

## Recruitment and retention of men

### Working with children – key messages for men

You can offer something different for children. Children need positive male and female influences, working as a team around them.

Many men are skilled in nurturing the strengths and talents of children.

You can be a role model for children, including those without positive male role models in their life.

You can enable children to be happy – getting on with life with a positive purpose, not easily shaken by the world, and well respected by others.

You can help to keep children safe from risks that they face.

### Key elements for recruitment of men

#### Influencing career choices:

- incorporate diverse gender images and stories about jobs and professions into materials for children in early years (0-6)
- engage with young people when choosing course/career options in school – men already working in roles, content likely to be as attractive to boys as to girls
- train teachers as well, as they influence decisions

#### Career options and progression:

- emphasise the diversity of roles in early years (not all nursery based)
- highlight progression routes within children and families' services

#### Practicalities:

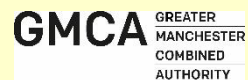
- do not rely on job titles (which are often meaningless or misleading for people)
- be specific about what you want staff to do
- align practical descriptions of roles with day-to-day reality (to challenge perception of early years roles as 'babysitting')
- emphasise a person's lived experience, rather than professional qualifications
- emphasise support for learning, development and professional qualifications
- demonstrate scientific evidence
- role modelling - gentleness can be strength

#### Language and imagery

- appropriate language
- appropriate imagery (including men in early years settings)
- appropriate colours
- appropriate case studies / stories (videos, etc.): hearing from men already in the roles, and their own experiences and career journeys
- use quotes

Considerations for employers
<b>Benefits:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be clear on the <b>benefits to employers</b> (such as a workforce more reflective of the population it serves, and the benefits of a more gender-balanced workforce for both boys and girls).</li> </ul>
<b>Active recruitment:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly <b>define 'early years'</b> (include antenatal and perinatal; not just babies but also children).</li> <li>• Recognise that there might be <b>different challenges</b> in different fields (such as education, health care and social care).</li> <li>• <b>Targeting</b> men from certain backgrounds, including those who might have limited options, such as military veterans.</li> <li>• Possible <b>entry points</b> through routes such as 'high energy' environments (forest schools, outdoor education, etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>Recruitment process:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Salaries</b> – and (perceived) status – are still fundamental issues.</li> <li>• Consider <b>recruitment panels</b> including parents (male and female).</li> </ul>
<b>Employment arrangements:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flexible working</b> for staff – including for men who are already fathers.</li> <li>• <b>Specific support</b> for men in roles (such as how to deal with negative views from parents about men working in early years, and specifically the 'issue' of nappy changing).</li> </ul>
<b>Engaging parents:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Onboarding</b> of parents (showcasing risk assessments) – including nappy changing, intimate care.</li> </ul>

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