

# Men in the Early Years: Hafeez Rahman



My name is Hafeez. As an individual I've always had a passion and desire to spend time with my younger sibling and cousins. I would often spend hours every evening, after school and weekends playing with them and taking them out to visit the local shops and town. I would frequently save my pocket money and once it accumulated, I would use it to buy snacks and resources for our play and outdoor activities.

Once I finished school I found it difficult to find or retain a job. My mother recommended that I seek training in early years due to my passion for supporting and nurturing my younger sibling and cousins. I was really reluctant to even consider early years as a viable career option due to the view that it was a job for a girl. After consistent harassment from my mother I agree to at least attend the enrollment interview. The day of the interview I was really reluctant to attend and my mother actually took me to the college and waited outside at the main gate in her red Micra which was so reassuring.

During my time at college I really found it difficult to adjust and often struggled with the course and placements. I considered dropping out after I was told not to return to one of my placements. The turning point came when I was given a placement at a children's centre. The children's centre was really supportive and nurturing. They provided me with an opportunity to actually work with children instead of being isolated away in a storeroom laminating all day.

After this point, I gained confidence and actually believed I could do this job and become successful at it. I began to develop my own practice and started to really enjoying the course and placements. I am now a Dads' Worker in the West Bradford Children's Centre Cluster, and am very glad that I persevered with my course.