

Home Learning Environment

High Achieving White Working Class (HAWWC) Boys



Key Facts

EVIDENCE

- Warm, nurturing, attentive, relaxed but 'boundaried', parenting, with regular routines, provides the basic nutrients for optimal development.
- Parents who enjoy spending time with their son, and support and encourage the young boy's interests and passions encourage self-motivation and self-directed learning.
- Giving children opportunities to initiate, self-direct and self-manage their activity and to take responsibility for their actions encourages the development of important lifelong learning habits and dispositions, which have been called the super-skills of learning.
- Children thrive with regular, familiar routines but which are not rigidly enforced, encouraging a flexible attitude and the capacity to be adaptable.
- Language development is critical for social and intellectual development and language rich environments, in which sustained shared dialogues between children and adults predominate with lots of story sharing and creating, provide the optimal conditions for learning to occur.
- The mind and the body are linked and young children need to move to learn. Physical activity and movement, both indoors and outdoors, is essential to healthy development.
- Children are fundamentally exploratory and curious and seek a broad range of play based experiences and activities through which they practice and extend their abilities and interests.
- Young children are born into a digital world and can be seen as 'technology natives'.

Project Findings

Warm, Nurturing, 'Boundaried' Parenting: Young boys need warm, caring and intimate parenting and interactions, where rules and behaviour expectations are consistent but not too rigid or onerous. The successful parents in this project were not overtly pushy or domineering. Parenting should meet the young boy's five basic needs: 1. food and warmth; 2. protection and safety; 3. love and a sense of belonging; 4. a feeling of being valued; and 5. a sense of achievable fulfilment, drawing on aspiration and expectations. Boundaries and order can come from daily routines such as meal times, story times, play times, bed-

times, can be helpful in anchoring the child's day and providing security and structure to daily life. **Sharing Time and Being Attentive:** Having regular, one on one time, where the young boy is given individual, affectionate attention, sharing activities and interests can deeply impact on the boy's sense of self-esteem, self-worth and wellbeing. Being 'tuned' into the boy's emotional and cognitive state and needs and responsive to these gives the child security and the confidence to be independent and exploratory. **Child Initiated Activity:** Parents of high achieving young

boys follow their son's lead and support their self-directed passions and interests, providing lots of support, encouragement and a playmate. They are not 'pushy' or 'tiger' parents but see their son as competent and with their own agency and play agendas. **Routines:** Parents ensure that each day has clearly embedded routines (eg getting up, bath time,



Project Findings

mealtimes, bedtime, sleep time) and regularity but these are not rigidly imposed and flexibility was also seen as important. Mealtimes often were seen as an important family time when talk was shared and relationships within the family were cemented.

Parent/Child Talk: Parents of high achieving boys enjoy their child's company and have talked a lot to their child (engaged in sustained shared dialogues) since birth. Responding to children's curiosity and questions is an important part of the dialogue.

Stories and Books: Sharing and creating stories from books and daily life is an important part of daily life for these boys and their parents. Reading together is an important part of daily routines and parents often model reading for pleasure themselves.

Outdoors and Physical

Activity: Being outdoors a lot and sharing walks, playing in the park, on the beach, in the fields or in the garden is an important feature of home life, with lots of dialogue about the natural world. Physical activity is seen as central to child and parent well being, with football, cycling, wrestling, fishing from an early age featuring as an important shared activity.

Home Activities: A wide range of indoor and outdoor activities are identified as providing the

young boy with stimulation and opportunities for both companionable and self-directed learning, including, table games, bricks, jigsaws, drawing, small world play and Lego. Many parents commented on their son's enjoyment of imaginative and creative play activities, including music making.

Technology: Technology was a present and recognised element in daily home life for most (but not all) the high achieving children, but 'screen time' was generally monitored and limited.

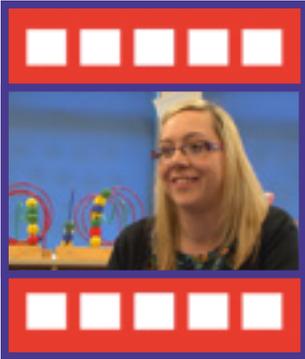
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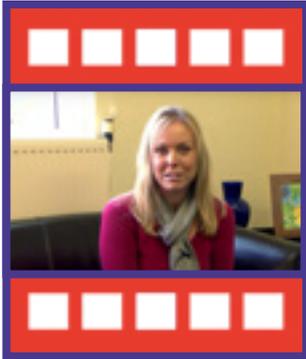
Action Points

- Encouraging positive, warm parenting with regular routines and reasonable expectations for their child can help parents to relax and enjoy their son's company.
- Building in daily time for sharing activities and experiences, both indoors and outdoors, that motivate the young boy is beneficial for both the parent and child.
- Giving extended and sustained time to talk, share experiences and celebrate the young boy's achievements is fundamental to securing boy's development and positive attitude to self.
- Young boys need plenty of physical activity and continuous opportunities to move within their environment. The outdoors, providing first-hand experience of the natural world, is a particularly stimulating context, providing the young boy with a wide range of physical, sensory and cognitive learning opportunities.
- Technology should be encouraged as part of the modern world of childhood but should not dominate in daily activities.

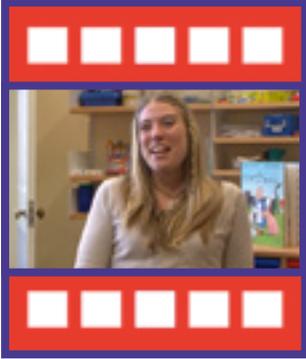
HAWWC Boys Project Video Blogs



Home
Learning
Playmates



Attitudes
to
Learning



Outdoors &
Physical
Play



Indoor
Play