

Triggering and sustaining extra-curricular engagement as a route to resilience in middle childhood: practitioners' perspectives.

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We know that participating in an extra-curricular activity enhances :

- Psycho-social well-being, the promotion of positive health behaviours among children and young people (Amnesi et al., 2007; Gore et al., 2001; Fredricks and Eccles 2008)**
- Cross-sectional studies show that extra-curricular activity is associated with perceptions of competence (McCarthy et al. 2008; Eime et al. 2013)**
- Higher self-esteem (Findlay and Coplan, 2008; Marsh and Kleitman, 2003; Eime et al. 2013)**
- Emotional control and social adequacy (Griffiths et al., 2010; Marsh and Kleitman, 2003)**
- Social functioning compared with children who did not participate (Griffiths et al., 2010; Snyder et al., 2010; Bourassa et al. 2017).**

We know very little about how engagement first begins. We know even less about how engagement and persistence is nurtured in children not lucky enough to be born with a precocious talent and a supporting environment to develop those aptitudes.

Least well understood is how to engage the most disaffected (Hart and Heaver 2013).

“Listen to this: Britain has the lowest social mobility in the developed world. Here, the salary you earn is more linked to what your father got paid than in any other major country.”

David Cameron addressing the annual Conservative Party conference in October 2014

Pupil Premium Grant - £1320 (FSM) child English primary school, and £935 in secondary schools (2017).

The government's toolkit has been compiled through £3.5 million of grant funding to the Education Endowment Fund to support promising approaches to *character building* to allow poorer pupils to emerge from education better equipped to "thrive in modern Britain" (DfE 2015).

What we are looking for:

- Proposals should develop new innovations or expand existing evidence-based practice in some, or all, of the areas below:
- building a range of schools' or colleges' capacity **to improve character education** by developing the knowledge and skills of staff trialling school or college-based initiatives, for example: classroom-based initiatives linked to school/college subjects teaching and learning strategies whole-school/college practical approaches to ethos and discipline
- **bespoke activities with groups of pupils on character development providing extracurricular activities after school or college – this could include competitive sports, music, debating, outdoor activities** or survival weekends

**Nicky Morgan (Secretary of State for Education from July 2014 – July 2016) was confident that the outcome of these interventions “will cement our position as a global leader in teaching character and *resilience* [my italics]”
(DfE 2015).**

What works.

Feedback +8

Meta-cognitive and self-regulation programmes +8

Arts participation +2

Sports participation +2

Teaching assistants +1

Mentoring +1

Aspiration interventions 0

In 2015 the Sutton Trust reported that, “despite five years of pupil premium, five elite schools in Britain sent more pupils to either Oxford or Cambridge than nearly 2000 state schools.”

In 2016 The Social Mobility Commission reported that inequality was increasing and a child living in one of England’s most disadvantaged areas was 27 times more likely to attend an inadequate school.

“I want Britain to be the world’s great meritocracy – a country where everyone has a fair chance to go as far as their talent and their hard work will allow.”

Theresa May. 9th September 2016

The Education Endowment Fund (2017)

Feedback +8

Meta-cognitive and self-regulation programmes +8

Arts participation +2

Sports participation +2

Teaching assistants +1

Mentoring +1

Aspiration interventions 0

Metacognitive
Self-regulation
Social and emotional
learning
Soft skills
Life skills
Character
Grit
Resilience
(growth)Mind set

- **psycho-social well-being, the promotion of positive health behaviours among children and young people (Amnesi et al., 2007; Gore et al., 2001; Fredricks and Eccles 2008)**
- **Cross-sectional studies show that extra-curricular activity is associated with perceptions of competence (McCarthy et al. 2008; Eime et al. 2013)**
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“[teach]how to think about themselves” (Positive Action)

**to apply the knowledge taught “to understand emotions”
(Lion’s Quest)**

**“teaches participants to cope with their feelings by training
them to think more positively about themselves and how to
relax and regulate their bodies” (Friend’s for Life)**

**Inequality... directly impacts on psychological and physical health, to a degree that that cannot simply be ameliorated by psychological interventions
(Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky 2005)**

There is an absence by policy makers to recognise the large body of evidence that suggests it is the connections between people in schools rather than the cognitive and behavioural interventions, which provide the greatest driving forces in shaping mindsets for all pupils.

