, ALWAYS CALL 911.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Your Life Your Voice

This is a national hotline, toll free, available to kids, teens and young adults at anytime. Please contact us if you’re depressed, contemplating suicide, being physically or sexually abused, on the run, addicted, threatened by gang violence, fighting with a friend or parent, or if you are faced with an overwhelming challenge. **800-448-3000**

<http://www.yourlifeyourvoice.org/Pages/home.aspx>

National Runaway Hotline

24-hour crisis line. It’s anonymous, confidential and free. **1-800-786-2929** (RUNAWAY)

RELATIONSHIPS

National Dating Abuse Helpline

The National Dating Abuse Helpline is specifically designed for teens and young adults. The advocates are available 24/7 to answer texts, phone calls and chats. The helpline also offers translation services. **866-331-9474**
866-331-8453 TTY

RELATIONSHIPS CONTINUED

National Domestic Violence Hotline

National Domestic Violence Hotline provides information for people living in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The hotline is open 24/7 and offers services in more than 170 languages. **800-799-SAFE** (7233)
800-787-3224 TTY

National Sexual Assault Hotline

The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) offers secure assistance on Sexual Assault issues 24/7. **800-656-HOPE** (4673)

MENTAL HEALTH

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

The NAMI HelpLine can be reached Monday through Friday, 10 am–6 pm, ET. HelpLine staff and volunteers are prepared to answer your questions about all kinds of mental health issues including symptoms of mental illness; treatment options; and local support groups and services.

800-950-NAMI (6264) or info@nami.org

<https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/NAMI-HelpLine#sthash.0serNAp0.dpuf>

National Suicide Prevention Line

No matter what problems you are dealing with, we want to help you find a reason to keep living. By calling 800-273-TALK (8255) you’ll be connected to a skilled, trained counselor at a crisis center in your area, anytime 24/7. **800-273-8255**

COGNITIVE

Career, Academic and Skill Testing

Resources, inventories and information about college, career, and other vocational opportunities.

<http://www.yourfreecareertest.com/>

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Alateen

Chat live with other teens! Young people aged 13 to 18 who have been affected by someone else's drinking are invited to share experience, strength and hope with other teens from across the U.S. and Canada. **888-425-2666** (888-4AL-ANON)

<http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/try-an-alateen-chat-meeting>

National Eating Disorders Association

Serves individuals and families affected by eating disorders and provides prevention, cures and access to quality care. **800-931-2237**

NationalEatingDisorders.org

Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine

This link will bring you to a directory of adolescent health providers.

<http://www.adolescenthealth.org/About-SAHM/Directory.aspx>

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

These health centers provide a wide range of safe, reliable health—and the majority is preventive, primary care, which helps prevent unintended pregnancies through contraception, reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections through testing and treatment, and screen for cervical and other cancers. **800-230-PLAN**

www.plannedparenthood.org

COMMUNITY

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Big Brothers Big Sisters makes meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers (“Bigs”) and children (“Littles”), ages 6 through 18, in communities across the country.

<http://www.bbbs.org/>

COMMUNITY CONTINUED

GSA Network

Gay-Straight Alliance Network (GSA Network) is a next-generation LGBTQ racial and gender justice organization that empowers and trains queer, trans and allied youth leaders to advocate, organize, and mobilize an intersectional movement for safer schools and healthier communities.

<http://www.gsanetwork.org/>

YWCA

YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

<http://ywca.org>

YMCA

Millions of children and teens build skills and confidence as they explore new interests and passions through the Y. Leadership and academic enrichment programs—including Achievers Clubs, Youth and Government and college preparation. **800-872-9622**

<http://www.ymca.net/>

PURPOSE

Taking Charge of Your Health & Wellbeing

A way to measure and get help understanding your purpose and spirituality.

www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/

ENVIRONMENT

Center for Spirituality and Healing

Healing environments—a wealth of information on improving your environmental health.

