

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON PARENTS EDUCATION *Good Practices Manual*



AUGUST 2010- JULY 2012



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

INTRODUCTION

*Tell me and I'll forget.
Show me and I'll remember.
Involve me and I'll understand.*
(Chinese Proverb)

“New perspectives on parents education” is a common project, funded under the European project called Grundtvig, integrated in the Long-life Learning Program of the European Union Institute.

The main goal is the development of the comparison of actions in the education field, with a focus on exchanging experience to elaborate new methodologies and approaches in work with families.

We are a partnership made up of five organizations (public and private) coming from five different countries: a non-governmental organization from Bulgaria, a psycho-pedagogical team from Spain, a social cooperative from Italy, an association of popular education from France and a high school from Turkey.

With this project, our main objective is to share our own experiences of dealing with parents in the context of educational strategies developed for parents and to propose new kind of strategies. We have had two years (2010-2012) to :

- ❑ share experiences ;
- ❑ define, together, new activities to develop with parents in order to improve their parenting competences ;
- ❑ test these activities in our own countries ;
- ❑ evaluate the weak and strong points of these new strategies, which should increase the participating rate of parents and involve them deeply in the activities.

Five transnational meetings allowed us to compare, adjust and evaluate the results of our common work.

These final results are presented, now, in a manual that we want to share with you.

PARTNERS

The Partnership involves five European countries and institutions.
(to see more information about partners at the end of the Manual)

COUNTRY	NAME OF INSTITUTION
Murcia, SPAIN	Equipo de Orientacion Educativa y Psicopedagógica de Molina de Segura (EOEP)
Puget Theniers, FRANCE	Foyer Rural C.E.P.A.G.E.
Reggio Emilia, ITALY	Social Cooperative L'Arcobaleno Servizi
Veliko Tarnova, BULGARIA	Educational World Association Sdruzhenie "Obrazovatelen sviat"
Cayirova, Kocaeli , TURKEY	Cayirova Mehmet Akif Ersoy Anadolu Lisesi Okul Aile Birligi

MANUAL OBJECTIVES

THIS MANUAL COLLECTS THE BEST PRACTICES THAT PARTNERS
HAVE TESTED WITHIN THESE TWO YEARS

The main objective of the manual is to collect the best practices on parents education and to disseminate them among educational figures working with parents, analysing methods, strategies, weak and strong points for each activity.

THE SPECIFIC AIMS OF THE ACTIVITIES

1. To improve the emotional and educational competences of the parents;
2. To help them acquire the necessary information and knowledge to understand child behaviour;
3. To induce a positive attitude in parents towards lifelong learning;
4. To give voice to needs of parents and especially to those who live in a condition of social exclusion;
5. To help to deconstruct stereotypes and stigmas of education attached to poverty and social exclusion;
6. To promote a society that sustains and develops quality of life and social well-being, thanks to meetings between parents;
7. To promote equal opportunities for all parents enabling them to participate in the social life;

WHO CAN USE IT AND HOW ?

1. Good practices are described with specific aims, planning, organization, contexts, instruments and methodologies.
2. The direct target group of the manual involves: psychologists, counsellors, educators or, in general, educational figures working with parents.
3. The manual could be used also in schools (teachers and school principals) to plan educational activities for parents.
4. The manual is an important instrument for the authorities involved in family policies because the analytic description of each activity permits a profitable and efficient distribution of economic resources.

If the reader desires to have more information about actions or some details, or has suggestions for our work, please contact the group of the partnership.

THEORETICAL BASE I

Taking into consideration previous partners' practices, community needs and leading European models, our team has chosen a multidimensional approach to work with parents including three different complementary approaches.

Information - dissemination approach

The aims are to provide information and try to improve parents' involvement using newspapers, advertising, flyers, magazines, studies, websites, on-line platforms.

Educational approach

The educational approach is based on training of parents by specialists.

It is an interactive technique based on parents' participation. Starting from theoretical thoughts, parents are involved directly by telling their experiences: comparison is the main focus of work.

The educational approach is an interactive training aiming to:

- raise parents' awareness and self-confidence
- change some views and beliefs influencing parents' attitudes to education
- help parents become aware of their children and their education
- help parents become aware of their own parental role in children's success at school and in life

THEORETICAL BASE II

Community based approach

The community based approach supports children in their educational process. Community development is an effective way to induce necessary and desirable social changes. It is implemented by means of social and structural changes in the community, which influence its members' quality of life.

The Community Based methodology is based on "Educative Empowerment" approach: starting from life experiences and from abilities and competences that parents, or other figures, have and can improve and strengthen. The aim is the creation of awareness to become a resource for other parents in a community logic.

One specific way based on community approach is the Peer Education Approach.

Peer Education is based on the enhancement of parents' knowledge and skills and the change of the attitudes towards their own inclusion and support of children's education. The approach has the aim to improve an individual's personality, feelings and skills. Its advantages are the opportunity to boost one's self-assessment, develop skills, clarify one's principles, realize and express one's feelings, improve one's ability to take responsible decisions and to solve life problems. The basic methods include: group discussions, role play, brainstorming and learning through experience.

OUR WORK WITH PARENTS
















***ACTIVITIES* DEVELOPED
IN OUR PROJECT**

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

what kind of activities and where ?












a) Informational Materials for Parents.

The aims are providing information and trying to improve the involvement of parents using newspapers, advertising, flyers, magazines, studies, websites, on-line platforms.

	Booklet	   
	On-line platform	  
	Parents' corner	    
	Specific guides for parents	








b) Education and Training of Parents

Consists in explain parents how to deal with their sons through theoretical and practical methodologies: this work is done in specific institutes or in schools.

	Working group : parents and children together	 
	Parents' coffee/tea groups	   
	Parents' education courses	   
	Training teachers to work with parents	



c) Individual and Group Counseling for Parents

If the problem is not common but related to a specific situation of a father, mother of a family, it is necessary to work in a different way: counseling is the most used technique to solve private problems. It could be individual, but sometimes it is better to compare one's situation in a group-work.

	Individual counseling	    
	Group counseling	 

d) Training Parents to be Trainers

It is based on the enhancement of parents' knowledge and skills and the change of the attitudes towards their own inclusion and support of children's education.

	Parents support parents	
	Popular university for parents	

a) INFORMATION MATERIALS FOR PARENTS

The aims are providing information and trying to improve the involvement of parents using newspapers, advertising, flyers, magazines, studies, websites, on-line platforms.

- a.1) Booklet
- a.2) On-line Platform
- a.3) Parents' corner
- a.4) Specific guide for parents

a.1) Booklet

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Booklets are published in four countries: France, Spain, Turkey and Italy.

They aim to provide information about and facilitate access to existing services for parents.

Booklets are distributed among families through various ways: municipalities, public services, kindergartens, libraries, leisure and sports organizations, medical centers, parents' corners, etc.

Booklets can reach a large number of parents.

Booklets cannot be used by illiterate parents and thus do not lead to effective changes in parents' attitudes.



BOOKLET IN SPAIN "LEARNING TO BE PARENTS"

OBJECTIVES

To create a booklet for the parent's participation and education.



THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

In the schools, the journal was published on paper and it was distributed to parents by means of their children. It was also published online on the schools' web sites.

- All the parents of the schools of our geographical area (sixty schools) could read it.
- Parents, teachers and pupils participated in the preparation and drafting of the contents, and the counselors of the EOEP coordinated the work.
- *The journal sections:*
 "Parents think.."
 "Teachers think"
 "Pupils think"
 "Some ideas for parents"
 "Know more": Bibliography and webs

Topics published:

"Educational styles".
 "Emotional Intelligence".
 "How we can help our children in the study".

STRENGTHS

- A lot of families can get the publications.
- Attractive format.
- Accessible contents for the general population who have internet.
- Parents, pupils, and teachers' involvement in the project, which leads to a better response to their needs and interests.
- Use as a resource for the tutor's labor with the families.

WEAKNESSES

- No guarantee that families will read it.
- We need to find ways to ensure better use of the publication by the families.
- We need to obtain more teacher's involvement, in order to motivate its reading and cover its contents during parents' meetings.



BOOKLET IN TURKEY

OBJECTIVES

To inform our school families about education

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

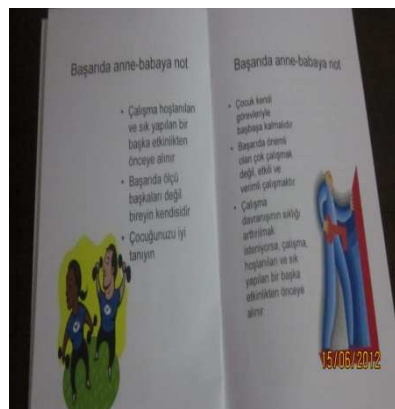
Booklet is prepared for our school's families. It was prepared by teachers and counselors. They decided on topics through observations and interview with students and parents. Our school-family association published the booklet. This booklet was also published online in our school group on facebook. Our booklet includes school rules, presentation of activities and parents' education course in the school and the importance of the family about children's success. It is distributed in parents' meeting and it is found in the school library, parents' corner and anywhere in the school.

STRENGTHS

- The booklet was given during the meetings
- It was also sent to families by students
- Teachers motivated the parents to read it.

WEAKNESSES

- No guarantee that parents will read it
- No guarantee that parents will use the Internet or facebook
- No guarantee that parents join the meetings





BOOKLET IN ITALY.

OBJECTIVES

Creation of an easy booklet for parents self-education

"Riflessioni"

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

We have create a collection of booklets called "Riflessioni" ("thinking"). These are abstracts of training courses for parents that our team has used during these two years in educational contexts.

Booklets are created respecting a scheme and some rules:

TITLE

EVOCATIVE PICTURES

EVOCATIVE SENTENCES

MAIN CONCEPTS

REFERENCES

See section: PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSES

STRENGTHS

- We can disseminate materials of training events
- References permitt a self-education process in parents
- We can print directly materials

WEAKNESSES

- It's difficult to evaluate impact on parents

BIBLIOGRAFIA:

• Jeanne Van den Brouk- "MANUALE E USO DEI BAMBINI CHE HANNO GENITORI DIFFICILI". RAFFAELLO CORTINA EDITORE.

