

# Children & Youth Well-being in Korea

Summary

2022



Statistics Korea  
Statistics Research Institute

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This report was written as the English summary of Children and Youth Well-being 2022, which was released in Korean in December 2022. The original Korean report with explanation on 60 well-being indicators under 8 sub-dimensions is available on [<https://sri.kostat.go.kr/board.es?mid=b10105000000&bid=0060>].

# 01

## Age coverage for this report

Children and youth are defined as people aged between 0 and 17, including students in secondary schools. However, as the framework consists of the indicators from existing statistics, our age criteria do not always correspond with age coverages in some indicators. For these indicators, the age coverages do not either fully include or go beyond age 0–17.



## 02

# Well-being Measurement Framework

In the course of developing the framework for the Children and Youth Well-being, we have adopted a comprehensive approach combining theory-driven, data-driven, and children's voice-driven approaches. •

## ① Theory-driven approach

Theory-driven approach reviewed and adapted theoretical works, previous research, and cases about production of well-being indicators for children and youth in other countries or international organizations to our development of the framework and indicators

## ② Data-driven approach

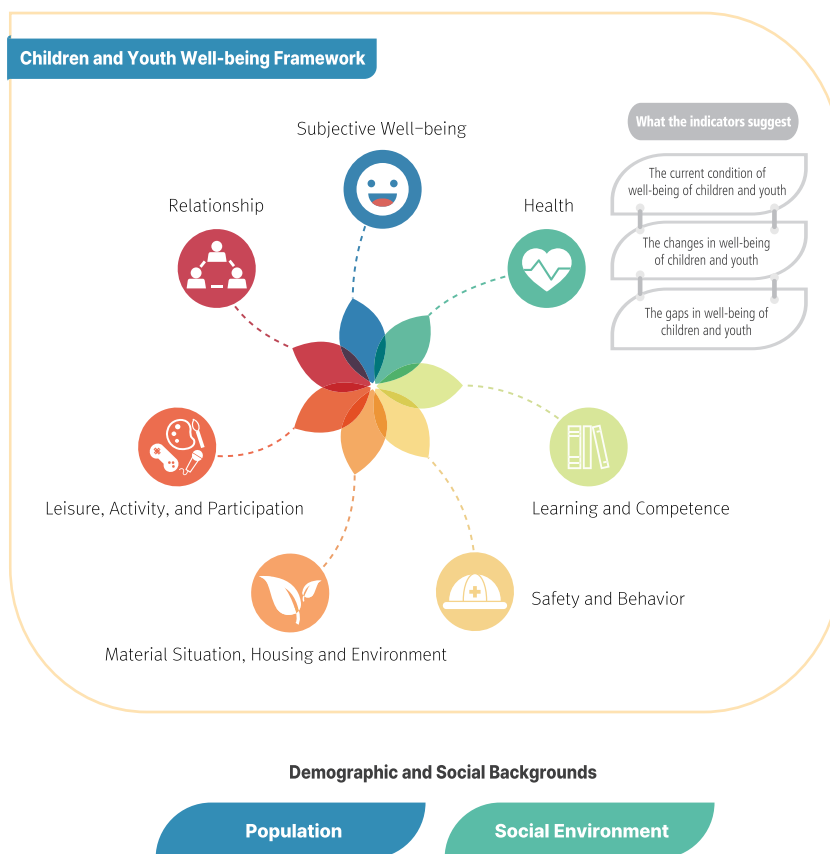
Data-driven approach compiled indicators developed with the theory-driven approach with nationally approved statistics, and identified indicators requiring further development

## ③ Children's voice-driven approach

Children's voice-driven approach conducted Focus Group InterviewsFGI with children to identify what they think is most important in their lives and how they define a happy life, which have been reflected in the indicators framework

Based on this comprehensive approach, the framework of the

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- **For a detailed explanation, see as below report:** Yoo, M. S., Lee, H., Ryu, S., Ryu, J. H., Do, N. H., Koo, J. Y., Kim, H. J., Kim, D. H., Choi, C. Y., Jung, J., Lee, Y.(2019). Developing National Indicators of Child and Youth Well-being in South Korea. Sejong: National Research Council for Economics, Humanities and Social Science.



Children and Youth Well-being comprises the ‘Demographic and Social Backgrounds’ section and the ‘Well-being of Children and Youth’ section, each respectively representing an underlying macro-sociological environment and microscopic living conditions and their qualities. Furthermore, with consideration about time series changes, we have examined the characteristics of children in different ages as well as the longitudinal changes of indicator outcomes.

