

Forget  
'boys will be boys' ...  
boys will be brilliant!



An information evening for parents.

Why are we here?

**An Article from the Times (Summer 2011):**

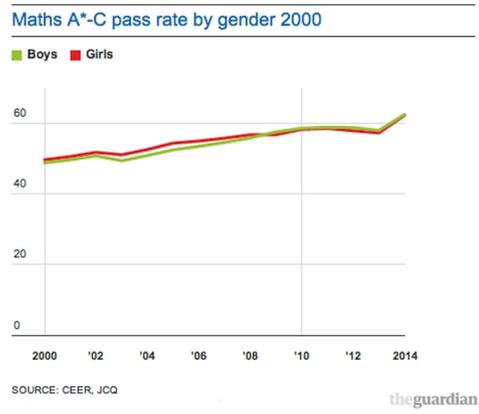
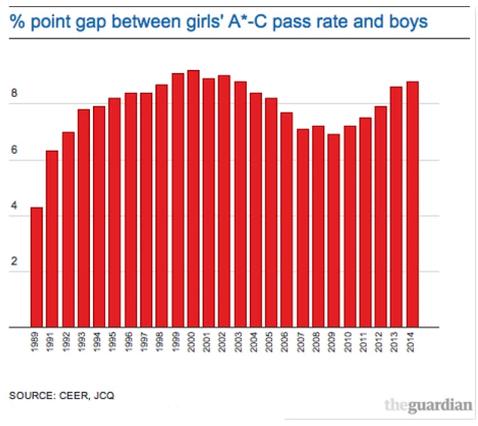
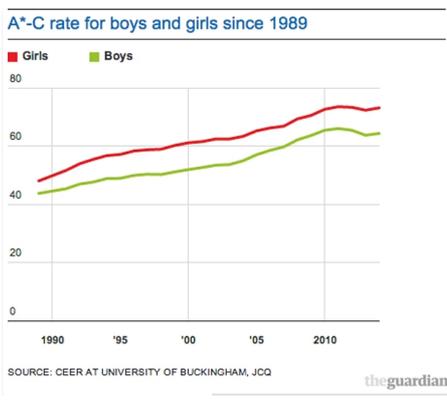
Girls are racing ahead of boys at GCSE at "worrying" speed, opening up a record achievement gap between the sexes, results show. Girls outperformed boys in almost every subject and significantly increased their clutch of top grades in the sciences compared with last year.

A record 26.5% of girls' entries in all subjects were an A\* or A grade, compared with just under a fifth - 19.8% - of boys' entries.

**Guardian 2014**

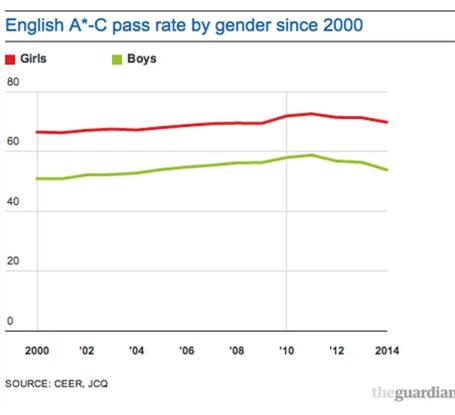
**GCSE results: biggest gap in 11 years between boys and girls A\*-C pass rate**

Despite boys getting a higher share of A\* grades they continue to fall behind across the board. While both boys' and girls' results have increased, the gap between the two genders has remained solid.



This year girls more A\* and As than boys across all the major subjects, all of them that is except for Maths where boys finished ahead.

Now contrast that to the gap between boys and girls's pass rate in English in the chart below.



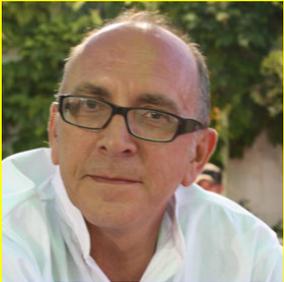


Mr Gary Wilson, your sons  
... and mine!

Currently a freelance consultant and author of several books including "Breaking Through the Barriers to Boys' Achievement" and (for parents) "How to Help Your Boy Succeed" , Gary Wilson taught in secondary schools for twenty seven years, mostly in West Yorkshire. He began work on raising boys' achievement in 1993, quickly realising the need to work in conjunction with feeder primary schools in order to maximise the impact.



My intentions...  
34 barriers woven into tonight!



