



Be What You Want

A resource for teachers



About Close the Gap

Close the Gap is a partnership initiative which works across Scotland to encourage and enable action to address the gender pay gap. The project is funded by the Scottish Government.

Our partners include the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Equality and Human Rights Commission and Scottish Trade Union Congress.



Introduction

The **Be What You Want** campaign aims to support young people to make informed decisions about the types of training, education and job opportunities available to them after they leave school. We hope this campaign will challenge the link between gender stereotyping and the types of jobs that women and men are segregated into.

The school environment is where young people lay the foundations for further education, training and employment. The school environment also plays a role in challenging assumptions and stereotypical attitudes young people may have about the world of work. In particular, those assumptions are based on gender stereotypes of women and men in the workplace.

Despite advances for women in education and the labour market, women and men are still segregated into jobs and industries which are based on gender stereotypes. The subjects girls and boys study at school and in tertiary education are also heavily segregated according to gender, where in particular we see an underrepresentation of girls in science, engineering and technology.

The purpose of the **Be What You Want** campaign is to highlight the barriers which prevent girls and boys entering 'non-traditional' areas of work. In doing so, we hope the campaign will support the aspirations of young people and help them make informed decisions about their future based on what they enjoy, their skills and talent and not on gender stereotypes, which are so prevalent throughout society.

This guide has been developed to support teachers in disseminating the messages of **Be What You Want** to young people. It provides

information on gender stereotyping and occupational segregation and explains why these issues are important in the context of subject choices at school. It also includes activities and ideas to support the aims of Curriculum for Excellence.

As well as this short guide for teachers, we have produced four campaign posters and six comic strips aimed at young people. The six comic strips and posters depict different scenarios facing young people who are thinking about what they want to do after they leave school. This includes, challenging assumptions about what is perceived to be suitable jobs for girls and boys; thinking about what courses and jobs might be available in the local area; realising that many different jobs use similar skills; getting the appropriate advice from teachers and career advisors; and making sure that they research their options.

The campaign website, www.bewhatyouwant.org.uk, has information for young people, parents and professionals, including case studies and links to courses and jobs in a number of industry areas.

Evidence of gender stereotyping

Gender stereotyping is one of the main barriers that prevent girls and boys studying ‘non-traditional’ subjects. Expectations based on traditional ideas of the roles of women and men in society affect the types of choices girls and boys make about what they want to do when they leave school. As a result girls and boys become segregated into different areas of study leading to the clustering of women and men into occupational groups.

A survey conducted by Careers Scotland in 2004 found that by the time young people reached S3, girls and boys had fixed ideas about gender roles: ‘women are better at caring and talking to people’ and ‘men are stronger.’ Girls in the study were also likely to express strong preferences in relation to not working in sectors traditionally associated with men, for example, engineering.

The Girl Guides Association 2010 survey found girls' career aspirations are heavily inclined towards gender stereotypes. The most popular careers mentioned included hairdressing/beauty therapy, veterinary science, fashion/artistic design, teaching and working in medical professions. The most popular career amongst those surveyed up to the age of 16 was hairdressing/beauty therapy. After 16 this preference changed to teaching and subsequently 44 per cent of the 16-21 year olds surveyed had undertaken work experience at a school.¹

In 2010, the Scottish Government published a report into occupational segregation. It included information on the percentage of girls and boys in each school subject and found that the choices that girls and boys make are heavily gender segregated. Girls dominate biology, social sciences, modern studies, arts, early years education, home economics, and languages, and boys tend to dominate physics, technology, computing, craft and design.²

Training and tertiary education

Subsequently a similar pattern is repeated in types of training and courses young people go on to do after leaving school. For example, on higher education courses there is a greater representation of women in areas such as healthcare, education and arts and a greater representation of men in engineering, technology and computing science courses. In 2009, 80 per cent of computing science graduates in Scotland were men and 86 per cent of engineering graduates were men.

