Parent Education Course Writer's Guide

> The PISA study substantiates in accordance with the findings of earlier scientific examinations that the fundamental abilities and dispositions for academic learning and lifelong learning processes of the younger generation are created in the families. Therefore the family must be recognized as the fundamental educational institution of children and adolescents.
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> —The meaning of the family for educational policy, conclusions from the PISA study [1], Scientific Advisory Council of the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Foreword

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [2], Portuguese [3], Arabic [4], French [5]

Parent education courses are a modern means of parent education, which is meant to support all parents to carry out their tasks as educators and natural mentors of their children. Parents do not share any specific qualification, but are entrusted with a very special task by article 6 paragraph 2 of the constitution of Germany; similar wordings can probably be found in the constitutions of most countries.

Article 6, paragraph 2: Care for and education of the children are the natural right of the parents and first and foremost their duty. The state shall watch over them in the performance of this duty.[6]

The public community obligates a group of persons here that isn't necessarily sufficiently qualified for the task. Participation in a parent education course could almost be seen as a resulting moral obligation. This writer's guide is meant to instruct adolescent readers how to write such a parent education course in order to support their own parents and possibly those of younger schoolfellows in accomplishing their task.

Article 6, paragraph 4: Every mother shall be entitled to the protection and care of the community.[6]

Education and also motivation for education could be seen as protection and care and furthermore education can also without any doubt have a protective effect. The community and every member of the community could consequently see themselves obligated to offer protection and care by providing educational services. It should be undisputed that there are mothers who may benefit from this kind of protection and care significantly in relation to the education of their children and the organization of their family life.

Preliminary note for teachers and educators

This book is intended for pupils at the end of middle school or at the beginning of high school, more precisely grades 8-10. The pupils do not require any prior knowledge of pedagogy but should be able to read books independently and to discuss them in group work. The discussions can be held during regular lessons under the guidance of a teacher but independent working groups who are willing to sacrifice some leisure time are likely to reach better results. The pupils are meant to apply scientific methodology from the area of social research. A preparatory introduction to the work with questionnaires, interviews and sociological experiments can be beneficial and a basic understanding for scientific methodology is required. The pupils are meant to acquire the necessary foundations of pedagogy and parent education while working on their own course, which is supported by the literature references and web links which are recommended in this guide. The recommended web links can also be printed conveniently and can be used as handouts for the author group. At some points it can be intended that the pupils think about what they read and think further; the mistakes that may otherwise creep in are harmless in nature and do not devalue the resulting parent education course, even if a pedagogue or sociologist may rightly be surprised (for example: cultural dimensions). The goal of the book is to enable pupils to write their own parent education course for their own parents or for the parents of younger pupils. If younger pupils are chosen as the target audience it is advantageous to enable the author group to interview their parents and the pupils, because they should be able to address the demand of the

target audience and not rely exclusively on their own experiences, possibly from their own family life. For the acquisition of information the pupils should learn about anonymization of data; in this context information privacy can also be explained. For quality assurance it is recommended that the constructed course is held by trained instructors for professional parent education courses or teachers with an appropriate advanced training; the course can be enhanced with parts of professional courses or supplemented with a professional course. The combination of a professional course with the constructed course should, as far as possible, be discussed with the pupils and the pupils should be given the opportunity to participate in the realization of the course as volunteers. Voluntary service of pupils can be honored with a special notation on the school certificate or leaving certificate.

Guidance for mentors

The aim of the book is to raise the adolescents' awareness of upbringing and education and to allow them to implement their own vision in a parent education course. Particularly suitable for mentors are the topic roster for discussions, the model of culture and the goals of education and upbringing. These sections offer content for discussions with a mentee and allow to address interesting aspects of the education and worldview of the mentee. Beyond that the frequent questions in the book offer interesting opportunities for further discussions throughout the whole book. Adolescents can also derive the invitation to take their education into their own hands and to choose to reach certain educational goals and attitudes themselves; this aspect can be facilitated by mentors. Last but not least the book is meant to promote parent education of future parents; a mentor can address issues of life planning, future plans and other notions of the mentee in this context.

Introduction

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [7], Portuguese [8], Arabic [9], French [10]

> " If it is said in objection, that pupils in school are not capable of any such originality, and hence must be confined to appropriating and reproducing things already known by the better informed, the reply is twofold. (i) We are concerned with originality of attitude which is equivalent to the unforced response of one's own individuality, not with originality as measured by product. No one expects the young to make original discoveries of just the same facts and principles as are embodied in the sciences of nature and man. But it is not unreasonable to expect that learning may take place under such conditions that from the standpoint of the learner there is genuine discovery. While immature students will not make discoveries from the standpoint of advanced students, they make them from their own standpoint, whenever there is genuine learning. <...> "

> —Democracy and Education, John Dewey

This book is intended as a writer's guide for pupils who want to write their own parent education course. It is meant to complement the Mentoring Handbook but can also be used in a different context (e.g. in a school class).

This book alone is not meant to qualify an author to write or participate in the writing of a parent education course. Authors are expected to study at least one or two parent education courses before trying to do so.

Why should pupils write their own course?

"What our parents need to understand" can be a continual research project and every group of teenagers may find widely differing answers. Writing your own course allows to mix established knowledge and personal experience, possibly with a better result than standardized courses. This is not meant to discredit more established parent education courses, however: a group of pupils may be insufficiently qualified to achieve best results, so an established parent education course may even be a sensible supplement when you have finished your own course.

Writing a course on parent education is also likely to be a valuable experience for the authoring group, which is increased through the perception of contributing to an independent work.

Recent studies in Germany have analyzed reasons for unhappiness of children, which may have the potential to start a vicious circle. The studies have found that children of poor or less educated parents have a significant

disadvantage. Contributing to parent education can have several beneficial effects for the participants and for their social environment.

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What are the beneficial effects for the participants of an authoring group and their social environment? Is the lesser expertness and authority of the teenage authors possibly even beneficial when parents consider the propositions?

Writing a parent education course in school

A rationale why it seems a good choice for teachers to hold parent education courses and/or to write courses with their pupils is that teachers are pedagogues and already have a significant knowledge in this area, which seems likely to be beneficial for a course. The effects of better parent education are also likely to have an immediate influence on the work of the teachers: Pupils with a better socialization and upbringing are likely to make the work of their teachers easier and more rewarding.