The ‘Children and Youth Well-being’ section is divided into sub-areas as shown below:

- **Material Situation, Housing and Environment** indicates whether a child benefits from material goods and is guaranteed to have proper housing within a safe community

- **Health** indicates whether a child receives safe and preventive medical services throughout his or her inception, birth, and growth and is growing up healthy
- **Learning and Competence** indicates whether a child receives good education and is properly developing their capacities to build democratic citizenship
- **Leisure, Activity, and Participation** indicates whether a child enjoys leisure and breaks enough and participates in activities at his or her free will
- **Safety and Behavior** indicates whether a child grows in a safe environment free from danger, violence, or risky behavior
- **Relationship** indicates whether a child forms positive relationships with other people in his or her daily life including in a family, a school, neighborhood, etc.
- **Subjective Well-being** indicates whether a child is satisfied with his or her daily life and perceives his or her life to be meaningful



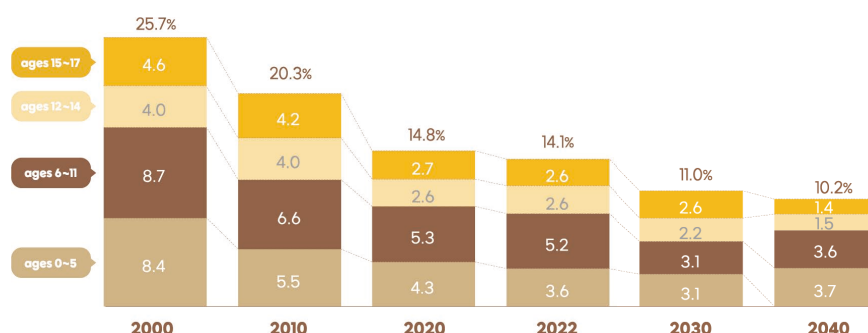
# 03

## Summary of Key Indicators

### 3.1 Demographic and Social Background

The population of children aged between 0 and 17 was 7,256 thousand in 2022 accounting for 14.1% of the entire population. The share has decreased from 25.7% since 2000, and it is predicted to constitute 10.2% in 2040.

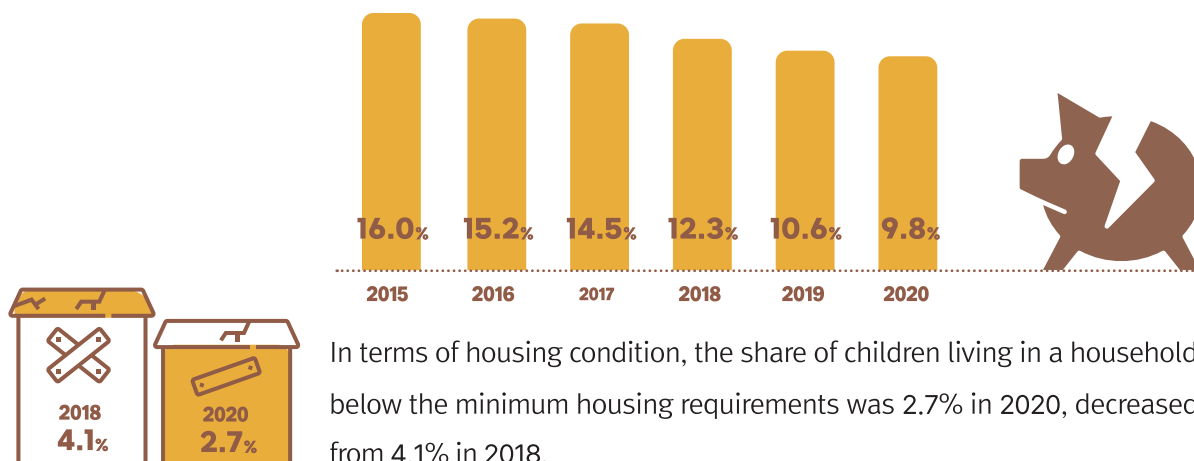
**Figure.** The population of children aged between 0 and 17



### 3.2 Material Situation, Housing and Environment

The rate of children deprivation was 31.5% in 2018. In terms of household income, the share of children living in households below the relative poverty line decreased from 10.6% in 2019 to 9.8% in 2020.

