SUCCESS FOR BOYS

BOYS’ ACHIEVEMENT: A SYNTHESIS OF THE DATA is now available on www.educationcounts.govt.nz
Boys’ Achievement: a synthesis of the data provides a single picture of boys’ educational achievement in New Zealand schools.

The Ministry of Education is focused on lifting the engagement and achievement of all young people. It is also supporting schools to identify successful strategies and share good practice about engaging all boys in learning.

This leaflet summarises the key findings from Boys’ Achievement and encourages you to examine how your school is engaging with boys and responding to their needs.

Boys’ Achievement highlights a number of successes, with most boys doing well at school. At the same time it shows that a significant number are disengaged or not achieving to their potential.

Teachers need to inquire into the teaching-learning relationships in their classrooms, create supportive learning environments, and provide differentiated learning opportunities for boys relevant to their needs and abilities, so they achieve their full potential.

BOYS’ EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT REFERENCE GROUP

In July 2004 the Minister of Education established a reference group to provide advice on matters relating to the educational achievement of boys in New Zealand. A main aim for the group is to build support for effective practice and innovation in teaching boys.

The reference group is leading professional discussion about boys’ learning needs and provides advice on research and development activities related to boys’ educational achievement.

The reference group includes:
- Mike Leach, Principal, Botany Downs Secondary College, Auckland
- Paul Baker, Rector, Waitaki Boys’ High School, Oamaru and past-chair of the Association of Boys’ Schools NZ
- Ian Baldwin, Principal, Southland Boys’ High School
- Bill Hagan, Senior Lecturer, Manukau Institute of Technology.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: boys.success@minedu.govt.nz

KEY FINDINGS

Boys’ Achievement – a synthesis of the data shows that while many boys are high achievers, boys are over-represented in statistics related to:

- Early problems in reading
- Disengagement from school
- Lower achievement in reading and writing
- Lower qualification attainment

Key findings include:

Most boys are achieving well, and a number are advanced readers and writers.

There are some differences in the participation, engagement and achievement of boys and girls:

- Girls perform better in reading and writing at all school levels and across all ethnic groups.
- From year 11, boys are leaving school at a faster rate than girls.
- More boys than girls, and Māori and Pasifika boys in particular, are stood-down and suspended; significantly more are excluded or expelled; and gain early leaving exemptions.
• While achievement levels have improved across all groups, girls are improving at a greater rate than boys.
• Boys are less likely than girls to gain University Entrance, NCEA or higher qualifications.
• Māori and Pasifika boys are less likely to leave school with University Entrance or higher qualifications than boys from other ethnic groups.
• Boys are less likely than girls to participate in and attain degree-level qualifications.

**HOW ARE YOUR BOYS DOING?**

You can see how your boys compare with those at similar or local schools by using School Smart at https://web.minedu.govt.nz/leadspace/sia_login.asp.

Some of the success indicators include participation and engagement (truancy, stand-downs, and suspensions), literacy, numeracy, and qualification attainment.

Start tackling the issues for the boys at your school by engaging with them and listening to their concerns and hopes for the future.

Talk with teachers and curriculum leaders about effective strategies to engage boys in purposeful learning.

Involve families and whānau in discussion about how their boys are doing and what they want them to achieve.

Some questions you could ask are:

• What kinds of learning do your boys enjoy? What do they not enjoy?
• Do your boys receive the formative assessment, with ongoing feedback and feed-forward, they need?
• What more can teachers, parents and whānau do to help boys engage with learning at school, and to motivate reading and writing?
• Are your school structures supporting boys to take responsibility for their own learning, manage self and relate positively to others?
• Are your boys well represented in leadership, peer mentoring and social service positions in your school?
• Are your boys encouraged to participate in co-curricular (including cultural) activities and do the current opportunities cater for a diversity of male interests and needs?
• Does your school programme include experiential, hands-on and activity-based learning and is e-learning being used to engage boys in learning?
• Are there opportunities for your boys to engage with positive male role models – senior boys, staff and community-iwi leaders?
• Do your boys have regular opportunities for physical activity and challenging outdoor adventure programmes?
• How effectively does your school help boys make realistic decisions about tertiary education and career directions?
• What qualifications and skills are your boys leaving school with and what are their short-term outcomes after leaving school?

Once you’ve identified the issues for boys in your school (and found where they are succeeding and why), you can use this knowledge to develop a ‘whole-school’ strategy to improve outcomes for students.

Reviewing your processes on a regular basis allows you to see what’s working and to keep improvements happening.

**CONTINUED**

**Early leaving exemption rates by gender and ethnic group in 2005**

**Percentage of students achieving NCEA level 3 in 2006 by gender and year of schooling**
MINISTRY INITIATIVES AND RESOURCES

Ministry of Education initiatives and resources supporting success for boys include:

- The Literacy Professional Development Project (LPDP), which reports a lift in boys’ literacy achievement; Resource Teachers (Literacy), and Literacy Learning Progressions and the Numeracy Professional Development Project, which provide teachers with professional support and tools that show them what knowledge and skills their students need in order to meet the reading, writing and numeracy demands of The New Zealand Curriculum;
- The New Zealand Curriculum implementation resources;
- Resources and tools for formative assessment (assessment for learning);
- The Staying at School booklet, which showcases school programmes that are lifting engagement in learning;
- The Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) programme, which draws together, explains and illustrates bodies of evidence about what works to improve learning outcomes, and what can make a bigger difference for the education of all our children and young people. The BESs are intended to be a catalyst for systemic improvement and sustainable development in education;
- Te Kotahitanga professional development programme for teachers of Māori students in English medium secondary schools, which is investigating how to improve the educational achievement of Māori students;
- Early intervention in learning barriers (e.g. Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour and special education grants and funds);
- ICT and e-learning in schools;
- The Supporting Positive Behaviours information website;
- Physical Activity for Healthy, Confident Kids: guidelines for sustainable physical activity in schools;
- The Extending High Standards Across Schools (EHSAS) initiative.

Schools Plus, Ka Hikitia (Māori Education Strategy), and the Pasifika Education Plan will contribute to lifting educational achievement for all young people.


School strategies for boys in Australia and the UK:


Raising Boys’ Achievement: http://www-rba.educ.cam.ac.uk/

NEW WEBPAGE – SUCCESS FOR BOYS

The Success for Boys webpage is being developed and will be launched in July 2008. This will provide a directory of Ministry of Education programmes, resources and information to help schools implement effective strategies. This webpage will encourage schools to share stories about good practice to engage boys in learning.

Involve families and whānau in discussion about how their boys are doing and what they want them to achieve.