For a group of mentors a logical audience would be the parents of their protégés. For other pupils the teacher or chief editor might have to assign an audience, for example the parents of a lower grade at the same school. The authors should probably be at least in grade eight.

Getting started

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [11], Portuguese [12], Arabic [13], French [14]

Preparing the authoring group

If you write your parent education course in a team (writing one alone is strongly discouraged) it makes sense to prepare the team by assigning literature to members of the team. What literature needs to be read and who should read it? Giving one parent education course to an author or a group of authors allows every author to be competent in relation to one pedagogical approach, which can promote discussions among the authors later on, when the authors present and criticize "their" pedagogical approach.

Personal experience

In a group of mentors personal experience and views could be gathered from mentors and their protégés, possibly with anonymization, if protégés were reluctant to reveal their experiences or views. Gathering experiences from protégés allows to address the actual problems of the primary, and possibly only, audience of a course.

Know your audience

The audience of a parent education course is more complicated than a usual audience. The primary audience are the parents but their children are also a part of the audience and require independent consideration. What do you need to know about the parents? The educational background of the parents in your group may be important. If there are migrants in your audience they may have problems with complicated language and you may need to use easier language, for instance. Migrants may also require cultural adjustment. If the audience are primarily academics it may be tempting to assume they have no need for extensive explanations, which may be wrong. Having studied a specific subject doesn't necessarily make you a fast learner in an entirely different subject, even if it may help. You might also want to know the reading habits of your audience: Can they be expected to read longer texts or should your course aim for a high degree of interactivity between one or several lecturers and the audience?

What do you need to know about the children? The age group of your audience is quite important. Parent education programs often distinguish children from 2 to 6 years, from 6 to 12 years and teenagers. A likely audience for your parent education course is from 6 to 16 years old, which may be a reason to distinguish between children and teenagers.

What do you need to know about parents and children? Obviously you want to form an opinion about the problems they may have. It may also be a good idea to gather the good ideas and recommendations they may have to offer.

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Is there anything wrong with excluding parents with children who are not yet in school? Following the categorical imperative one would have to imagine what would be the consequence if everybody would follow that example. People who got used to parent education starting at age six could develop a blind spot for early childhood education. Given that the problem exists, what follows?

Research methods

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [15], Portuguese [16], Arabic [17], French [18]

> "Educated parents are examples which children use for their guidance. If, however, the children are to progress beyond their parents, education must become a study, otherwise we can hope for nothing from it, and one man whose education has been spoiled will only repeat his own mistakes in trying to educate others. The mechanism of education must be changed into a science, and one generation may have to pull down what another had build up."

—On education[19] , Immanuel Kant

Interviews

Interviews can gather more information than questionnaires because you may be able to learn more things you didn't expect in advance. Interviews can also help to gather issues that should be addressed in questionnaires. An interesting group of educators for interviews are teachers because they have a broad knowledge in pedagogy and experience with many pupils and their parents. Interviews with teachers can also help to bring the view of teachers into a parent education course.

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- What is the school's official position on parent education?
- What is the school's official position on citizenship education?
- Are teachers interested to participate in parent education?
- What are the primary problems teachers see as problems of pupils in each age group, that can be addressed in a parent education course?
- What are the primary issues teachers see as current problems of parent education?
- What can teachers anticipate as future problems of their pupils concerning soft skills and other skills that may not receive a grade?

Questionnaires

Questionnaires can be used to gather information from parents, pupils and teachers or other educators in order to prepare a parent education course. Questionnaires allow convenient anonymization to gather information from people who may be reluctant to disclose personal information otherwise.

Questionnaires are also a good way to get feedback and to promote involvement. Parents who have to fill in well-considered questionnaires may experience a similar beneficial effect as the authors of the parent education course themselves: Being brought to think about the issues and to phrase your own experiences and views has the potential to provoke further thoughts than just reading a text and can also promote involvement. The feedback from the questionnaires can be used to extend and enhance a parent education course for the following lessons. A course that makes extensive use of questionnaires is kess-erziehen.

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In what ways do the research questionnaires differ from the questionnaires presented during a parent education course?

Experiments

A school class may be able to conduct psychological experiments in a course on psychology or pedagogy. A group of mentors trying to write a parent education course may profit from cooperation with a school here: Without a teacher conducting experiments may be too difficult for many young teenagers.

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Pupils who have neither a subject pedagogy nor a subject psychology but do have the subject religion may be able to make parent education a topic anyway: The course kess-erziehen has been published by the working group for catholic family education (akf-bonn.de [20]) and the companion course "kess-erziehen II" is a course on the religious world view, so one could argue that the subject religion lacked an officially recognized first part of the course and had an inappropriate focus on the second part.

One could also take the view that the subject religion often has a strong affinity to mentoring topics anyway, only without the purpose of an actual mentoring effort. Dogmatic religion could also be seen as practical philosophy but starting with some implausible propositions so as not to waste opportunity for debate (or "valuable problems").

Observations

A group of pupils cannot rely on making useful observations about parenting while working on their own course; it should be the exception that pupils make usable observations as a group. TV series about upbringing and education can be useful to allow observations. In German TV there is for instance the TV series "Super-Nanny" on RTL, which tries to give example solutions to pedagogical problems. What is "super" about Super-Nanny and what goes wrong on TV?

The authors can watch some episodes on TV and at the same time claim in all conscience to conduct scientific work. To be able to make observations the episodes should be recorded with a video recorder to allow repetitions and pauses. The authors should also have paper and pens in order to be able to write down their observations immediately.

The most important categories are misconduct of educators, behavioral problems of children and good or bad advice of educational advisers. The authors can also develop their own ideas concerning the observations in a following discussion.