• Asha Philips- "I no CHE AIUTANO A CRESCERE" .;SAGGI UNIVERSALE ECONOMICA FELTRELLI.

• V. Maioli Sanese: "Ho sete, per piacere"- ED.MARIETTI 1820

• P. Crepet: "I figli non crescono più"-ED. EINAUDI

LE REGOLE EDUCATIVE



L'ARCOBALENO
COOPERATIVA SOCIALE SERVIZI

Il genitore che tollera il dolore di dover proibire, insegna al bambino a tollerare il dolore di non poter fare ciò che vuole..



GENITORE COME FONTE DI AUTORITA'

- ✓ PERMANENZA NEL TEMPO
- ✓ ASIMMETRIA
- ✓ FORTI SENTIMENTI DI OBBLIGO

CARATTERISTICHE
DI UN GENITORE AUTOREVOLE





OBJECTIVES : create a booklet giving institutional and general information for parents about parenthood activities and theory.

BOOKLET IN FRANCE.



THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- The publication offers parents, food for thought to involve them in the educational process of their sons :
- Educational theory (Thomas Gordon)
 - Practical actions developed in the town where they can involve themselves if they want to ;
 - Statement of experiences developed in other countries.

5 000 copies of it has been printed and spread in all the countryside threw letterbox. Some of it has been left in public places (municipality ; library, schools...).

This publication can also be downloaded on the association's web site.

STRENGTHS

- Easy and pleasant to read ;
- Attractive design and format ;
- Kids like it and take it for their parents.
- Great variety of information.

WEAKNESSES

- It is very difficult to know how many people really read it.
- It's impossible to evaluate impact on parents ;
- This publication should have a sequel.



« APPRENDRE À ÊTRE PARENT » (publication écrite)

Le partenaire espagnol propose de tester cette action dans le cadre de notre projet. Il s'agit d'une publication écrite trimestrielle ou semestrielle qui a pour objet de favoriser la participation des parents.

Les parents, professeurs et élèves contribuent à la conception et à la rédaction de ce petit journal. L'organisation du partenaire espagnol coordonne l'activité.

QUE DE QUESTIONS SE POSENT À NOUS, PARENTS !

- « Qu'est-ce que cela veut dire être un bon parent ? »
- « Face-book est-il dangereux pour nos enfants ? »
- « Faut-il les autoriser à avoir un téléphone et à quel âge ? »
- « Comment résoudre les conflits avec nos ados ? »
- « Est-ce que nous prenons le temps d'écouter nos enfants ? »
- « Mangent-ils correctement ? »

« CAFÉ DES PARENTS »

Les partenaires français, repris par tous les partenaires, proposent de mettre en place des « café des parents ». Il s'agit de formation informelle où les parents se réunissent dans un lieu convivial pour aborder, soit avec des spécialistes, soit en utilisant les connaissances propres des participants, des questions éducatives.



« COURS D'ÉDUCATION PARENTALE »

nombre spécial

PARENTALITÉ

Avons-nous renoncé à éduquer nos enfants ?



a.2) On-line Platform

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

On-line platforms are developed in Turkey, Bulgaria and Italy. They aim to inform parents about interesting for them issues, activities, books and periodicals.

On-line platforms allow:

- an easy and time-saving access to modern materials for parents.
- participation in on-line discussion groups.
- sharing challenges, personal experience and an opportunity to receive feedback.

On-line platforms are suitable for busy parents, though on-line communication gives information but doesn't develop skills.

The platform could be the inclusion of educational sections with easy materials that parents can read to enrich their parenting competences.

In some countries the platform is part of the school's or the institution's website.



ON-LINE PLATFORM IN BULGARIA

OBJECTIVES

It aims to inform parents about interesting for them issues, activities, books and periodicals.

<http://educationalworld-vt.hit.bg>

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

The online platform is part of the Association's website. It presents the project activities, useful materials for parents, presentations of fellow psychologists on leading practices for work with parents and articles written by teachers and experts about parents' involvement in children's education.

STRENGTHS

Easy access to useful information

WEAKNESSES

Some disadvantaged parents do not have access to the Internet.



<http://educationalworld-vt.hit.bg>



ON-LINE PLATFORM IN TURKEY

OBJECTIVES

To reach more families, to spread ideas and to inform parents, other people about this project and to support families.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- Our school name has just changed so new website is being built. So we opened the group on facebook for parents and students. This group website includes some topics for parents. These topics are:
- Communication with adolescents
- How your child's success?
- To gain responsibility
- School rules
- Our school activities etc.



STRENGTHS

- Our parents have computer and internet access

WEAKNESSES

No guarantee that parents will use internet or facebook



<http://www.facebook.com/groups/230218313747595/>



ON-LINE PLATFORM IN ITALY.

OBJECTIVES

To give information about parenthood

GENITORI e dintorni

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

“Genitori e dintorni” collects information about activities which involve parents.

There are 4 sections:

1. Training for parents
2. Psychological Support service for Parents (*see section: Individual counseling*)
3. Projects about parenthood
4. News

STRENGTHS

- The access is easy
- A good number of people have consulted this section in the website
- The number is increased in 6 months

WEAKNESSES

- We can monitor number of visitors, but we cannot measure the real impact on parents site have, but we cannot measure the real impact on parents

<http://www.arcobaleno.re.it/genitori-e-dintorni.aspx>



a.3) Parents' corner

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Parents' corners are set up in all the partnering countries as a space for parents to share ideas and experiences, to communicate, get acquainted with modern theories and practices in parenting and learn about activities organized by parent.

Parents' corners are located in convenient places for parents – schools, libraries, halls of medical centers, etc. They provide informational materials for parents (e.g. book presentations, articles), but also educational materials to develop new awareness (e.g. abstracts of training courses for parents).

Parents can have coffee or tea and they can share their experiences about their children, they can read books, they can use the Internet.

A challenge is that some parents do not often visit the schools and libraries. Sometimes parents prefer less demanding activities (e.g. reading gossip magazines or newspapers).



PARENTS' CORNER IN SPAIN

OBJECTIVES

- To promote the resources of the schools and of our guidance team for their care to families.
- To provide printed and digital materials for self-education families.
- To implement a greater family involvement in schools and in our guidance team.



THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

The parents' corner and library is a place for self-education of families on topics regarding the development of their children, as well as a place of easy access to information about resources that they can use (lectures, training courses, schooling, etc.)

Our work in our schools was sequenced in the following steps:

- To contact with schools Management team and Parents Associations to explain how to perform a corner and a library for parents.
- To carry out a literature research and to write a document classifying books and web resources on topics of interest for parents.
- To share the literature found with schools.
- To advice to all those schools that want to implement the parents' corner.

STRENGTHS

- It promotes self- education for families, so they can be able to use resources independently.
- It's easy to arrange. It's not needed specific material.
- It's an improvement of the school's resources.
- It's very intuitive for families, it doesn't require complex instructions.

WEAKNESSES

It's difficult for families to make changes on the use of this resource.





PARENTS' CORNER IN BULGARIA

OBJECTIVES

To help parents socialize with other parents and share problems and solutions.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

We organized in collaboration with the regional library in the town of Veliko Tarnovo. We invited parents to come and share their experiences and get acquainted with interesting books and materials for parents.



STRENGTHS

It is an innovative initiative in our town and parents enjoyed being together discussing common problems. They were happy to learn about new books, materials and parental strategies.

WEAKNESSES

Parents do not have enough free time to spare.





PARENTS' CORNER IN TURKEY

OBJECTIVES

To facilitate to access information for parents

To warrant to come to school frequently

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

Parents' Corner is prepared in the library. We asked them what they want in this corner. Counselor prepared a book list about their needs and Literature teachers prepared another book list for parents. So there are books about growing children, world classics, Turkish classics, two computers with internet connection, some documents and posters about parents education and booklets in this corner. Parents can drink coffee or tea and they can share their experiences about their children, they can read books, they can use internet.

STRENGTHS

- Good resources for parents in the school
- Parents' eager to learn
- Access information-it is related to their needs- in the library

WEAKNESSES

Difficulties in transportation to school





PARENTS' CORNER IN ITALY

OBJECTIVES

To create a specific space for parents to provide stimulus for their self-education.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

We have created a specific location for parents, in the hall of our organization.

This space is for parents who want to learn something more about parenthood, children and activities concerning parents. It wants to be an "information space" but also a "stimulus" for personal reflection.

The target is composed of our users' parents (in particular, children with Learning Disabilities, Languages Disorders, Psychological Diseases and Disabilities). During treatments, parents can read specific materials:

- Booklets about activities with parents;
- Booklets about parents' education ("Riflessioni")
- Guides for parents;
- Books about parenthoods (There is a library). Each book (selected by our team) has got a sheet in which parents can write the most interesting sentences they have read.

STRENGTHS

- It is a relaxing and comfortable space where parents love to stay.
- The organization of this corner is easy and cheap
- Sheets in books contribute to train parents thanks to other parents (peer education).

WEAKNESSES

- It's difficult to evaluate the impact on parents.
- We observe that parents sometime prefer less demanding activities (e.g. reading gossip magazines or newspapers).
- Parents complete the sheet only if they are stimulated





PARENTS' CORNER IN FRANCE

OBJECTIVES : create specific places inside and outside where parents can meet each other in a friendly way.



THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

A specific place has been created inside our organization where parents can seat, talk together and get some information about various topics linked to parenthood.

Computers and Internet can also be used here by parents, if needed, to look for some information.

“Open spaces” are also provided for parents when the association organize manifestations. Literacy about parental education is proposed.

During this “open spaces” various activities for children coming with their parents are proposed.