<http://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/explore-healing-practices/healing-environment/what-are-healing-gardens>

WIT-Y Snapshot

The second component of the WIT-Y is the WIT-Y Snapshot. The WIT-Y Snapshot is made up of five rings with each ring representing a different level of well-being. The inner-most ring represents “in crisis”, the next ring is “just surviving”, and so on with the outer-most ring representing the “doing great” level. Each ring is also divided into eight sections representing the eight domains of well-being (each domain looks like a piece of pie). Once youth complete the WIT-Y Assessment, a “snapshot” or picture of their well-being appears with their level of well-being shaded within each

domain. For example, if a youth answers “in crisis” for the Safety and Security domain, only the first level/ring will be shaded. Likewise, if the youth indicates that they are “doing good” in the domain of Relationships, the first four rings will be shaded. The more color in each slice of pie, the greater the level of well-being the youth has expressed in the WIT-Y assessment for that particular area. The WIT-Y Snapshot allows youth to understand their well-being in each domain while also being able to see how it is balanced/imbalanced across all eight domains of well-being.



WIT-Y Blueprint

The third and final component of the WIT-Y is a planning document for youth called the WIT-Y Blueprint. Some youth may decide, upon looking at their WIT-Y Snapshot, that they would like to take steps to increase their well-being in a particular domain. The WIT-Y Blueprint is an open-ended tool youth can use to design their plan(s) to increase their well-being. The WIT-Y Blueprint consists of a series of questions to help the youth think of ways they can improve their well-being in their chosen domain as well as to think about the barriers or challenges they might face in making this effort.

The WIT-Y Blueprint can be used to help youth engage in conversations about the meaning and circumstances behind their perceived levels of well-being. The WIT-Y Blueprint is designed to assist youth with the identification of potential resources, supports, and challenges which may impact their ability to improve their well-being in a specified domain. If youth choose to include a caring adult in a conversation about the

development of their WIT-Y Blueprint, they might discuss factors which impact well-being such as access, resources, skills, knowledge, capacity, culture, values, and motivation. These important factors may significantly influence youth perception of well-being and their corresponding rating of their well-being. The action plan embedded within the WIT-Y Blueprint provides youth with the opportunity to focus their thinking about well-being and to take a future oriented approach to self-care.

It is perfectly fine if youth chose not to utilize the WIT-Y Blueprint. They may have a different way to think about changing their well-being or may feel they are not currently in a position to do that kind of work. Again, the WIT-Y is a tool designed for youth to use in the way(s) that best meet their needs as they continue to transition to adulthood. Therefore, youth may choose to use the components of the WIT-Y that best meet their needs.



Sample WIT-Y Blueprint

Domain to focus on: Relationships

Current Level of well-being (circle one):



In Crisis



Just Surviving



Doing Okay



Doing Good



Doing Great

Desired Level of well-being (circle one):



In Crisis



Just Surviving



Doing Okay



Doing Good



Doing Great

Describe what well-being at your desired level would look like. Remember, there are no right and wrong answers, just describe what that level of well-being would look like in your life.

I would be able to let some adults (math teacher, social worker, school counselor, foster mom) help me. I would not say mean things to them or try to avoid them. I would be able to talk to people by my locker or next to me in class—at least say hello or good-bye to them.

Who might be able to help you reach the level of well-being that you want?

People might include: siblings, parents, foster parents, staff, social worker, coach, neighbor, teacher, faith leader, boss, etc.

My older brother. My uncle.

What steps do you have to take to achieve your desired level of well-being?

For example maybe you need to locate a therapist, join a group, obtain a tutor, or make time for walks in the park.

check in with my uncle once/week. Go to the doctor to talk about my medicines. Go for a walk with someone once/week. Try to ask my math teacher for help on the next assignment. say hello and make eye contact with three peers each week.

What challenges might make it difficult to have the level of well-being you want? Think about things like how easy it is to trust people, make new friends, ask for help, find resources or people that will help you.

Unable to trust adults who say they want to help me. Don't have any friends at school. Feel anxious and unable to ask for help. Get afraid people who are nice to me just want to hurt me, so I try to hurt them first.

What resources do you think you might need to help reach your desired level of well-being? Resources might include things like, money, people, time, or access to certain places. You will likely think of other resources that you have or you need in your life to make the change you want in your well-being.

A regular time to check in with my uncle. Someone to help me make a doctor's appointment and go with me. Ask my brother to go on a walk to the park.

Change often takes time. What do you think is the right amount of time to work on making this change in your well-being?

At least six months.