See also: Ist die "Super-Nanny" wirklich super? [21] (familienhandbuch.de, German)

Analysis and preparation

For the preparation the authors should form expert groups. A possible form of assignment for the book project is for instance to assign each chapter to one group of experts who aim for a better understanding of the particular topic. The chapter patterns and anti-patterns can be subdivided into two knowledge areas. The secondary literature can also be assigned to appropriate expert groups and can also to individual authors. That should, however, not mean that the authors shouldn't have read the whole writer's guide; the expert groups should put more effort into preparing their assigned topics and consider the preparation of these topics and how their topics affect the final parent education course. All expert groups should cooperate with other expert groups and exchange ideas. It does not make sense for each expert group to develop their own concept for the parent education course. Opportunities to exchange ideas can be planned in advance. If the expert groups do not work in a school a wiki can be used to cordinate current developments in the expert groups or a coordination group can be formed with one expert on a topic from each group of experts.

Design phase

Concepts of parent education

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [22], Portuguese [23], Arabic [24], French [25]

The concepts explained in this chapter are not meant as a substitute for reading a parent education course. The concepts are supposed to serve as an introvertiert to the topic of parent education and to raise the interest of the reader for the topic.

Behavior window

The behavior window is a concept of the Gordon Model which allows to determine acceptance and problem ownership. If a behavior is acceptable for the observing parent but not for the child the problem is with the child and the method of resolution is active listening. Is the behavior inacceptable for the observing parent it can be a conflict in needs or a conflict in values. If it is a conflict in needs the parent can use I-messages to communicate his or her needs. In the case of a conflict in values the parent may have the problem of not being able to explain a legitimate interest. In this case *powerless* conflict resolution is the recommended method of resolution.

Way of life

"Way of life" is a term introduced by Alfred Adler; he declared that each individual has an individual way of life. An individual's way of life determines his or her outlook and priorities.

One can regard the way of life as a kind of personal culture and concede everybody their own personal culture. To understand this culture one may have to consider and possibly evaluate which properties of the culture are consciously chosen cultural dimensions and which properties simply result from lack of thought. A person who has a positive influence on the culture of another person for an extended period of time while acting as a friendly advisor can be regarded as a "natural mentor", where "natural" in this case means that the mentor is not part of a formal mentoring program (otherwise he would be referred to as a program mentor).

The own parents should be natural mentors for a child or adolescent, but one cannot assume that this is always the case. Many parents see educational duties rather as the task of the school and other institutions, sometimes even as the task of television. A parent education course can and should demand from parents to accept and to perform the task of a mentor consciously.

Basic needs

The course kess-erziehen identifies four basic social needs, which are:

- to belong and feel loved
- to be important
- to be able to influence
- to feel protected and secure

Mistaken goals

The term mistaken goals was used by Rudolf Dreikurs to refer to the four goals power, attention, revenge and avoidance of failure, which he identified as four common motivations for misbehavior of pre-adolescents. The goals are called mistaken goals because the child doesn't actually achieve exactly what it really wants, unless the parent understands the psychology of the situation.

The course kess-erziehen assigns needs to each of the four mistaken goals:

Mistaken goal	Needs of the child
power	autonomy, co-determination, responsibility
attention	belonging, notice, involvement
revenge	fairness, equal treatment
avoidance of failure	encouragement, support

Time, care and affection

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi phrased the needs of children, or rather the obligation of parents, as time, care and affection.

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- Which needs or obligations have to do with time?
- Which needs or obligations have to do with attention and care?
- Which needs or obligations have to do with affection?
- Which recommendations for parents could follow from these needs and obligations?

advice
type of relationship
parental example, role model
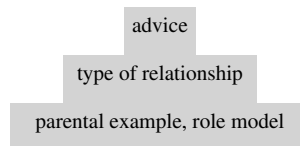
Pyramid of influence

The pyramid of influence is a concept from Starke Eltern - Starke Kinder. The pyramid of influence clarifies that advice is a weaker influence on a child than the type of relationship and the type of relationship is a weaker influence on a child than the parental example as a role model for the child.

Natural and logical consequences

Natural consequence: Examples for natural consequences are experiences parents allow the child to make, like missing the school bus or touching a hot (but not too hot) oven. The child learns that his actions have consequences and may learn to appreciate that parents help to avoid negative consequences.

Children can learn from natural consequences when parents allow children to experience the real consequences of their actions under controlled conditions. Natural consequences are most effective without any kind of comment from parents, so that the child can work out the meaning of the experience by himself.

Logical consequence: An example for a logical consequence is a situation where the child has to choose between two TV shows but is not allowed to watch both. The child has to make a decision and has to accept the consequence. The child may also learn time management if the time slot for the other show is immediately filled with another activity as a consequence.

Logical consequences are consequences that follow from choices parents offer their children. The course kess-erziehen refers to the "four R criteria" for logical consequences:

- The consequences should be directly **r**elated to a choice offered.

- The consequences should allow children to take **r**esponsibility for their own actions.
- The consequences should be **r**easonable.
- The consequences should be presented **r**espectfully.

Logical consequences should not be confused with punishment, a child should be able to understand the reasoning behind a logical consequence.

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What is the relationship between logical consequences and higher-order volitions?

Boundaries and autonomy

A dilemma in education is the apparent contradiction between boundaries and autonomy. On the one hand parents must set limits, because children and young people may otherwise sometimes do things they may later see as nonsense themselves. On the other hand it is an important aspect of education to grant autonomy to teenagers, which allows the teenager to make his own experiences and to become more independent. A greater independence of a teenager should also be seen as a basic need, similar to the need for autonomy that already occurs with children (see Mistaken goals). Thus parents navigate in the area of tension between necessary limits and necessary freedoms.

A good balance between boundaries and autonomy is also referred to as authoritative parenting style.

> See also:

- Ist die "Antiautoritäre Erziehung" out? [26] (familienhandbuch.de, German)
- Freedom and Limits for Teens [27] (education.com)
- Guiding Children's Behavior [28] (education.com)

Parenting styles

Parenting styles are categorized by different features. There is a categorization with two axes (more affection upwards, more direction to the right).

	Affection ↑	
indulgent	authoritative	**Direction →**
neglectful	authoritarian	
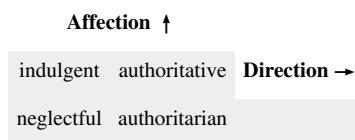
Alternatively the authoritative parenting style is simply described as the middle ground between authoritarian parenting and anti-authoritarian parenting. A further categorization is the following view:

	Parental esteem	**Making demands and setting boundaries**	**Granting of autonomy**
Freedom in boundaries (authoritative parenting style)	high	high	high
Boundaries without freedom (authoritarian parenting style)	low	high	low
Freedom without boundaries (anti-authoritarian parenting style)	any	low	high

A parenting style that combines different parenting styles dependent on the situation is called flexible parenting style. The flexible parenting style is meant to respond to the current situation and personal characteristics of the

persons involved. One could consequently demand as a criterion for an actual flexible parenting style that the educator has this understanding, otherwise the flexible parenting style easily becomes an excuse for aimlessness. You can find more detailed descriptions of different parenting styles in the Wikipedia. The Wikipedia article can be handed out in class or can be read as homework.

