

# Stark divides in parenting attitudes toward education

September 29 2021

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Middle class parents of school-age children are more likely than working class parents to ask teachers for information regarding their children's education (61 percent versus 46 percent).

Meanwhile only just over a third (36 percent) of all [parents](#) say they are provided with adequate guidance and advice to help with their children's learning and education, with 31 percent actively disagreeing.

And while a quarter (24 percent) of parents say they will invest in extra tutoring to make up for missed education during the pandemic, 36 percent believe their children do not need any extra tutoring outside normal schooling hours.

The results come from a major survey of just under 800 parents from across the country earlier this month, commissioned for the launch of a new parenting book [The Good Parent Educator](#) which aims to open up the 'black box' of education. The book, by Lee Elliot Major, Professor of Social Mobility at the University of Exeter, aims to equip parents with the best advice for their children, from engaging with schools to learning to read to choosing a school or college.

The survey shows six in ten (57 percent) of parents in London said they spend more time on education activities with their children than their own parents did. This compares with only 40 percent of parents in the North East of England, 32 percent in Scotland, and 30 percent in Wales.

Parents had polarized views about education recovery following the pandemic. Two fifths (39 percent) said they will spending more hours on education time with children to recover from school closures but 44 percent said they would not, and believed their children do not need to make up for any missed education.

The Good Parent Educator offers hundreds of evidence-informed tips to empower parents to help their children do well in education. Based on the findings of thousands of studies, but also filled with personal parenting stories, the book's ultimate aim is to empower children through education to become independent thinkers ready to prosper in the world.

Each chapter is dedicated to an important education topic, from pre-school to post-graduation. The book also warns about the rise of excessive parenting as tiger mums, helicopter parents and 'sharp-elbowed warriors' who will stop at nothing to do the best for their children in an ever escalating arms race of education.

Professor Elliot Major said: "We know that so much of children's development is shaped by what happens in the home. But up to now there has been little accessible, authoritative advice guiding parents through one of life's most important tasks."

The survey was carried out in collaboration with the parent campaign group Sept for Schools. "There is a power imbalance in education. There is so much knowledge in the sector and yet parents are often left in the dark as to how best to help support their children," said Fiona Forbes, co-founder of the group. "There is a certain amount of assumed knowledge in education, that parents 'must' know a lot. Well, often we don't! And we would love to be told how best to help support our children at home."

Key findings of the survey include:

- Middle class parents are more likely to attend open evenings (38 percent vs 24 percent), look at Ofsted inspection reports (41 percent vs 24 percent) and scrutinize the latest data on pupil progress (19 percent vs 8 percent) when considering a school.
- 6 percent of middle class parents of 16 to 18 year olds in education say they do not help their children with choosing a university; whereas this is the case for 13 percent of working class parents.
- 43 percent of parents agree that their school listens to their views.
- 46 percent of parents in high earning households (with income over £50,000) say they spend more time on education activities

with their [children](#) than their own parents did. This compares with only 31 percent of parents in households with income less than £50,000.

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. The total sample size was 4,440, of which 773 were parents/guardians of anyone aged four to 18 in full-time [education](#). Fieldwork was undertaken between 6th and 8th September 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

As is common practice, here the NRS social grades C2DE and ABC1 were used in the survey to categorize people are given the broad titles 'working class' and 'middle class.'

Provided by University of Exeter

Citation: Stark divides in parenting attitudes toward education (2021, September 29) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-09-stark-parenting-attitudes.html>

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