1. Guide Association (2010) Girls' Attitudes: Education, Training, Skills and Career Girl Guiding UK [online] Available at: http://girlsattitudes.girlguiding.org.uk/pdf/Girls_Attitudes_education.pdf Accessed December 2010

2. Scottish Government Social Research (2010) *Tackling Occupational Segregation a Review of Key Evidence and National Policies*, Scottish Government, Edinburgh available www.scotland.gov.uk/socialresearch Accessed December 2010

The Modern Apprenticeship Programme is a publicly funded training scheme which gives young people the opportunity to combine employment and training. It reflects a similar pattern of gender segregation, where young women and men are concentrated in specific frameworks (courses). Young women are significantly less likely to be involved in science, engineering and technology (SET) related frameworks and young men are less likely to be involved in health, social care and early years care and education. For example, in 2009/2010 97 per cent of those on the Engineering framework were men and 98 per cent of those on the Early Years Education and Care framework were women. In addition the percentage of women 'in training' as part of an MA programme was only 26 per cent in 2009/2010.

The Women and Work Commission estimated that the cost of job segregation could be worth between £15 billion and £23 billion per year to the UK economy, which is about 1.3 – 2.0 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).³

The impact on young people

The social and cultural messages which young people, parents and peers are exposed to still influence the attitudes towards what jobs are suitable for girls and boys, which for many young people limits their choices to be who they want to be.

The **Be What You Want** campaign comic strips depict a number of scenarios in which young people are deciding what courses or jobs they would like to do. Fiona is feeling under pressure to do something she is not that interested in, or good at, and Andy's friend at football seems to think he is choosing to do a 'girl's job.' For Ingrid however, her challenge is to find a course she can do while still living close to home in Orkney.

3. Women and Work Commission (2006) *Shaping a Fairer Future* Department of Trade and Industry, London.

Fiona's story

Fiona is exceptionally good at physics and maths and would like to be an engineer. However, she is aware that everyone has an idea of what job she should do. Fiona is the first in her family to think about going to university, but her Dad's suggestion that she gets a 'good job in a bank' is based on a very traditional idea about the opportunities a bank could offer her



after leaving school. Her friends have ideas for her based on the assumption that Fiona would be 'naturally' good at working with children, so they think that a good choice for her would be a nursery nurse. Fiona's teacher is also assuming that Fiona might be good at working with children and suggests that if she applied herself more in English this would enable her to be a primary school teacher. Although her family, friends and teacher are trying to help they are not asking Fiona what she wants to do or supporting her to use physics or maths, the subjects she excels at.

It is easy for assumptions to be made about what girls are 'naturally' good at and for many girls this leads to entering courses or jobs based on those gender stereotypes, rather than on their skills or even what they enjoy. This is partly the reason why women are underrepresented in science, engineering and technology courses and occupations, despite a good level of educational attainment in these subjects.

Fiona has not been persuaded by family and friends, but instead is sticking to her own ideas, which is great. However, for many girls support and guidance is crucial if they are to be encouraged to enter science, engineering and technology related courses and jobs. Family, friends, teachers and career advisors all have a role to play in ensuring that young people are not influenced by expectations based on gender stereotypes and instead look for ways in which to encourage girls into science, engineering and technology.

Andy's story

Andy is in a similar situation to Fiona. He is discussing his job options with his friends in his football team and he is interested in working in childcare. One of his friends laughs and suggests it is a 'girl's job'. Although the majority of those working in childcare are women, again this is often based on gender stereotypes of what types of jobs are suitable for women and men. This pattern of occupational segregation, where women and men are clustered into occupational areas is caused by the reinforcement of gender stereotypes which starts at an early age.



Luckily Andy's other friend offers some encouragement based on his Uncle's experience of retraining to work with children. Positive role models play an important part in challenging stereotypes about the types of jobs women and men can do. The school environment can ensure that young people are exposed to positive roles models of women and men studying or working in 'non-traditional' jobs.

Ingrid's story

For Ingrid and her friends their situation is slightly different, but it is easy to see how occupational segregation can impact on local communities. Rather than be persuaded to move to Edinburgh or Glasgow, Ingrid has decided that she is going to study at a university that is not too far away from her home in Orkney. For her it is important to have a balance between staying near her local community and finding a course that she is interested in. She has also pointed out to her friends that there are lots of new and exciting opportunities to work in the environmental sector in the Highlands and Islands area, and perhaps they too might be surprised to find out what is available.