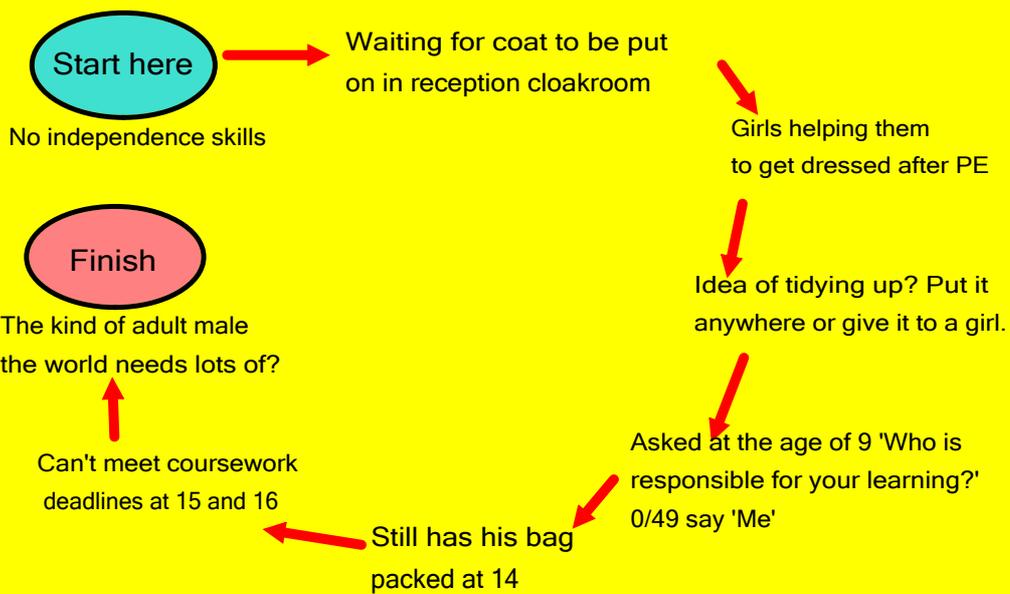
Making a difference



## Lack of independence prior to starting school

Self-esteem develops as a direct result of being able to do things for ourselves.

Boys need to take responsibility for their own learning.

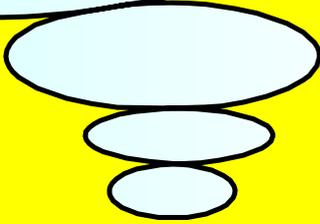


What can we do to develop independence in our boys?

Do you encourage your son to help around the house?  
Do you encourage him to dress himself?  
Do you encourage your son to help prepare meals?  
Do you encourage your son to help tidy things away after meals?



(Help your boys succeed p.16 - 17)



## Less developed linguistically prior to starting school

"If he can't talk, he can't negotiate. If he can't negotiate, then he can't ask for what he wants. If he can't get what he wants, he grabs it."

Girls use between 10 and 30 times as much language in their play even before school.

Girls develop facility with language more quickly than boys do.

Boys need to learn how to communicate their feelings and use words as a substitute to physical reactions.

Boys become adept at minimising emotions to do with vulnerability, guilt, fear and hurt.

We can help our boys by talking!

Need to get rid of the 'grunt culture'.



Being less linguistically developed does not just mean that boys have a tendency to do less well in reading and writing SATs tests and language-based subjects through school, but it also clearly has a fundamental impact on the ability to express emotions and the subsequent development of emotional intelligence.

These boys often become the kind of me who cannot subsequently express their feelings in adulthood.

"It is quite possible that parents are talking to their children less now than at any time during the history of mankind."



Pushchairs that face away from the parent reduce opportunities for verbal interaction. Gary Wilson would like to see them banned!



Eating around the dinner table (less than half the homes in the UK have tables around which families sit and eat and talk on a regular basis).

40% of 4 year olds have televisions in their own bedrooms.

Playtimes and encouraging imaginative play.

The implications for boys are serious.  
What can I do to help?



Talk! Talk! Talk!

When he's younger:

Don't put him under pressure to name lots of things but if he does, give him lots of praise.

Older females and males need to read to him extensively and talk about the reading (and don't stop when he starts to be able to read for himself).

He should see older males reading in his home and not just newspapers. Young boys see reading the news as masculine and male. It does not help their writing or language development.

Play imaginatively together, talk about what you are doing as you are doing it and encourage him to do the same. Develop character's voices as you play and encourage him to do the same. The more excited and 'into it' you are, the chattier and more engaged he'll become.

Talk about what you are doing as you carry out every day activities.

Enjoy lots of rhymes and songs together.

Point out all the things you see around you.

Look at him as you are talking to him - it shows that you value him.

If he says something incorrectly, don't correct it - just say it back to him the correct way.

