Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-being scales

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Why is the Early Years Foundation Stage important?

If the race is already halfway run even before children begin school, then we clearly need to examine what happens in the earliest years.

Esping-Andersen, 2005

Like it or not, the most important mental and behavioural patterns, once established, are difficult to change once children enter school.

Heckman & Wax, 2004

Effective Pre-school Primary and Secondary Education – the impact of the EYFS

"…few children from low SES families had the combined benefit of highly favourable early years HLE and excellent pre-school education. However, the relatively frequent occurrence of medium or high early years HLE with good pre-school experiences among the children "succeeding against the odds", underlines the significance of this combination of experiences early on in children's learning life-course."

Performing against the odds: developmental trajectories of children in the EPPSE 3-16 study

SES – socio-economic status

HLE – home learning environment

Birth to eleven

| EYFS (including Reception)	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Early years birth to five A mixed economy of private business and maintained schools Home Child minders Integrated centres LA day nurseries Nursery schools Private day nurseries Playgroups Nursery classes	Primary or infant school five to seven	Primary or junior school seven to eleven

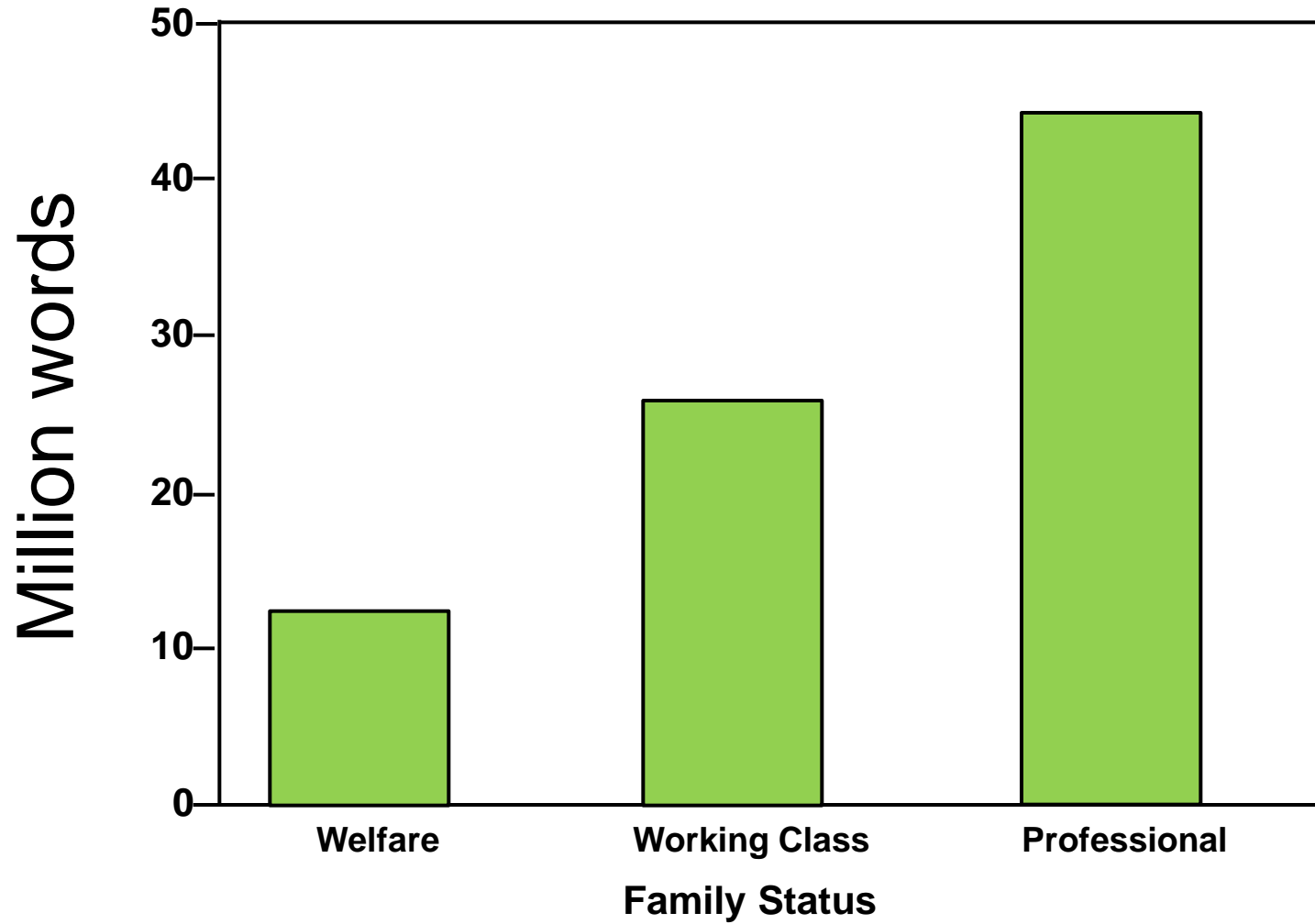# Quantity of Words Heard In Typical Hour
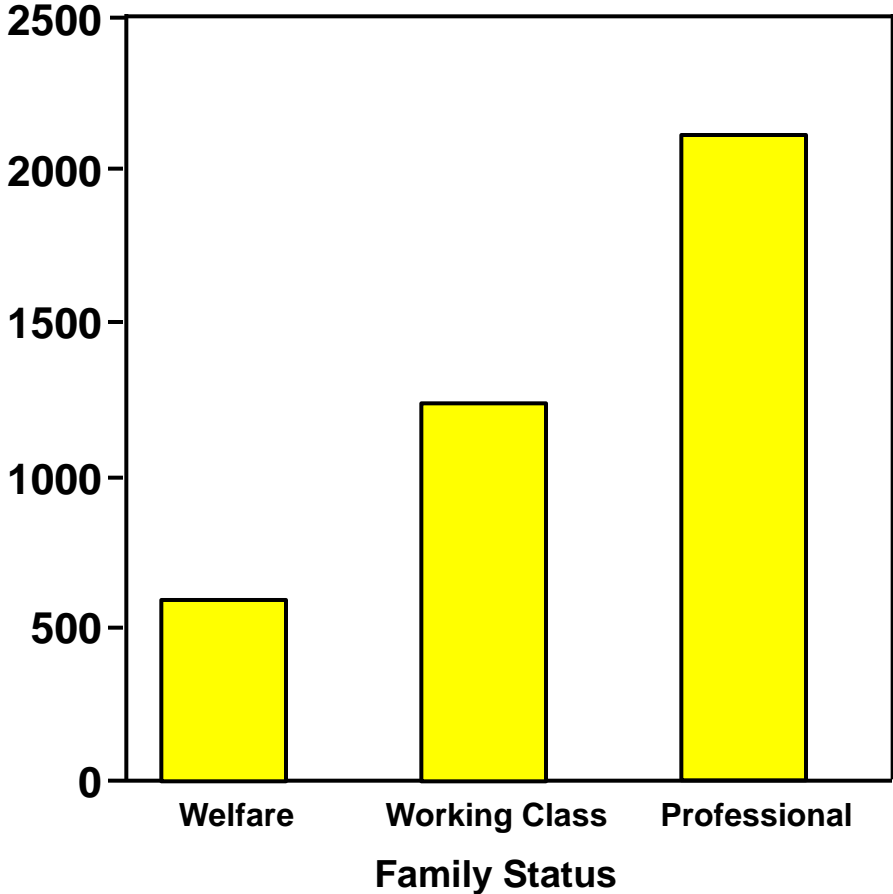
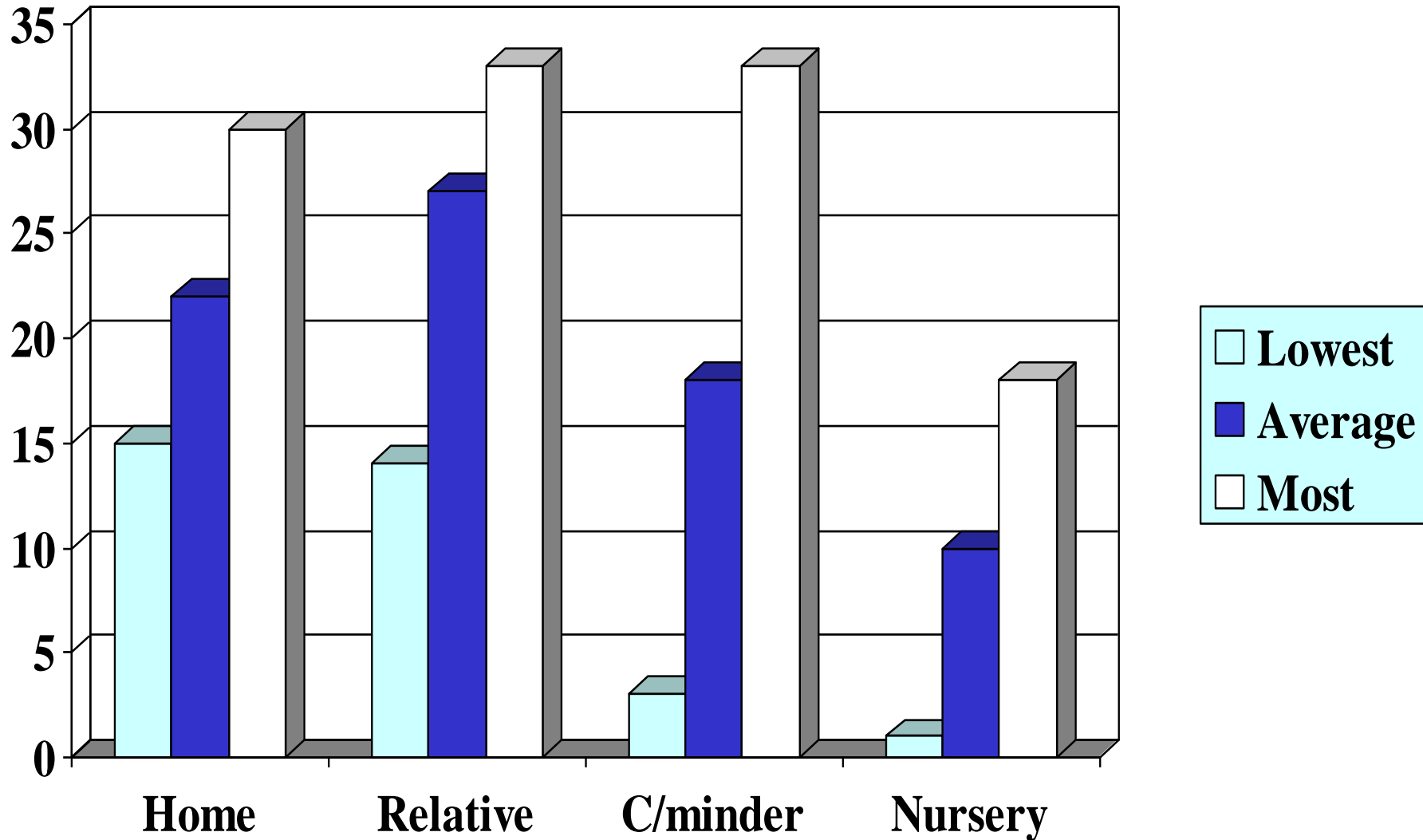# Quality of Words Heard In Typical Hour
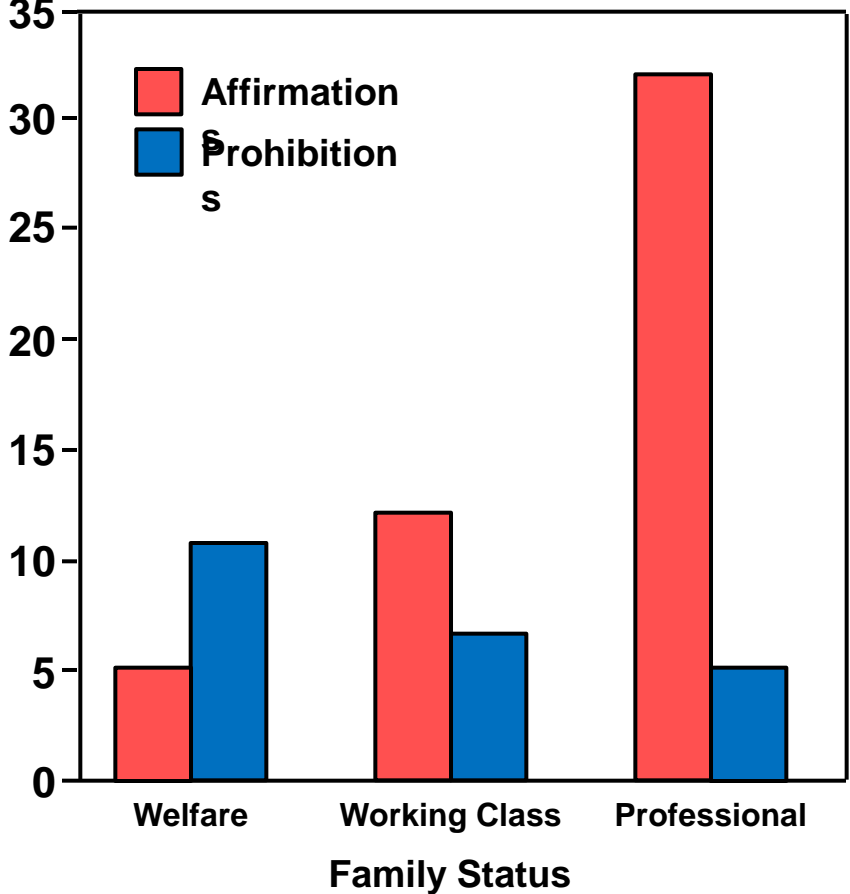
From Hart & Risley (1995). Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children.
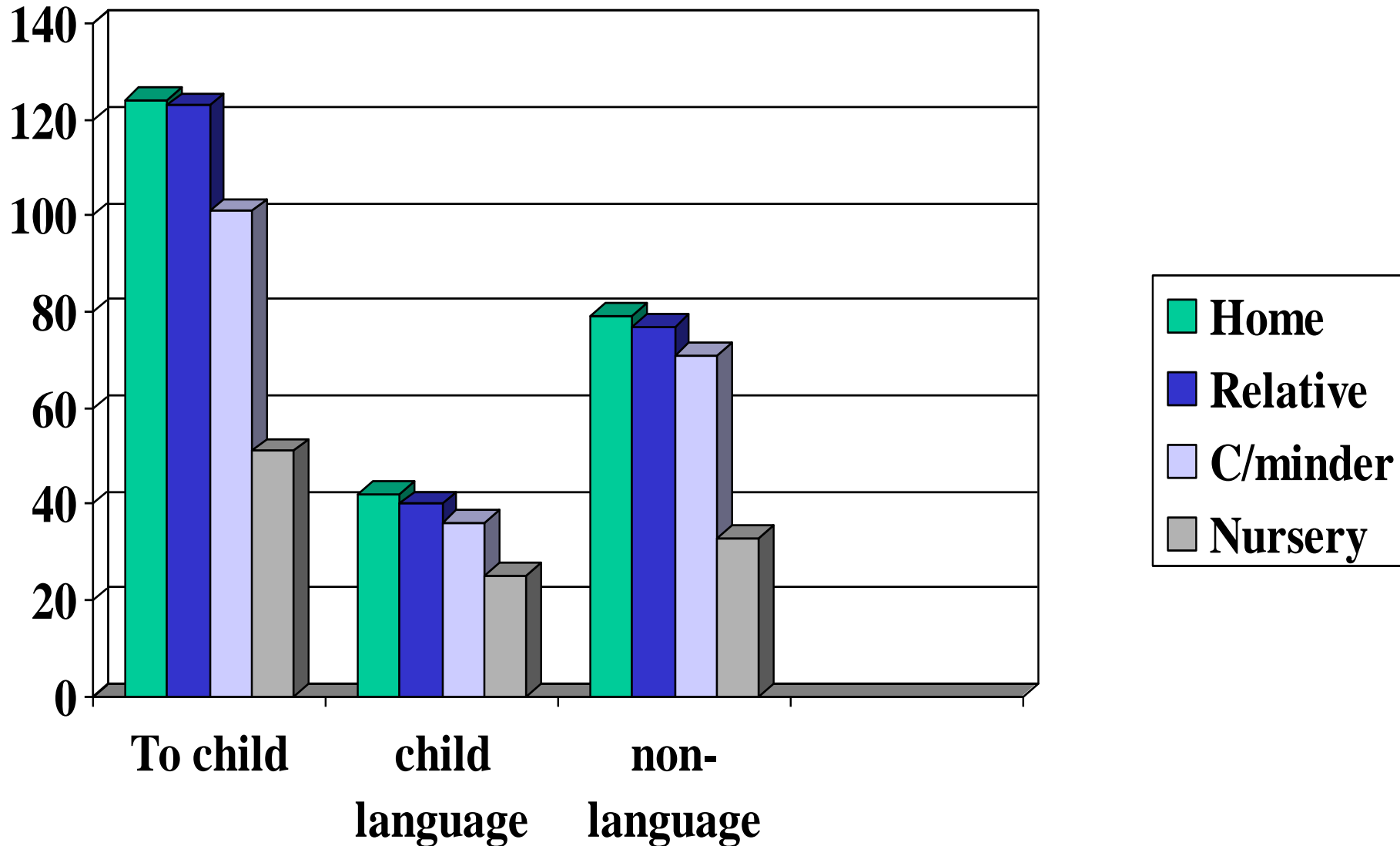
Words Heard In 4 Years

