

Do we need men in Early Years?

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Twitter #NMEYC16

Do we need men in Early Years?

and if so...

Why? or

Why Not?

Maybe we're better
off without them?!



This is why women live
Longer

Reasons why we might not need men -

- Risk Takers / Dangerous
- Get the children “worked up”
“rough & tumble”
- Feckless, Lazy
- View with suspicion / question their motives
- Not a job for men – not manly, nurturing, caring
- Intruding into women’s world
- They are murderers!

Possible uses for men -

- To play football
- To go outside, especially when it’s wet and cold!
- To carry the heavy stuff
- To fulfill a quota – “We’ve got a male worker!”
- Role model nb boys



Gender

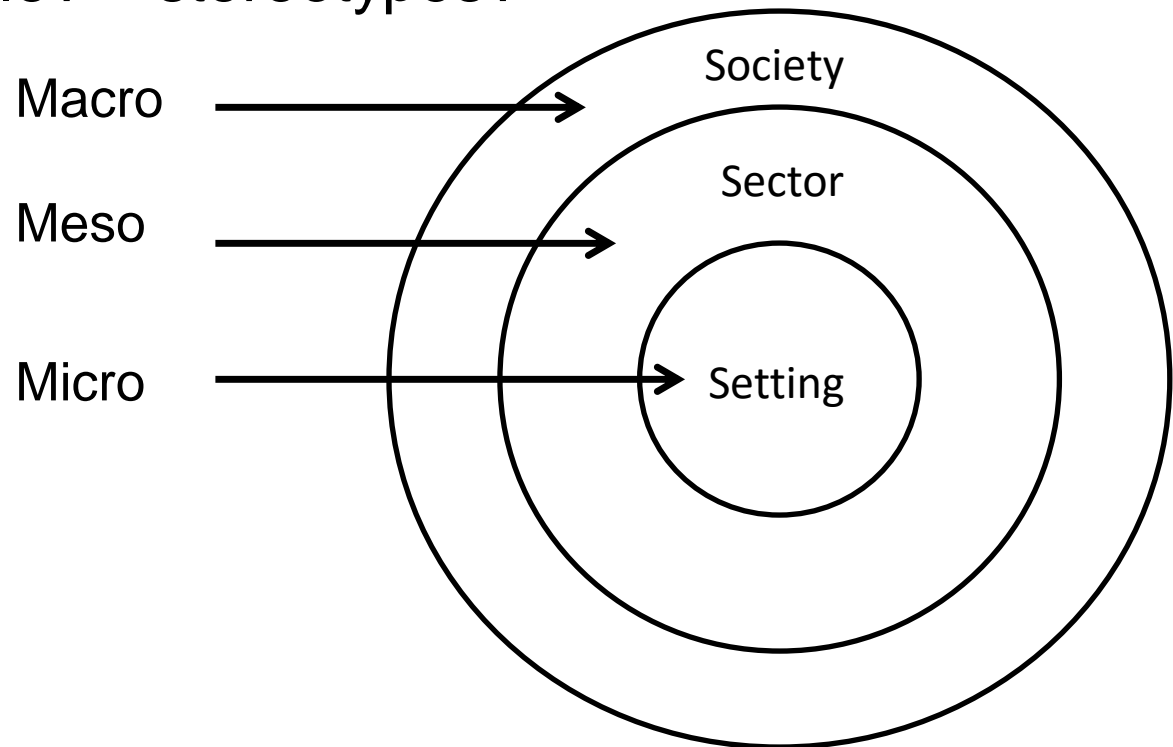
The World Health Organisation says that:

*Gender is the **characteristics** , **roles** and **responsibilities** of women and men, boys and girls, which are **socially constructed**.*

Gender is related to how we are perceived and expected to think and act as women and men because of the way society is organised, not because of our biological differences.

Culture

- ideas, values, attitudes, and expected patterns of behaviour (implicit as well as explicit)
- the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another – male vs female? – stereotypes?



How are cultural values expressed?

- in an all female environment?
 - in an all male environment?
 - in a “mixed” environment?
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- Expectations – risk taking, behaviour, guns? super-heroes?
 - Environment - what gender is it?
 - Staff relationships
 - Conversations / language / adult:child interactions
 - Children’s activities



Boys and Girls need Men and Women



Boys and Girls need Men and Women

Why?

- Arguably the most important job – as a nation we need to ensure the best people working with our youngest children.
- Diversity - to redress the imbalance
- Equal Opportunity
 - men have a right to work with children
 - children have the right to be cared for by men and women
 - more chance of meeting all children's needs
- Enrich experience
- Improved outcomes for children
- Tackle stereotypes
- To challenge the status quo
- To change society
 - more tolerant



Start from where we are

- Less than 2% of workforce
- Change attitudes
 - Outside Sector (macro culture)
 - Not currently promoted as a viable career option for men and boys
 - Inside Sector (meso & micro culture)
 - Support networks, mentoring, environment, attitudes
 - It's normal here for children to be cared for by men and women
- Build on success
 - Where are males working currently?
 - Promote success stories / benefits to men
 - Put men together – host male students
 - Male only training courses
- Set a target and supporting policies