A possible proposal for a new parenting style is the balanced-flexible parenting style where each additional freedom at a given time has a logical consequence. Parents could however argue that the basic idea of this parenting style is not really new.

A parent education course can also offer anti-parenting styles and explain what is wrong with them. The aimless-nagging parenting style, for instance, is just constant criticism for criticism's sake, one can assume a self-serving bias here (see: puberty). The secretly-dictatorial parenting style avoids exaggerated authority but the educator actually tries to decide all sorts of things, which should be the affairs of the teenager. The religious-fanatic parenting style delegates all authority to a non-negotiable belief, which is not necessarily a true religion, it can, for instance, be the belief that young people have to take over the profession of their parents. A demanding-supporting parenting style can also easily overstrain a teenager.

With anti-parenting styles it is important that the audience understands the explanations as humorous, but still every parenting style contains sufficient information in order to allow the audience to learn something. It should not be intended that parents might feel personally addressed. The humorous presentation should obviously criticize the abstract exaggeration and not the audience.

See also: Parenting Style and its Correlates [29] (education.com)

Reference groups

A reference group is a group to which a person belongs and whose role models and culture are therefore of importance for the person or it may be an abstract group of people to which a person may feel connected due to similar properties and which can therefore also influence the selection of role models and cultural characteristics.

Young people choose for instance their family, friends, school classes, clubs, interest groups and youth cultures as their reference groups.

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- Which reference groups do you know?
- How many and which reference groups can you identify for yourself?
- How strong is your personal culture influenced by reference groups?
- Are there role models and cultural influences that you reject?

Various reference groups may require different treatment. Abstract reference groups, which are known mainly or exclusively through the media, differ from reference groups to which one can make personal contact. Reference groups in the media can be accepted or rejected but you can not respond to them immediately. People to whom you have a personal contact can be addressed and thus be educated to show different behavior before rejecting a contact altogether.

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- Has educating or rejecting something to do with the categorical imperative?
- Is educating (or informing) better than rejecting or is rejecting better than educating?
- Can educating and rejecting be combined intelligently, for instance by trying to educate first and only rejecting on failure?

The parents of one family alone can logically not accomplish very much to educate the children of other parents. Collectively intelligent actions require that you coordinate your behavior with that of others. What needs to be done?

To filter reference groups in the media does not just mean to learn media literacy, but can also require to filter the media, because some media have surprisingly low quality. The low quality media however contribute to the

education of children and teenagers who consume these media. A collectively intelligent behavior would be, for instance, a sensibly compiled media offer a group of parents can agree on and which may be filtered or compiled by technical means.

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- If you want to educate other people to improve their behavior, what to do?
- What can parents do to influence the education of other children?
- What forms of organization are there? What can mentoring accomplish?

  See also: Peer Pressure [30] (education.com)

Emotional competence

Emotional competence describes the competent handling of own emotions and the emotions of others, particularly to avoid unnecessary stress or anger.

  See also:

- Managing Anger [31] (education.com)
- Helping Children Manage their Feelings [32] (education.com)
- Children's Feelings [33] (education.com)

Media literacy

Media literacy is the critical and competent handling of print media, electronic media and the World Wide Web. The author group can learn about media literacy if they think about the different media available as information sources for their own parent education course. Media literacy is also important for the presentation. Different media have different functions or perform one purpose or another better or worse than other media.

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- Are the Wikipedia articles more important, the texts from the family handbook (familienhandbuch.de) and education.com or the professional courses for parents?
- How good are the TV series about parenting as a source of information for the course?
- Is an interactive CD suitable as a parent education course? Should the authors consider to implement their own course as a CD?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each media?

  See also: Freiheit in Grenzen: eine CD zur Stärkung elterlicher Erziehungskompetenzen [34] (Chair for personality psychology, psychological diagnosis and family psychology of the Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, German)

Puberty

The puberty is a period of physical and mental development, which may begin in girls from the age of 10 years and in boys from the age of 12 years and can last up to the age of 18 and in boys up to the age of 20 years. The puberty is in relation to the psychology of the teenagers particularly characterized by mood swings, which may also give rise to disputes and discord in the family. A stage of puberty around the age of 12 to 14 years is sometimes called "second defiant age" because the young people, like children in the autonomy stage of childhood (also called defiant age), seek more autonomy and thus can cause conflicts.

The problems of young people are often emotionally motivated and can not always be logically understood as conflicts. A frequent attributional error, the self-serving bias, which parents make at this stage is that they claim outside influences to be responsible for problems, such as groups of friends, the school or the media. The puberty crisis can thus lead to the strengthening of conflict patterns which could otherwise be compensated by positive emotional experiences.

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- Is it true that conflicts of the puberty crisis are not always logically motivated?
- What mistakes do parents make in dealing with young people during the puberty crisis?
- Which positive emotional experiences would you recommend?

  See also:
- Teen Issues [35] (education.com)
- Puberty [36] (education.com)

Goals of education and upbringing

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [37], Portuguese [38], Arabic [39], French [40]

Honesty	79	Independence, Self-reliance	65	Reliability	64
Helpfulness	64	Manners, Propriety	61	Moral responsibility	60
Kindness	60	Politeness	59	Diligence	57
Tolerance	56	Sense of duty	55	Discipline	55
Sense of justice	55	Trustworthiness	52	People skills	52
Assertiveness	50	Critical faculties	39		

Data in percent of the interviewees, Source: BAT institute for leisure research (Germany 2006), representative survey of 2000 persons older than 14.

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- Which goals of upbringing would you add to the list?
- Which goals of upbringing would you remove from the list?
- Which goals belong into a parent education course and which don't? Why is that so?

