

Parents & Teachers: Building Bridges

Summary

If I asked you who was important for you during your educational development in your childhood, probably most of you would easily mention two significant roles: parents and teachers. These 'key actors' play such an important role in our educational path, not only because we learn from them and because they teach us, but also because they inspire us and help to create who we are.

It is easy to notice that both parents and teachers take part in non-formal and formal education of children and teenagers. Thus, it is very important to create the environment where the youngsters feel safe and they can develop their skills and gain knowledge while surrounded by supportive and integrated community. The message received by pupils should be clear: 'we all are here for you!'

However, is it possible to create such a 'dream team' at schools? What kind of strategy should be used to do so? What tools and ideas can be applied? What can teachers do to build good partnership with parents?

During this course we will have a chance to analyse the goals, needs and expectations related to key factors of educational system.

We will think and discover how to establish an integrated community in order to support and motivate students. Moreover, we will focus on the crucial role of teachers in building such a 'dream team.'

As a teacher, you will have the opportunity to develop and expand your skills in order to build a strong relationship with parents.

You will learn the new communication tools such as non-violent communication method and the Enright's method. Furthermore, we will get to know how to involve new technologies in building relationship with parents.

Additionally, you will understand the important role of empathy and feelings in case of problem solving in school community and use your knowledge in practice by analyzing real situations.

Finally, we will try to collect all new ideas and tools to prepare a guidebook on how to build a good partnership with parents, so that you will have some ready made strategies to use after the course.

Methodology

The approach will be practical, experiential and based on an analysis of reality and the group concerns. Mainly, we will work on the forms of a role play, drama methods, group dynamics, brainstorming and assembly, encouraging reflections and creativity in order to expand some options and alternatives for action. 80% practice and 20% theory, by using multimedia presentations, videos and additional training materials, learning will be conducted in a relaxed atmosphere for all participants.

Additionally, the course follow-up strategy will be proposed to all the teachers in order to monitor the implementation of good practices in their schools based on the knowledge, skills and competencies gained by them during the workshop.

Learning Outcomes

By completing this course, participants will be able to acquire new skills and competences that will allow them to considerably improve their relationships with parents in terms of:

- Verifying and developing their pedagogical and communication skills.
- Improving the perspectives and development opportunities of each student.
- Giving possibility to attract students more by presenting topic in a more interesting and appealing way.
- Increasing motivation for professional development.
- Reaching even the most demanding students in an easier way.
- Managing feelings and conflicts by focusing on solutions.
- Cooperating with teachers as well as with students and parents.
- Promoting group work and long-term projects to provoke changes which will allow to take off unnecessary burden off the shoulders of the educational staff and exert greater impact on the learning process and more satisfying and stimulating climate of coexistence in the school context.

How can the acquired skills be applied in your work?

1. Engaging and building trust with parents, creating supportive and integrated community and home-to-school connections.
2. Improving their skills and resources to build constructive and positive relationships with students and families in order to facilitate cooperation and integral development of every student.
3. Being able to recognize the needs, fears and expectations of students and families in order to build a safe and supportive environment
4. Learning clues to improve communication with families, with individual and organizational approaches.
5. Learning specific resources and programmes to improve communication and problem solving techniques.
6. Being more aware of the power of the role of the teacher, having a clear position to unleash all constructive influence.
7. Being able to use different methods of implementing creative solution in professional lives, discovering their own creative resources at the same time.
8. Being aware of benefits of a language use, improving skills of assertive communication, being able to paraphrase, verbal and nonverbal communication, etc.
9. Beginning to understand and manage feelings, learning to listen to students and parents to create the atmosphere of understanding focusing on solutions.
10. Knowing how to foster with teacher's own example in the everyday life in schools the skills of the 21st century education.

Course Programme

Day 1 (5 hours)

WELCOME TO 'DREAM TEAM' BOAT. WHO DO WE HAVE ON BOARD?

Getting to know each other and introduction to the workshop.

Establishing the common agreement: Goals, expectations and fears related to the course

Roles and goals of parents and teachers in educational system

Identifying what goals related to education of children and youth have parents and teachers

How teachers and parents see each other? Who they can be for each other? – myths, stereotypes and prejudice – analysing how to build the community based on respect and human rights

Day 2 (5 hours)

WHAT DO WE NEED TO START THE JOURNEY AND SAIL?

Market of Ideas: What do teachers usually do to have a good relationship with parents? – exchanging Ideas

Collecting already well-known strategies: What are the advantages and disadvantages of used strategies and how teachers can improve them?

Filling the gaps: Is something missing in the used strategies? – looking at some aspects from different points of view- what do parents and teachers need to have to be a part of a dream team in order to maximise the child's outcomes

Getting to know methods based on empathy in the establishment of the relationship with parent

Day 3 (5 hours)

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT JOURNEY DIRECTION?

How to listen and be listened to

Improving communication skills: getting to know Enright's method

Resistance and ways to overcome them

Day 4 (5 hours)

AND IF WE HAVE A STORM...

Getting to know non-violent communication method: how to speak the language of heart

Getting to know about Importance of recognising needs, feelings and expectations in the process of building relationship with parents

Using a non-violent communication to solve the problem: working on real examples

Day 5 (5 hours)

ALL HANDS OVER THE DECK!

New technologies in building relationships with parents

How to implement new skills and gather ideas to my school reality? – preparing your own strategy to take it home

Presentation of the workshop results