STRENGTHS

- Parents like to come here, seat and talk together to share their experiences (they don't read so much !)
- With the “open spaces” , they are surprised because they don't expect this kind of activitie and it make them come later in the parent's corner.
- Others educational actors are now thinking about their own “parent's corner”

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of parents.
- small place.



a.4) Specific guide for parents

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Specific guides for parents are developed in Italy.

The guide has got lists of games parents could play with their children to stimulate and develop learning abilities and skills.

The guide involves parents directly in their children's learning processes.

The guides are born to share, support, inform parents from an instrumental and legislative point of view; To increase parental competences during homework execution; to build a “comparison-space”; to gain consciousness of the problem.



SPECIFIC GUIDE FOR PARENTS IN ITALY

OBJECTIVES

To inform parents about
Compensatory instruments for
learning disabilities

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

Team has created a guide for parents.
It's divided into sections:

- Compensatory tools (payment)
- Compensatory tools (free)
- Software to study
- Typing tutors
- E-books
- Specific trainings to learn compensatory tools

Each section lists tools, describes their properties, communicates costs and how to buy or to download them

STRENGTHS

- The guide permits to compare similar products and choose the best one for each family
- It's cheap (printed directly from our organization and upload on the website)
- Parents appreciate this instrument

WEAKNESSES

- It needs constance to be updated



b) EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR PARENTS

Consists in explaining to parents how to deal with their children through theoretical and practical methodologies: this work is done in specific institutes or in schools.

- b.1) Working group: parents and children together
- b.2) Parents' coffee/tea
- b.3) Parents' education course
- b.4) Teachers training to work with parents

b.1)Working groups: parents and children together

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Working groups are formed in Italy and Spain.

They aim to improve the understanding between parents and children and to develop parents' skills to support their children.

In Italy there is a special focus on developing the awareness and knowledge about learning disabilities.

The approach is based on practical activities that involve (e.g. knowledge and use of compensatory tools) parents and children at the same time.



Working groups: parents and children together. Italy

OBJECTIVES

To create a chance for parents and their children for a mutual learning

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

In projects about learning disabilities, a specific section concerns learning of compensatory tools.

Experts explain how to use compensatory tools (free or with fee).

Parents and children attend this section together.

In particular, the plan of the experience is:

1. First meeting all together: experts explain objectives and methodologies of the course
2. Second meeting: only children (expert teaches tools)
3. Third meeting: only parents. The group is mediated by a Psychologist. During the meeting, expert deals the following topics:
 - ☐ Awareness;
 - ☐ Knowledge about learning disabilities
 - ☐ Knowledge about children needs (also emotional ones)
 - ☐ Knowledge and use of compensatory tools
1. Fourth meeting: together (expert propose some activities to use and test new instruments and guides a comparison about difficulties, impressions and suggestions)

We have test this methodologies in different contexts (schools, educational and inside our organization).

STRENGTHS

- The project:
 - improves parents' awareness about what learning disabilities are.
 - permits to know new istruments
 - improves children' s wellness
 - improves a good communication between families and school and creates a cooperative learning process in participants
- Parents understand real difficulties of their children and the communication in the family is improved.
- Children appreciate to work with parents because sometimes they help directly them to use personal computer.
- Parents become a concrete support during children' homework

WEAKNESSES

- The project needs economical supports to cover experts' costs
- Sometimes, Parents with children with learning disabilities don't want to participate in this activity.



Working groups: parents and children together I Spain



OBJECTIVES

- To promote the involvement of parents and group participation in the activities of the school.
- To promote the training and exchange between parents and children on particular issues.
- To improve parents-children communication.
- To improve the understanding between parents and the children.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

A. –Work sessions: parents and children on Social Net works and Communication, in Primary Schools.

We designed three working sessions with students and parents of the last cycle of Primary Education (5th and 6th level: 11-12 years).

- Firstly we had a meeting with tutors to organize the work and to provide an initial questionnaire for students to be served before starting sessions. We designed a citation for parents to explain the activity and its purpose.

First session: To work with students in the classroom. Dynamics of group work related to the responsible use of Internet and social networks: to view animated videos on the subject and to draw conclusions and a list of good practices by students. This session is developed by the counselor in collaboration with the tutor.

Second Session: Work session with parents about the topics "Educating our children in the responsible use of Internet and Social Networks" and "Strategies to improve communication between parents and children". This session provides the theoretical and practical activities with parents and is conducted by the counselor of the school.

Third Session: Work session parents and children together. The objectives are to share knowledges and to become conscious about the issue and to reach agreements on the responsible use of Internet and Social Networks. Dynamics are made related to learning strategies to improve parent-child communication (active listening, say NO, set rules...) This session is conducted by the counselor in collaboration with the tutor.



Working groups: parents and children together II Spain

B. Workshops for parents and children about Emotional Intelligence in Nursery

Schools (from 3 to 6 years old)

We did two kind of interventions:

Part 1: ANALYSIS AND REFLECTIONS ON THE PROPOSED ISSUE.

During five sessions we worked with the parents the topic: Emotional Intelligence and parent-child communication. After that, we prepared the activities parents were going to do in the classroom with their children.

Part 2: ACTIVITIES DEVELOPED BY PARENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

Parents are involved in organizing activities that will develop later in the classroom with students.

- We worked on the chosen theme, with dynamics that allow the exchange of information between parents and children, bringing them together and improving communication skills.

STRENGTHS

- To promote the common work and the communication between parents and children.
- You can encourage the participation of parents in the school context.
- Tutor encourages participation in activities with parents and children.
- You can develop the working sessions during school hours for students.

WEAKNESSES

- Difficulties in organizing activities in order to make all the parents of the pupils attend and participate.
- The tutor participation is essential for the organization and development of the activity.



b.2) Parents' coffee/tea groups

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Parents' coffee/tea groups is an approach that is practised in France, Italy, Spain and Turkey.

The aim is to facilitate communication between parents and to give professional advice and information in an informal friendly environment. Parents feel relaxed and open to share with other parents.



PARENTS' COFFEE IN FRANCE

OBJECTIVES :

To give informations and resources related to parental education in a friendly way as well as provide a place to share experiences.



THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

First of all the social worker of the association gathered various questions coming from parents ;

Then, the team chose the first subject to discuss (Authority) and invited a specialist to animate the parent's coffe.

Parents have been invited to have a coffe in the public library to share their experiences about Authority.

At the beginning the "expert" provides information about the thematic ; then parents share their experiences. After that, there is a time for questions/answers and before the end, the expert gives feed-back to the parents. At the end parents decide what will be the next topic to discuss in the parent's coffe (Violences ; social networks ; communication...)



STRENGTHS

- This is an unformal and friendly way to talk about parental education
- Parents feel less lonely with their difficulties and doubts ;
- Parent's are deeply involved in the solutions to apply ;
- The thematics are directly linked to parent's preoccupations .

WEAKNESSES

- Sometimes parents suggest a topic and they don't come when the parent's coffe is organized on this thematic;
- Sometimes it's difficult to find the "good" expert for the topic wanted.





OBJECTIVES

To create an informal occasion to meet parents, to facilitate the communication between them and to share experiences related to the education of their children.

PARENTS' TEA IN ITALY I

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

We organized parents' tea in a public library at 5 p.m. to have a tea with parents.

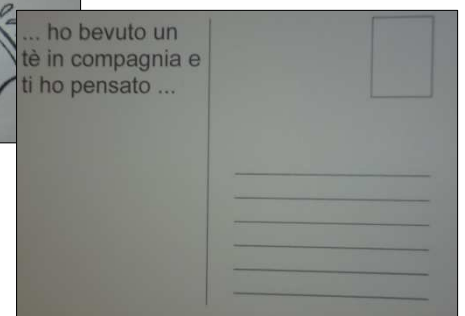
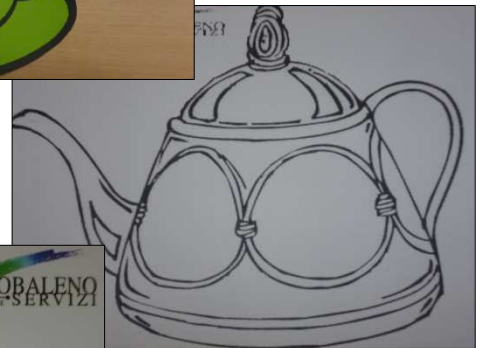
The topic of the meeting has been: "parents talent scout".

The information about meeting is given through newspaper, website and brochures.

The parents' group is mediated by a pedagogue and a psychologist

Our team has created an innovative instruments composed of:

- "Tea Cards": describe different features and behaviors of children. Children as "different kind of teas".
- "Teapot" to help parents to discover their children's talents: they must colored their own "teapot" thinking about their children.
- At the end of the meeting parents sent by post a positive message to their children.





PARENTS' TEA IN ITALY II

STRENGTHS

- The informal context and the Innovative method are appreciated by parents
- The place where the sessions will be held (a library) allows us to reach a public which does not like/participate to institutional events (training for parents at school for example)
- The postcard creates an “emotional bridge” between parents and their children.
- It is an easy instrument we can use with illiterate parents.
- The organization in a public space permits to cover a part of costs.

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of participation
- The activity needs an economical support for costs for trainers
- It's more expensive a meeting in a private setting than in a public one.
- Participants sometimes have some barriers to participate in an active way to the meeting



PARENTS' COFFEE GROUP IN SPAIN I

OBJECTIVES

To facilitate the communication between parents and to share experiences related to the education of their children.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- This kind of activity is developed for parents of the children in the rural or interurban geographical area. In these places our team focuses on new arrivals- and on families with less opportunities.
- The parent's coffee will be held monthly in an educational center. The first thematic will be chosen in order to interest all kind of families "universal preoccupation now". A specialist of the thematic will animate the session. Parents will choose the next topics. Our organization will find the "right" speaker for next sessions. "Specialists" will be chosen among the local existing services if it's possible.
- The sessions start with a presentation of the thematic by the specialist. Then, a debate and questions/answers.
- The information about the meetings is given to the pupils by means of notes for parents and posters ...Coffee is offered by our organization. The entrance is free.

