

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS' AT RISK

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

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Introduction

These guidelines are addressed to parents of students at risk, during and after compulsory education. The references are general, so that each country can read them in the national system of education and relate to different periods of compulsory education. School is always exploring new ways to involve parents and families in the children's education. Research indicates that parents' involvement makes an enormous impact on students' attitudes, attendance, and academic achievement.

The 10 steps, which do not have to be followed in a chronological order, start with the identification of the possible barriers that parents and students may have to face when wishing to make the right choice in the educational and training system. The path starts from acquiring information on school and the educational system of the local area, related to the former school period (steps 1 and 2); then the process is enhanced when the student is included in new class groups (steps 3 and 4) and when the student has to get confidence in the new school and the new courses talking to the class teacher and headteacher (steps 5, 6 and 7). He has to get the appropriate support both outside and inside the school environment.

Report

From the School Inclusion Project Portal



[Parents, Carers and Schools, July 2007](#)

This report evaluates the extent to which schools involved parents and carers in the education of young people and how effective this was.

Identify the Best Opportunities

1. Identify if the choice you have made in sending your child to school is the right one, and understand your own expectations.
2. Check if you know where you can get information about the school system, to learn about all the opportunities, with a necessary guide from the previous school.
3. Learn about what kind of support for your child you can receive in school and think about taking responsibilities for your child's learning and schooling.
4. Learn how to participate in school life, above all at the beginning of school, that is the period when the risk factors can appear

Websites



[Identification of Students at Risk](#)

This training module available on the School Inclusion Portal helps teachers and other educational professionals to identify young people at risk of dropping out of education.



[Parents, Carers and Schools, July 2007](#)

This report evaluates the extent to which schools involved parents and carers in the education of young people and how effective this was.

Know the School

1. After the end of compulsory education, it is not easy to make the right choice. The previous school will help families and students to make the right choice, better if a network of schools and training agencies or social services are available in the area.
2. There are school regulations that you should know when your child enrolls. Ask the school to explain them to you and check if they also have a website where you can find them.
3. Find out if the school has an organized system specifically devoted to the relation between students and their family, so that you can ask in what forms and times it is available.
4. Learn about how the school is organized: curricular subjects (lessons, workshops, stages, external guided visits); assigned homework; how school communicates with family about your child's general situation (not only concerning assessment, but above all for possible risk situations); the students must attend school regularly and absences have to be justified. There is a system to certificate key competences and subjects attended if students move to a different school or training path; there are regular parents' meetings that you should attend to keep informed about all the activities carried out to prevent and solve student's risk.

Websites

- [ABCD+Orientamenti](#)
Website about the right choice for students.
- [Parents, Carers and Schools, July 2007](#)
This report evaluates the extent to which schools involved parents and carers in the education of young people and how effective this was.

“I Care”: Family, School, Students

It is important that parents take care about life at school, especially for risk factors and learning possibilities.

1. Check if your child attends school every day and motivate him to participate in every planned activity.
2. Communicate with your child about what she/he has learnt every day and show interest.
3. Check your child's homework every day. If you cannot help, address the existing support systems through the class teachers and ask for help.
4. Appreciate your child's training and learning process at school as something really valuable for his/her future life

If school organizes events and meetings addressed to parents, try to be present.

Online Resources

- [Early school leaving falls in the net. Strategies for a high-quality school that promotes and supports](#)
Link to a book resulted from a recently implemented project focused on five targets: students, parents, teachers, local networks, organization of administrative aspects.
- [Parent Support Adviser Project - Resource Kit 1](#)
Research shows that involving families, parents and carers in their children's learning is a highly effective way of raising standards of behaviour and attainment.
- [Save children from dropping out of school and lack of integration](#)
This guide contains an analysis of the dropping out causes and the presentation of the Investigative Methodology.
- [Success stories](#)
A collection of success stories on the prevention of early school leaving with the perspectives of all of the main actors involved: school headmasters, teachers, students and parents.
- [38 Easy Ways to Get Involved in the Classroom](#)
The author points out 38 simple ways to make the most of the engagement families should have to improve the ties between the students and their schools.

Rights and Obligations

1. Find out about the services for students at risk who attend school, or homework support services (network of schools, volunteer service and similar)
2. Find out about how your child can receive acknowledgement from the school system (certificate of key competences, EQF diploma, before the formal end of course (i.e. in Italy five years diploma)
3. Find out about extra classes your child may attend in school in order to improve skills and better him/herself in the school grade she/he is attending.
4. Talk to the teachers about all activities, not only learning. Use those meetings as opportunities to understand how you can tackle and solve the problem in cooperation with the school.
5. Rights come together with obligations. Make sure you understand which obligations you have in connection with the rights described above. Ask where you can find a clear presentation of all rights and obligations for families, not only by laws, but also in the general context of education.

Website



[European Union Agency for fundamental Rights](#)

National constitutional law related to article 14 - right to education.

Deal with Risk Situations

Misunderstanding situations of risk is often the cause of many problems and blunders. These may be an obstacle to your effective communication with the school about your child's risk.

The general aim is to have a school inspiring people to continue their educational career or even supporting students in their professional orientation. But these expectations figure a student who is able and willing to stick in his/her studies. Whatever is the reason that increases the possibilities of early school drop out, family and more specifically parents are the cornerstone of any decision. It is important that parents, when they realize that their children are at risk or they are informed by school that their children have possibilities to give up their education, should communicate with the school and provide all the necessary information related to the background of their children.

