

Functional English: Early Years tasks

Parents demand more male childcare workers

Published: Tuesday, 20 January 2009

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/NI1/Newsroom/DG_174092

According to research conducted by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC), 55 per cent of parents say they want a male childcare worker for their nursery-aged children, with two thirds of lone parent mothers saying they would like a man involved in the care and development of their young children.

Early years settings can provide children with access to a male role model. Currently 17 per cent of children from lone parent female families have fewer than two hours a week contact time with a man, while 36 per cent have under six hours. Male early years workers can perform a vital role in ensuring many of these young children have quality contact time with men.

Offering someone for the boys to look up to was seen as important for 37 per cent of parents, who say that it sets boys a good example, while a quarter say they believe boys will behave better with a man.

But it's not just boys who stand to benefit. Fifty-seven per cent of parents recognised the fact that men and women have different skills to offer young children, while 52 per cent simply said that a nursery setting should better reflect the real gender mix of the world.

Yet despite the high demand for male workers, there are very few men currently working in this field. To try and tackle this dramatic gender imbalance, CWDC is calling on more men to consider working in early years.

Thom Crabbe, National Development Manager for Early Years at the Children's Workforce Development Council, said:

"Parents are right to want to see more men working in early years. It is important that during the crucial first five years of a child's life they have quality contact with both male and female role models.

"And working with under 5s is definitely a job for the boys. It's one that requires someone who is patient, creative, and bright and one which gives back major rewards. Male workers will get to work in a challenging, stimulating environment with like-minded professionals dedicated to the development of children with positive benefits to babies, toddlers and young children to families and communities."

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Task 1

Answer the questions

1. How many parents say they would like a male childcare worker for their nursery?
2. What percentage of children from lone parent female families have fewer than two hours a week contact time with a man?
3. Who said, "Parents are right to want to see more men working in early years"?
4. What is CWDC doing to try to encourage more men to consider working in early years?
5. 52% of parents gave what as their reason for wanting to see more men working in a nursery setting?
6. Give two reasons why it is seen as important for more men to work in the early year's sector.
7. What do you think?

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Task 2

Fact or opinion?

Decide which of the following are fact and which are opinion.

There are not enough men working in the early years sector	
Men have the patience to work with children	
Most parents want to see male workers in their nurseries	
"Parents are right to want to see more men working in early years"	
Most children from lone parent families do not have enough contact with males	
Some children have very little contact time with males	
Boys need a man to look up to	
Parents felt it was important to have a gender mix in the nursery to reflect the real world	

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Task 3 Sentences

Which of the following are complete sentences?

Do not use capital letters or punctuation as a guide as these have been removed.

C = complete NC = not complete

many parents say they want a male childcare worker for their nursery-aged children	
male workers will get to work in a challenging	
there are very few men currently working in this field	
quality contact with both male and female role models	
two thirds of lone parent mothers say they would like a man involved in the care and development of their young children	
working with under 5s is definitely a job	
who say that it sets boys a good example	
contact with both male and female role models	
offering someone for the boys to look up to was seen as important for 37 per cent of parents	
parents recognised the fact that men and women have different skills	
CWDC is calling on more men to consider working in early years	
Male early years workers can perform a vital role in ensuring many of these young children have quality contact time	

When you have finished you can add the capitals and punctuation to the complete sentences if you wish.

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Task 4 Capital letters

Replace the capital letters

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thom crabbe, national development manager for early years at the children's workforce development council, said:

"parents are right to want to see more men working in early years. it is important that during the crucial first five years of a child's life they have quality contact with both male and female role models."

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Task 5

There are some spelling mistakes. Can you spot them?

1. "And working with under 5s is definetely a job for the boys. Its one that requires someone who is patiant, creative, and bright and one wich gives back major rewards. Male workers will get to work in a chalenging, stimulating environment with like-minded profesionals dedicated to the development of children with posative benefits to babies, toddlers and young children to familys and communities."
2. Acording to research conducted by the Childrens Workforce Development Council (CWDC) 55 per cent of parents say they want a male childcare worker for their nursery-aged children, with two thirds of loan parent mothers saying they wuld like a man involved in the care and develoment of there young children.

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Task 6 Writing

What is your opinion about the topics discussed in the text on page 1?

Write no less than 200 words to express your point of view.

Remember to use the statistics to back up your points and to use quotation marks if you quote any part of the text. Quotation marks look like this: "this is a quote".

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Answers

Task 1

Sample answers – others may be possible

1. How many parents say they would like a male childcare worker for their nursery?

55 per cent of parents

2. What percentage of children from lone parent female families have fewer than two hours a week contact time with a man?

17 per cent of children

3. Who said, "Parents are right to want to see more men working in early years"?

Thom Crabbe (the National Development Manager of the Children's Workforce Development Council)

4. What is CWDC doing to try to encourage more men to consider working in early years?

The CWDC is calling upon more men to consider working in early years and is pointing out the qualities needed and the rewards of working in early years.