(McLaughlin and Clarke 2010)

A child who does not participate in a school club at primary school is more likely to go through their entire education without ever engaging in an extra-curricular activity.

(Fletcher et al. 2003; Aumètre and Poulin 2015)

Middle Childhood

A critical stage in forming the newly emerging independent self. A child begins to compare their aptitudes against others (Devine et al. 2016).

Reflecting upon the ecology of middle childhood Oberle et al. (2014) discovered that adult support in the school was considered the most significant by 9 year olds and began to decline with the onset of adolescence.

Interview: 20 school practitioners (an adult working in a primary school setting)

Subject: the triggering and sustaining of extra-curricular engagement of a FSM child in Key Stage 2 (8,9,10 year olds) who had previously never participated in an extra-curricular activity.

Sustaining: at least six months and within the last year.

10 teachers

3 teaching assistants

1 deputy head

6 undergraduate mentors

16 female

4 male.

This ratio of 25% male was higher than the national average. According to 2015 government statistics 16% of teachers in primary schools were male

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment

The duration of teaching extra-curricular activities among the twenty respondents ranged from 2 years to 36 years. The average length teaching in schools among the practitioners was 10.68 years.

Cycling

P.E (3)

Gymnastics

Art (2)

Foreign languages

Girls' football

“Snack ‘n’ chat”

(lunch time club)

Maths

Forestry School

Gardening

Running

Debating (6)

What we are looking for:

bespoke activities with groups of pupils on character development providing extra-curricular activities after school or college - this could include competitive sports, music, debating, outdoor activities

12 girls

8 boys

18 practitioners said they had a hobby(ies)

“Fairly important”

“Massively important”

“It’s how I view the world”

Notions of *“identity”*, *“a release”*, and keeping *“sane”*

**One participant had acquired her hobby from her husband.
Another said that the trigger was a personal call “*an inside thing*”**

The other sixteen participants either pointed to school (9) or a family member (4) or both school and family (3) for introducing them to their hobby.

Why this child/why this story?

- ***“Initially shy”***
- ***“Initially not confident”***
- ***“Wasn’t enthusiastic about anything”***
- ***“Angry”***

Levels of self-confidence or anger issues (nine stories)

- ***“mum’s mental health difficulties”***
- ***“not picked up from club”***
- ***“mother did not sign permission slip”***
- ***“lacking self-confidence (the fault of mum)”***

90% of the stories the children were either invited or selected to join the club.

8 clubs were run during the school timetable.

1 club was made part of the official curriculum.

Sustaining:

- **Goals; competition**
- **Responsibility**
- **Mastery**
- **Achievement recognition**
- **Responding to Feedback**
- **Ownership/belonging**
- **Identity/belonging**

- ***It was the first competition... we went to the Houses of Parliament***
- ***so many different opportunities to succeed that are so very different to like the sort of class-based activities***
- ***suddenly these things that he had never done before, he was able to represent the school***
- ***The fact that he was getting better***
- ***He liked being part of a team... he liked that sort of responsibility***
- ***...it's their club, they decide what to do, they come with ideas, they share them...***
- ***... actually the fun things are the things that teach you the most...***

Outcomes. Resilience?