The experiences of Fiona, Andy and Ingrid illustrate how gender stereotyping relates to occupational segregation. Occupational segregation is one of the main causes of the gender pay gap. Women and men employed in 'women's work', such as catering and cleaning are generally the lower paid, and are often viewed as having lower status. This is bad news for Andy who is hoping to work in childcare, but for Fiona if she becomes a qualified engineer then she is likely to be getting paid a lot more than if she had listened to her friends and trained to be a nursery nurse.

Challenging occupational segregation in schools

There are a number of opportunities to support young people to make informed choices about what they want to do when they leave school and at the same time tackle the causes of occupational segregation.

We have provided two classroom activities which will help raise awareness of the impacts of occupational segregation and made further suggestions on how to use the **Be What You Want** campaign materials.

Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence seeks to ensure that teachers can shape the learning needs to suit individual young people, and work in collaboration with colleagues in different disciplines. Its aim is to provide a more flexible and responsive learning environment which will meet the needs of pupils as they progress through school.

Curriculum for Excellence facilitates the value of interdisciplinary learning, which can help capture the interest of individuals in subjects they may not have considered before. It has the potential to engage more young people in science and technology subjects, and in particular reach girls who otherwise may not consider a SET related occupation.

Classroom activities

Close the Gap has delivered Activities 1 and 2 classroom sessions to a number of schools in Scotland. These activities aim to raise awareness of the gender pay gap and its causes. It is a fun way to engage pupils in the causes and consequences of occupational segregation and to get pupils to think a bit more about what they want to do when they leave school. The materials are also available on our campaign website, www.bewhatyouwant.org.uk.

The classroom activities will help engage pupils across a number of different subject areas, such as modern studies, PSE and mathematics, and at the same time support cross curriculum activity on health and wellbeing outcomes.

Taking Be What You Want further

There are a number of ways to build on the messages of **Be What You Want**.

- The campaign comic strips depict different situations young people might experience when deciding what to do once they have left school. These could provide discussion points during PSE.
- Spin off projects or campaigns in your school to encourage pupils to find out about different jobs, how much they pay and what the job involves. Start by visiting our website www.bewhatyouwant.org.uk where you will find case studies from a number of professionals.
- Some of the issues raised could be used in debating competitions e.g. closing the pay gap, the 'glass ceiling,' migration of young people to cities for study or work.
- Encourage staff and pupils to follow **Be What You Want** on Twitter and Facebook.



Activity 1: same job, different title

Description

This activity is designed to give young people an understanding of the gender pay gap and its causes. It is designed to make them think about views we hold on the jobs that are traditionally seen as women's work and those that are seen as men's work. It will also provide an insight into the way women's work is undervalued.

Learning outcomes

- To develop an understanding of the gender pay gap and its causes.
- To learn what occupational segregation is and how it contributes to the unequal pay between men and women.

Subject areas

- Social studies: economics, modern studies, history, PSE.

Timings

10 minutes feedback and discussion.

Method

- Write the eight job titles in Table 1 on the board or flipchart.
- In a general discussion ask pupils if there is anything that they notice about the list of jobs (ideally they will identify that they are the same jobs with different titles). Then ask them what skills they think are needed for one of the jobs e.g. chef. Then ask what skills they think are needed for its equivalent e.g. cook. Finally, ask them whether they think it is a 'woman's job' or 'man's job'.

- Do the same for another pair of jobs and lead a discussion on the issues raised i.e. some jobs are the same but have different job titles depending on whether it is a man or a women doing it and the way that we value jobs depends on whether it is seen as a ‘woman’s job’ or a ‘man’s job’.
- Other jobs that match up are Seamstress/Tailor; Senior Administrator/ Office Manager; Janitor/Senior Cleaner.
- Introduce the idea that some of the jobs with the same skills are paid different amounts i.e. a cook is paid less than a chef. Again, what is viewed as ‘women’s work’ is undervalued.

Resources

- Table 1 for reference.
- Read [Information on the gender pay gap](#) on page 15.

Table 1: same jobs, different titles	
Senior Administrator	Seamstress
Janitor	Tailor
Chef	Office Manager
Senior Cleaner	Cook



Activity 2: causes of the gender pay gap

Description

This activity is designed to give young people an understanding of the gender pay gap and its causes. It is designed to make them think about views we hold on the jobs that are traditionally seen as 'women's work' and those that are seen as 'men's work'. It will also provide an insight into the way 'women's work' is undervalued.