STRENGTHS

- The action is presented to the association of the pupil's parents in order to reach more families and define the thematic.
Our staff looks for the first "right" specialist once the thematic is defined by our team and the parent's association. It could be "Risks for our children using facebook".
- The event is announced by several means of communication and with an "invitation".
At the end of each meeting we'll ask to the participants to define the next topic/question/problem linked to the education of their children.
- According to the chosen thematic our organization will invite each month one specialist (psychologist, sociologist, teacher, behavior specialists...)
- The methodology with which the sessions will be held (the coffee) allow us to reach a public which does not like/participate to institutional events.



PARENTS' COFFEE GROUP IN SPAIN II

WEAKNESSES

- Nowadays, parents do not go to learn more about children or education as often as we would like to.
- It is necessary to find new ways to involve parents.





PARENTS' COFFEE GROUP IN TURKEY

OBJECTIVES

To attain family who has same problems with children.

To share their problems each other and to profit experiments.

To give suggestions them about their problems.

Also to motivate family, who has good and successfull children.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

This activity is organised for families, who have same/similar problems with children. And it is organised to motivated families who have good and successfull children.

This activity is arranged in the school by counselor or teachers. Counselor or teachers decided the topic and invited families who experience same problems. Counselor or teachers inform parents about topic and invite them, so parents know what to talk about in the coffee time. At the begining counselor or teachers talk about the topic and parents share problems with children, their ideas, feelings and experiments so they support each other and also Counselor gives some advices to them. Sometimes teachers talk to them about their children and advice them something for success in lessons. And prosess goes on with question-answer, discussion etc.

We invited also our successful students' family for coffee. We thank them for caring their children. Parents are happy with the feedback. Feedback is important for improvement. Parents need feedback.

STRENGTHS

- As we know our students and families' needs, we can chose the best topics
- To send invitation easily by students
- To reward parents by giving feedback
- To have suitable places in the school for this activity
- The easiness of access the teachers in case of any problems

WEAKNESSES

- Difficulties of transportation
- Some of parents think it is not necessary



b.3) Parents' education course

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The courses are carried out in all the partnering countries aiming to raise families' capacity to help children in their growing up.

In Bulgaria the 32 sessions of the course give parents an opportunity to get to know themselves and their parenting styles better and to develop new strategies for supporting their children.

In Turkey the parents education course is about 8 weeks. It is for parents who have 14 – 18 year-old children. Different topics are discussed every week.

Italy and Spain also develop some parents' education courses.



PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN BULGARIA

OBJECTIVES

The courses are run by psychologists and aim to raise families' capacity to help children in their growing up.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

First we surveyed parents' needs using a survey card. The parents pointed out issues they would like to discuss.

We developed a training programme and materials based on the parents' needs.

Then we organized training workshops for parents.

STRENGTHS

The training is in accordance with real parents' needs and the programme is tailor-made.

WEAKNESSES

Training workshops can be time-consuming.





PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN TURKEY I

OBJECTIVES

To support parents to communicate, to save teens from the risks, to plan the future and help children's development

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- Parents education is about 8 weeks
- Max. 25 participant (We had 28 participant in two groups)
- 3 hours once a week
- Parents with 14-18 age children
- Different topics are discussed every week.

THE TOPICS DISCUSSED

- Knowledge of adolescence(teens)
- Growing together
- Communion with adolescence(children)
- Parents behaviour
- Gaining positive attitude
- Protect from risks
- Understanding and agreement with teens
- Plan the future

THE TECHNIQUES

- Brain storming
- Discussing
- Dramatisation
- Role play
- Group works
- Question-answer
- Powerpoint presentation





PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN TURKEY II

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- MATERIALS
- Stories
- Images
- Media-newspapers
- Letters
- Powerpoint

THE RESULTS

- Certificates for parents attended the course
- Letters from children to their parents to measure results of the course
- A questionnaire to the students whose parents attended the course to see the effects of the course
- Interview with teachers about the attitudes of the students
- Observe the students

PARENTS SCHOOL MEETINGS

- We organized five meetings with parents to discuss the problems in education and the problems with their children and their solutions.
- We organized two meetings about their children future, universities, jobs, etc

- A conference was organized to explain and how to overcome the problems of parents and teenagers and become more successful in life.
- Poem day, mother day, school night party, food festival were organised for parents to involve school life.

STRENGTHS

- A good school community
- Support from the school administration
- Parents willingness
- Supported by Minister of Education

WEAKNESSES

- Uneducated parents
- Working parents
- The students from different places
- Parents away from the school area





PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN TURKEY

III

OBJECTIVES

NAME OF ACTIVITY: COMMUNICATION

To develop relationship between families and children

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- PHASE 1: The members of group, understanding the causes of existence, create an environment in confidence and receptive. The rules are created by all members together. The members of group promise to notice group rules and join the group. The leader pretend to join group members, because group members prefer to talk leader than each other.
- PHASE 2: Group members learn how to share the depth of ideas and emotions in this stage. Members try to understand each other's behavior. Group members develop loyalties and feelings of belonging.

PHASE 3: Members trust each other in this phase and participation rate is high. Group members try to provide feedback. The most long-lasting at this stage, members will see the individual differences, accept each other in positive and negative aspects. Advisor consist to summarize conversations and guide to group.

DISCUSS DURING THE PROCESS

1. Meeting of the group, group rules and establishment of communication and a relationship to begin the process of consultation on the Basic Needs
2. Relationship of different ages and time configuration
3. The effect of the relationship of personality
4. Communication models and family communication with adolescents
5. What can be done to communicate better?
6. Parents communication each other and effects on children

STRENGTHS

- Parents willingness

WEAKNESSES

- Parents away from the school area



PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN ITALY. I

Inside our organization

OBJECTIVES

Supporting parents in particular and difficult moments of their family life.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

Our psychological team promotes supporting courses for parents who are in particular conditions or moments of their life, such as:

- Change of schools (from Preschool to Primary)
- Special needs
- Problems concerning sexuality
- Problems with educational rules
- Bereavement
- Parents' Separation
- Unconditional Fears

Organization of the activity

Groups are created in base of parents' interest on topics.

Each group participates on two meetings

Meetings are organized in the evening starting from 9.00 pm to give parents the opportunity to attend the course after work and after dinner with family.

Duration: about 1,5 hours

Place: a training room in our organization

Mediator

Groups are mediated from 2 Psychologists of our team.

Methodology

Parents are involved in a process composed by different steps:

1. Motivations and Expectations: reason of parents' attendance and their needs are collected by expert
2. Sharing: participants tell their personal experiences
3. Discussion: the group is involved in a group discussion about doubts, suggestions, questions, observations. The aim is not to give answers but to start an individual process of change
4. Stimulation: the topic is revised thanks to particular instruments (i.e. Stories, Films, Cartoons, pages of novels)
5. Conclusion: some generalizations create good practices or strategies for coping





PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN ITALY. II-a In schools

OBJECTIVES

Supporting parents to grow up with their children: to move themselves from a "couple condition" to a "parents condition". Thinking together about educative-style of mothers and fathers, moving across different and daily themes

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

Our psychological team promotes education courses for parents especially in schools.

Organization of the activity

Parents' groups are usually divided depending on ages of their children:

- 0-3
- 3-6
- 6-11
- 11-14

But sometime groups are mixed.

Each group attends two meetings

Meetings are organized in the evening from 8.30 pm to give parents the opportunity to attend the course after work and after dinner with family.

Duration: about two hours

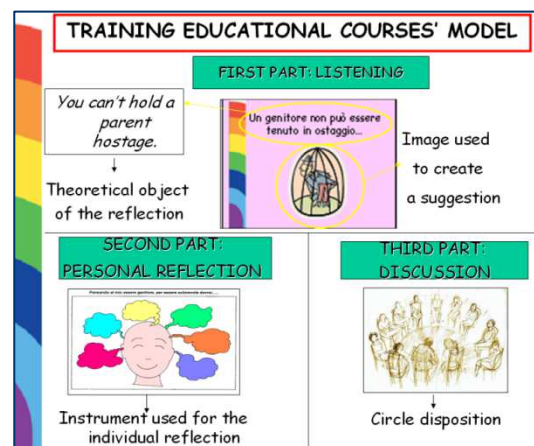
Place: a school's room frontal or circle disposition

Mediator

Groups are mediated by a Psychologist of our team.

Methodology

Our team uses a specific model for training that we can call Socratic Method



Parents are involved in a process composed by 3 steps:

1. Listening: the psychologist introduces the topic with theoretical information for a first approach (in this step, uses a power point presentation with different languages – verbal and iconic)
2. Personal Reflection: an activation involves directly parents for more or less 10 minutes
3. Discussion: the group is involved in a group discussion about doubts, suggestions, questions, observations. The aim is not to give answers but to start an individual process of change.

Materials

- Power Point presentations
- Interactive instruments
- Group works



PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN ITALY. II-b

In schools

OBJECTIVES

Supporting parents to grow up with their children: to move themselves from a “couple condition” to a “parents condition”. Thinking together about educative-style of mothers and fathers, moving across different and daily themes

STRENGTHS

- Municipalities or schools cover costs for experts. Meeting are free for parents.
- Schools offer free spaces
- Schools provide to invite families to events
- The invitation is to the collectivity, to citizens and not to people who have specific needs.
- It's not necessary an active participation. Parents can only listen.

