



## Parents/school community partnership

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## Section 1: Presentation

### Origin

For the psycho-pedagogical literature it is well established that a good relationship between parents/cares and teachers favours the well-being of the children-pupils.

The relationship between the school and the family is a central factor in the promotion of learning: numerous studies have shown the correlation between this and the scholastic success of the students. Where better educational results (interest, participation, non-abandonment) are obtained with a synergistic school-family relationship, the school is called to plan targeted interventions with parents/carers to give children the highest opportunity for harmonious and peaceful development. This relationship must be based on the sharing of values and on the effective collaboration of the parties in the mutual respect of the competences.

Despite this evidence, little is done in this direction: more and more school and families are unable to communicate and fruitfully collaborate. These difficult relationships must be faced starting from the conviction that, at both organizational and individual level, the school-family relationship constitutes a dimension on which to invest because it produces benefits at all levels, but above all because it fosters learning and wellbeing in pupils.

In the psychological literature **some models** have been elaborated on the school-family relationship, useful for **defining operative perspectives** that can improve this relationship. Each of them emphasizes the cooperation and complementarity of the school and the family by encouraging communication and collaboration between the two educative institutions focusing also on the **parents' sense of effectiveness and on the construction of their parental role**. These studies highlight how for fathers and mothers it is important to perceive that they can exert an influence on the education of children and feeling involved in school.

Where better educational results (interest, participation, non-abandonment) are obtained with a synergistic school-family relationship, the school is called to plan targeted interventions with parents to give children the highest opportunity for harmonious and peaceful development. This relationship must be based on the sharing of values and on a structured collaboration of the parties in the mutual respect of the competences. The following is a model of good practice on the school-family relationships, useful for defining operational perspectives that can improve this relationship. Especially for the migrant students who show higher drop out % than the native students, sometimes their parents/carers involve an important role in promoting their engagement and attendance to the school activities. Parents/carers who are not interested to the children school life, and who think it to

be less important than a professionalizing activity transfer this ‘motivation’ to attend school to their children. Involving migrant parents and native ones to the school activities could be a starting point to favour their more general integration in the tissue of the surrounding community and strengthening their cultural identity in the new community.

## Description

Inside the framework of the [pioneer project](#) in a secondary school, the following good practice took place in order to reach a most successful partnership between parents and the school community. The development of the GP could be distinguished in three main moments:

### *Phase n° 1: diagnosis*

A first diagnosis is needed in order to explore the state of the art regarding the relationships existing between parents and the schools, their main channels of collaboration and communication, assessing the spaces which needs further improvement and the challenges currently facing. A survey could be in support of this phase, including most significant questions concerning from one hand the composition and management of the class group, on to the other hand the educational methods of parenting. This exercise could help to each target involved (for example teachers and parents) to detect their own perspectives about **the reasons who impede** an effective collaboration between the school and students’ parents/carers. **(anche problemi di integrazione a livello sociale, quindi una ricerca a 360 gradi).**

### *Phase n° 2: How to solve the impasse? Dialogue (questa fase è la più importante)*

A meeting should be established in which parents and teachers (and potentially also students) could dialogue, in the etymological sense of the term: dia = between + lògos = speech. So talk between the parties involved **(tramite alcuni punti già scandagliati nella survey)**. Through this learning face to face activity parents and teachers will have the possibility to **commonly identifying a common** educational methodology in order to:

- Improve parent’s participation and motivation, outlining the importance of their collaboration in the school life
- Recognizing the educational authority and importance of both on the personal growth and academical performance of the students
- Laying down the basis for a trustful guild in which each educative institution (school and family) recognize the importance and the complementarity of each other

- Identifying a common educational methodology and approach to be developed for students' involvement and engagement

Adopting more inclusive and participatory methodologies with parents could not only improve the active participation of young people, but also increase class cohesion, favouring a learning climate based on social recognition and inclusion.

### Phase n° 3: Solutions

The features of the **structured partnership** explored in the previous phase should be laid down: teachers will have the possibility of commonly agreeing on the inclusive practices to adopt for an inclusive education which aims to make all pupils reach the highest possible level of learning and social participation, **enhancing the differences and diversity** inside the class group.

The differences do not only affect the students, but also the teachers: how students do not all learn the same way, in fact, so teachers do not teach with the same style. Finding collaborative solutions on the teaching approach to be used create more trust and **reliance from parents' side who see the school educative model**. Parents will have the chance to define the characteristics of their commitment and collaboration **supporting the school** and respecting the educational alliance it is building with it. They could establish **workgroups** among parents/carers of the same classrooms for supporting their children in the delicate task of both cultural and human growth.

The three main ranges of solution for parents-school effective collaboration could be grouped in the following **3 call for action!** (**operative phase**)

#### *Call for action n°1*

This action is promoted by the school aimed at improving the quality of family/parents' participation in the school life: conferences, meeting groups for parents and teachers, voluntary activities for parents in the school, organization of events for families and teachers;

#### *Call for action n° 2*

Action promoted by the family aimed at the education of children: conversations and **improved dialogue** about the school between parents and children, support from parents in doing the homework, **involvement of families/parents** in extra-educational activities

#### *Call for action n° 3*

Actions promoted by teachers in the classrooms aimed at the good functioning of the learning group and the satisfaction of the users (students and families).

## Section 2: Resources

To implement this good practice, you will need:

- A room
- A board, papers and pens
- Human resources (teachers, parents/carers, students, other school staff)
- A meeting agenda

## Section 3: Duration

This good practice should be implemented continuously for the entire school year, with a frequency from one until three times a week for reaching this purpose.

## Section 4: Expected results

By implementing this good practice, you will:

- Support the families in their process of social integration in the surrounding community
- Promoting social inclusion at community level
- Creating partnership inside and outside schools
- Co-elaboration of the activities to be developed
- Development of collaborative and inclusive methodologies

- Create a contact network for the inclusion of migrants
- Stimulate the integration in the host country language
- Improved academical and personal growth of migrant students

## Section 5: Evaluation

### How can we adapt this good practice to our context?

Here, trainees should reflect on the above question, having into consideration their real needs and technical and human resources available. This section aims to develop critical thinking and to adjust the good practice to each particular educative context. Whether this is proposed on the face-to-face sessions or virtually at home (after watching the MOOC videos, where all the previous information should be available), trainees should write a small reflection, considering what is doable and positive and what is not. Trainers can provide a set of orientations to help them do this (What competences should the professionals have? Do we have the space needed? How can we include this good practice in the school plan of activities? Etc···)