How to Get Started

To access the WIT-Y Assessment, go to:
z.umn.edu/wityapp

1. The link will take youth to the WIT-Y Assessment and provides a description of the tool. There may be a demographic screen that asks for relevant demographic information. Please know that this will not be used to identify you in any way but it will be used to help us learn more about youth who are using the WIT-Y.
2. Once the youth indicates that they want to begin the WIT-Y, they advance to the first of eight screens which include a single question, specific to one of the eight domains of well-being. Youth will select one of five answers that best describes what they think their current well-being is in that specific domain. In other words, youth will indicate if they are “in crisis”, “just surviving”, “doing ok”, “doing good”, or “doing great” in each of the eight domains. Examples are provided on the screen for each answer, describing well-being at that level. Youth select which answer best represents how they are feeling at the time.
3. Once selected, the answer will change color to indicate that it has been selected. Youth must then click the right-pointing arrow at the bottom of the screen to move to the next screen. This will be repeated until all eight questions have been answered. If youth do not want to answer a question in a particular domain, they can click on the box that says “I do not feel comfortable answering this question”. This section of the WIT-Y Snapshot will then not be shaded.
4. The youth’s answers can be changed at any time. Youth can click the left-pointing arrow at the bottom of the screen at any time to return to a previous page and change their answer(s). Once youth click a new level of well-being, it will change color and they can continue using the WIT-Y Assessment by clicking the right-pointing arrow at the bottom of the screen to move to the next screen.
5. If youth indicate that they are “in crisis” on any domain while completing the WIT-Y Assessment, a text box containing resources for help and support will also appear after they complete the last of the eight questions. This text box will not appear until all eight questions are completed because youth do have the ability to navigate forward and back throughout the tool to adjust their answers. Youth can indicate on this screen if they would like to have the help and support resource list emailed to them.
6. Upon completing the questions, the WIT-Y Snapshot will appear on the next screen. Youth can indicate on this screen if they would like a copy of their WIT-Y Snapshot emailed to them. As indicated previously in this guide, youth can use the WIT-Y Snapshot however they wish. It is anticipated that youth will use the graphic output to talk with a caring adult about their well-being.

For Youth

Completing the WIT-Y Assessment is a great way for you to begin to explore your own well-being. This is not a tool for the adults or the professionals in your life to complete – this is yours! As you continue to move into adulthood you might want to have ways to check yourself and know how you are doing. The WIT-Y can help you do that. Some youth may invite a caring and supportive adult to sit with them and/or talk with them as they use the WIT-Y. Others will choose to complete the WIT-Y Assessment by themselves and then they may or may not talk about it with a caring adult. The point is, you get to choose. As you complete the WIT-Y, here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. The WIT-Y uses technology, so access to a computer, tablet or smart phone is necessary.
2. This is NOT a test! There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. It is simply a tool for you to use to help you decide what your level of well-being is at this point-in-time.
3. The WIT-Y will help you identify which areas in life are going well and which areas could use more attention. You may discover that there are areas of well-being that you haven’t thought much about.
4. The examples in the WIT-Y Assessment don’t have to match your experiences exactly-some will make sense to you and others just won’t.
5. Some of the examples may remind you about sensitive or difficult areas life (e.g. relationships, risky behaviors, safety). YOU determine the answer. Don’t answer in a way you think other people want you to answer. These answers are about you ... and for you. If you would like to mark “I do not feel comfortable answering this question” that is just fine. If you have an adult that is with you as you complete the WIT-Y Assessment they do not get to change or judge your answers. The reason they are there is to support you.
6. If you have questions as you complete the WIT-Y and you think that an adult can help you, go ahead and ask them. They are with you because they want to help and support you. The final answer to each question is YOUR decision however.
7. YOU get to decide if and with whom to share your answers. You will have the option to email a copy of your WIT-Y Snapshot to yourself. Share it or don’t share it – it is up to you.
8. The caring adults in your life will always be concerned about your safety. Please be aware that if you talk to your caring adult about past or present abuse or neglect that is happening to you, or others, they are required by law to report it to the proper authorities. Also if you threaten harm to yourself or anyone else, your caring adult will be required to report it to appropriate people that can help.
9. You can quit taking the WIT-Y at any time. Caring adults should not require you or persuade you to do more than you want to do.

For Caring Adults

A youth may invite you to support them and/or talk with them during their use of the WIT-Y. If invited, there are several things to keep in mind as you support them in their journey to better understand and perhaps improve their well-being.