Affectionate acts per hour

Communications per hour

% Responsiveness
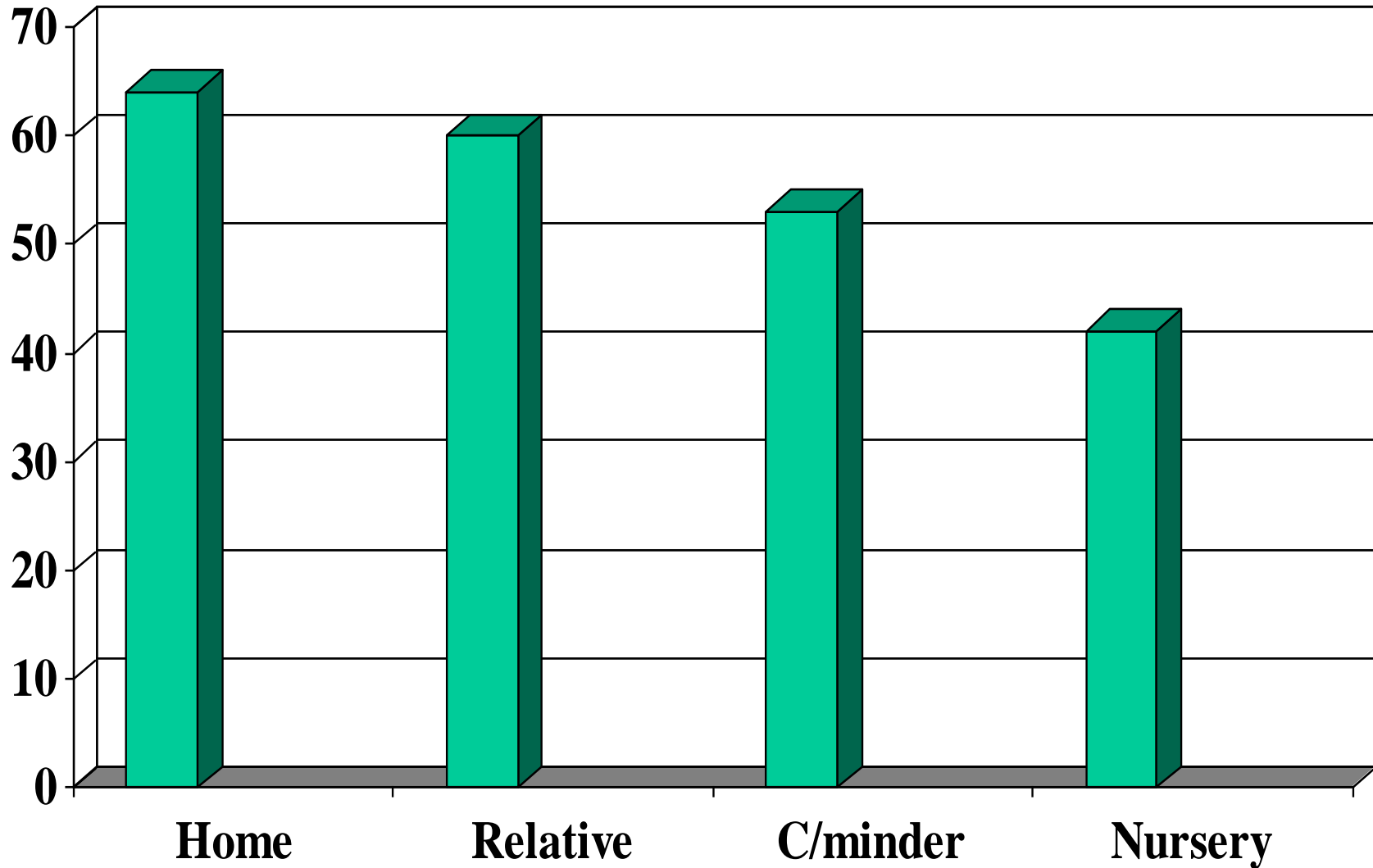
Achievement Gap starts early

Vocabulary: Number of Words (y-axis)