WEAKNESSES

- Schools' rooms are not the best place to organize this kind of meeting based on socratic method because it's not always possible to have a good disposition of chairs in circle.
- Duration: 2 meeting are few to create a feeling in the group and to permit a personal participation
- Lack of participation: in particular, families who need these activities most, don't participate because participation is not compulsory.
- Lack of fathers' participation
- Resistance in challenge themselves as parents
- We are looking for new methodologies to involve parents (i.e. we are thinking about an educator as a sort of “Baby sitter” for parents who want to participate but they can't leave children alone at home)



PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN SPAIN

PARENTS' SCHOOLS I

OBJECTIVES

- To reflect and to discuss issues of interest concerning the education of the children.
- To encourage the involvement of the parents in the activities of the Centre.
- To promote the educational coherence between family and school environments .
- To promote the communication between the families through the exchange of experiences.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- The targeted people were parents of pupils enrolled in stages of early childhood and primary education in the schools in our sector.

Organization:

1st. Phase: Parents school planning.

- The choice of the topics should be designed taking in consideration the issues of the own parents and the needs that were identified by teachers or educators. To do so, an initial meeting is hold to assess the needs of the center. In this meeting, we reviewed the most needed contents and the times and dates.
- In the assemblies of the Parents Association we used semi-structured questionnaires

2nd. Phase: Notification

- The way of inviting the parents to win their interest was very important. In addition to written announcements, it is crucial to involve the teachers and their attitude to transmit the appropriateness of joining the parent's school. The tutors can also use the quarterly meetings with families, and individual interviews for transmitting the invitation. It can be also done by putting up notices in the center with the proposed issue and the date of completion.



PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN SPAIN PARENTS' SCHOOLS II

3rd. phase: Development.

- The meetings were done in the area of the school, during school hours, from 9 to 10 a.m. The frequency was fortnightly and usually developed between 4 and 6 sessions to collect information on topics of interest to parents.

Contents: The educational styles, How to practice a positive authority ,The rules and limits , The educational coherence between the father and mother , How to promote language development, The aggressiveness , Fears, The sleeping habits , Eating habits.

Methodology:

- It was based on promoting the participation of the parents in the contents of each session in order to fit the interests, concerns and questions of the audience. We tried to develop it as a discussion session in which the specialist addresses an issue and allows the attendees alongside to contribute with their viewpoints and present their doubts.
- We understand that the exchange of experiences between the parents (led by the speaker) allows them to be aware that others have similar problems to theirs, and change strategies that are working for other parents can be implemented in similar situations.
- At the end of each session we offered a written copy of the daily subject-matter, in order people to read it at home and to discuss it with their partners. In addition, a copy of the same document was distributed to tutors to enable them to give it to the parents who request it (those who did not attend the meetings and are interested in having such information).



PARENTS' EDUCATION COURSE IN SPAIN PARENTS' SCHOOLS III

STRENGTHS

- The accessibility of parents to such activities that take place in the school itself, as well as being a free service.
- Adaptation to the proper interests and needs
- It promotes the relationships between the parents of the same center, as well as the exchange of experiences.
- It promotes the motivation of introducing changes in the educational standards.

WEAKNESSES

- The general aspect that may not respond to the individuality.
- The lack of participation.
- Sharing information will not always fit the change of beliefs.
- The parents with higher need to assistance sometimes do not go to such activities.
- The disenchantment of the education system with advancing schooling creates a state of general disinterest.
- Low expectations. The rate of involvement of teachers in the activity.



b.4) Teacher training to work with parents

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Such training is run in Spain. It aims

- to improve the knowledge and skills of teachers to work with parents.
- to promote parents' access and active participation in school life, involving them more profoundly in the educational process of their children.



TEACHER TRAINING TO WORK WITH PARENTS IN SPAIN

OBJETIVIES

- To improve the knowledge and skills of teachers on working with parents.
- To promote the access and the active participation of parents in the school, involving them more profoundly in the educational process of their children.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- We worked with a group of ten teachers , all of them tutors of pupils from Nursery School (3-6 years old).
- The general topic was the Tutorial Action with Families. They chose two specifics topics to analyze : The interview between teacher and parents, and How to improve the collaboration of the parents of children with behaviour problems.

We (the counsellors) had five meetings with the teachers group in order to discuss about these topics. We gave them some written materials and they had a task to do between the meetings.

STRENGTHS

- The high motivation of the teachers' group, maybe because we attended his demand of training.
- We could exchange this experience to other group of teachers.
- The collaboration of the headmaster who made possible a time in the schedule of the teachers in order to do the meetings.

WEAKNESSES

It is not possible to do in all of our schools because it depends on the interest of teacher and the collaboration of the headmaster.

c) INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COUNSELLING FOR PARENTS

If the problem is not common but related to a specific situation of a father, mother or a family, it is necessary to work in a different way: counseling is the most used technique to solve private problems. It could be individual, but sometimes it is better to compare one's situation in group-work.

c.1) Individual Counselling

c.2) Group counselling

c.1) Individual Counselling

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Individual counselling is provided in all the partnering countries. It is done by professionals in a confidential environment and aims to help families solve concrete problems. Counsellors can direct parents to adequate external services. Counselling can be sought directly by parents and children or they can be referred to counselling by teachers, school principals, etc.

In Italy and Bulgaria individual counselling is inside schools.

Such places, not medical ones, allow a better approach to the service.

Experience shows that it takes time for parents to accept it.



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN SPAIN I

OBJETIVIES

- To give individualized pieces of advice to the families to face a risk or difficulty the child suffers.
- To establish, with parents help, some guidelines to overcome or improve such a situation.
- To provide a response to the demand of families, in the case that the family asks for an interview.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- We did individual counseling with parents of pupils (in our schools) who required advice, via their proper requests or via a proposal of the teacher.

Organization:

- The citation.
It is desirable introducing the citations orally and to be supported by a written note. The tutor will usually participate, as he/she has more contact with the family. It is important to involve both the father and the mother, so the citation will be explicitly addressed to both of them.

- The citations allow addressing the issue that would be discussed in the interview, which will avoid unnecessary feelings of anxiety from parents about it.

The place.

- It is important that the place is clean, tidy and with good lighting. It is essential to avoid interruptions and walkways.





INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN SPAIN II

Time.

- The time should be fixed according to the possibilities of parents' attendance, so we'll consider their work schedule and availability. Furthermore, it is important to forecast the necessary time.

Methodology:

- The interview is a communicative situation, and we consider some variables that modulate the processes of interpersonal communication: to have a good outline, to offer an attitude of collaboration with the family, We will end the interview with a summary of the discussed issues, the agreements reached and the necessity of a subsequent interview.

STRENGTHS

- It offers an individualized intervention.
-

WEAKNESSES

- It takes much time
- It reaches few families
- People do not always assume the orientations, as some families consider the interview as unnecessary.



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN ITALY.I

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING (Private service)

OBJECTIVES

Support parents

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

Our psychological team provides support to parents (individual and in couple) about educational and psycho-pedagogical themes.

We have two kind of services:

1. Private service inside our organization
2. Guidance service inside schools of the "Tiles District" (Distretto di Scandiano Reggio Emilia): preschools, primary and secondary schools.

THE PRIVATE SERVICE

Families/Parents choose our service because they need a specialistic support for different problems or questions:

Emotional diseases
management of the first months of life (breastfeeding, fears and anxieties);
educational rules;
school problems
problems related to growth;
problems related to sexuality of children and adolescents;
management of jealousy, conflict and abnormal behavior;
management of situations of illness and bereavement;
management of complex changes in life (change of house, temporary absence of a parent).

In these situation, a psychologist guidance supports and develops potentialities of parents /couple in their educational role.

The psychologist promotes an empowerment process: parents have got an active roles; they work on their abilities and competences; the aim is the creation of awareness to become a resource

STRENGTHS

- It's a short training, it's not a therapy, so families normally attend few consultants

WEAKNESSES

- It's a private service: families pay directly.



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN ITALY.II GUIDANCE SERVICE IN SCHOOLS (Sportello Psicopedagogico)

OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the project is to prevent discomfort situation and the rate of school drop-out

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

Our psychological team has got guidance services in 6 School Institutions since 1998.

Specific aims

- Help students in difficult situations or at risk of marginalization/isolation with negative effects on scholastic life
- Provide parents and teachers of instruments useful to understand students' and families' unease
- Organize specific interventions (in difficult cases, planning of more interventions with co-participations of different subjects (first of all family and teachers))
- Give Specific didactical strategies for teachers and families
- Organize a counseling for family problems, or for individual parents or teachers

Users

Teachers of Primary and Secondary schools
Parents of pupils attending Primary and Secondary Schools

Pupils attending Primary and Secondary Schools

Pupils are not direct receivers of the Counselling Point: it is not a place dedicated to the listening of their problems. Pupils access to the Counselling after a specific combined request between teachers and parents and after an evaluation of the psychologist.

Professionists

Manager of the project and didactical coordinator
Supervision and coordination of the psychological staff
Psychologists for counseling

Organization

Each school has defined hours for counseling (minimum once every two weeks, maximum twice a week)

The presence of the psychologist is decided together with the reference teacher. This person is elected by the College and has to be a sort of bridge between the psychologist and users.

The reference teacher has important tasks:

- definition of appointment
- communication with users
- communication of changes with users and psychologist

It's important to adopt respectful modality to safeguard users' privacy, in particular about parents.

Methodology

Scholastic psychologist is a professional who has to be competent and flexible to prevent unease and promote pupils' welfare.

Sometimes is useful and necessary to involve in this project also other figures, working for educative life of the pupil, such as educators.



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN ITALY.II

GUIDANCE SERVICE IN SCHOOLS

(Sportello Psicopedagogico)

The work of the psychologist is divided in five areas:

1.Prevention

- Promotion of concrete actions to facilitate individual and group growing up process
- Facilitation of learning process
- Build up didactical modalities and path to express capabilities

2.Teachers staff training

- Conceptualize, explain and give theoretical bases to teachers (about knowledge and competence)
- Describe and interpret situation in a different way compared to the one used by teachers
- Build up (together), give and find didactical materials
- Update knowledge with recent publication, didactical methodologies, new technologies and software (especially about Learning Disabilities)
- Teaching about management of class-group, management of unease situations, welfare promotion

3. interaction

The psychologist has to stimulate positive comparison between pupils, and pupils and adults, to favour:

- the concept of respect of others
- positive identification

- Stimulate democratic participation to decisional process. In addition, the psychologist has to
- give indication to use correct group work techniques for a particular group of pupils or with parents;
- structure specific interventions, for integration and multicultural education to create a class-climate useful to learn.