Further goals of upbringing, according to the article Rückeroberung von Elternkompetenzen [41], are for instance:

Self-confidence	Sense of responsibility	Understanding for others
Fantasy	Self-criticism	Sense of family
School performance	Obedience	Religiousness

The following goals of upbringing are summarized as life skills (or "life competence") in the article Erziehung zur Selbstachtung [42]:

Self-control	Frustration tolerance	Conflict ability
Psychological resilience	Health awareness	Interpersonal skills
Group membership, group skills	Empathy	Enjoyment and experience skills
Enjoyment of life	Dreams	Emotional competence
Future prospects	Meaning	Values

" Parents are confronted here with the difficult task to be open for new ideas, possibly to try something new, but at the same time not to see the advice literature as a bible, but just as suggestion and encouragement. "

—Erziehungsvorstellungen von jungen Eltern:
Wie soll mein Kind einmal werden? [43], Birgit Leyendecker und Ricarda Drießen

Another collection of dispositions, skills, aptitudes and understanding has been published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on behalf of the Citizenship Advisory Group of the British Government. The collection was part of a recommendation for the subject citizenship education in British schools and is under the copyright of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority; it can be found on page 44 (PDF page 46) of the Crick Report[44] . It may be reproduced for the purpose of research, private study, criticism or review, or by educational institutions solely for educational purposes, if full acknowledgement is given. Educational goals can also be derived from goals of academic education or a desired personal culture or family culture. As a reader of this book you are likely to be in junior high school or the first year of high school; at that age you might also want to consider how you want to develop yourself. The result of this consideration is not necessarily important for the target audience of the parent education course, which you are meant to write here, but there may be relevant conclusions, which can also have consequences for the course. In 1977 the average age of a mother in Germany at the birth of the first child was 25 years while 20 years later the average age was 28½ years, which is a trend that appears to continue. According to a Forsa study only 9 percent of the study participants below the age of 30 were already parents. Even though you appear to have a long time to consider the issue a further deliberation could address what you would wish for if you (already) were parents.

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- How would you like to raise your children?
- What should you pay attention to for the future?
- Which educational goals have enduring value?

  See also: Building Family Strengths: Values [45] (education.com)

Educational goals as a moral obligation

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- Is there a moral obgliation to promote certain educational goals?
- What has the categorical imperative got to do with it?

Do your parents have a plan for educational goals?

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- Do your own parents have a notion of educational goals and educational methods?
- How dou your parents believe to accomplish these educational goals?
- Are their views realistic?

Goals of academic education

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [46], Portuguese [47], Arabic [48], French [49]

> " Men have long had some intimation of the extent to which education may be consciously used to eliminate obvious social evils through starting the young on paths which shall not produce these ills, and some idea of the extent in which education may be made an instrument of realizing the better hopes of men. But we are doubtless far from realizing the potential efficacy of education as a constructive agency of improving society, from realizing that it represents not only a development of children and youth but also of the future society of which they will be the constituents. "

—Democracy and Education, John Dewey

The family as a fundamental educational institution

The recommendation of the scientific advisory council at the beginning of the book was to recognize the family as a "fundamental educational institution". What does that mean and what makes the family an educational institution?

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- Which goals can a family aim for in order to live up to the expectations of its task as an educational institution?
- What are the tasks the different family members have to take on and which preparations are required for these tasks?
- Which attitudes and skills should the children learn in the educational institution family?

Further ideas for the family as an educational institution are mentioned below. The authors can answer these question without reading ahead and collect their answers as a mind map. During the further preparation of their own parent education course the authors can answer the questions again, but then with the collected knowledge of the author group. A comparison between the first mind map and the later mind map can show how the perspective of the authors has broadened. The repetition is also useful to consolidate the shared perception of the author group.

Citizenship education

> " Parents who solve too many problems for their children can impede learning " "
>
> —kess-erziehen

An important part of citizenship education can be to offer children or teenagers problems to be solved under controlled conditions. Ideas for groups of pupils can be found under civic education in the Mentoring Handbook.

For the democratic education of pupils a mentoring organization or other organization with sufficient democratic participation may be a sensible recommendation. That is, however, not what can be written in a parent education course. "Send your children to a mentoring organization" as the sole recommendation of a mentoring organization somehow isn't enough. The question here is what parents can do and what parents may have to learn in order to promote democratic education. A good hint is the family council.

> see: Democratic education (Wikipedia), Citizenship education (Wikipedia)

Independent thinking and learning

Independent learning outside of school can be promoted through the creation of extensive written works and team work. To create a parent education course, such as the one you are about to write, could consequently be seen as a useful learning context. The topic is of general interest and there are extensive opportunities for literature research and research projects. Independent thought can be encouraged by a need for metacognition, through research and through extensive opportunity for discussions which can be further stimulated through questions and contradictions, or other need for clarification.

?

- How can you bring the motivation for independent learning into the family?
- What other topics than parent education could one work on in a similar manner?
- What other aspects of independent thought and learning could one choose to promote?
- What other methods of promotion for independent thought and learning can you devise?

A parent education course may also have the objective to train competencies in a family. An important competence, which promotes independent thought and learning, is autodidacticism. In order not to exaggerate one should also apply idiocultural competence; not everybody shares enthusiasm for lifelong learning and not everybody wants to improve his autodidactic skills. The right way can be to prefer interest-driven learning and to improve autodidactic

skills only as a side effect; whoever learns according to his interests is unlikely to complain about the improvement of his learning skills. Autodidactic learning presupposes a willingness to accept that there are things which one does not understand, but which one may consider essential once they are understood. Many people fail to recognize this fact again and again.

?

- How do you explain to a learner that he only after understanding a topic can truly understand its benefits?
- Why is it hard to understand that the benefits of the unknown may also be unknown?
- Is this a cognitive bias?

Intercultural competence

Intercultural competence is actually the competent handling of cultures of other countries, but you can also apply intercultural competence to the personal cultures and characteristics of people and groups of people as idiocultural competence. This is obviously the case when you personally meet people from other cultures.

?

- What cultural differences do you know?
- What is required for intercultural competence when dealing with people from other countries?
- How can you learn or train intercultural competence?