**Figure.** Relative poverty rate



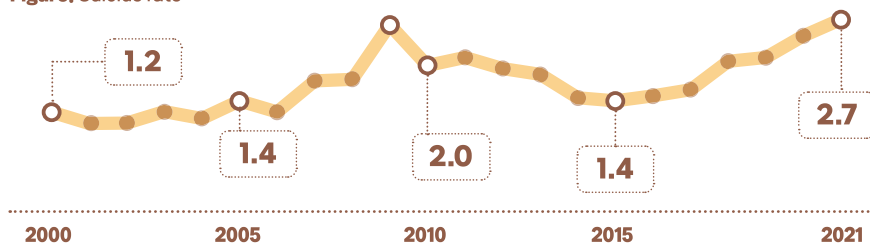
In terms of housing condition, the share of children living in a household below the minimum housing requirements was 2.7% in 2020, decreased from 4.1% in 2018.



### 3.3 Health

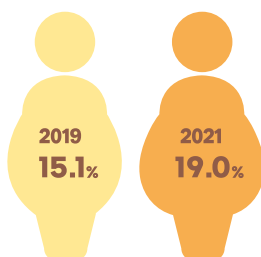
Among mental health indicators for children, the number of deaths by suicide per 100 thousand children rose from 2.5 in 2020 to 2.7 in 2021. Stress self-recognition also rose from 34.2% to 38.8% during the same period.

**Figure. Suicide rate**

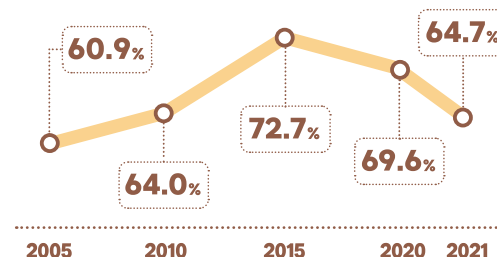


Among physical health indicators, the obesity rate rapidly increased from 15.1% in 2019 to 19.0% in 2021, and self-reported health decreased from 69.6% in 2020 to 64.7% in 2021.

**Figure. Obesity Rate**

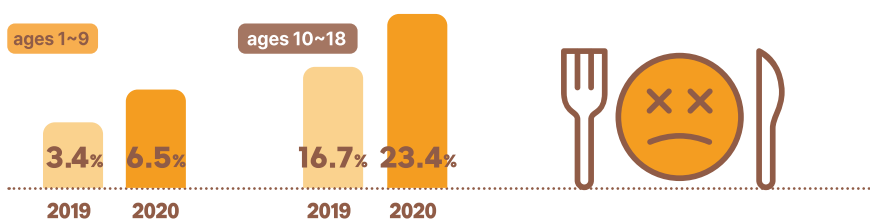


**Figure. Self-reported Health**



Undernutrition rates escalated rapidly between 2019 and 2020, which recorded a growth from 3.4% to 6.9% for children of ages 1 through 9 and a growth from 16.7% to 23.4% for ages 10 through 18. It implies that children's health has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, children who regularly practice physical activities have increased slightly from 14.0% to 14.6% between 2020 and 2021, which remained similar to those before COVID-19.

**Figure. Undernutrition Rate**





### 3.4 Learning and Competence

Average daily study time for children dropped between 2014 and 2019 to mark 5 hr. 9 min. among elementary students, 7 hr. 10 min. for middle school students, and 8 hr. 2 min. for high school students in 2019. In 2021, the rate of participation in private education among students was 75.5%.

Figure. Study Time(2019)

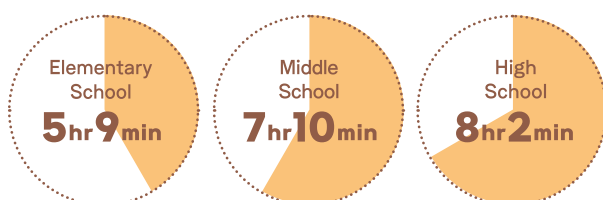


Figure. Rate of Participation in Private Education

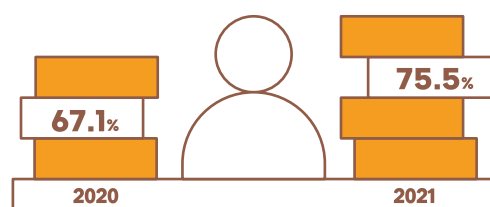
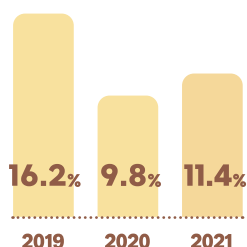