120
100
800
600
400
200
0

1,116 words
College educated parents

749 words
Working class parents

525 words
Welfare parents

16   24   36

Child's Age in Months
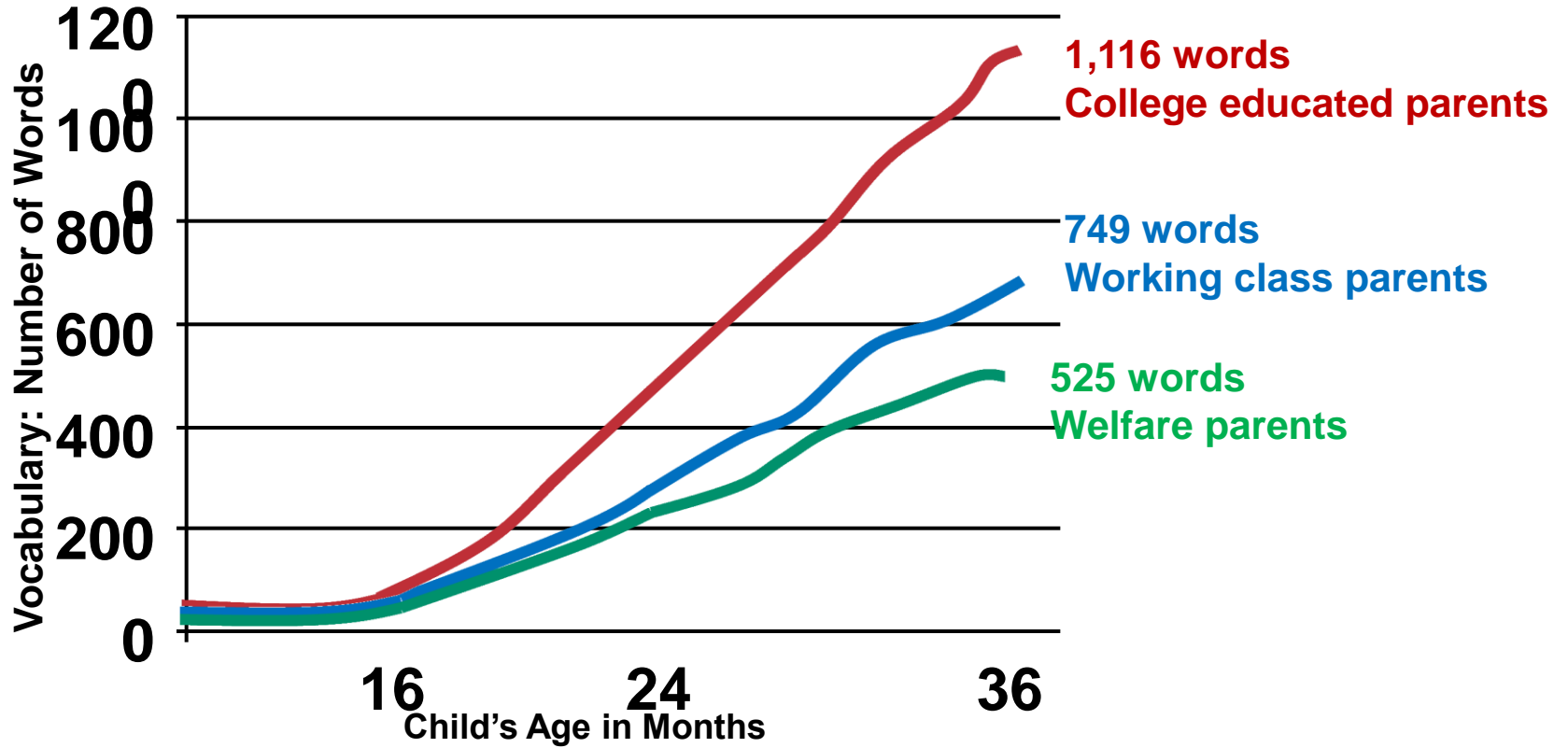
Number of word combinations at 18 months

Number of word combinations	Home %	Relative %	Individual care %	Group care %
0	59	64	60	73
1-4	9	5	16	20
5-9	15	9	14	3
10+	17	23	10	3

The quality and duration of early education and care matter in terms of months of developmental advantage on literacy

Legend:
- low quality
- average
- high quality

Categories:
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years

Y-axis: 0 to 8
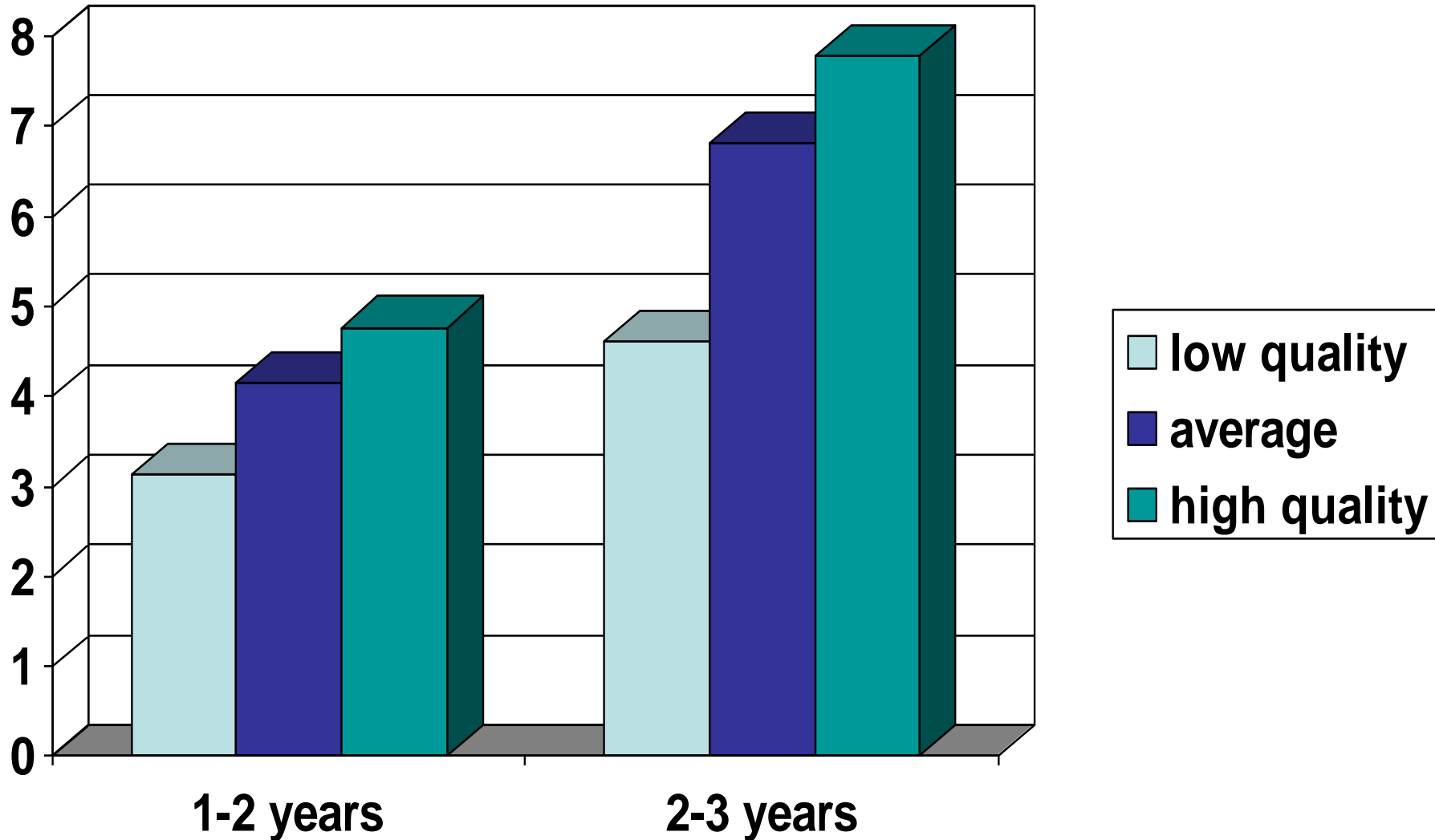
Effect sizes on literacy, age 5