Let the youth determine when and where the WIT-Y Assessment will be completed. If they ask for your suggestion, consider a comfortable, quiet, and confidential place where they can complete the WIT-Y

1. If you are present while youth complete the eight questions that comprise the WIT-Y Assessment, sit with them quietly and offer support or clarification if they ask for it. The WIT-Y Assessment will take approximately 10- 15 minutes to complete.
2. Remember, your role is not to judge or criticize the youth's answers nor is it to persuade them on any particular level. They may however need to process ideas with you based upon the examples given throughout the WIT-Y Assessment.
3. Some of the WIT-Y Assessment examples and questions may make youth feel uncomfortable or uneasy. You can re-assure them that they can stop or take a break at any time. They may also select the choice, "I do not feel comfortable answering this question". You may want to ask them if they would like to talk about what is making them uncomfortable. Remind them that you are there to help and support them and are willing to talk about any of their concerns.
4. Remind youth that there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Their answers reflect how they feel at this moment and time and that it is not uncommon for levels of well-being to fluctuate and change.
5. If youth answer that they are "in crisis" on any of the questions they will be prompted to seek help from a caring adult. Be prepared to offer them a chance to "take a break" from the WIT-Y and process any concerns or situations they are facing. You should also be prepared to provide youth with local help and support resources. Refer to the resources listed in this guide as an example.
6. If youth want to talk about the results of their WIT-Y Assessment, you should plan for time to discuss their WIT-Y Snapshot. You can utilize the discussion questions listed in this guide, or allow the youth to direct the conversation. Every youth will likely approach this conversation differently and you might need to plan for 10 minutes or as much as an hour.
7. Offer to help the youth complete their WIT-Y Blueprint. Allow their ideas to guide the development of this plan. Not every youth will want to complete a WIT-Y Blueprint – and that is just fine.
8. After the youth has indicated that they are done, you might ask the youth if they would like to meet again in the future to discuss progress on their Blueprint (if they chose to complete one) or you might offer the youth an opportunity to re-assess themselves after a period of time so that they can monitor their own level of well-being over time. Assure youth that it is okay if they don't want to commit to anything but remind them that you are available to them in the future.

Reflection Prompts

The WIT-Y is designed to guide youth as they explore different aspects of their well-being. The WIT-Y Snapshot provides youth with a visual view of their well-being and provides a unique opportunity for discussion. The questions listed below might prompt a deeper exploration of well-being between youth and

their caring adult. Youth can also use these questions to conduct a deeper self-reflection on well-being through journaling, blogging, or artistic expression. Use them as a guide; they don't need to be used exactly as they are written here.

- What are your thoughts when you look at your WIT-Y Snapshot?
 - Do your 8 areas of well-being seem balanced?
 - Do you think it is important to have balance across the 8 areas? Why or why not?
 - Are some areas of well-being more important to you than others? If so, which ones?
 - Are some areas of well-being less important to you than others? If so, which ones?
- Are you surprised by the results of the WIT-Y? Why or why not?
- Would you like to change any of the current levels of your well-being? If so, which one(s)?
- Do you have ideas about how to change or improve those areas of well-being?
- Would you like other people to help you make those changes? If so, who?

Well-being Indicator Tool for Youth (WIT-Y) Consultation, Development and Research

For questions about the WIT-Y Guide or the development and research related to the WIT-Y, please contact the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW). CASCW is an internationally recognized research and training center in the field of child welfare. Dissemination of training and education materials to child welfare students and professionals working in child protection with children in out of home placement is a critical role fulfilled by CASCW at local, national and international levels. As part of its charge, CASCW conducts research and evaluation to develop empirical evidence on issues confronting the child welfare system, including local and statewide evaluation studies as well as research and evaluation with national relevance to the child welfare system. As home to the Minn-LInK Project, CASCW also offers the opportunity for researchers to utilize statewide administrative data from multiple state agencies to answer questions about the impacts of policies, programs, and practice on the well-being of children in Minnesota.



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Well-being Indicator Tool for Youth (WIT-Y) Implementation, Technical Assistance and Training

For questions about the use and implementation of the WIT-Y with youth, or for consultation, training and technical assistance, please contact Anu Family Services. Anu is a national award-winning innovative child welfare organization providing national and international training, consultation, technical assistance, and demonstration projects in innovative permanency and wellbeing practices. Anu Family Services was a driving force and collaborative partner in the initiation, financing and consultation for the development the WIT-Y. Anu Family Services offers consultation for organizational change and utilization of a well-being framework for youth and their healers. If you would like more information on Anu Family Services and their consultation and training services, email info@anufs.org or call 877-287-2441.



www.anufs.org/