Figure. Free Time during Weekday (percentage of less than 1 hour)



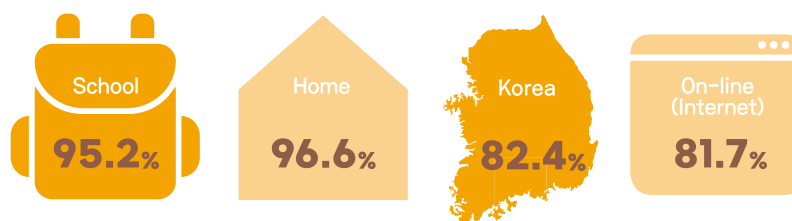
### 3.5 Leisure, Activity, and Participation

Children spending less than an hour per weekday in leisure activities was 11.4% in 2021. Given that the rates were 20% or higher in mid 2010s, the finding suggests increase in time spent in leisure activities. Children's satisfaction in their leisure activities also arose from 43.3% in 2019 to 47.9% in 2021.

Most children usually spent their time after school in 'private academies or tutoring', the rate of which increased from 40.6% in 2013 to 47.3% in 2018. This was followed by the 'use of smartphones', recorded at 14.1%, and the rate of 'play with friends' reported at around 5.0%.

In 2021, more than 95% of children reported that their human rights were respected at home and school, while the recognition of their rights at the national level and in the cyber space were comparatively lower at 82.4% and 81.7%, respectively.

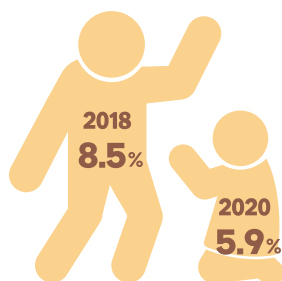
Figure. Recognition of Respect for Child & Youth Human Rights(2021)



### 3.6 Safety and Behavior

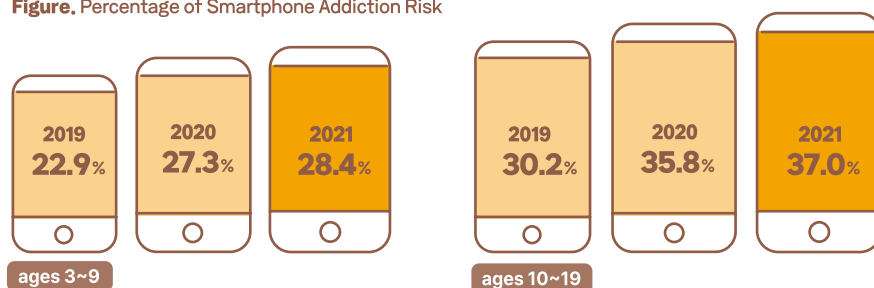
The rates of children who have encountered bullying by peers declined from 8.5% in 2018 to 5.9% in 2020. During the same period, the violent crime victimization rate declined as well from 325.2 per 100 thousand to 280.7. This suggests that COVID-19 restricted outdoor activities thereby reducing the likelihood of exposure to a potentially risky situation. On the contrary, children experiencing abuse considerably increased from 380.3 per 100 thousand children in 2019 to 401.6 in 2020 and to 502.2 in 2021.

**Figure.** Rates of Children Who Have Encountered Bullying by Peers

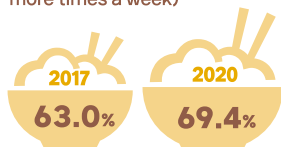


Among the risky behaviors of children, the rate of exposure to smartphone addiction risk surged between 2019 and 2020. For children of ages 3 to 9, the rate went from 22.9% to 27.3% and for older ages of 10 through 19 the rate were 30.2% and 35.8% in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

**Figure.** Percentage of Smartphone Addiction Risk



**Figure.** Percentage of Having Dinner with Their Families(4 or more times a week)



### 3.7 Relationship

Children who reported having dinner with their families 4 or more times a week rated 63.0% in 2017 which rose to 69.4% in 2020. The average family relationship satisfaction score was 8.19 in 2020.