Background factors

Chart showing effect sizes (y-axis from 0 to 0.6):
- gender: ~0.19
- birthweight: ~0.20
- Social class: ~0.29
- Mother's Education: ~0.39
- Home Learning Environment: ~0.59
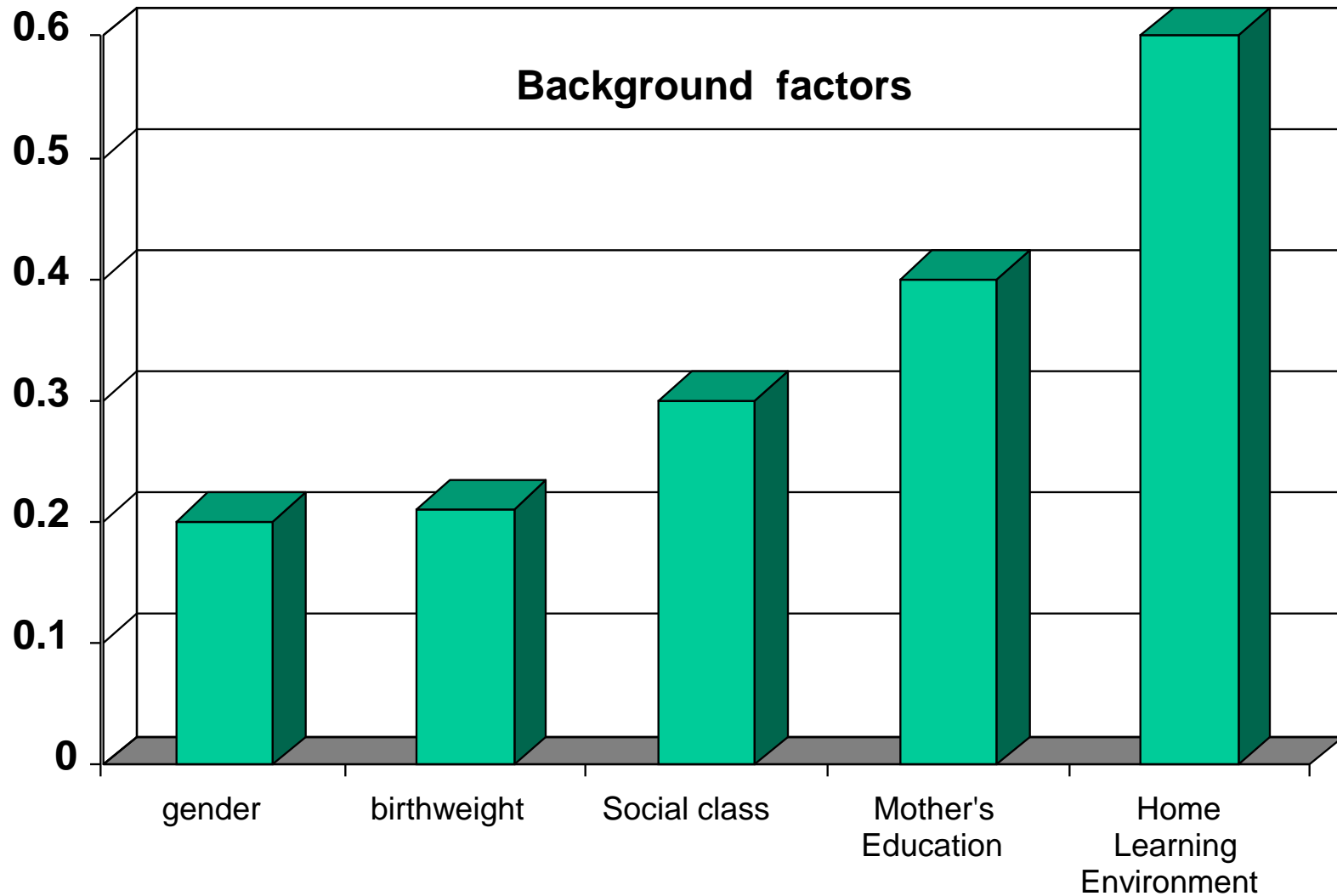
Effects upon Age 11; literacy and numeracy

Effect size in standard deviation units (y-axis, 0.0 to 0.8)

Legend:
- **Literacy** (red)
- **Numeracy** (blue)

Categories (x-axis): Family income, Mother's Education, Father's Education, Socio-economic status, Home learning environment, High-quality pre-school, Primary school
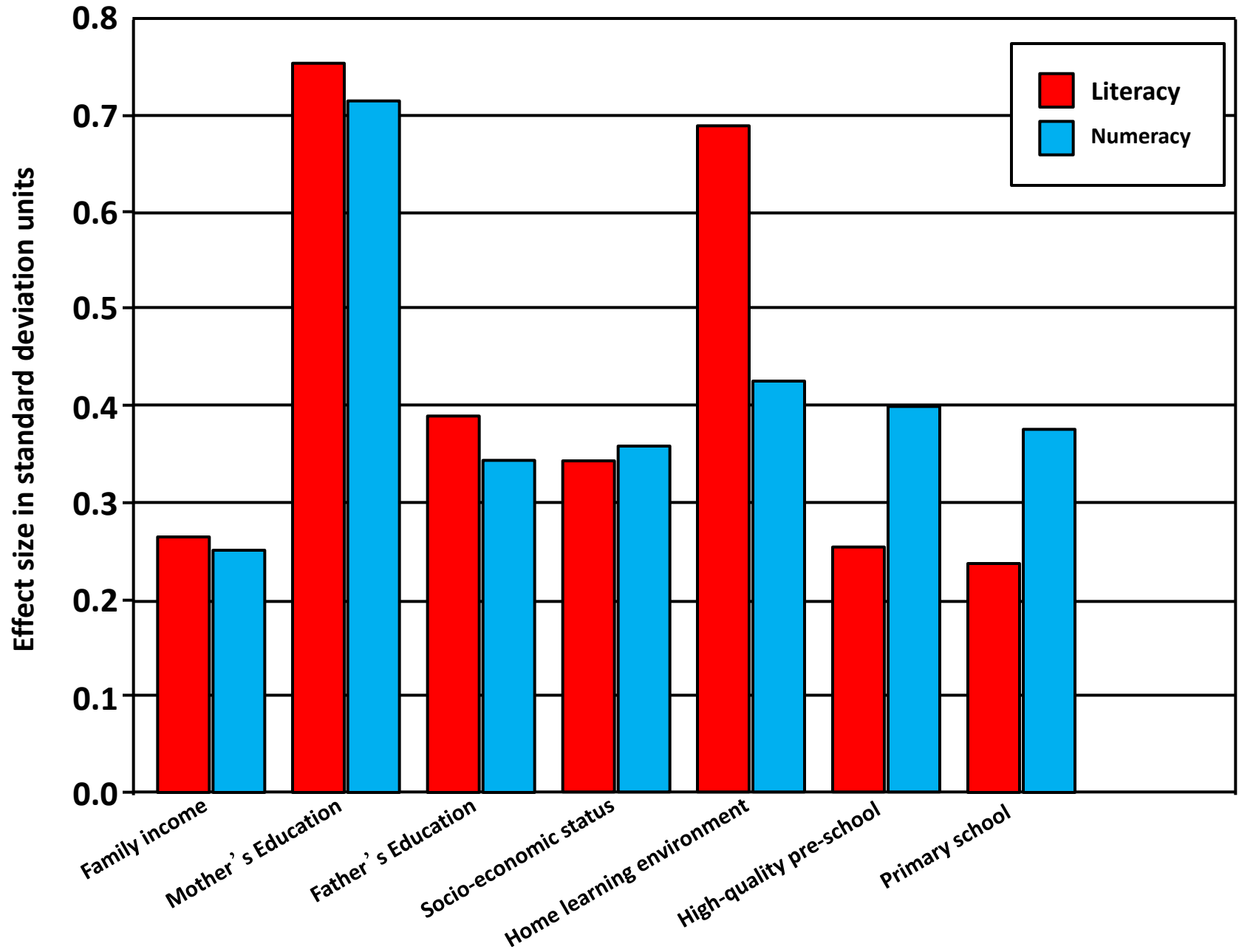
Improving quality and outcomes