Intercultural competence means knowledge about other cultures, but also metacognition, because you have to think about your own actions and the actions and expectations of others; it means people skills, because you have to be able to apply the knowledge and the results of your considerations in social activities. The required knowledge, the ability for the required metacognition and the aspects of social competence that are necessary form together an active mental vocabulary of intercultural competence, or more simply put: You cannot just read up on intercultural knowledge but you have to train intercultural competence like a skill.

?

- Is there a cognitive bias, which produces the impression that one is proficient, although one only knows the theory?
- What cognitive biases result in the impression that other cultures are less important, less complex, and already sufficiently known?

Für die Bewertung von interkultureller Kompetenz werden insbesondere die Eigenschaften Ambiguitätstoleranz, Kontaktfähigkeit, Verhaltensflexibilität, Emotionskompetenz, Leistungsmotivation, Empathie und Polyzentrismus bewertet.

For the assessment of intercultural competence the attitudes and abilities ambiguity tolerance, interpersonal skills, behavioral flexibility, emotional competence, achievement motivation, empathy and polycentrism are of particular importance.

?

- Which of these properties can be trained?
- How can you measure these properties?
- Can you measure or train the abilities of parents?
- Which of these options could be used as part of a parent education course, if they are usable at all?

Don't worry if you cannot devise or implement the perfect measurement methods as pupils in middle school or at the beginning of high school. The attempt is important and the considerations about the possibilities should be useful to reveal new perspectives for the parent education course. You shouldn't be discouraged by the view "we can't do this yet", but you should, of course, not assume that your measurement methodes will produce very precise results; that is possibly not relevant: Fantasy and creativity are what is demanded from the authors here.

Philosophy, psychology and pedagogy

Cognitive biases

Decision-making and behavioral biases:

- Choice-supportive bias
- Confirmation bias
- Illusion of control
- Irrational escalation
- Mere exposure effect
- Post-purchase rationalization
- Reactance
- Selective perception
- Availability heuristic

Biases in probability and belief:

- Hindsight bias
- Observer-expectancy effect
- Optimism bias
- Overconfidence effect
- Subjective validation

Social biases, Attributional biases:

- Actor-observer bias
- Egocentric bias
- False consensus effect
- Hedonistic relevance
- Herd instinct
- Ingroup bias
- Positivity effect
- Projection bias
- Self-serving bias
- Self-fulfilling prophecy
- System justification
- Trait ascription bias

Memory errors:

- Consistency bias
- Egocentric bias

Sense of self-worth

Sense of self-worth or self-esteem can be seen as a basic need and can be found in the hierarchy of needs on the fourth level. One can however attribute an even greater importance to self-esteem, since it could be considered to be the basis for positive development of the psyche, which can not be said of all the needs on the fourth level. Self-esteem is thus also playing an important role in the development of children and adolescents. To have a positive self-esteem should, of course, not be interpreted to mean arrogance or egoism, quite to the contrary arrogance and egoism can be evidence that lack of self-esteem must be covered up. Self-esteem results only partialy from one's own evaluation of one's self-concept, but in part also from the views, role models and values of others, which can influence it in a positive but also in a negative way; thus lack of self-esteem alone does not actually have to tell very much about a person. Due to the importance of self-esteem one could see everybody as entitled to have self-esteem, which should not present a problem, since everybody can evaluate himself in a relative reference system. In absolute comparison with outstanding personalities or other possible role models most people could only evaluate themselves as bad. Self-esteem is also developed through positive social interaction and respectful treatment of others. This applies to friendships as well as the relationship with one's parents. The parenting style of parents can therefore also influence the self-esteem of teenagers directly.

?

- Is there a relation between parenting and self-esteem?
- Which parenting styles and characteristics of parenting styles are of advantage?
- Which characteristics of social behavior have a positive effect on self-esteem?

See also: Self-Esteem Development [50] (education.com)

Self-concept and metacognition

The term self-concept (or self-image) describes the ability of self-evaluation and knowledge about one's own characteristics, traits, attitudes, skills and their limitations. A good self-concept hence includes the ability to recognize and reject prejudices about oneself; to accept prejudices about oneself could thus be regarded as an indicator for a blurred or incomplete self-concept. The self-concept also has an emotional component that is determined, for instance, by self-esteem and self-confidence.

Metacognition is the ability of reflecting about one's own thought processes or the thought processes of others. It can thus easily be argued that metacognition is advantageous to develop a good self-concept.

The comparison with the perspective of others or one's own goals (normative self-image or desired image) allows to improve one's own thought patterns. If a group of pupils discusses their prejudices and beliefs about themselves and others probably everybody will have different prejudices, but the objective view will at least initially be obscured by prejudices and cognitive biases. In an objective discussion and with the help of logical arguments one can, however, train both metacognition and enhance the self-concept of the discussants.

?

- Are there different aspects of metacognition?
- How can one train metacognition?
- How can one enhance one's own self-concept?
- What other methods can you imagine?

A good pupil mentor or a good pupil in the role of a tutor can also benefit from the advantage of training his mental toolbox for metacognition, which can be beneficial for his self-concept. The independent and prestigious work of a pupil mentor or tutor is also advantageous for the self-esteem and thus the emotional component of the self-concept.

The complexity of thought and particularly the complexity of metacognition while learning and teaching rises in four steps, regardless of the topic:

- learning
- teaching
- teaching to learn
- teaching to teach (to learn)

On the second level a teacher must consider his pupil's ability to understand what the teacher means to teach. At the third level a teacher must reflect on the learning processes and the metacognition of the pupil and distinguish them from his own views and prejudices. On the fourth level a teacher must distinguish his own metacognition from that of his trainee teacher and that of the trainee teacher's pupil.

?

- What has education got to do with the self-concept?
- What do you need metacognition for in a parent education course?

    See also: Selbstkonzept und Selbstwert fördern die Selbstständigkeit. Wie Eltern dazu beitragen können [51] (familienhandbuch.de, German)

Higher-order volitions and free will

The human brain is quite good at repeating previous behaviors that have proven to be successful and it is capable to create (random) stimuli that surface as the desire to do something, usually to repeat an action that has previously proven to be successful. The higher brain functions are not necessarily involved or are not involved to a degree that creates an intellectual challenge. Consciousness and emotions occur primarily when the telencephalon is presented with problems it has not yet an established solution for. In that case the cerebral cortex builds new neuronal networks under the guidance of the limbic system and on the basis of past experiences. Consequently what you might want to sustain and to expand your intellect is intellectual stimulus and training for introspection.