5. 52% of parents gave what as their reason for wanting to see more men working in a nursery setting?

In order to reflect the gender mix of the real world

6. Give two reasons why it is seen as important for more men to work in the early year's sector.

Sets boys a good example

Boys behave better for a man

Men offer different skills

To reflect the gender mix of the real world

To provide children with quality time with men

To provide male role models

7. What do you think?

Individual answers

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Answers

Task 2

There are not enough men working in the early years sector	F
Men have the patience to work with children	O
Most parents want to see male workers in their nurseries	F
"parents are right to want to see more men working in early years"	O
Most children from lone parent families do not have enough contact with males	O
Some children have very little contact time with males	F
Boys need a man to look up to	O
Parents felt it was important to have a gender mix in the nursery to reflect the real world	F

Task 3 (some answers are open to discussion!)

many parents say they want a male childcare worker for their nursery-aged children	C
male workers will get to work in a challenging	Nc
there are very few men currently working in this field	C
quality contact with both male and female role models	Nc
two thirds of lone parent mothers say they would like a man involved in the care and development of their young children	C
working with under 5s is definitely a job	Nc
who say that it sets boys a good example	Nc
contact with both male and female role models	Nc
offering someone for the boys to look up to was seen as important for 37 per cent of parents	C
parents recognised the fact that men and women have different skills	C
CWDC is calling on more men to consider working in early years	C
Male early years workers can perform a vital role in ensuring many of these young children have quality contact time	Nc

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Answers

Task 4

According to research conducted by the **Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC)**, 55 per cent of parents say they want a male childcare worker for their nursery-aged children, with two thirds of lone parent mothers saying they would like a man involved in the care and development of their young children.

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Task 5

1. "And working with under 5s is definitely a job for the boys. It's one that requires someone who is patient, creative, and bright and one which gives back major rewards. Male workers will get to work in a challenging, stimulating environment with like-minded professionals dedicated to the development of children with positive benefits to babies, toddlers and young children to families and communities."
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Teaching Notes

I used these resources to help prepare E1-L1 learners for Functional English (note the Functional English criteria are tougher than SfL at the same level).

For the Entry 1-2 learners I simplified the piece of text, e.g. the wording, chunks, and sentence structure. The E1 learners had in-class support so did not use the resources in isolation.

The E3 and especially the L1 learners worked through the exercises at their own pace without support unless it was requested. They were then asked to self-mark using the answer key and finally to hand in work to be checked by the tutor.

The resources were also used as group tasks and for discussion at all levels.

Colleen Craggs

Note that these resources are not Functional English practice assessments.

They are designed to develop underpinning reading, writing and 'discussion' skills (see next page).

Functional English criteria

Useful definitions Ofqual (2009), pp3-5.

Reading within Functional Skills qualifications is defined as the independent decoding and understanding of written language and text in a purposeful context.

Speaking, listening and communication within Functional Skills qualifications are defined as non-written communication, normally conducted face-to-face.

Writing within Functional Skills qualifications is defined as the independent construction of written text to communicate in a purposeful context.

Entry 3 Skill standard	Entry 3 Coverage and range Ofqual (2009), p9.
<p>Speaking, listening and communication Respond appropriately to others and make some extended contributions in familiar formal and informal discussions and exchanges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the main points of discussions Use techniques to clarify and confirm understanding Give own point of view and respond appropriately to others' point of view Use appropriate language in formal discussions/exchanges Make relevant contributions, allowing for and responding to others' input
<p>Reading Read and understand the purpose and content of straightforward texts that explain, inform and recount information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the main points of texts Obtain specific information through detailed reading Use organisational features to locate information Read and understand texts in different formats using strategies/techniques appropriate to the task
<p>Writing Write texts with some adaptation to the intended audience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan, draft and organise writing Sequence writing logically and clearly Use basic grammar including appropriate verb-tense and subject-verb agreement Check work for accuracy, including spelling
Level 1 Skill standard	Level 1 Coverage and range Ofqual (2009), pp10-11.
<p>Speaking, listening and communication Take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges that include unfamiliar subjects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make relevant and extended contributions to discussions, allowing for and responding to others' input Prepare for and contribute to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions Make different kinds of contributions to discussions Present information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language
<p>Reading Read and understand a range of straightforward texts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the main points and ideas and how they are presented in a variety of texts Read and understand texts in detail Utilise information contained in texts Identify suitable responses to texts <p style="text-align: right;">In more than one type of text.</p>
<p>Writing Write a range of texts to communicate information, ideas and opinions, using formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail Present information in a logical sequence Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience (55-60% assessment weighting) Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear (40-45% assessment weighting) <p style="text-align: right;">In more than one type of text.</p>

References

Ofqual (2009), *Functional Skills criteria for English: Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, level 1 and level 2.*

<http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2009-11-functional-skills-criteria-for-english.pdf>

Further functional skills documents available at <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/2578.aspx>