

If kindergarten education is so good, why don't we have it already?

**We were trapped by history.**

In 1870, the English parliament chose an early school starting age so their mothers could provide cheap labour in factories. Scotland followed suit, and ever since we've taken it for granted that formal education must start at five. Only 12% of countries worldwide start children at school so early – and all are ex-members of the British Empire.

**The rest of the world treats its children differently.**

66% of countries worldwide chose a school starting age of six, and 22% chose seven, including the European nations who are currently making the greatest improvements in children's education and mental health.

**It's time to change.**

Scotland has a long tradition of high-quality early years provision, and our EY teachers are trained in the same principles as those in the successful European systems. But at present there isn't time to develop all children's learning potential. And, as long as early years is seen as part of the school system, there will be downward pressure to begin formal learning too early.

It's now becoming clear that giving young children more time to learn through play has immense benefits – not only for them but for the society they grow up in.

*There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.*

Nelson Mandela

*We are an alliance of parents, early years practitioners, teachers, playworkers, health and social work professionals and others concerned about the education and well-being of Scotland's next generation.*

logo (Upstart for Scotland's children) as on website (original can be got from Maria)

Only other text:

**A campaign to raise the school starting age and provide what the undersevens really need**

plus website address:  
[www.upstart.scot](http://www.upstart.scot)

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