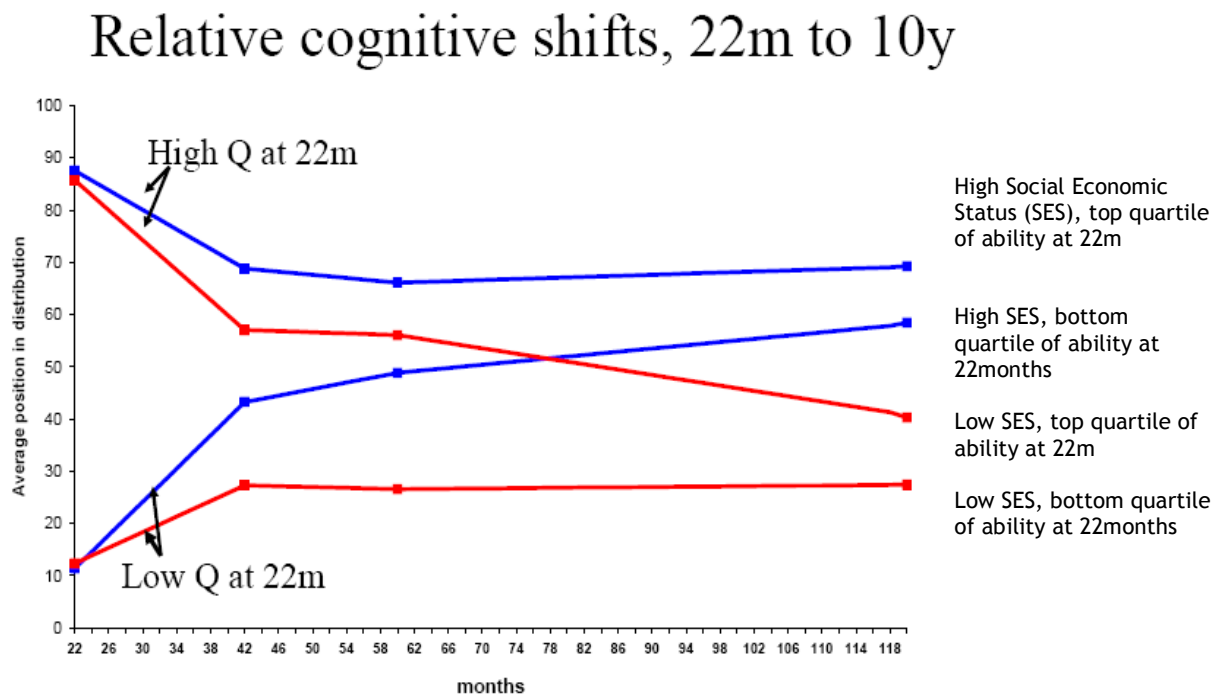


Handout 4.3

Parents influence on children's life chances

1. 'At-home good parenting' has a bigger effect on children's achievement at primary level than differences in quality of schools, evident across all social classes and all ethnic groups.
Charles Desforges, *The Impact Of Parental Involvement, Parental Support and Family Education On Pupil Achievement and Adjustment*, DfES Research Report, R433 (2003)
2. 'Parental interest' in their child's education has four times more influence on attainment at 16 than socio-economic background
Feinstein, L. & Symons, J. (1999). Attainment in secondary school. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 51, 300-321
3. Able children from poor backgrounds are likely to be overtaken in attainment by less able children from more affluent families as early as age six: see graph, where Q = age appropriate measure of ability



Source: Feinstein, L. (2003) 'Inequality in the Early Cognitive Development of British Children in the 1970 Cohort', *Economica* (70) 277, 73-97

4. 80% of children from the top two socio-economic groups go to university. 20% from the bottom two socio-economic groups
Higher education minister, Bill Rammell, Education Guardian 16.11.2005
<http://education.guardian.co.uk/universityaccess/story/0,,1643877,00.html>

Parents influence continued

5. Less than 30% (28%) of working class children go to university compared with 80% of the top two socio-economic classes
* Higher Education Statistics Agency (Hesa) - www.hesa.ac.uk/
6. Poor parental supervision is the biggest factor in juvenile delinquency
Utting, D, Bright, J, & Henricson, C, *Crime and the Family*, Family Policy Studies Centre, 1993, pp 13-14
7. Troublesome behaviour by boys at age 8-10 is one of the best predictors of later delinquency.* A child with persistent antisocial behaviour at age 10 will cost, on average, ten times more by age 28 than one with no problems, amounting to £70,000 extra public spending at 1998 prices**
* Utting, D, Bright, J, and Henricson, C, *Crime and the Family*, Family Policy Studies Centre, 1993, pp 13-14
**1 Scott, S., Knapp, M., Henderson, J. and Maughan, B, (2001) *Financial Cons of social exclusion: follow-up study of antisocial children into adulthood*, BMJ, 323:191 (28 July)
8. Childhood experiences and lack of family support in adulthood are also significant factors in depression*, which cost over £9 billion in 2000 in England, according to the Royal College of Psychiatrists**
* Sue Gerhardt, *Why Love Matters: How affection shapes a baby's brain*, Brunner-Routledge, 2004, pp112-132 ** RCP, 1/12/2003
9. Research by the Social Exclusion Unit identified “support to children and families in the early years and at key transition points throughout their journey to adulthood” as a way of breaking cycles of disadvantage
Social Exclusion Unit, *Breaking the Cycle: Taking stock of progress and priorities for the future*, Office of Deputy Prime Minister (Code: 04SEU02456), Sept 2004, Summary
10. Family relationships are the most important single factor affecting personal happiness
World Values Surveys, Eurobarometer & US General Social Surveys, cited in Layard, Richard, *Happiness: Lessons from a new Science* (2006), Penguin: see <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/layard/annex.pdf>

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Note that the research strengthens the case for supporting parents and helping them deal with difficulties and challenges in their lives. It does not blame parents for having difficulties.