- **All twenty participants judged their child to be more resilient after 6 months extra-curricular engagement.**
- ***“having a go”***
- **accepting set backs**
- **persevering for better results**

Definitions of “resilience”

9 participants used the phrase *not giving up*

Other phrases used:

- *being able to respond*
- *Put more effort into it*
- *The ability to bounce back*
- *Carry on, keep going*
- *Learning to dance in the rain*

Resilience Framework (Children & Young People) Oct 2012 – adapted from Hart & Blincow 2007 www.boingboing.org.uk

	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
SPECIFIC APPROACHES	Good enough housing	Find somewhere for the child/YP to belong	Make school/college life work as well as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
		Help child/YP understand their place in the world		Being brave	
	Enough money to live	Tap into good influences	Engage mentors for children/YP	Solving problems	Support the child/YP to understand other people's feelings
		Keep relationships going			
	Being safe	The more healthy relationships the better	Map out career or life plan	Putting on rose-tinted glasses	Help the child/YP to know her/himself
		Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope		Fostering their interests	
	Access & transport	Get together people the child/YP can count on	Help the child/YP to organise her/himself	Calming down & self-soothing	Help the child/YP take responsibility for her/himself
		Responsibilities & obligations			
	Healthy diet	Focus on good times and places	Highlight achievements	Remember tomorrow is another day	Foster their talents
		Exercise and fresh air		Lean on others when necessary	
	Enough sleep	Make sense of where child/YP has come from	Develop life skills	Have a laugh	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
		Predict a good experience of someone or something new			
	Play & leisure	Make friends and mix with other children/YPs			
Being free from prejudice & discrimination					

NOBLE TRUTHS

Engagement



Triggering



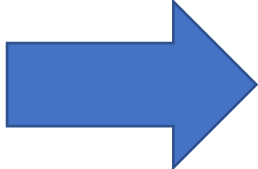
Participating



Interest
Motivation

Invitation/opportunity

Sustaining



No choice/Governed

Emerging
identity



Activity



Achievement



Goals

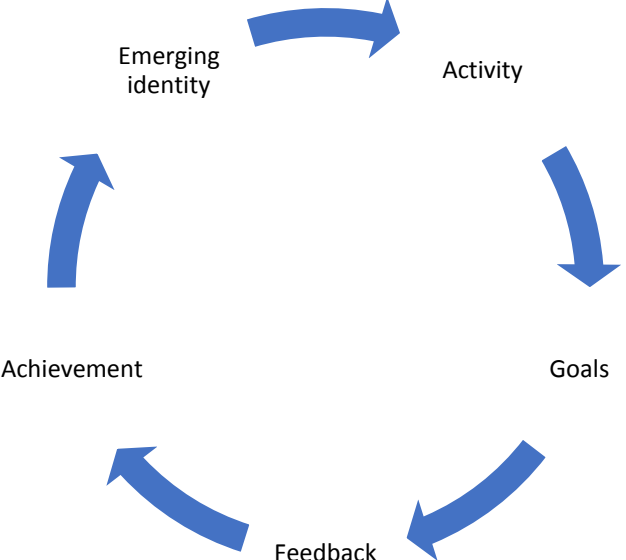


Feedback



The school/exterior

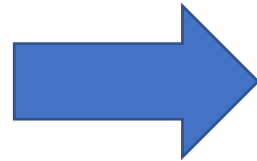
The child/interior



Engagement



Triggering



Sustaining



Interest
Motivation

Arts participation +2
Sports participation +2
Teaching Assistants +1
Mentoring +1
Aspiration Interventions 0

Feedback +8

Metacognitive and self-regulation +8



Beginning
Triggering

Development
Sustaining

Career

Flow

Element

ZONE



Rewards of effort

Resilience



Process



Outcomes

Resilient Moves

Self-esteem
Identity
Belonging

Exterior



Interior

Resilience is an emergent property of a hierarchically organized set of protective systems that cumulatively buffer the effects of adversity and can therefore rarely, if ever, be regarded as an intrinsic property of individuals. (Roisman et al., 2002, p.1216)

Overcoming adversity, whilst also potentially changing, or even dramatically transforming, (aspects of) that adversity.

(Hart et al., 2016, p.3)

The sphere of individual sovereignty is not based on a mere desire to consume... it is based more profoundly on activities... which are in themselves communication giving, creating and aesthetic enjoyment, the production and reproduction of life, tenderness, the realisation of physical, sensuous and intellectual capabilities. (Gorz 1982)

So where does resilience
belong and what is its
identity?

Thank you.

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