



ABC Courses for Parents with Sons Aged 0-5

The About Boys Course is a four-session course offered to parents with sons under the age of five. The course targets parents in families where boys are thought to be at risk and mothers are struggling to deal with their behaviour.

The course addresses several areas of concerns and targets, including the following:

- Parents often come on a course because they are either already anxious about their sons or anxious about their sons' futures;
- Provides an opportunity for mothers to learn about their sons, which usually means that parents tell us about their parenting, but don't feel judged. This also means that parents who would not attend a parenting course are more willing to attend. As a result, hard-to-reach parents are more likely to come into Children's Centres;
- By addressing the needs of boys who are 'not school ready'.
- The programme has extensive experience in addressing the needs of boys from black and ethnic minority backgrounds;
- By addressing some critical behaviour issues that hinder and distract boys from academic achievement, particularly boundaries, discipline and motivation;
- By being reflective and practical parents learn about their sons' development as well as a series of techniques (especially about discipline and boundaries) that prevent problems from becoming acute;
- By being offered as an early intervention programme for parents with sons up to one-year-old;
- By being offered as a behaviour and discipline programme for parents with sons who are between the ages of two and four;
- By being offered as a preparation for a school programme for parents with sons who are aged four.

The courses consist of four two-hour sessions with the following themes:

Differences between boys and girls and boys' development;
Understanding of, and practical strategies to maintain discipline and boundaries;
Why boys do what they do and what motivates them;
Preparing boys for school.

Outcomes for the parents include:

Increased understanding of their sons;
Increased confidence in addressing their sons' needs;
Several practical techniques and ways to get the best from their sons.

'I can now use the examples that were given. Through talking to him, using 'no' more often and controlling my tone, my parenting skills have proved effective.'

'I really enjoyed the course a lot. It made me realise a lot of things that I am aware of now. I appreciated the strategies of discipline and behaviour.'

'I feel this course has enabled me to understand many things about boys I previously had never thought of.'

By far the majority of parents finish the course with a much greater understanding of their sons, a much higher confidence in addressing their needs and a broad range of techniques. The follow-up external evaluation found that parents had significantly different relationships with their sons (much more talking, much less shouting) and had maintained their level of confidence because the techniques had worked and their understanding of boys' development had enabled them to respond differently to their sons' behaviour (these were the top-line findings of the external evaluation).

What we can offer Children's Centres

1. A four-session (eight-hour) programme for twelve parents if delivered less than an hour from one of our accredited trainers. We provide publicity material; delivery of four two-hour sessions by an experienced facilitator; booklets and handouts for all mothers; a course evaluation and report. We would expect you to provide a suitable venue, at least a dozen parents and a crèche. The cost for a one-off course is £XXX.
2. Several courses in a locality (cluster, area, borough, shire, city etc.) at a lower rate, where we deliver and expect the same as above.

3. A four-day accredited course for those wanting to deliver the About Boys Course (ABC 0-5). Practice-based learning that includes four days' training and four practical assignments (an interview with a mum; use of the techniques training will teach the mums; answers to some core questions within the programme and a more book-based investigation). To become accredited, participants will need to attend all four days of training; pass the four assignments and recruit for, deliver and evaluate a course of their own.

Expected outcomes for course participants

- An increased understanding of issues related to boys' development and behaviour;
- Increased confidence in working with boys and their mothers;
- A range of strategies to offer mothers the optimum way of getting the best from their sons;
- Experience of using the pack of materials and session plans to deliver the About Boys Course (ABC 0-5).

Individual participants can attend ABC training organised by us for £XXX a place (which includes the four training days, all course materials, reading all four assignments, and two evaluation reports for each participant). Alternatively an area can buy in a course for twenty people for £XXX, plus any travel and accommodation costs for the trainer (so the programme will cost £XXX per person and include as above). Follow-up includes supervision and optional training days, access to a trainer's forum and regular updates of relevant literature.

If you would like to discuss any of these options please contact Trefor Lloyd at Boys Development Project on 0208 693 7684 or email him on tlloydbdp@mail.com.