1. Your expectations matter. It is important for you and your child to be conscious of your own choice. You know the importance of a qualification for a future job. So, accept invitations from the class teacher to talk about your opportunities and difficulties.
2. Talk to your child about his/her experience at school. You may encourage your child to write it in a diary or post it on an online blog.
3. Try to keep informed about all school initiatives regarding personal emotions, socio- affective aspects, cultural activities (i.e. theatre, music) and also presentation of work (visiting farms, knowing art and crafts) in an effective alternation of school and work, to strengthen key competences and build an aware citizenship.
4. Encourage your child to have a personal project for his/her life, by looking at things from different perspectives, not only as a student. This will build a respectful relationship between you and your child, useful to tackle and solve problems and risks.

Publication

From the School Inclusion Project



[Communication](#)

Training module for teachers on Communication available on the School Inclusion Portal

Learning Methods: Individual Path to Subscribe and Share

When arriving in a new school, families must know something about learning methods. If the school has an individual path to suggest to tackle and solve risk, the family should know and agree with it, so as to be conscious of steps and objectives.

1. It may be difficult, for parents, to understand some school subjects and methods, so the family can ask for a support from school. Individual paths can be an answer to risk situation. The family must know how these paths can lead students to have success and improve their self-esteem necessary to complete school courses.
2. Be part of the learning process of your child, talking with him/her about activities, above all the practical ones ("What did you do today at school? What topics did you deal with? What difficulties did you meet?").
3. Get a look at educational materials and try to be informed about work experiences. It is very important to know where your child will spend his/her first work experience guided by school.
4. The family should try to learn about all aspects connected with teaching methods and individual paths, and school can help them to search for external organizations that can be of help

Websites



[Teaching methods](#)

Some collaborative teaching strategies that seem to be particularly fruitful from the School Inclusion web portal.

Talk to the School Staff

It is your responsibility to talk to the class teacher and to staff members about your child's risk and about any learning difficulty he/she may experience.

1. Communication is a difficult process, because of social problems, sometimes even language barriers. The present structure of most families often causes the creation of intermediaries between school and families in need.
2. The teachers and school staff must be clear and simple about the best choices for your child in educational terms. Families must always ask for a clarification if they do not understand, and if the objectives are not so clear and well - defined.
3. Try to be present when the teachers call you for an individual interview.
4. Talk to the class teacher and the headteacher if problems appear between your child and the school, especially if there are punishments that the school can impose and that need to be taken into consideration.

Websites



[Teaching methods](#)

Some collaborative teaching strategies that seem to be particularly fruitful from the School Inclusion web portal.

Look for Support

There are many ways in which parents can support their children to develop skills and make the right choice for their personal path.

1. If he/she can access the Internet, try to use this device for learning purposes
2. Try to give your child books and newspapers to read and discuss.
3. Encourage your child to take part in social occasions organized by school in extra-time activities.

There are also more institutional ways to help your child if she/he has learning difficulties:

1. Accept the teacher's suggestions for your child to meet a counsellor or a social worker when it is suggested, in order to choose the best option for education and training.
2. You may ask to benefit from several school initiatives, such as mentoring, private tuition, re-schooling, and see if in your local area you can have access to similar offers.

Web Articles

- [Teaching methods](#)
Some collaborative teaching strategies that seem to be particularly fruitful from the School Inclusion web portal.
- [Career Counselor's Role in School Dropout Prevention](#)
The career counselor can contribute to school dropout prevention by raising students' awareness of the benefits resulted from continuing their education.

Create Relationships with Other Parents

It is important to create a network to maintain contacts with other parents. It will be a good way to communicate your own opinions and it helps create a link and commitment of parents to school. There are not only the institutional ways (councils, associations, and similar) but also non- formal occasions to get in touch with other parents.

1. Try to talk regularly to the parents of children who attend the same class, or who are friends.
2. Ask the school to organize periodical meetings of parents in informal ways, better if monitored by a counsellor. There you may discuss several school-related topics such as courses, school activities, progress or difficulties in learning.

Publication

- [Mediated Learning Experience Inside and Outside the Classroom](#)
This publication can turn an average or uninterested person into a person willing to learn.

Collection and Dissemination of Good Practices

1. Parents can collect their personal experiences about students' risk, in connection with local authorities who may help with your child's education.
2. Families can check also the availability of specific programmes for students at risk in municipalities and schools that specifically involve parents and communities.
3. Families can check if the school attended by their sons and daughters has a home/school/community contact coordinator within the school.
4. If families experience problems, they can check if there is a cross- sector co-operation between schools, social welfare and health services.
5. They can talk to the school (class teacher or headteacher), with other services that may help them, and they can disseminate good practices among other families.

With the help of a guide (teacher, school staff) examples of good practices from school could be collected. They could be presented during the Teachers' assemblies, meetings with parents, during the different curricular and extra-curricular school activities where representatives of the community would be invited.

The collection of good practices could be printed as a booklet, with the students' and the families' co-operation, and handed out in schools, as well as to students and their parents and to the community representatives. In addition, the good practices examples/ booklet could be posted on the school website.

Websites

- [Early school leaving and social distress. Critical factors of the education and training context and good practices](#)
The information provided want to give a better understanding of the phenomenon of early school leaving and its causes, but also to reduce the gap between scientific research and training practices.
- [Early school leaving and social unrest. Critical aspects of the educational environment and good practices](#)
A book which aims to illustrate, using an inter-disciplinary perspective, the results of theoretical and empirical research on the subject of distress and school drop out.
- [Extended Services: Partnership Working in Action](#)
A DVD containing five video case studies, each looking at a different aspect of the topic.
- [Good practices against early school leaving](#)
An article addressed the school drop outs at all levels of education.