

Working with Boys and Young Men

14th January 2025

For decades, the disparity in attainment and progression of young men who are eligible for Free School Meals has been a significant feature of our national educational conversation. Yet, over that time, there has been very little strategic action taken to address it.

At this NERUPI event we will:

- Explore the complex interplay of challenges experienced by young working-class men as they negotiate their identities in compulsory education and the role of masculinity in likelihood of young men engaging in the classroom.
- Find out about innovative approaches to meeting the challenge as educators.
- Hear from NERUPI members and colleagues who are supporting the progression boys and young men into higher education.
- Consider outcomes from Year 8 onwards and the evaluation measures and methods we can use to assess our impact.

◆ 9.45 Registration

◆ 10.00 Welcome and Introductions

Annette Hayton, Senior Research Fellow & NERUPI Convenor

◆ 10.05 Meeting the challenges of identity in education

Alex Blower, Research Fellow, Boys' Impact

Drawing on work undertaken across the UK by Boys' Impact, this session will introduce the complex interplay of challenges facing young working-class men as they negotiate their identities in compulsory education.

◆ 10.25 Question and Answer Session

◆ 10.35 Practice Example 1: University of Sussex

Sam Dunnett, Head of Widening Participation, University of Sussex

Chris Mason, Widening Participation Partnership Manager, University of Sussex

Through their educational partnership, the Widening Participation Team at University of Sussex is opening up university for boys and young men whilst supporting local schools in the region. This presentation will describe the Boys pilot project that ran over the period of three months with ten Year 9 participants from a local partner school. The project enabled the boys to create a participatory film of their experience of visiting the university and learning about representation and identity.

◆ 10.55 Short Break

- ◆ **11.00 Practice Perspective 2: University of East Anglia**
Darren McMorran, Outreach Officer, University of East Anglia
Darren chairs the East Anglia regional hub of Boys' Impact. In his day job he works with local secondary schools and takes the lead on Key Stage 2 projects. Uni Boys is an Outreach project for Year 7 students studying in Norfolk and North Suffolk target schools. The programme develops two key skills for success at school - teamwork and target setting. Central to Uni Boys is providing opportunities for boys to talk, share and reflect on school learning experiences, and interact with relatable university student role models from their local area. The programme adopts Ulster University's Taking Boys Seriously principles and offers a relational approach in multiple workshops and campus visits. Uni Boys also provides positive feedback through a range of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational tools to encourage positive outcomes towards education and learning.

- ◆ **11.20 Questions to the panel**

- ◆ **11.30 Evaluating our Success: Outcomes, Measures and Methods**
Jon Rainford, Lecturer in Education, Open University, NERUPI Research Fellow
Joanne Moore, NERUPI Research and Development Officer
Through a series of facilitated activities this session will consider approaches to evaluating the outcomes of interventions with boys and young men from Year 8 onwards and the range of methods to collect evidence to measure the impact.

- ◆ **12.30 Feedback and Round-up**

- ◆ **13.00 Close**