



## Understanding the anxiety (assessment)

Assessment approach	Making it successful	Resources
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Leuven scale</b></p> <p>Created by Professor Ferre Laevers from the Research Centre for Experiential Education at Leuven University.</p> <p>There are two Leuven scales:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emotional wellbeing</li> <li>2. Involvement</li> </ol> <p>These are two sets of indicators that should be considered when planning any educational setting and to assist in assessing the child/young person's engagement and</p> <p>They are not designed solely for early childhood education but are equally applicable in primary and secondary.</p> <p>Wellbeing focuses on the extent to which pupils feel at ease, act spontaneously, show vitality and self-confidence. It is a crucial component of emotional intelligence and good mental health.</p> <p>Involvement focuses on the extent to which pupils are operating to their full capabilities. In particular it refers to whether the child is focused, engaged and interested in various activities.</p>	<p>This is best used when observing a child/young person at a variety of activities. Each observation is only required to last for a few minutes. Following the observation, the observer will be able to give a rating for wellbeing and/or involvement.</p> <p>It is thought that unless pupils are operating at 4 or 5, learning will be limited.</p> <p>However, it is natural for levels of well-being and involvement to fluctuate throughout the day and it is therefore unrealistic to expect children to operate at levels 4 or 5 at all times.</p> <p>Use of the scales can help to determine if there are times when the child/young person has lower or higher levels of wellbeing or involvement.</p> <p>This analysis should inform educators about the quality and suitability of their work and it should provide some sort of framework for intervention toward individual pupils.</p>	<p>Training in use of the Leuven scale has been available via CPD manager during session 2018-19. If you have not had training, it may be that someone in your establishment has, and could be consulted for support in using these tools.</p> <p>A copy of the scales are enclosed and further information is available here:</p> <p><a href="https://family.co/blog/management/leuven-scales/">https://family.co/blog/management/leuven-scales/</a></p>

## The Leuven Scale for Involvement

Level	Well-Being	Signals
1	<b>Extremely Low</b>	<p>The child hardly shows any activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no concentration: staring into space, daydreaming,</li> <li>• an absent, passive attitude, displaying no energy;</li> <li>• no goal-oriented activity, simple, aimless actions, not producing anything;</li> <li>• no signs of exploration and interest;</li> <li>• not taking anything in, no mental activity.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Low</b>	<p>The child shows some degree of activity but which is often interrupted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited concentration: looks away during the activity, fiddles, dreams;</li> <li>• is easily distracted by surrounding activity;</li> <li>• action only leads to limited results.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Moderate</b>	<p>The child is busy the whole time, but without real concentration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• routine actions, attention is superficial;</li> <li>• is not absorbed in the activity, activities are short lived; makes some progress</li> <li>• limited motivation, no real dedication, does not feel challenged;</li> <li>• the child does not gain deep-level experiences;</li> <li>• does not use his/her capabilities to full extent;</li> <li>• the activity does not address the child's imagination.</li> </ul>
4	<b>High</b>	<p>There are clear signs of involvement, but these are not always present to their full extent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the child is engaged in the activity without interruption;</li> <li>• most of the time there is real concentration, but during some brief moments the attention is more superficial;</li> <li>• the child feels challenged, there is a certain degree of motivation;</li> <li>• the child's capabilities and its imagination to a certain extent are addressed in the activity.</li> </ul>
5	<b>Extremely High</b>	<p>During the episode of observation the child is continuously engaged in the activity and completely absorbed in it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is absolutely focussed, concentrated without interruption;</li> <li>• is highly motivated, feels strongly appealed by the activity, perseveres;</li> <li>• even strong stimuli cannot distract him/her;</li> <li>• is alert, has attention for details, shows precision;</li> <li>• its mental activity and experience are intense;</li> <li>• the child constantly addresses all its capabilities: imagination and mental capacity are in top gear;</li> <li>• obviously enjoys being engrossed in the activity.</li> </ul>

## **Child Involvement Signals (to assist with Leuven Involvement Scale)**

### **Concentration**

The attention of the child is directed toward the activity. Nothing can distract the child from his/her concentration.