Higher-order volitions allow you to follow goals that are not primarily influenced by external stimuli or lower-order volitions with a strong tendency towards repetitive actions. Metacognition allows you to analyze your own (or somebody else's) thinking and to make informed assumptions about the factors that influence it. One could argue that both are necessary to give the human brain a degree of self-control it does not otherwise possess but which it is commonly assumed to possess. One could also see both as necessary to establish free will.

Following the categorical imperative it seems only reasonable that you might want to provide what you would like to receive. Following the categorical imperative you would probably also not wish for a society in which people had not established their higher-order volitions and learned to apply a sufficient degree of metacognition, consequently mentoring would become a moral obligation and recruiting protégés as future mentors could also be seen as a moral obligation (in the best interest of the protégés).

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- Do you need a particular active mental vocabulary if you know your higher-order volitions?
- Where does the idea to consider higher-order volitions originate?

You can only follow higher-order volitions when your active mental vocabulary suggests to analyze how a lower-order volition relates to higher-order volitions and to do that you again rely, to a degree, on random associations, not on a strict algorithm.

In more day-to-day words: Reminding yourself to reconsider your higher-order volitions may require training like any other skill. The skill is trained when you help others to reconsider their goals and volitions and to plan how to reach their goals. This could be seen as better training because the task to help somebody else tends to be intellectually more challenging than reflecting on your own goals and volitions. One could also see this as over-training a crucial skill for your own benefit. It also isn't uncommon that the teacher learns something about what he teaches, which is metacognition in this case.

The ability to work with people also requires training and to educate other people is among the best training you can aim for. The ability to work with people is often circumscribed with soft skills and is, under that heading, a qualification for working life.

Mentoring and teaching share the qualities of being benevolent by design, of providing and embracing intellectual challenges and are both social by design. In contrast a mental vocabulary can also reject intellectual challenges if it makes little use of analysis, anticipation and imagination, an attitude which passive TV consumption may promote.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs
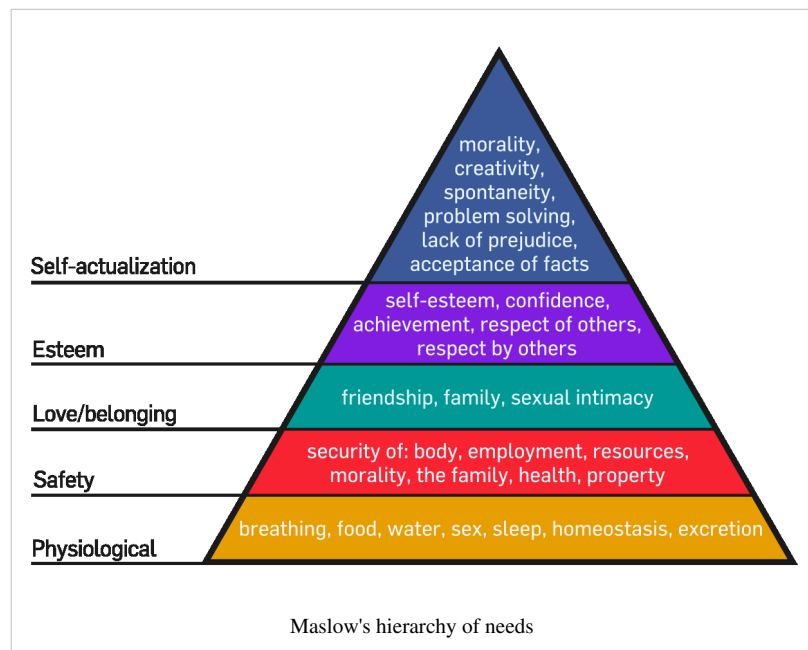
Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The American psychologist Abraham Maslow is regarded as the founder of humanistic psychology. He used the hierarchy of needs to assign human needs and consequently motivations to different levels or categories.

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- What would be the right level for education in the hierarchy of needs?

- Where would you place upbringing?
- Should parent education consequently be assigned the same priority?

Categorical imperative

The categorical imperative is, simply put, the demand that one should act the way one would like to be treated by others. One could argue that the categorical imperative implies an assumed symmetry that often does not apply. Particularly the relationships between parents and children are not symmetrical, because parents have different tasks and perspectives, which children and teenagers do not always fully understand and especially do not have to reciprocate. A simple interpretation of the categorical imperative for families could for instance be the demand that one should show the fundamental behaviors and attitudes, which one would like to see in others, as for instance friendliness, respect and tolerance. The categorical imperative should however not be seen as an invitation to return the like, to pay someone back by showing just the same behavior. A further misunderstanding is the assumption that one can make a demand through one's own behavior that others have to fulfill the same standards. One can make that demand, but one should do that explicitly, which means one has to phrase the demand and one has to discuss it with others. One can do that in a family council or it can become part of the negotiation of an idioculture or the code of conduct between individuals; the idioculture can also be discussed in a family council, of course.

?

- Does the categorical imperative consequently only represent a minimal standard one should aim to exceed?
- How can one negotiate demands?
- How can one react if demands are not met?
- How can one explain the categorical imperative for children?
- Why is the categorical imperative important?

Active mental vocabulary

> Because of our education we use words, thinking they are ideas, to dispose of questions, the disposal being in reality simply such an obscuring of perception as prevents us from seeing any longer the difficulty.

—Democracy and Education, John Dewey

Many papers and proofs begin with a definition of terms; making a term up does not by itself discredit the term. In this case the meaning is pretty generic. The difference between an active vocabulary and a passive vocabulary is the difference between being able to phrase something and being able to understand the phrase when it is used. Words that do not suggest themselves are not part of your active vocabulary but they do belong to your passive vocabulary if you can deduce the meaning. The brain contains a vast amount of associations that may appear as the vocabulary in which you can be addressed. Parts of that vocabulary are more active and other parts are less active, meaning they do not suggest themselves as easily. Inert knowledge could also be seen as a less active part of one's mental vocabulary.

