

Parents urged to look beyond apprenticeship misconceptions

Too many parents are unaware of the range of opportunities apprenticeships can offer according to a new survey by the parent website Mumsnet.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has urged parents to move on from outdated stereotypes when giving their children advice about their future career paths so they are not missing out on the chance to pursue their dream career.

According to the [research](#) published today to mark the start of National Apprenticeship Week, more than 60% of parents of children aged 13-18 surveyed said they were concerned their child would be stuck 'making the tea' if they were to choose an apprenticeship.

Other findings highlighted that more than a third (35%) of parents said they still associate apprenticeships with manual jobs, like plumbing and carpentry, and 45% are unaware they go right up to degree level.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

This research shows that outdated views are holding young people back from pursuing their dream career.

Every parent wants the best for their children and when they ask you for advice about their futures, it's incredibly daunting. But I know that when I'm asked for help by my children I will absolutely encourage them to consider an apprenticeship.

So as we celebrate the life changing potential of apprenticeships I would urge all parents to do the same and look beyond stereotypes and embrace every opportunity.

Mumsnet Founder Justine Roberts said:

Our research shows that parents on Mumsnet are interested in the idea of apprenticeships and don't dismiss them out of hand, but some of our users are not very confident about explaining the opportunities on offer, and in some cases perhaps haven't yet fully understood the range of qualifications and the doors they can open with employers.

The world of education and training has changed a great deal over the past ten years and it's obviously taking some of us a little while to catch up – on the bright side, you could say this is a great example of lifelong learning.

48% of parents surveyed said they weren't worried about the future earning potential of their child should they choose an apprenticeship, but there were still concerns with almost half (45%) saying they didn't think apprenticeships were valued as highly as a university degree by the UK's top employers.

The government has transformed apprenticeships, working closely with top employers like BT, BAE Systems and Greene King to create more high-quality apprenticeship opportunities so that apprentices gain the skills they need to secure a great job and that provide industry with the workforce they need now and in the future.

Apprenticeships offer the chance to kick start a well-paid career in a wide range of exciting professions such as cyber security and aerospace engineering with options to train right up to degree level. There are many positive benefits apprenticeships are bringing to individuals and workplaces across the country. Research has highlighted that:

Lynne Craddock, whose daughter Lucy is a Data Science Degree Apprentice, added:

My daughter is able to get real experience, build her confidence, and network with professionals in the industry at a very young age. She's at the forefront of technology with brilliant career prospects, paying for her own car and able to save for her first house since she was 18.

I was very nervous at first as I didn't know how apprenticeships worked. She was leaving home, having to do everything by herself – and the process was very hard – but when she started working I knew it was the best decision she ever made. My advice is to other parents is to give your children a lot of support, especially when they are not always successful in applying. It's a great opportunity which means it takes a lot of work and resilience to get through.

Neha Swaly, Senior manager and apprenticeship ambassador, Accenture said:

To any parents whose children are thinking about taking an apprenticeship, I'd say support them. Your child will not only have the opportunity to gain real experience working in an organisation, but will also embark on an educational journey. If they chose one of the degree apprenticeships, they will also gain a degree from a UK university as well. An apprenticeship opens up a number of opportunities for your child, and as an organisation we have seen our apprentices grow and succeed in their careers, creating their own paths and identities as they progress.

To help challenge outdated attitudes, last year the government launched the

'Fire It Up' campaign and [website](#) . The campaign aims to overhaul the perception of apprenticeships, and to position them as world-class.

It showcases apprentices who follow their passions, and who have a natural energy and enthusiasm that rubs off on everyone around them.