Children aged 3~8 playing with their friends at least once a week was rated at 83.7% in 2018 and children between ages 9~18 scored their peer relationship satisfaction at an average of 7.89. In this stage of child development where peer relationship is increasingly important, the subjective satisfaction of children is found to be slightly higher in family relationships than in peer relationships.

**Figure.** Satisfied with their family members and peers(0 to10, 11-point scale)



### 3.8 Subjective Well-being

The overall life satisfaction scored 6.8 in 2020, which slightly declined from that of 2017. This aligned with that fact that the scores of positive emotions fell slightly in 2020, and those of negative emotions moved up from 2.67 in 2017 to 2.94 in 2020. This implies that social changes brought by COVID-19 have influenced the lives of children as well.

**Figure.** Subjective Well-being (0 to 10, 11 point scale)



## 04

## ‘Children and Youth Well-being’ indicators

This study devises a framework consisting of 60 indicators under 8 sub-dimensions. The table below shows these indicators grouped by sectors, definition and target age ranges.

## Demographic and Social Background

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Demographic Background	<b>Child population</b>	The ratio of projected population of ages 0-17 to the projected total population	0-17
	<b>Children mortality rate</b>	The number of deaths per 100,000 children in ages 0-17	0-17
	<b>Children with both parents employed</b>	The ratio of children aged 0-17 living with both working parents	0-17
	<b>Children living with single parent</b>	The ratio of children aged 0-17 living with single parent	0-17
Social Environment	<b>Preschool enrollment rate</b>	The ratio of children aged 0-5 who are enrolled in a preschool or a kindergarten	0-5
	<b>Rate of public childcare centers</b>	The ratio of the number of public or national childcare institutions to the total number of childcare institutions	0-5
	<b>Number of students per class</b>	The number of students per class by school level	kindergarten, elementary, middle and high school students
	<b>Disabled children participating in inclusive education</b>	The ratio of children entitled to have special education who receive education in a general class at general schools	
	<b>Children covered by the National Basic Livelihood Security Program</b>	The ratio of children aged 0-17 who receive a payment from the National Basic Livelihood Program under Article 25 of the 'National Basic Living Security Act	0-17
	<b>Children requiring Protection</b>	The number of yearly newly listed children in a child protection system per 100,000 children of ages 0-17	0-17
	<b>Children in custody of foster homes or institutions</b>	The number of children in custody of a child welfare institution, foster home, or group home per 100,000 children aged 0-19	0-19

## Material Situation, Housing and Environment

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Poverty and Deprivation	<b>Child deprivation index</b>	The rate of children deprived of necessities that are directly required for children	0-17
	<b>Concern about household economic difficulty</b>	The degree of children's concern about the economic difficulties of their families	9-17
	<b>Relative poverty rate</b>	The rate of children living below a relative poverty line	0-17
Housing	<b>Access to amenities within a neighborhood</b>	The rate of children living in a neighborhood with access to different types of amenities for their uses	0-17
	<b>Dwelling without basic facilities</b>	The rate of children living in a dwelling where failed to meet minimum housing requirements	0-17
	<b>PM2.5 level</b>	The level of fine dust(PM2.5 concentration in the air)	-

## Health

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Mental Health	<b>Stress self-recognition</b>	The rate of children being under stress in their daily lives	Middle and high school students
	<b>Suicide rate</b>	The number of deaths by suicide among children in the same age group	0-17
Physical Health	<b>Infants born with low birth weight</b>	The ratio of infants who were underweight at birth to the total number of live births	0
	<b>Obesity rate</b>	The ratio of children diagnosed as obese according to Body Mass Index	Elementary, middle and high school students
	<b>Self-reported health</b>	The ratio of children considering their own health to be in good condition	Middle and high school students
	<b>Hours of sleep</b>	An average daily sleep hours on weekdays for children	Middle and high school students
Health Behaviors	<b>Vaccination Rate</b>	The ratio of children who completed all mandatory vaccinations	1-6
	<b>Undernutrition</b>	The ratio of children not getting sufficient energy and/or nutrition	1-18
	<b>Level of regular physical activities</b>	The ratio of children who, in their daily lives, practice physical activities of a certain impact on a regular basis	Middle and high school students