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – revised ECERS-R

Based on observation and questions –7 sub-scales

1. Space and furnishings
2. Personal care routines
3. Language reasoning
4. Activities
5. Interaction
6. Programme structure
7. Parents and staff

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – extended (ECERS-E)

Based on observation and questions – 4 sub-scales

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Science and environment
4. Diversity

How do we define quality?

Based on the findings of the Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY) study

- Adults have warm, responsive relationships with children.

- High quality interactions including sustained shared thinking.

- Setting has clear educational goals and planning.

- Staff have recognised early years qualifications.

- Trained teachers are amongst the staff.

- Parents are supported in involvement in children's learning.

What are the Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-being Scales?

The SSTEW scales build on ECERS-R and ECERS-E/ITERS-R. They focus on the pedagogy within the setting, the adult's role in supporting learning and development

- Consider high quality interactions with and between children.

- Some staff/settings may not be ready for all of the subscales; particularly those relating to critical thinking, assessment for learning and supporting and extending language and communication.

- Needs to be used by someone with knowledge of child development and appropriate practice.

Early Education Sustained Shared Thinking Project

Techniques include the adult:

Tuning in:

listening carefully to what is being said, observing body language and what the child is doing

Showing genuine interest:

giving your whole attention, maintaining eye contact, affirming, smiling, nodding

Respecting children's own decisions and choices inviting children to elaborate:

'I really want to know more about this'

Sustained verbal and non-verbal communication 1

Inviting children to elaborate:

'I really want to know more about this'

Re-capping:

'So you think that…'

Offering your own experience:

'I like to listen to music when I cook supper at home'

Clarifying ideas:

'Right Darren, so you think that this stone will melt if I boil it in water?'

Sustained verbal and non-verbal communication 2

Suggesting:

'You might like to try doing it this way'

Reminding:

'Don't forget that you said that this stone will melt if I boil it'

Using encouragement to further thinking:

'You have really thought hard about where to put this door in the palace but where on earth will you put the windows?'

Offering an alternative viewpoint:

'Maybe Goldilocks wasn't naughty when she ate the porridge'

Speculating:

'Do you think the three bears would have liked Goldilocks tocome to live with them as their friend?'

Sustained verbal and non-verbal communication 3

Reciprocating:

'Thank goodness that you were wearing wellington boots when you jumped in those puddles Kwame. Look at my feet they are soaking wet'

How do we support children's sustained shared thinking (SST)?

SST involves:

- Staff being aware of the child's interests and understanding;

- The adult and child together developing an idea or a skill.

Developing children's thinking skills - definitions

- What do we mean by "thinking"?
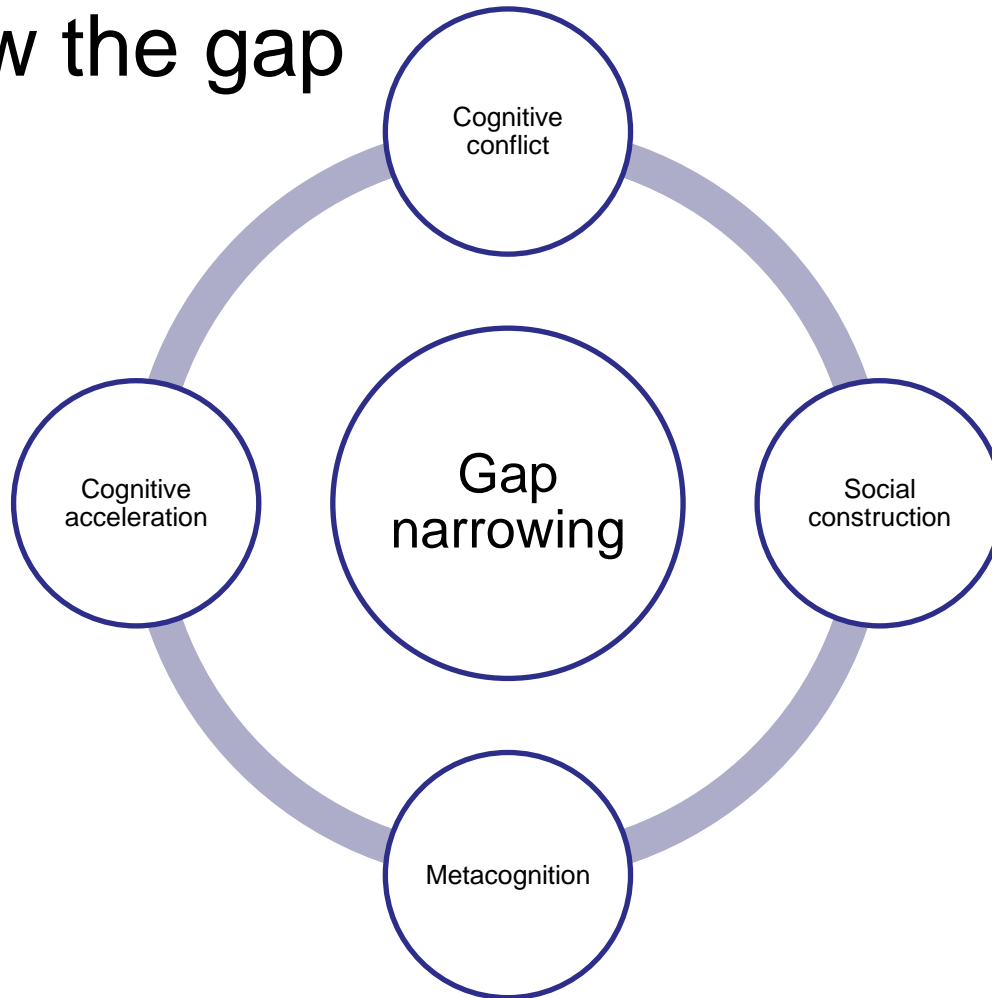- What do we mean by "intelligence"?