In small groups, they use activity cards to match the job with the salary and the percentage of women who do that job.

Learning outcomes

- To develop an understanding of the gender pay gap and its causes.
- To learn what occupational segregation is and how it contributes to the unequal pay between men and women.

Subject areas

- Social studies: economics, modern studies, history, PSE.
- Mathematics: percentages, averages, interpreting statistics.

Timings

- 20 minutes group work, feedback and discussion.

Preparation

- Use the cards provided on pages 17 to 26 with details of job titles, salaries and the percentage of women in that job. Cut each individual card out so there is a set for each group.
- Mix up the cards prior to giving a set to each group.

Method

- Ask the pupils to work in small groups. Give each group a set of cards. Ask the groups to match the jobs with what they think are the correct salary and percentage of women working in that job.
- Ask the groups to feedback which salary and percentage they had for each job and then give them the answer.
- Ask them what they thought of the answers, whether they were surprised, whether they thought it was fair and so on. Lead a discussion on the issues raised i.e. occupational segregation, the undervaluing of ‘women’s work’.

Resources

- Activity cards on pages 17 to 26.
- Table 2 answers.
- Read [Information on the gender pay gap](#) on page 15.

Jobs	Average Salary (£)	% of women
Administrator	15,000	82%
Classroom Assistant	8,000	99%
Nurse	23,000	80%
Refuse Collector	13,500	< 1%
Nursery Nurse	16,500	99%
Head Teacher	60,000	26%
Civil Engineer	55,000	6%

Follow up

- You may want to ask pupils to see if they can use the internet to research and find out about more jobs, the average salaries and percentage of women and men.



Information on the gender pay gap

In Scotland, women working full-time earn 12% less than men working full-time and women working part-time earn 34% less than men working full-time.⁴ This means that for £1 a man earns, a woman earns 88p if she works full-time and just 66p if she works part-time. The reasons for women's inequality are both historical and cultural and are still very much entrenched in our society. The traditional notion that women stay at home to look after the children and men go out to work has shaped how women and men are active in the workplace today. The gender pay gap is caused by a number of factors and it can often be quite a complicated issue. There are, however, three main causes; occupational segregation, caring responsibilities and discrimination within pay systems.

Occupational segregation

Stereotyping about women's capabilities and skills results in women working in so-called 'women's jobs' that are low-paid. These include cleaning, catering, clerical, caring and retail work. These jobs are undervalued as it is assumed that the skills required to perform these jobs are inherent and natural to women. Stereotyping also affects young women and girls in terms of both subject choices at school and career choice upon leaving school. Assumptions about women's abilities also mean that they are less likely to be found at senior management level i.e. 'glass ceiling'.

Caring responsibilities

Women also experience discrimination because they are more likely to have caring responsibilities for children, sick relatives, disabled people or older people. 1 in 5 women lose their job, or lose out on pay or promotion, simply for being pregnant.

A lack of flexible working in many workplaces means that women are required to look for part-time work in order to balance their many responsibilities. As most part-time work is in low-paid, stereotypically female jobs, this means that women's pay is likely to go down.

Discrimination

There is also discrimination within pay systems, with many women being paid less for work that is the same or similar, or of the same value as male colleagues' work. Discrimination can occur even when it is not intentional.

Administrator	£15,000	82%
Classroom Assistant	£8,000	99%
Nurse	£23,000	80%
Refuse Collector	£13,500	< 1%
Nursery Nurse	£16,500	99%
Head Teacher	£60,000	26%
Civil Engineer	£55,000	6%

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Civil Engineer	£55,000	6%



Further information

Here you will find useful links to further information and resources.

Be What You Want

The campaign website has further information for young people at different stages of their school career and you will also be able to download more campaign materials.

www.bewhatyouwant.org.uk

Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work

This website is a career planning tool to support people to make decisions about the types of job they would like to pursue. It has information on courses and qualifications, training opportunities and a database of different jobs classified by industry and occupational area.

www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/myworldofwork

Do Something Creative. Do Science.

A campaign which aims to encourage more young people into science and technology related occupational areas.

www.doscience.org

Close the Gap

Our website has further information about the gender pay gap and its causes.

www.closesthegap.org.uk



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