

The Early Years Home Learning Environment

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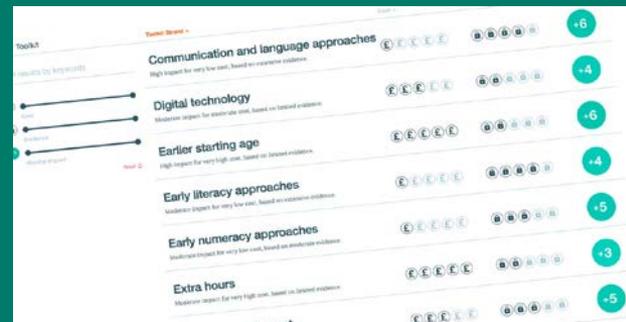
11th July 2019

- 1. What is the early years home learning environment?**
- 2. Does it have a positive impact on all pupils?**
- 3. What specifically makes a good early years home learning environment?**
- 4. How can we improve the early years home learning environment?**

An independent charity which aims to raise the attainment of 3-18-year-olds, particularly those facing disadvantage.

Founded in 2011 by the charity the Sutton Trust, and a £125m founding grant from the UK Department for Education.

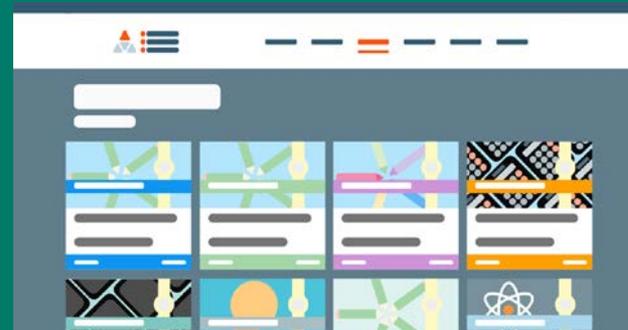
Evidence synthesis



Evidence generation



Evidence mobilisation



What is the ideal home learning environment for children aged 0-5?

What would you expect to see?

1. What is the early years home learning environment?

‘The Home Learning Environment (HLE) refers to the activities that parents carry out with their children in order to encourage learning. In the early years this might include reading to their child, supporting learning through play, taking the child to the library, or teaching rhymes and songs’.

Katalin Toth and Pat Sammons, The home learning environment and children’s attainment and progress, Better: Evidence-based Education, Volume 6, Issue 2, Institute for Effective Education

1. What is the early years home learning environment?

The early years home learning environment (HLE)

The early years home learning environment (HLE) index is composed of the first seven of the measures below, specifically those deemed the most educationally orientated, and has a scale of 0-49; the frequency of each of the activities being coded on a scale of 0-7 (0 = *not occurring*, 7 = *occurring very frequently*) (Melhuish, Phan, Sylva, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford and Taggart, 2008).

The specific items associated with the early years (HLE) measure

- Going to the library
- being read to
- learning activities with the alphabet
- learning activities with numbers/shapes
- learning activities with songs/poems/nursery rhymes
- playing with letters/numbers
- painting or drawing
- playing with friends at home
- playing with friends elsewhere
- visiting relatives or friends
- shopping with parent
- watching TV
- eating meals with the family
- having a regular bedtime.

2. Does it have a positive impact on all pupils?

Order the factors in order of predictive influence on GCSE scores.
The higher the factor, the larger the impact it is predicted to have on total GCSE scores (based on the EPPSE study)

Age	Parents' socio-economic status at age 3-5
Gender	Early years home learning environment
Health	Attending a pre-school
Number of siblings	The quality of a pre-school
Parents' highest qualification at age 3-5	Early behavioural problems
The academic effectiveness of your secondary school	Free school meal eligibility in year 11

Parents qualification level at age 3-5 (the more qualified your parents are, the higher your achievement) (0.47)

The academic effectiveness of your secondary school (0.42)

The quality of a pre-school (those who attend a better early years setting are likely to attain better) (0.37)

Early years home learning environment (those with a good HLE attain better) (0.36)

Free school meals in year 11 (those who are eligible for free school meals are less likely to attain higher) (-0.32)

Attending a pre-school (those who attend a pre-school of some sort are likely to attain better) (0.31)

Parents' socio-economic status at age 3-5 (those with a higher socio-economic status attain higher) (-0.31)

Gender (girls are more likely to attain higher than boys) 0.19

Number of siblings (the more siblings you have, the lower your cognitive achievement) (-0.17)

Age (the earlier you are born in the year, the more likely you are to attain higher) 0.14

Health (children with early health problems have lower outcomes) (-0.12)

Early behavioural problems (those with early behavioural problems are likely to attain lower) (-0.12)

2. Does it have a positive impact on all pupils?

There is a wealth of literature on the relationship between early home learning activities and enhanced cognitive, social and physical development of children.

Rebecca Smees and Pam Sammons, Action for Children, 2018



Does it have a positive impact on **all** pupils?

Who may lose out? And why?

