



# Early Years Alliance

---

Neil Leitch - Early Years Alliance

*National overview of the sector, exploring where the sector is heading and the Alliance's key asks of government*



*The YMCA's vision for young children is to create a safe, nurturing, and empowering environment where **every child** can belong, contribute, and thrive... supporting the growth of the whole child - **body, mind, and spirit** - to help them reach their full potential.*

“

*Talent is within every child, but opportunity is not!*

## The whole child...

- true education goes beyond academic achievement
- childhood success
- the impact of policy towards our most deprived and vulnerable children
- the moral responsibility educators hold

# The Telegraph

It's official: The UK is the second-most miserable nation in the world









“

*People are born so that they can learn how to live a good life - like loving everybody all the time and being nice.*



**B B C**

*“At the heart of all of this is the need for us to develop and nurture a set of social and emotional skills which we must prioritise **if we are to thrive**”.*

HRH Princess of Wales

For me it's  
personal...







*Any person who should attempt to teach any free person of color, or slave, to spell, read or write, shall upon conviction thereof by indictment, be fined in a sum not less than two hundred dollars, not more than five hundred dollars.*

Alabama Slave Code 1833



“

*Talent is within every child, but opportunity is not!*

Press release

## **Working families saving thousands on childcare costs**

Research shows that government-funded childcare has cut childcare costs for families in half.

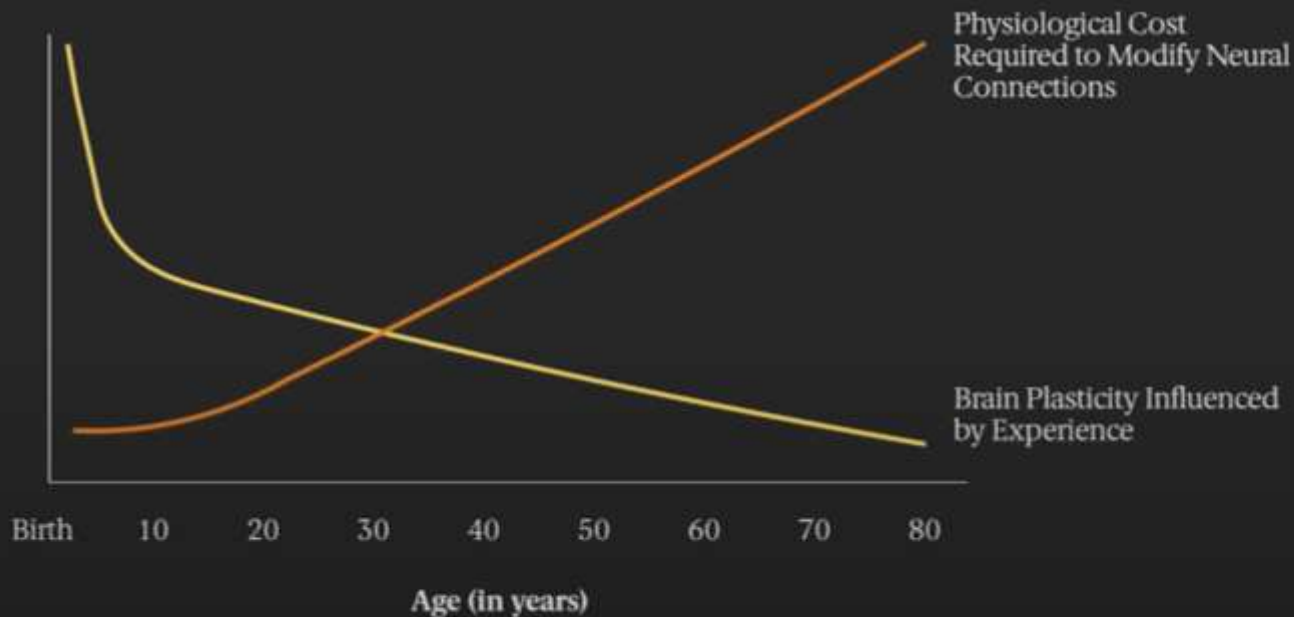
---

From: [Department for Education](#) and [The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP](#)

Published 18 March 2026

...and if your parents or carers aren't working?

## Why early experiences are so important for the developing brain





*The early years are a vital time for families and a crucial period of development for children. Steep inequalities emerge throughout this stage: EPI research has found, for example, that **40 per cent of the gap in educational attainment is already evident by age 5.***

EDUCATION  
POLICY  
INSTITUTE



**Dr Tammy Campbell**

CO-DIRECTOR FOR EARLY YEARS AND  
WELLBEING

## **Half of pupils who get low GCSE grade already judged to be behind at age five.**

Assessments of children as early as age 3 and five are powerful predictors of who will go on to fail to secure good GCSE results in English and maths.



**UCL**



*There are **19** childcare places available per 100 children under 7 in the most deprived areas in England... compared to **31** places per 100 children in the most affluent areas.*





*According to the DfE's 2024 Childcare and early years survey of parents, published in July 2025, over half (56%) of children aged 0 to 4 years in the most deprived areas receive formal childcare compared to the three-quarters (75%) of children aged 0 to 4 years living in the least deprived areas .*



““

*22.9% of providers made the decision to accept fewer children with additional needs in the last twelve months to offset increased costs, with 26.5% considering taking this step in September...*

 EARLY  
EDUCATION AND  
CHILDCARE COALITION  
for children, for parents, for the economy

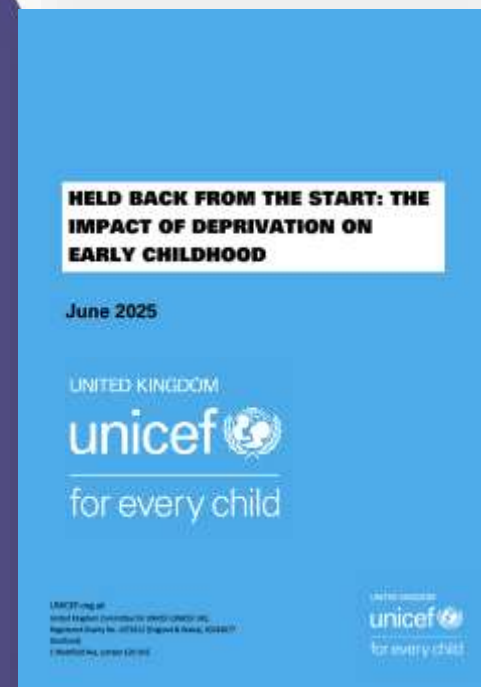
Impacts of the Minimum  
Wage and Employer NI  
Changes in April 2025  
on Delivery Costs for  
Early Years Providers



frontier  
RESEARCH

“

*There is a clear link between attainment and deprivation: 9 out of the 10 local authorities with the least children reaching a good level of development, are in the most deprived areas of the country.*



Shaping  
US  
National Symposium 2025

ROYAL FOUNDATION  
Centre for  
Early Childhood



Joshua T. Dickerson





People will forget what you  
said, people will forget what  
you did, but people will never  
forget how you made them feel.

Maya Angelou





## A simple solution... prioritise

---

Neil Leitch - Early Years Alliance