Use sing-song or funny voices for characters when you read.

Point to pictures and use props such as character-related toys or wizard's hats.

Make up stories together. You can start by telling stories that are familiar to both of you, then add a new twist (such as bringing yourself into the story), then invent a new story using the same basic structure.

If his grandad lives far away, get him to make a CD of stories.

When he's older:

Play board-games together.

Find opportunities for discussion related to films or programmes watched together on television.

Limit leisure time spent passively in front of screens.

Eat together as regularly as you can, making it a habit to share thoughts and feelings about the day as you do so.

Wash up together and chat.

Talk as you do jobs about the house together.

His 'payment' for a ride in mum or dad's taxi can be a proper heart-to-heart.

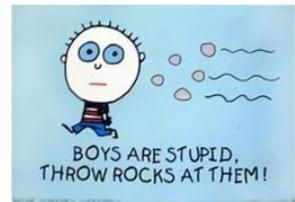
Ask him open questions and try to get him to teach you something that he has been taught that day - if you can do that, you've hit the jackpot! 'What is Skellig all about?'

In general:

Never stop responding to his questions, or he may just stop asking them.



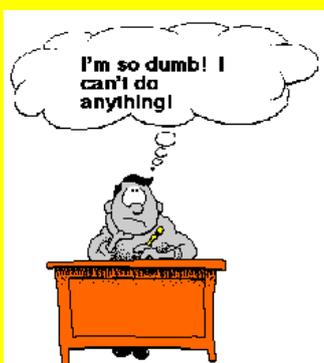
## Boys and their labels...



No wonder they have low self-esteem!



## Low self-esteem



I'd like everyone to stand up...

Pocket Pal p.53

Praise boys and say why. Boys will then repeat the behaviour.

I am.... not I don't want to...

## Reading and role models

Over emphasis on non-fiction.



Reading is perceived as female.

### What do we know about boys and their reading?

Boys are less likely to talk about what they are reading so try to find ways to chat informally about a news story, magazine, book or film...

Boys spend less time reading so don't be too harsh if it seems too little! Even five minutes a day can make all the difference.

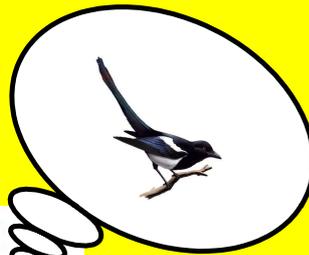
Boys choose different books to girls and tend to go more for humour, science fiction, action, even horror!

Boys' interest in a topic really does seem to make a difference to their understanding so it really is worth choosing books that match their interests and hobbies.

**With these facts in mind, MOTIVATION and ATTENTION-GRABBING CONTENT have to be the top priorities if you want to get your son to read - and stick with it.**

See bottom of the handout for books/authors that appeal to boys.

The best readers make  
the best writers!



### Handwriting

We warm up to play football, so we  
should warm up to write!



## Children are kinaesthetic learners...



Take frequent study breaks.

Move around to learn new things e.g. read while on an exercise bike or walking.

Work at a standing position.

Put the main points on cards and then sort them in different ways.

Do demonstrations and, role plays and acting.

Use drawings, write things down, draw diagrams.

Use bright colours to highlight reading material.

Dress up their work space with posters.

Listen to music while they study.

Look, cover, remember, write.

Skim through material to get a rough idea before settling down to read it in detail.



Thank you for listening.  
Any questions?



**Breaking Through Barriers to Boys Achievement**  
It is, sadly, a fact that boys don't do as well as girls at school. There is no logical reason for this, of course, it is not as if boys are innately more stupid than girls, more of a case that many boys don't perform as well for a number of reasons. This book aims to change all that by examining research findings and providing strategies to help teachers.  
Buy online from [Amazon](#)



**Raising Boys' Achievement**  
Based on sound research and experience by leading author Gary Wilson, this "Pocket PAL" provides an introduction to why boys underachieve along with a practical toolkit of proven strategies to help raise boys' attainment across all age boundaries, enabling every teacher, department, key stage or school to identify the problems and plan a way forward.  
Buy online from [Amazon](#)



**Help Your Boys Succeed**  
This highly practical book contains strong messages about the need to develop independence in boys, the importance of male role models within the family and what to look out for in school, including signs of peer pressure and limiting negative self beliefs. It gives advice on how best to support boys in their learning and in developing self esteem.  
Buy online from [Amazon](#)



**Getting It Right From The Start**  
By Linda Tallent with Gary Wilson  
Order by post from: G.A.L. Publishers, 8 Paris Mews, Scholes, Huddersfield HD9 1QU

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