All these steps bring to a knowledge and acceptance of the existence of different cultures in the same place, and permit a social growth of the pupil, of the whole class and of the society

4. A context useful to learning

Psychologist is a sort of mediator in scholastic relationship, from the promotion to the spread of psychological emotion, and interaction between people.

It's important:

- promotion of a positive educative climate in school
- interaction between people
- knowledge and characteristic of development age
- development of relationships and communicative competences

5.A "net-work".

Psychologist has to work in a net of different social professional figures, to involve in planning the different social figures that work in the community for a welfare community aim.

Methodologies

Individual counseling
Supervision in groups of teachers
Group working
Observation in classroom
Intervention in classroom
Examination with tests
Focus group



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN ITALY.II GUIDANCE SERVICE IN SCHOOLS (Sportello Psicopedagogico)

STRENGTHS

- Free service for families
- The service is inside the school (this educational context is preferred by families instead of a clinical service)
- The service inside schools permits to create a positive network between different figures involved in the education process
- **Supervision and coordination** of the psychological staff has guaranteed the good structure of the project through respect of planning bonds and the continuous supervision of psychologists' work. In addition monthly internal staff (in which are convened all the psychologists involved in the project and two persons dedicated to the coordination of it) has allowed to check all the evolutions of cases and to study specific and critical situations. Different experts' backgrounds are important for the support team: there is an interchange of information between experts after specific requests made by specific community.

WEAKNESSES

- It is difficult to involve foreign families
- The project needs many years to be accepted from families
- If there are problems in schools (i.e. Behaviour problems, drop-off) families are not forced to attend this service to help the situation
- Experts can work with pupils and students only with the parents' permission and sometimes parents don't accept this opportunity.



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN FRANCE

OBJECTIVES

The aim is to help parents to find the service they need and to give some advices (not expert's ones).

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

The association is located in a rural area. On this territory it is not possible to find all the existing social and public services.

The association has been agreed as a “relay” of those administrations to offer services to rural citizens leaving here.

In this framework individual counseling for parents who need it is provided.

A social worker (french and arabic speaking) from the association is here to receive parents, listen to them and give advices.

These person does not give experts counsels (as a psychologist for example) but helps parents to define better what they need. On this basis he can indicate them which service to see. He also acts as a mediator between them and the appropriate service (medical, psychologist, linguistic, social worker...)

There is a french label “Point Info Familles” (Info Point for families) for that.

STRENGTHS

- In our territory, people does not need to go to the bigger city (65 kms from there) to find someone to talk about their problems, difficulties,
- This service contributes to a better integration of families on the territory.
- It helps immigrant families to understand better how does the french administration works and which services can be used, in this sense it contributes to mixity and equal access to public services.

WEAKNESSES

- This activity needs a lot of time to spend with parents, it is not possible to define a max. time per interview;
- This activity requires to have wide general competencies ;
- This service is very expensive for the association as the interviews and counseling are free for parents.



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN TURKEY

OBJECTIVES

To suggest family about their problems with children

To support to be good parents who listen, care, support their children

Preference of parents on consultation. It is important their willingness.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

- We did individual counselling only with our school parents. Parents can want to consultation only for children problems. Teachers refer to consultation for parents. Counsellor works in the school so if she realizes any problem about students' which is related their family, she invites them to do individual counselling. Counsellor call them and tell what the topic is, so parents know why they come. We invite father and mother together but usually mother comes alone.
- Counselling room is clean, tidy, warm and good lightened. It is important not to interrupt consultation with any noise.
- Consultation time depends on parents' problem. We consider parents and counsellor attentions. If it takes long time, parents are boring and it doesn't work. Also counsellor attention is important to efficient consultation.
- It is important to give feedback to parents, to suggest their problems, to summarize the consultation and define the solutions. And then counsellor and parents decide the frequency of consultation.

STRENGTHS

- To facilitation of finding counsellor
- To have parents care their children

WEAKNESSES

- Difficulties of transportation to the school
- Parents not attending other meeting after the first consultation
- It takes a long time

c.2) Group counselling

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Group counselling is done in Spain and Bulgaria. The groups are formed on the principle of similar parenting problems. We rely on parents' sharing and group resources to support its members.



GROUP COUNSELING IN SPAIN I

OBJECTIVES

The organization of this activity allows us to work in small groups with the parents of the children that have similar problems, in order to think about their problems and to acquire educational strategies.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

The activities with these groups were developed at the headquarters of EOEP and the families were referred by the counselor for each school, who knows the needs of that school. (Through the Referral Protocol).

The parents are divided into different groups according to the main problem of the pupil or according to the family context, are:

- Behavioural problems in the early childhood education stage.
- Behavioural problems in the elementary education stage.
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Difficulties persistent in literacy (dyslexia).
- Early stimulation.
- Emotional Intelligence.
- Gifted.

At the organizational level, we implement 6 sessions for each group of parents, fortnightly. The optimal number of participants for each group is ranged from a minimum of 6-8 and a maximum of 15.

Methodology

The overall purpose of this kind of parents' training is not a mere transmission of knowledge or information content, neither a proposition of a behaviour patterns model, that are far from the social and emotional reality of the family and its network of relationships. It is rather an opportunity to learn from the experience, in the sense of reflecting on the issues, elections and conditions that characterize the daily life and the experience through training situations.

To do so, we tend to:

- **Share information:** the counselor encourages participants to share information presenting facts, concepts and theoretical information about the different areas and about the educational and interactive processes in the family.





GROUP COUNSELING IN SPAIN II

- **Acquisition and development of the skill:** Sharing information is often insufficient to achieve behaviour changes because just saying to people what they have to do is not usually an effective educational way. Therefore, the information is often incorporated into skills constructions. The techniques of role-playing are often used, and also modeling and behavioral tests to teach parents specific skills and to support information sharing. We teach the parents how to use "I messages, " the thoughtful attention, modeling, reinforcement, stimulation, how to conduct family meetings, negotiation, setting limits, the use of time outside, and how to "control " their children's behavior.
- **Beliefs' change:** on one hand, we tried to develop consciousness raising and self-consciousness of parents regarding their own parenting style, its genesis and its influence on the development and education of the children and, on the other hand, to change different kinds of beliefs such as values, educational attitudes, implicit theories about the development and education, and the perception of parental behaviour and children in their relationships.
- **Problems' solving:** application of problem solving to one's own family life. It requires the counselor to provide continuous stimulation and constructive feedback during the process to the parents.
- **Feeling of power and self-competence:** increasing their potential of being parents and their ability to use the educational available resources.
- **Share the experience:** As in the report of the European Parents Association (2000), experience represents the beginning and the end of any initiative targeting the parents. Content and examples for training were provided. Also, we offer topics for reflection based in the group work experience, on personal, social and cultural experience, which often influence the decisions of parents about the education.



GROUP COUNSELING IN SPAIN III

STRENGTHS:

Advantages of team-working:

- It allows a direct and more realistic observation of the attitude and the thoughts of the parents.
- The group facilitates the expression of viewpoints and the ability to consolidate with the other members.
- It allows to the professionals working on specific facts, using: problem solving techniques, role-play, reinforcement of positive attitudes among the group members...
- It is positive to internalize better the messages for generating more relaxed atmosphere than in the individual consultation case.
- In the final evaluations, the parents emphasize: the exchange of experiences and the acquired motivation for making changes in their family dynamics.

WEAKNESSES:

- Timing issues, schedules and work and family responsibilities of the participants.
- Decrease in the number of participants during the sessions.
- Sometimes unrealistic expectations by the families.
- Lower involvement of fathers compared to mothers.





GROUP COUNSELING IN BULGARIA

OBJECTIVES

The aim is for parents to feel supported, to share their problems and to receive professional counselling. Parents have much more resources to cope with the problems as a group than individually.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

We do it in collaboration with local schools and the local resource centre for parents with special needs. The parents of children with special needs are the most motivated.

STRENGTHS

Group counselling is a powerful strategy for coping with problems.

WEAKNESSES

It is not easy to organize a group of parents at convenient for all of them time.



d) PARENTS TRAINING TO BE TRAINERS

It is based on the enhancement of parents' knowledge and skills and the change of the attitudes to their own involvement and support of their children's education.

d.1) Parents support parents

d.2) Popular University for Parents

d.1) Parents support parents

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

This approach is practised in Spain. It aims to train parents to support other parents. Parents find it easier to take advice and information from their peers. In this way we reach a large number of parents.



PARENTS SUPPORT PARENTS IN SPAIN I

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage parental involvement in schools and to study the positive aspects and difficulties.
- To improve communication skills and the dynamization groups.
- To set out specific proposals to develop in the schools in order to improve parent involvement.
- To improve relations between school and families.

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

Five sessions were designed to work with parents. Previous mind holds a meeting with each school principal to explain this activity and the objectives. The collaboration of the tutors and the direction team is required for the selection of parents who were going to participate.

In each of the schools subject of our intervention as school counselors, a group of parents who meet the following requirements was selected:

- Interest in training about issues related to the education of their children.
- Interest in becoming a trainer of other parents.
- Characteristics to be a good trainer-mediator: communication skills, positive leadership, etc.
- Availability in terms of time.

First session: It consisted of an exhibition about the involvement of parents in school life, their advantages and difficulties.

Second session: it offers a presentation on two topics: "Formal participation of families in school: Associations of Parents and School Council" and "The Association of Parents as a dynamic group".

Third session: We work to improve Communication Skills of parents with a theoretical and implementation of group dynamics about "Active listening", "Messages I ...
Presentation table needs analysis in family-school relationship.