Developing children's thinking skills – the tools

- Concrete operations

- Working memory

- Schemata

Developing children's thinking skills – cognitive acceleration

- Cognitive conflict
- Social construction
- Metacognition

Sustained shared thinking to narrow the gap

Format of the sustained shared thinking (SSTEW) scales

Same structure as the ECERS-R

Items assessed on a seven point scale

Divided into five sub-scales:

1. Building trust, confidence and independence
2. Social and emotional well-being
3. Supporting and extending language and communication
4. Supporting learning and critical thinking
5. Assessing learning and language

Example of an environmental rating scale

Inadequate	Minimal	Good	Excellent
1 2	3 4	5 6	7

Measuring Quality using the Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-Being (SSTEW) Scales for 2-5 year olds provision

There are 5 Subscales and 14 items:

1. *Building trust, confidence and independence*
- Self-regulation and social development
- Encouraging choices and independent play
- Planning for small group and individual interactions/adult deployment

2. *Social and emotional well-being*
- Supporting socio-emotional wellbeing

3. *Supporting and extending language and communication*
- Encouraging children to interact with others
- Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen
- Staff support children's language use
- Sensitive responsiveness

Measuring Quality using the Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-Being (SSTEW) Scales for 2-5 year olds provision

4. *Supporting learning and critical thinking*
- Supporting curiosity and problem solving
- Encouraging sustained, shared thinking during story time
- Encouraging sustained, shared thinking in investigation and exploration
- Supporting concept development and higher order thinking

5. *Assessing learning and language*

Using assessment to support and extend learning and critical thinking
- Assessing language development

Authors: Iram Siraj, Denise Kingston, Edward Melhuish

Trentham and IoEPress, February, 2015 (www.ioepress.ac.uk)

Adult-Child Interaction

The light-up shoes

Making judgements using the SSTEW scales

The scores need to represent an overall and professional judgement of staff behaviours, responses and interactions and the resulting children's experiences within the setting

There's a child development section at end of SSTEW to support understanding of appropriate practice on:

- Social Development
- Emotional Development
- Cognitive Development (largely language)
- Progression in Play

Subscale 1 Building trust, confidence and independence
Item 1 Self-regulation and social development

Inadequate 1

1.1 Staff do not appear to agree about the boundaries/rules/expectations or apply them consistently*.

1.2 Some children are left even though they are obviously confused or distressed.

Minimal 3

3.1 Expectations and boundaries are made explicit and shared by all staff*.

3.2 Staff are respectful and professional around the children, parents/carers and each other

Subscale 1 Building trust, confidence and independence
Item 1 Self-regulation and social development**.**

Good 5

5.1 Staff explain carefully to the children what they need to do and pre-empt any difficulties.

5.2 Staff show empathy and understanding when children do not want to follow rules or get upset.

5.3 Staff show an awareness of individuals and their needs, giving additional support and allowing some flexibility.

5.4 Staff redirect inappropriate behaviour by stating what the children should do rather than what they should not.

Excellent 7

7.1 Staff congratulate children when they follow the rules well. E.g.

I saw you help put the tractor away. And/or the children are encouraged to tell staff how they followed the rules etc.

7.2 Staff have agreed processes that they follow when conflicts arise. The processes include engaging the children in problem solving and finding solutions to disputes together

Sub-scale 2: Social and emotional well-being
Item 4: Supporting socio-emotional wellbeing

Inadequate 1

1.1 Feelings expressed by the children are played down, ignored, dismissed or ridiculed.

1.2 Staff do not display a warm and welcoming body language to the children.

1.3 Staff do not lay out the setting or organise activities to encourage social interaction

Minimal 3

3.1 Staff empathise with the children and help them to deal with feelings expressed*.

3.2 Staff encourage children to play alongside each other providing additional toys/props and resources to support continued play. As the children progress to playing together, staff support them in helping each other and sharing.

3.3 Positive individual attention is paid to most children at some point during the session.

3.4 Staff are warm, friendly and calm. They use calming gestures, physical proximity, pats and hugs when necessary and appropriate.

Sub-scale 2: Social and emotional well-being
Item 4: Supporting socio-emotional wellbeing

Good 5

5.1 Children are encouraged to express/say what they feel and need.

5.2 Planning shows evidence of learning intentions that are designed to support social interaction, including encouraging collaborative activities and play* where appropriate.

5.3 Children are encouraged to seek an adult's support when sharing or playing breaks down.

5.4 Staff are responsive to the children's needs, feelings and moods. They may play, show liveliness and have fun with the children supporting positive emotions

Excellent 7

7.1 Staff provide opportunities for children to talk about feelings and needs -often using the children's own experiences. They may use stories or props e.g. 'puppet misses his family, how shall we make him feel better?'

7.2 Children are asked to show or say what they can understand from the non-verbal expressions of others in the group, from story books, photos, DVDs etc.

7.3 Staff support children in communicating with, and recognising and responding to the feelings of others, including where children may have difficulty expressing their needs or wants.

7.4 Staff look beyond the child to explain their feelings making changes within the environment/routine etc. when necessary.

Sub-scale 3: Supporting and extending language and communication

Item 6: Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen

Inadequate 1

1.1 Staff stifle communication by e.g. being judgemental or by humiliating, ignoring or belittling the children.

1.2 Requests for help are ignored *(whether the requests be direct or indirect, e.g., crying, withdrawal, inactivity)*.

Minimal 3

3.1 Children's verbal messages are understood.

3.2 Staff respond to verbal and non-verbal signs from children.

3.3 The body language of the staff shows that they want to communicate *(open arms, inclined head, smiles, waiting and listening)*.

Sub-scale 3: Supporting and extending language and communication
Item 6: Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen

Good 5

5.1 Staff position themselves at the children's height when talking or listening to the children.

5.2 Rephrasing and/or repeating is used to check that the children have been understood.

5.3 Where meaning or speech is unclear, staff make an 'educated guess' rather than asking the child to constantly repeat her/himself. Then, if they have guessed wrongly, staff take the blame for it.

Excellent 7

7.1 Staff allow long pauses, so the children have time to think and respond. They also show how they allow different lengths of pauses with different children*.

7.2 Staff encourage the children to talk and listen to each other by suggesting they tell another person. Or by inviting other children to come and listen to what another child has to say or show .

Sub-scale 4: Supporting learning and critical thinking

Item 10: Encouraging SST through storytelling, sharing books, singing and rhymes

Inadequate 1

1.1 Very little individual interaction during story/book time, singing or rhymes.

1.2 Staff involvement with stories, books, singing or rhymes is limited to whole group time.

Minimal 3

3.1 Staff respond to children asking for stories, books, singing or rhymes by helping them recall stories, locate and read books, singing with or engaging in rhyming, and word play as appropriate.

3.2 Staff invite children (individually or in small groups) to join them to sing, engage in word and rhyme play, or tell stories or read books.

3.3 Staff engage children in choosing songs, rhymes, stories orbooks and ask them about their choices.

3.4 Staff show that they know the children's preferred books, stories, songs or rhymes

Sub-scale 4: Supporting learning and critical thinking

Item 10: Encouraging SST through storytelling, sharing books, singing and rhymes

Good 5

5.1 Staff encourage the children to hold and 'read' books or retell familiar stories including their own 'stories', sing songs or join in with rhymes and word games.

5.2 Staff use props/puppets/the children themselves to support storytelling, engagement with songs or rhymes.

5.3 Children are given access to props and puppets to support retelling stories and use in free play.

5.4 Staff sing and engage in rhyming and word play while playing and interacting with the children during other activities.

