

MP Graham Allen calls for early years intervention ^[1]

Author: Sellgren, Katherine

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EXCERPTS

Early intervention will improve the lives of vulnerable children and help break the cycle of "dysfunction and under-achievement", a report says.

The government-commissioned report recommends regular assessments of all pre-school children, focusing on their social and emotional development.

Graham Allen's report also calls for a national parenting programme in the UK.

The Labour MP was asked to assess how children from disadvantaged backgrounds could be given the best start in life.

His report says success or failure in early childhood has "profound economic consequences" and calls for more private money to be channelled into early intervention schemes to help set children on the right path in life.

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He also suggests the UK gives the pre-school years - 0 to 5, including pregnancy - the same recognition developmentally as the primary and secondary years of education.

He says this could be partly achieved by numbering all the year groups from birth, not just from the start of primary school which starts with the Reception year.

The prime objective of this should be "to produce high levels of 'school readiness' for all children, regardless of income," he says.

"It is important that everyone with responsibilities for child development, particularly parents, understands how the 0 to 18 health and educational cycle is continuous from birth and does not start on entry to primary school."

He also calls for regular assessment of pre-school-age children, focusing on social and emotional development "so that they can be put on the path to 'school readiness'".

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