2. Does it have a positive impact on **all** pupils?

% of households where, more than once a day, 0-5 year olds:			
Family annual income	Read or look at books	Learn the alphabet or recognise words	Learn numbers or count with someone
Under £10,000	18	16	21
£10,000 - £19,999	20	14	21
£20,000 - £29,999	24	18	23
£30,000 - £44,999	28	20	34
£45,000+	35	29	41

Childcare and Early Years Survey of Parents in England, 2017, DfE (reports the findings of face-to-face interviews, conducted between January and August 2017, with a nationally representative sample of almost 5,700 parents in England)

2. Does it have a positive impact on **all** pupils?

	Parenting Index Score			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Poverty history				
None	42%	55%	73%	60%
Episodic	27%	47%	59%	40%
Persistent	19%	32%	58%	26%

Table 2: Percentage of children with a “good level of achievement” by different qualities of parenting and poverty status

Kathleen Kiernan, Children’s success is influenced by poverty and poor parenting, Better: Evidence-based Education, Volume 6, Issue 2, Institute for Effective Education, 2014

‘For all children, the quality of the home learning environment is more important for intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income. What parents do is more important than who parents are’

The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Findings from Pre-school to end of Key Stage 1, Kathy Sylva, Edward Melhuish, Pam Sammons, Iram Siraj-Blatchford and Brenda Taggart, 2004.

3. What specifically makes a good early years home learning environment?

Chat

- Back and forth conversations
- Conversations about toys, food, and other household items are consistently associated with vocabulary growth

Play

- Early Years toolkit- weak evidence, but vocab, reasoning and early numeracy
- EPPSE-Painting, drawing, playing with letters and numbers, and songs, poems and rhymes

Reading

- Environmental print

Simple, fun activities for kids, from newborn to five

**We know what we want parents to do;
we don't know how we can get them
to do it.**

**What approaches do you currently use
to influence parents?**

4. How can we improve the early years home learning environment?

Project	Description	Impact
Family Skills (Learning Unlimited)	Parents of EAL 4-5 year olds received 11, 2.5 hour in school sessions to improve lang. and literacy. Included sessions on phonics, play and making best use of bilingualism. Children attended 30 mins of the sessions. 2/3 didn't attend. Despite overall 0 months progress, 91% of schools would recommend. See report for lessons.	0 months impact. High security
EasyPeasy	An app that sends regular game ideas to parents that they can play with their children, combined with information on child development. Parents are sent text reminders to use them. Early positive evidence from Uni of Oxford RCT.	Reporting 12 th July 2019
Peep Learning Together (Peep)	Trains EY practitioners to deliver an initial home visit and then 24 1 hour sessions over 2 terms in nursery settings. Sessions include songs, stories, discussion and advice and target a range of EYFS areas (numeracy, literacy, social and emotional dev.)	Reporting Summer 2019
PACT (Uni of Manchester and Book Trust)	Shared reading programme. Parents are provided with structured activities and resources (e.g. storybooks), and deliver the programme to their child every day for 20 minutes (5 sessions per week) over 30 weeks. Has an existing small scale RCT from 22 children's centre's showing a positive impact on language (even 6 months after the programme had finished).	Reporting Autumn 2021
Tips by Text (Behavioural Insights Team)	A 9-month text curriculum is sent to the parents of Reception children, sending 3 texts per week designed to improve literacy, language, numeracy and social and emotional skills. Has an RCT behind it (San Francisco) which demonstrated an additional 2 months progress in literacy. 120 schools in the North East.	Reporting Spring 2021
ParentChild+ (Family Lives)	An intensive home visiting programme. Visits occur twice weekly for 15 months and are delivered by a trained home visitor. During these visits, home visitors model reading, conversation and play activities.	Reporting Autumn 2021
The REAL programme (NCB)	EY practitioners trained to deliver 10 home visits and a number of literacy events to 8 children in their setting. Across these interactions they promote the ORIM framework which supports parents to develop literacy.	Reporting Autumn 2021
Level 4 Group Triple P	EY practitioners trained to deliver 8 sessions to parents of 3-4s where they learn 17 strategies for improving their child's behaviour. Sessions incorporate role play, homework exercises, discussions, and video modelling. 150 settings in the North.	Reporting Autumn 2021

4. How can we improve the early years home learning environment?

We cannot know yet whether these projects will be effective. In the meantime, a key takeaway from today's session should be the parental engagement report.

1

Critically review how you work with parents



Schools should be optimistic about the potential of working with parents

- There is an established link between the home learning environment at all ages and children's performance at school.
- Schools and parents have a shared priority to deliver the best outcomes for their children.

However, evidence on effective strategies that schools can use to engage parents in their children's learning is mixed

- If the aim is solely to improve academic outcomes, classroom interventions working directly with children currently have more

2

Provide practical strategies to support learning at home



- For young children, promoting shared book reading should be a central component of any parental engagement approach. Home learning activities, such as playing with letters and numbers, are also linked to improved outcomes.

3

Tailor school communications to encourage positive dialogue about learning



- Well-designed school communications can be effective for improving attainment and a range of other outcomes, such as attendance.

4

Offer more sustained and intensive support where needed



- Start by assessing needs and talking to parents about what would help them support learning: targeting is likely to be needed to use resources effectively and avoid widening gaps.

Read the recommendations. Discuss with a partner. Which specific strategies and recommendations will you delve further into? Why?

Conclusion

- The early years HLE refers to the activities that parents carry out with their children in order to encourage learning
- Evidence strongly suggests that the early years HLE can have a significant and positive impact on outcomes. This impact can mitigate the effects of disadvantage.
- A good early years HLE is where parents or carers will chat, play and read with their child (check out Hungry Little Minds)
- We do not yet know how to improve the early years HLE. Currently evaluating projects will hopefully give us a better idea soon. In the meantime, our parental guidance report can offer some recommendations (explore this!)