## Learning and Competence

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Learning	Study Time	Hours spent in studying per day	Age 10 to high school ages
	Participation rate in private education	The ratio of children participating in private education at personal costs	Elementary, middle and high school students
	Subjective academic achievement	The level of academic achievement subjectively perceived by children	9-18
	School life satisfaction	The ratio of children satisfied with overall school life	9-18
	School dropout rate	The ratio of students who have dropped out of school	Elementary, middle and high school students
Competence	Infant language development	The level of overall language development in infants	0-5

## Leisure, Activity, and Participation

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Leisure and Activity	Time spent in leisure activities on weekdays	Average daily leisure hours on weekdays	Grade 4 in elementary through grade 3 in high school
	After-school activities	The ratio of activities which children usually participate in after school	9-17
	Leisure satisfaction	The ratio of children subjectively satisfied with their leisure activities	13-19
Participation in Society, Economy, and Politics	Club participation	The ratio of children who join social clubs or groups and take part in their activities	9-18
	Interests in social issues	The degree of children's interests in social issues	13-18
	Recognition about respect of their own basic rights	The ratio of children who perceive that their rights are respected by others	Grade 4 in elementary through grade 3 in high school
	Rate of working youth	The ratio of youth working part-time	Middle and high school students

## Safety and Behavior

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Safety	<b>Child abuse encounters</b>	The ratio of children having experienced abuse to children in the same age group	0-17
	<b>Child neglect after school</b>	The ratio of children who are neglected without a guardian after school	0-12
	<b>Peers violence encounters</b>	The ratio of children having experienced bullying by peers	Grade 4 in elementary through grade 3 in high school
	<b>Rate of road fatalities</b>	The number of deaths from traffic accidents among children in the same age group	0-20
	<b>Violent crime victimization rate</b>	The number of victims of violent crimes (felony, assault) among children in the same age group	0-20
Behavior	<b>Smoking rate</b>	The ratio of children who smoke	Middle and high school students
	<b>Drinking rate</b>	The ratio of children who drink alcohol	Middle and high school students
	<b>Youth crime rate</b>	The ratio of children who have been indicted for a crime to children in the same age group	14-18
	<b>Runaway from home experience</b>	The ratio of children having run away from home	Grade 4 in elementary through grade 3 in high school
	<b>Smartphone addiction risks</b>	The ratio of children under smartphone addition risk (high risk group and potential risk group)	Elementary, middle and high school students

## Relationship

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Family Relationship	<b>Hours spent with parents</b>	Amount of time infants spend with their parents on weekdays and weekends	0-5
	<b>Frequency of having dinner with family</b>	The ratio of children having dinner with their family	9-18
	<b>Recognition about decision making within family</b>	The ratio of children who perceive that their opinions are respected in making decisions within their family	Grade 4 in elementary through grade 3 in high school
	<b>Family relationship satisfaction</b>	The level of children's satisfaction with overall relationships with their families	9-18



Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
Peer and General Relationship	<b>Frequency of playing with friends</b>	The ratio of children spending time playing with their friends once or more often a week	3-8
	<b>Children reporting to have someone they can count on</b>	The ratio of children who report having someone to talk to when they are in need	13-18
	<b>Peer relationship satisfaction</b>	The level of children's satisfaction with overall relationships with their peers	9-18
	<b>Social trust</b>	The level of children's trust in our society	9-18

## Subjective Well-being

Sub-dimensions	Indicators	Definition of indicators	age
<b>Life Satisfaction</b>	<b>Life satisfaction</b>	The level of children's satisfaction with their life in general	9-18
<b>Positive and Negative Emotions</b>	<b>Positive emotions</b>	The degree to which children feel positive emotions (happiness) in their daily life	9-18
	<b>Negative emotions</b>	The degree to which children feel negative emotions (concerns, depression) in their daily life	9-18
<b>Value and Meaning of Life</b>	<b>Eudaimonia</b>	The degree to which children perceive their life as a meaningful one	9-18



## **Children & Youth Well-being in Korea 2022**

### Summary

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The background is a solid yellow color. Overlaid on this are several large, semi-transparent geometric shapes. In the top right, there is a large orange circle. Below it, a large white semi-circle is partially covered by a yellow semi-circle. To the left of the white semi-circle is a smaller white semi-circle. Below that is a small yellow quarter-circle. In the bottom right, there is a large white circle. In the bottom left, there is a large orange semi-circle. The text 'CHILDREN AND YOUTH WELL-BEING IN KOREA 2022' is centered horizontally in the middle of the page.

# CHILDREN AND YOUTH WELL-BEING IN KOREA 2022



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