

NEXTPRACTICE in Parents / Carers and Schools

...is seeking to apply the values of rights and responsibilities and co-production in a modern setting: to see how this relationship can be updated and improved to enhance children's education.

The Starting Point



The 1944 Education Act said parents had a "duty" to "cause children to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".

It was clear from then on that parents in England and Wales should have rights and responsibilities as co-producers of education. They should be actively making choices about their children's future.

More than 60 years on, the education system is still not living up to the spirit of the Butler Act.

Field Trial Sites



Parents Supporting Parents



On-line career mentoring



Parents creating open source materials

3 domains:

- 1 Parental engagement enhanced by ICT
- 2 Parent to parent/student
- 3 20% "Hard to Reach"

- Baby Matters (Liverpool)
- Campsmout (Doncaster)
- Cognisco "Family Impact" (National)
- Co-op (Hull)
- Extreme Parenting (Nottingham City)
- Engaging in Children's Literacy (Leicestershire)
- Fusion (Dorset)
- Parents' TV.net (Walsall)
- Real Time Reporting (National)
- SPIN - School Professional Industry Network (Hillingdon)

Examples of Emerging Learning

- Parents may themselves have literacy needs – sensitive communication needed.
- Co-production between parents and pupils, with pupils taking the lead and parents supporting and contributing knowledge and expertise is an approach to drive up standards in careers, education and guidance and motivate young people to consider a wider range of options.
- Peer-to-peer parent networks work in recruiting hard-to-reach parents.
- The increasingly effective use of mobile phone texting to aid two-way communication between parents and schools. Most other real time information work relies on using websites and emails though texting is the main communication channel used by hard to reach parents.
- Mutual parent-parent support systems and collaboration from different backgrounds can produce dynamic results.
- Co-production between parents and pupils, with pupils leading can improve standards in career guidance and motivate young people to consider many options.
- The importance of timing, with bite-size information using a range of methods.
- Parent to parent communication for peer mentoring, support and information exchange.
- The need for localised communication strategies for parents tailored from robust authoritative central information and guidance.
- Integration of school and community via on-site job seeking skills and training for parents and young people.
- It is possible to engage hard-to-reach parents in schools through creating employment opportunities for those who are unemployed or lacking skill.
- Parents are keen to help shape the future vision of the school.
- Parents, who are also professionals can edit existing materials effectively to suit local parents.
- Co-production between parents and pupils in the development of Social Enterprise community projects produces sustainable results.

What we know about parents

They are the biggest single influence on attainment.
(Professor Charles Desforges, University of Exeter)

70% would like to do more to help their children but lack confidence – e.g. not understanding Diplomas but wanting to help their children make choices.

Families are very different and, like students, families need a personalised approach.

What parents are telling us

"They keep giving me stuff that makes me feel stupid."
(Doncaster Raising Community Aspiration Field Trial)

"If you're going to produce something, then it needs to be refined. You almost need people in schools to drip feed the relevant evidence and feed it through in chunks."
(Doncaster)

"My child is in year 10 and I'm only just beginning to clock who's who"
(Sheffield)

"It needs to be about starting the dialogue with teachers early on."
(Sheffield)

"I have tried everything but nothing has worked except Fusion."
(Parent at Conifers School Weymouth)

So what if we could have ...?

- ...a way of knowing what the parents of every 13 year old really think of diplomas...
- ...a way of introducing teen parents to primary school before their baby is born...
- ...a way for parents to get into work through school based enterprise...
- ...a way of parents running "support staff supply" needs and training...
- ...a way of parents tapping into their virtual social networks to support students in career choices...
- ...a way of parents creating materials to support other parents, all in an open source environment...
- ...a way for all schools to be able to pinpoint exactly where to inject parental support resources based on real data...
- ...a way in which parents really could influence strategy at LA level...
- ...a way in which parents receive real time reports without the school going through major disruption to provide it...
- ...a way to inform the Treasury of the cost effectiveness of partnering with parents...

Through Next Practice, we now have that and more...

In partnership with



innovation