### **Energy**

The child invests much effort in the activity and is eager and stimulated. Such energy is often expressed by loud talking, or pressing down hard on the paper. Mental energy can be deduced from facial expressions which reveal 'hard' thinking.

### **Complexity and Creativity**

This signal is shown when a child freely mobilises his cognitive skills and other capabilities in more than routine behaviour. The child involved cannot show more competence – he/she is at his/her very 'best.' Creativity does not mean that original products have to result, but that the child exhibits an individual touch and what she/he does furthers his/her own creative development. The child is at the very edge of his/her capabilities.

### **Facial Expression and Posture**

Nonverbal signs are extremely important in reaching a judgement about involvement. It is possible to distinguish between 'dreamy empty' eyes and 'intense' eyes. Posture can reveal high concentration or boredom. Even when children are seen only from the back, their posture can be revealing.

### **Persistence**

Persistence is the duration of the concentration of the activity. Children who are really involved do not let go of the activity easily; they want to continue with the satisfaction, flavour and intensity it gives them, and are prepared to put in effort to prolong it. They are not easily distracted by other activities. 'Involved' activity is often more prolonged but it can be dependent on the age and the development of the child.

### **Precision**

Involved children show special care for their work and are attentive to detail. Non-involved children gloss over such detail, it is not so important to them.

### **Reaction Time**

Children who are involved are alert and react quickly to stimuli introduced during an activity e.g. children 'fly' to a proposed activity and show prolonged motivation and keenness. (NB. Involvement is more than an initial reaction.)

### **Language**

Children can show that an activity has been important to them by their comments e.g. they ask for the activity repeatedly. They state that they enjoyed it!

### **Satisfaction**

The children display a feeling of satisfaction with their achievements.

### **NB**

The signals are channels for the observer awareness. They are not to be used on a scale basis, instead they are a means of making an overall judgement of the child's involvement. The observer can use the signals to build an image of the child. By trying to establish how the child really feels, and by trying to become that child, the level of involvement can be ascertained. These signals can be exhibited different ways by different children. Individual children need to be observed and their signals recognised.

## The Lueven Scale for Well-Being

Level	Well-Being	Signals
1	<b>Extremely Low</b>	<p>The child clearly shows signals of discomfort:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whines, sobs, cries, screams;</li> <li>• looks dejected, sad or frightened, is in panic;</li> <li>• is angry or furious;</li> <li>• shows signs feet, wriggles, throws objects, hurts others;</li> <li>• sucks its thumb, rubs its eyes;</li> <li>• doesn't respond to the environment, avoids contact, withdraws;</li> <li>• hurts him/herself or others: bangs its head, throws him/herself on the floor..</li> </ul>
2	<b>Low</b>	<p>The posture, facial expression and actions indicate that the child does not feel at ease. However, the signals are less explicit than under level 1 or the sense of discomfort is not expressed the whole time.</p>
3	<b>Moderate</b>	<p>The child has a neutral posture. Facial expression and posture show little or no emotion. There are no signals indicating sadness or pleasure, comfort or discomfort.</p>
4	<b>High</b>	<p>The child shows obvious signs of satisfaction (as listed under level 5). However, these signals are not constantly present with the same intensity.</p>
5	<b>Extremely High</b>	<p>During the observation episode, the child enjoys, in fact it feels great:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it looks happy and cheerful, smiles, beams, cries out with pleasure;</li> <li>• is spontaneous, expressive and is really him/herself;</li> <li>• talks to itself, plays with sounds, hums sings;</li> <li>• appears relaxed, does not show any signs of stress or tension;</li> <li>• is open and accessible to the environment;</li> <li>• is lively, full of energy, radiates;</li> <li>• expresses self-confidence and self-assurance.</li> </ul>