Fourth session. We analyzed some parents' involvement activities and assessed the needs of schools and the possibilities for activities after collecting the tab. Presentation table collection activities to be performed by parents in schools.

Fifth Session: Specification of proposed activities to be performed in their schools.



PARENTS SUPPORT PARENTS IN SPAIN II

We had monitoring meetings, in order parents-trainers to use them to develop their work.

STRENGTHS

- Training is provided equitably to all schools.
- There is a training on issues of interest form them.
- Parents are facilitators or linkers of others.
- It multiplies the effect of training.
- It improves the participation of the parentes in the school.

WEAKNESSES

- Difficulties to find the appropriate parents to be good candidates for the parent-trainers task.
- Training time is insufficient to change attitudes among parents.

d.2) Popular University for Parents

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Popular University for Parents is done in France. This concept has been created by "ACEPP" (French national association).

The aim is to gather parents who can share different topics related to parenting. Then, with the help of an academic researcher, they proceed to scientific research on a common topic and share their results with other parents and public services and policies.

d.2) Popular University for Parents

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Popular University for Parents is done in France. This device has been created by "ACEPP" (French national association).

The aim is to gather parents who can share different topics related to parenthood. Then, with the help of an academic searcher, they proceed to a scientific research on a common topic and they share their result with others parents, public services and policies.

There is a network of Popular University of Parents that allow them to meet each other :

- Workers from all french popular university for parents can meet once per month in a continuous training process ;
- Parents from all the french popular university for parents can meet once per year to share their experiences





POPULAR UNIVERSITY FOR PARENTS IN FRANCE

OBJECTIVES

The aim is that parents become actors of their parenthood by producing knowledge about it.



THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

First of all a group of parents has been made up. This parents comes from various places (public garden, users of the association, parent's association...) . This parents inform others parents about the project.

A first meeting has been held to explain what is a Popular University of parents.

Then there are several meetings dedicated to talk about parenthood. Parents talk about various individual questions related to parental education, school, behavior...They decide themselves what to talk about, what do they think about the topic, when and where to meet. Workers of the association are only here to animate the debates and to collect what has been said.

When parents feel ready, an academic searcher comes and help to define a collective research question.

With his support, parents carry out research into the subject. Then they share the result with the local community, regional/national authorities...

STRENGTHS

- It is the best mean to involve parents in parental education, as they are here the main and only figure of it (workers only coordinate and animate but don't act in this action).



WEAKNESSES

- The project is very long (2-3 years).





SOME KEY IDEAS TO IMPROVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

FIRST OF ALL...

- ❑ Parents are people with experience and a lot of information.
- ❑ It is important to say that when a child is born nobody instructs the parents how to raise them. Most often, parents follow their parents' model, which might not always be suitable for the new generation of children.
- ❑ Counseling families and parents is a process that depends on the context of the institution, the specialists' expertise and the task assignor. Always connect things with parents' previous experience and knowledge.
- ❑ Teachers (educational figures) and parents are equally important for children's development.
- ❑ The positive relationship between parents and teachers can contribute considerably to the child's success and good behaviour at school.

...PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL LIFE

The family-school relationship is important because...

Education is a shared task between parents and teachers. It is necessary for the teacher to facilitate parents' participation and to provide sufficient information for the family to feel connected with the school management, and to feel responsible for the process of education. This permits children to feel a common action line between the adults who surround them.

The family-school relationship is not always easy because of ...

SOME MYTHS

- **Thinking that parents' behaviors change as a result of a conversation.** People's behaviour is quite resistant to change. It requires good reasons to change. We need to believe that the alternatives we have can be trusted and to feel confident that they will lead to changes. It takes time, persistence, persuasion and evidence that change is possible and worthwhile.
- **Judging parents:** Parents tend to think that they educate their children the best they can and know. When they feel attacked, judged and sentenced they put up defence barriers. If we want to make them aware of certain practices or inadequate education, we must make sure that they do not feel that their competence as parents is threatened.
- **The understanding that the only valid form of education is the one provided by the school.** There are many ways to educate and stimulate a child well. Teachers can learn from parents, as well as parents can learn from teachers.
- **Expecting parents to participate in school life in a context where there is a little tradition of participation.** It will be more adequate to propose a strategy of ongoing collaboration, starting with what is easier for them. When they feel comfortable, respected, convinced of the benefit to the child, then progress may happen.

...and SCHOOL CONTEXT

- We must be aware of the reality of the parents: work schedules, educational level, house information resources, etc. We should know about their concerns and worries related to their children's education, before implementing activities for them.
- We believe that parents' involvement from the very beginning of schooling is essential, because later it is very difficult to change attitudes and dynamics. When parents enter the school for the first time, they should be taught that they are also part of that, allowing them to be so. We need to open more classrooms for the parents, involving them in organizing events and giving them responsibilities.
- Attempt to open all the windows as wide as possible to show to the parents the reality of the school, for that ICTs are useful: BLOG ...
- Schools have to think how to motivate and organize parents' participation in school life, define what they want and how they want it to be done.
- The attitude and the work of the tutors are crucial. They are the closest, and share the most interests with parents concerning the pupil. We must strengthen this tutorial role.
- As school counselors, we must contribute to teachers' development: attitudinal factors. (providing conditions for the family to come, participate, break the fear to let them get involved sincerely, and opening up more doors) and communication factors (take care of the ways we talk to the parents: not just telling the bad things, but also the potential and positive things).
- A publicity campaign, for promoting the importance of active parental involvement in school and ways to participate, could be run.
- It might be useful to use a card of parent's involvement in school activities to motivate and recognize the efforts of parents.



**SOME IDEAS TO FINISH
WITH**

SOME IDEAS TO FINISH WITH

Our society is changing. **Our families are changing** too.

The economic crisis opens new opportunities in the field of working with parents.

The crisis requires some changes in our lifestyles: parents need encouragement and stimuli to transmit positive attitudes to their children.

We need new ways to meet families and their needs.

During these 2 years working on parenthood, we have especially analyzed the weak points of our previous activities aiming to reach new horizons involving parents.

We have realized that **if we follow the old ways, we would not reach parents.** This motivates us to create new perspectives in our professional experiences.

There are **different kinds of participation** in educational proposals and initiatives.

Some parents can and want to participate in an active way.

Others want to participate, but in a passive way.

Yet others do not want to or cannot participate.

Therefore, we cannot use just one approach. We should be using different ways.



At the same time, in the ICT society, children grow up very fast and that is why parents have difficulties in following them.

Parents need other kinds of support, flexible and interactive programmes closer to them.


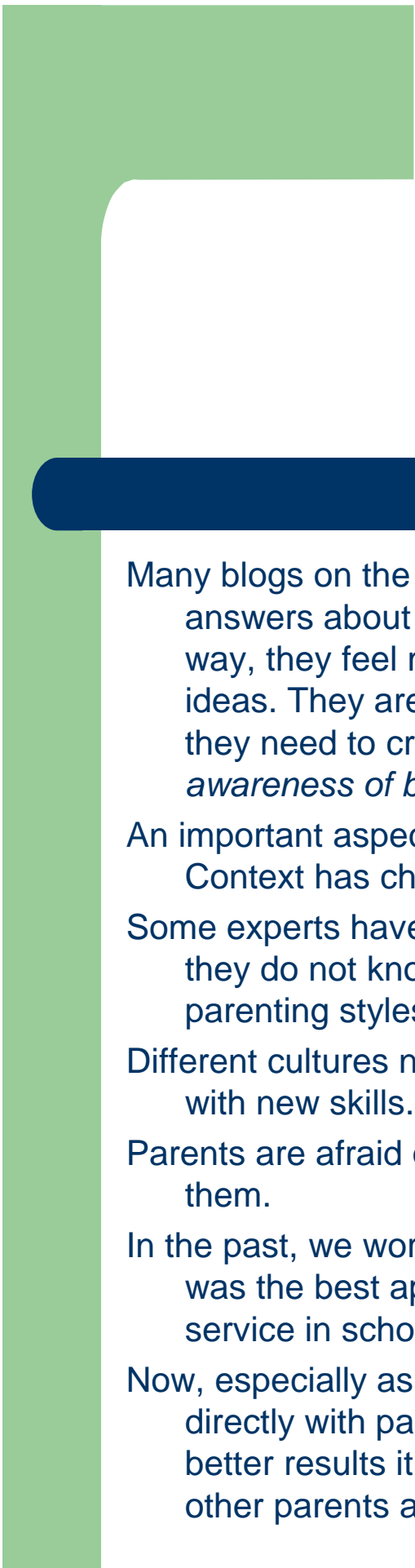
Professionals have to be **more creative and imaginative**.

This is the reason why friendly spaces for parents (i.e. parents' corners, special libraries) and on-line platforms are welcome and appreciated.

Parents have no time for attending training courses: an online platform can be a tool to inform them and, at the same time, to train them.

Parents are tired of being judged by experts: this is one of the reasons why they do not participate in traditional courses about rules.

They prefer the informal way: i.e. parents' coffee/tea mornings, an informal context/methodology based on comparison. There all parents are equal; the expert is a mediator not someone who says what to do.



Many blogs on the Internet are full of parents who look for answers about their role and children growing up. In this way, they feel more comfortable because they share their ideas. They are participating in a cooperative process and they need to create a new idea, a new *“culture and awareness of being parents”*.

An important aspect we have to consider is that the European Context has changed: **we are in a multicultural reality**.

Some experts have their own background and culture and they do not know about different cultures and different parenting styles.

Different cultures need new figures, new profiles of experts with new skills.

Parents are afraid of experts; they have lost confidence in them.

In the past, we worked directly with parents thinking that this was the best approach (individual counselling, guidance service in schools).

Now, especially as advisers in schools, we know that working directly with parents is only one approach; in addition, for better results it is necessary to work indirectly (i.e. with other parents and teachers).



A new perspective also means to create **informal ways** to work in the field of parents' education.

Now we know that parents want to share experiences with their peers because they need a new approach without experts.