Excellent 7

7.1 Staff use factual books to support children's understanding of concepts*.

7.2 Staff engage children with stories, singing etc. They support anticipation of familiar words, actions etc, make comments, evaluate stories/songs etc, and ask a few simple open-ended questions.

7.3 Staff encourage children to make links between the story, book, song or rhyme and their previous experiences

Positive Behaviours, Responses and Interactions

Subscale 3 : Supporting and extending children's language and communication

Item 6: Staff actively listen to children and encourage children to listen.

Indicator: 7.1 Staff allow long pauses, so the children have time to think and respond. They also show how they allow different lengths of pauses with different children.

Indicator: 7.2 Staff encourage the children to talk and listen to each other by suggesting they tell so and so. Or by inviting other children to come and listen to what another child has to say.

DVD clips for SST

Private day nursery – under threes

Foundation Stage Unit, Primary School

Year 1 class, Primary School

The Role of the Observer

An observer should be:

• Looking at/for interactions between children and adults, as well as children and children.

• Considering how the adult/s support and extend learning which will include their responsiveness to individual children as well as to small groups and all of the children.

Role play

"In play a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself. As in the focus of a magnifying glass, play contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form and is itself a major source of development"

Vygotsky, 1978: 102

Highscope conflict resolution

Step one: Approach calmly stopping any hurtful actions

Step two: Acknowledge children's feelings

Step three: Gather information

Step four: Restate the problem

Step five: Ask for solutions and choose one

Step six: Be prepared to follow up

Highscope, 2014

Areas identified for professional development - ECERS-E

1. Language and Literacy

2. Maths and number

3. Science and the environment

4. Diversity (meeting and planning for the needs of individuals and groups)

Areas identified for professional development - SSTEW

1. Building trust, confidence and independence
2. Social and emotional well-being
3. Supporting and extending language and communication
4. Supporting learning and critical thinking
5. Assessing learning and language

Planning for sustained shared thinking: continuous and enhanced provision, adult-planned activities

- Open-ended, accessible resources
- Reflecting children's current interests
- Flexible spaces
- Quiet spaces
- Both familiar and new, unusual resources
- Flexible routines
- Opportunities to revisit

How do adults support learning and critical thinking?
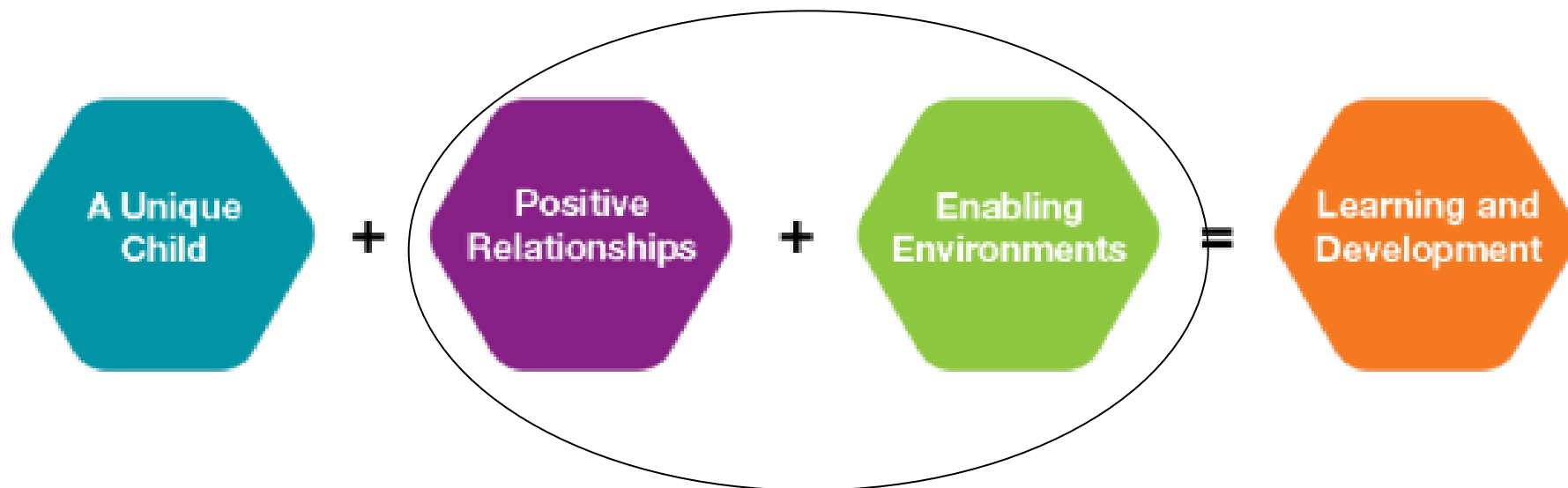
Practicalities for using SSTEW

Know what you are looking for:

Wait – next steps may not be immediately apparent

Look across contexts and environments

Consistency across staff members?

Combining observation with exploring records – planning and assessment;

On paper, or reality?

Wait, watch and wonder…….

- What might the play be about?

- What is the child's purpose?

- Is there a role for me?
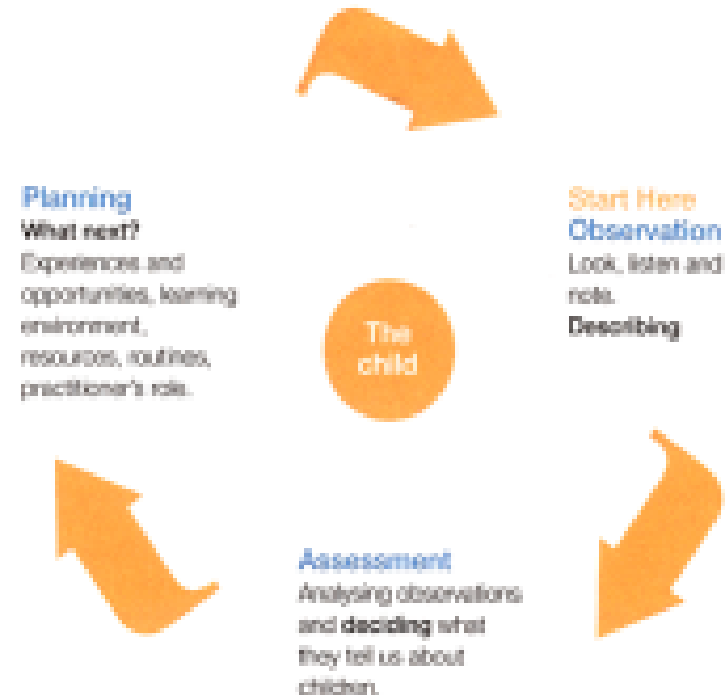
- What could I add?

- How can I join the play?

Planning 'in the moment'

Young children are in the here and now.

In that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the 'teachable moment' – the skilful adult makes a difference.

By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always

• Observing

• Assessing

• Planning

Planning
What next?
Experiences and opportunities, learning environment, resources, routines, practitioner's role.

Start Here
Observation
Look, listen and note.
Describing

The child

Assessment
Analysing observations and **deciding** what they tell us about children.

Self reflection and next steps

- What priority do I give to recognizing, supporting and extending children's thinking

    - In my organization of time?

    - In my interactions with individuals and groups?

- How effectively do I chair children's conversations?

- How well does my learning environment and the activities and routines I provide support and challenge children's thinking?

- How visible do I make my own thinking to children?

- What do I need to do next?