

Discussion following presentations by Paula Clearly, author of the 'Motivation and Attainment in the Learner Experience (MALE) report (July 2007) and Kenny Spence, project manager of 'Men into Childcare' initiative

How can support these types of initiatives?

Advertising

The group discussed how images used in advertising can impact who is attracted to the courses/institution. In current Forth Valley College adverts they used a male/ middle aged learner and as a result more males started on the same course he was on.

Highlighted was the fact that much stronger emphasis is put on including ethnic minorities in advertising than different age groups and sexes. Kenny Spence described the impact of popular media, when a male nurse was included on Coronation Street enrolments of males into nursing increased by 50-60%.

Research

The group identified a lack of research into why people came to college/universities, there is research into how but not why.

Schedule

Group discussed the fact the full time commitment to universities makes it hard for working classes to access and males who are often the main wage earner.

Study and Work

It was interesting to note how men were very interested in the link between study and work. The end result is their main motivation in a lot of cases. Kenny talked about the fact they break courses into short segments so men get qualifications along the way. Group discussed the idea that men are less interested in self development, they are very outcome focused. Colleges engaging with employers appealing to men?

Fees

Kenny was questioned as to how important it was to meet the student's fees. He replied this was one of the key features; it made the men less apprehensive. The cost also per student was also pretty low.

Language

It was discussed how language used by educational institutions does not engage working class. Words like under graduate prospectus could just be course guide. This also led to the debate of who teaches, usually middle class women who use language working class are not familiar with.

Treatment of boys at school?

The issue of boys feeling picked on at school was raised. How this could impact their education?

Retention figures?

Wendy McAdie mentioned there was research from her school about the numbers of girls dropping out of study was much higher than boys. She was questioned if this was across a variety of subjects, further research needed to be made.

Kerry Musselbrook thanked the speakers and group for input into the discussion.

Kenny Spence directed group to his website www.meninchildcare.com