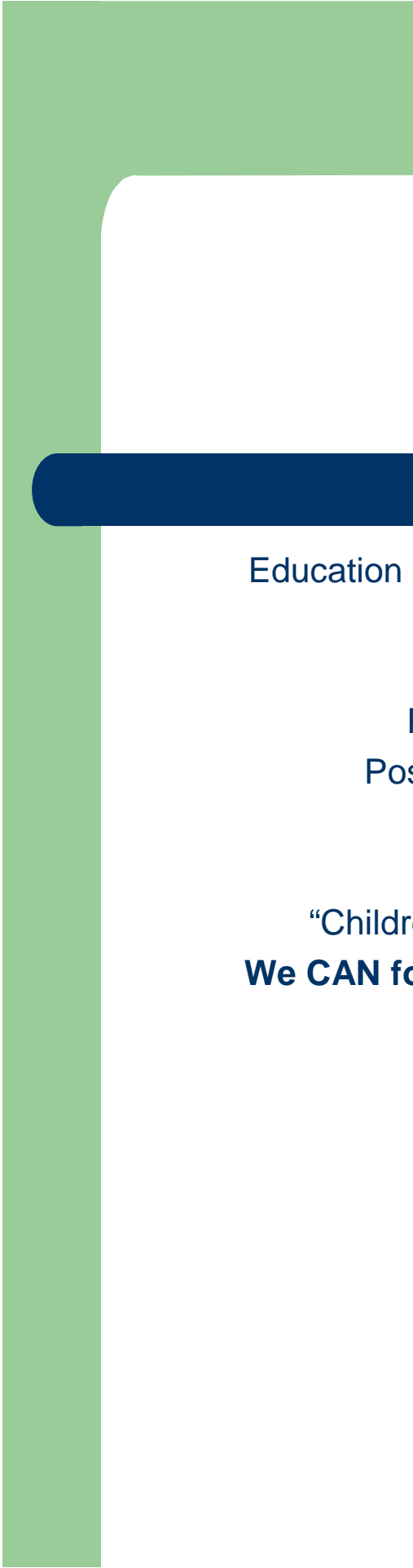
Active parents to support other parents: this is the idea of peer education. So, we have looked for and developed new ways to educate them with no experts and to create common knowledge.

With the popular university we go further in this direction.

Here parents are experts and they create themselves knowledge that they are going to share with the society.

Here, when teachers or experts participate they are at the same level.

New perspectives on parents' education open new perspectives for their children.



Education is a heritage for the next generation
More education
More support for families
Positive idea of our future
Positive Perspectives for future
Proactive citizens

“Children are the parents of tomorrow”
**We CAN form the future ... looking for NEW
PERSPECTIVES.**

....and finally

This partnership has opened up new perspectives and horizons for us as parents and professionals. We met committed to the same cause colleagues and friends, found out new ways to interact with parents and realized how important it is for parents to feel supported and encouraged.

We hope that the reader of this manual could find inspiration for his/her work with parents.

Coming together is a beginning.

Keeping together is progress.

Working together is success.

(H. Ford)



ANNEXES

PARTNERS PRESENTATION



PARTNERS PRESENTATION

ORGANIZATION (Coordinator)	Country
Equipo de Orientación Educativa y Psicopedagógica de Molina de Segura (EOEP)	Murcia , SPAIN



ACTIVITIES AND AIMS

The E.O.E.P. is a team of experts that give external support to Nursery and Primary schools. This team deals with childhood and Primary schools of seven towns, a total of 60 schools.

The socio-cultural context of these schools is varied: most of them have a high percentage of immigrants, people with low socio-cultural level, who run the risk of being socially excluded, and there are students with special needs.

The team consists of 21 advisers, working together in an interdisciplinary way:

Psychologists, pedagogues , psychotherapists and a social worker.

This is a public team from Ministry of Education and two of these figures are from the .

AIMS OF THE PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL GUIDANCE TEAM:

a.To contribute to the existence of courteous relations between the school and the family, by means of giving information, education and support

b.To give professional advice to the teaching staff so as they could work with diversity of students

c.Prevention of learning and personal development difficulties

d.To carry out the psycho-pedagogical evaluation and to decide the educational answer of students with special needs (disability or gift) or of students in a position of compensation of educational inequalities

e.To advise about School Cohabitation Programs

The work of the team is focused on three main aspects:

-Teaching staff guidance

-Direct attention to students

-Family guidance

PARTNERS PRESENTATION

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	Country
Foyer Rural C.E.P.A.G.E.	Puget Theniers, FRANCE 

ACTIVITIES AND AIMS

Foyer Rural C.E.P.A.G.E. is a non profit association working in the field of local and rural development, created in 1987.

It manages a Family Info Point (PIF) where it provides information, advisory, links with institutions in relation with parents.

AIMS OF THE FOYER RURAL C.E.P.A.G.E:

The association works in a disadvantage rural areas covering 11 municipalities and the mains aims are:

Local development

Promotion of citizenships by means of information, training, education, debates...

Implementation of European, national or regional devices dedicated to unemployed enterprises, social needs, European information, ICT...

The main activities of the Foyer Rural C.E.P.A.G.E. are:

Europe Direct Information Center

Rural Popular University

Training course for unemployed with organic farm

Family info Point, Regional Internet Access

In Parents education:

experimentation of action parts of REAPP

family info point proposes workshops linked to the parents' education in the Popular University

PARTNERS PRESENTATION

ORGANIZATION	Country
Educational World Association Sdruzhenie "Obrazovatelyen sviat"	Veliko Tarnovo BULGARIA



ACTIVITIES AND AIMS

Educational World is a non-profit, non-government organization based in the town of Veliko Tarnovo. It was founded in 2000.

The association aims to ensure the provision of information about educational programs and initiatives and to assist people of different age, ethnicity and culture in their efforts to launch and participate in educational projects, developing their full potential as individuals, so that they feel self-confident and competent in the new century of globalization.

The priority of the organization is stimulating the European integration through acquainting Bulgarian people and minority groups with the global education standards and values and fostering their adoption. The association has good experience in working with disadvantaged women and minority groups in underdeveloped areas. Since its establishment ***Educational World* has coordinated** a number of projects, funded by various donors, aimed at disadvantaged target groups. It has developed an efficient partnership network at local and regional levels involving training institutions, businesses, the Regional Inspectorate of Education, small municipalities, schools, health institutions, and other non-government organizations.

***Educational World's* main activities are:**

Developing and implementing projects for skill and qualification improvement of people from all society strata;

Organizing initiatives encouraging modern teaching methods and motivation for learning;

Training for teachers, parents, trainers and community representatives with the purpose to improve and develop personal resources.

PARTNERS PRESENTATION

ORGANIZATION	Country
Cooperativa Sociale L'Arcobaleno Servizi	Reggio Emilia, ITALY 

ACTIVITIES AND AIMS

L'Arcobaleno Servizi is a social cooperative from Reggio Emilia, founded as association in 1993, with the objective to develop the inclusion of children/adolescents in conditions of difficulty, in particular with learning disabilities, special needs and psychological diseases and to support families in condition of disadvantage. It provides clinical and social-educational services to citizens and to educational organizations, thanks to a multifunctional team of 35 experts: Neuropsychiatric, psychologists, Language therapists, Educators, Psychomotricists, Trainers. It supports Preschools, Primary and Secondary Schools thanks to 80 projects per year. Projects are focused on inclusion, integration, wellness promotion and uneasiness overcoming. The activities are Screening in schools about disadvantages; Parents/Teacher training; School guidance service for parents, students and teachers; Preventive social projects.

The aims are: to define actions for the prevention of disadvantages and wellness promotion; to promote innovative educational methodologies; to support teaching staff and to improve their competences; to promote dialogue between school and families and also between families (with attention to families in situation of disadvantages).

It is member of social pedagogical network in the territory for supporting families. It organizes courses for teachers, educators and specialist figures about educational subjects, in 2011, more than 300 participants. For Parents, it organizes about 20 meetings per year and It provides clinical/educational services: Parents Training about specific focus (Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity) and about Parenthood; Counselling; Family Psychotherapy. It works with 500 families per year.

Thanks to this European project, It has created in 2011-2012 some new actions: a Parents Corner an informal way to inform and training parents; a Library about Parenthood, a Parents Tea for training parents in an informal context, a Parent Training programme and a parents section in its website ("Genitori e dintorni") Its main site has got specific spaces for parents: in particular, a Parents hall and a psychotherapy room for families.

PARTNERS PRESENTATION

ORGANIZATION	Country
Çayırova Mehmet Akif Ersoy Anadolu Lisesi Okul Aile Birliği	Cayırova, Kocaeli TURKEY



ACTIVITIES AND AIMS

This institution is a newly opened General Secondary School with 250 students that are 14-18 year-old. Main subjects studied in the school are English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Literature, History, Geography, Biology, PE and German. The school is located in Cayirova, Kocaeli which is 4 km away from Istanbul, and it is a big industrial place with its 75 000 population most of which are illiterate and come from the rural areas to find a job. Lots of students come from families with standards a very low standard of living and deal with busy parents not having the chance to spend any time with their children. Thus, this institution works socially in a disadvantaged area because of the rapidly increasing population and emigration. The consequence of this situation is a lack of self – awareness and confidence, that has a big influence in the integration into social and work life.

AIMS OF ÇAVIROVA MEHMET AKIF ERSOV ANADOLU LİSESİ OKUL AİLE BİRLİĞİ

The principal goals of this institution are:

To find solutions to social problems that European society faces, intolerance,

discrimination of minorities, drug addictions, social exclusion and organized crimes

Promotion of the awareness of a European identity and develop mutual understanding between people from different cultures

To help its members place, strengthen and provide technical assistance to accelerate democratic and legal reforms with cooperation programs

PARTNERS' CONTACTS AND PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH COUNTRY

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Cayirova Mehmet Akif Ersoy Anadolu Lisesi Okul Aile Birligi			