To train your active mental vocabulary you could decide on a higher-order volition to prefer certain behaviors over others and to view each successful application of that higher-order volition as a success. Behaviors that train quite desirable aspects of your mental vocabulary are mentoring and teaching.

Computer games and, to a lesser degree, other media can create an overabundance of perceptions of success. Consequently another higher-order volition could be to limit artificially created feelings of success in order to avoid a slippery slope towards addiction (as a worst case) and to preserve more of a sense of achievement for goals chosen by higher-order volitions.

Of course children should be given the opportunity to experience success in learning situations and to derive motivation from it, but at some age a protégé may need encouragement to occasionally prefer intellectual motivation over pleasure. The emphasis is on *occasionally*, because an intermediate position may be desirable; to generally

prefer intellectual motivation could, for instance, lead to lack of socializing.

?

- How do feelings of success affect the active mental vocabulary?
- Should motivations be considered a part of the active mental vocabulary?

Inverse motivation

The inverse motivation is an unscientific description of the fact that one often follows motivations which lead, upon closer analysis of the implications and possible developments, not to the desired results, but may favor or even cause a problem. An inverse motivation is thus the simplified claim that a behavior leads to the opposite (or at least something in some way contrary, something unwanted) of the outcome one would have intended if one had given it more thought.

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To recognize and avoid inverse motivations it is helpful to ask oneself frequently:

- What are my motivations?
- Where do these motivations come from and how are they justified?
- Are there any inverse motivations?
- What could one do better or what would be a better organization, possibly for a larger group of people?

It is also helpful to create a social environment in which people help each other to identify problems and to avoid problems. In this context mentoring is particularly important. To reject mentoring out of convenience or out of lack of interest could, for instance, be regarded as an inverse motivation. In other words: Insurance companies would recommend mentoring, if it would concern them.

Predestination and lack of planning

Predestination (Latin praedestinatio) is actually a religious concept and means the predetermination by fate or by one or more gods. For this book the concept should, with a touch of humour, be seen as the opposite of planning. This view arises from the fact that one automatically makes things which aren't sufficiently planned accessible for the plans of others. If one were to watch commercials all day long, for instance, one would probably sooner or later want to buy something one may not even have known before; the plan would obviously have been the manufacturer's plan. In a similar fashion the plans of others can affect your own situation within a system everywhere. The consumption of resources, the education within a group and the advertisements for products are examples for plans of others, which can immediately affect seemingly uninvolved third parties. If a group of successful pupils forms inside a class, for instance, who choose not to help their peers, but want to keep to themselves, then the opportunities of the remaining pupils are decreased. The effect could be reduced with purposeful planning; a measure could for instance be private lessons. There is a saying in English for this fact: "If you fail to plan you plan to fail."

Topic roster for discussions

> " The greater the opportunities for and interest in a joint organization of stimulating leisure time and satisfying communication with their children, the more the interest will be awakened to increase the human capital of the child. "

—The meaning of the family for educational policy, conclusions from the PISA study [1], Scientific Advisory Council of the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

The topic roster for discussions originates from the mentoring program of the Wikiversity assistant teacher program. The topic roster is meant to help mentors or educators and their pupils to find suitable topics for discussions. For this purpose the pupil chooses a topic and the mentor prepares for the next meeting to say something about the chosen

topic. Thus the pupil has made the choice and the mentor can offer interest-driven learning. The mentor and his mentee can also extend the roster with topics they can agree on and which appear relevant to the mentee. Of course, a mentee should not be allowed to address only the self-chosen topics.

A set of parlor games can be devised in relation to the topic roster, which can involve drawing cards and guessing or explaining terms. Parlor games have the advantage that the playful context creates an additional motivation without reducing the value of the topic.

Soft skills	Character	Learning habits	Lifestyle	Hobbies	Moral obligations	Metacognition
Manner of expression	Higher-order volitions	Scientific methodology	Society	Habits	Friendships, relationships	Categorical imperative
Manners	Philosophy	Psychology	Cognitive biases			

One can already philosophize with young children. The topic roster is likely to be too abstract for young children but it should be easy to devise an appropriate topic roster for children or to find another means, for instance a kind of advent calendar without chocolate, a book with stories or a ritual. Other topics than philosophy can, of course, also be interesting.

?

- Why is it useful to philosophize with young children?
- What can the children learn this way?
- Which educational goals can be promoted through philosophizing?

   See also: Mit Kleinkindern philosophieren [52] (familienhandbuch.de, German)

Family culture, school culture and youth culture

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [53], Portuguese [54], Arabic [55], French [56]

Discussion of the family culture

A guide to discuss the family culture is given through the example of dogmatic religion and democratic education. Several aspects of dogmatic religion may seem contrary to democratic education. In fact, dogmatic religion is not entirely inappropriate to motivate the discussion of family culture, just because of some of the issues young people may be likely to criticize.

A dogmatic religion (of any kind) rejects to discuss the dogma. This prohibition can be regarded as a challenge for debate by itself. The philosophical and cultural views of the religion are also likely to contain contradictions to the youth culture of the young people. A dogmatic religion is quasi undemocratic, because it makes demands and assigns in its implied power structure a high amount of authority to one or more deities; these contradictions can be used to stimulate the discussion of family culture. A discussion of religion is, of course, useful for the topics ethics, philosophy, citizenship education and culture and can help to develop a constructive culture of criticism.

For the author group this can mean that their parent education course can give a recommendation to the parents to use these contradictions and thereby to bring about a need for discussion on purpose. It is, of course, necessary that the parents are willing to lead a meaningful discussion and are willing to make compromises, which allow the young people to develop their own cultural ideas. Even pupils who have dropped the subject religion in school, possibly in favor of the subjects ethics or practical philosophy, which are sometimes offered as replacements, can give the recommendation to use religion as a topic for discussions; alternatively other cultural views without a relation to religion can be used.

Model of culture

Cross-cultural researchers have devised various models of culture that describe cultural dimensions as important features of cultures, which vary between different cultures. Models of culture are, for instance, important for intercultural competence. A cultural dimension that deserves the name describes an important aspect of a whole culture that is part of the culture and shapes the culture, especially in comparison to other cultures. For the parent education course, however, the term culture shall be extended to include smaller groups up to idiocultures. The term cultural dimension is thus made more flexible and may allow interesting new interpretations.

The model of culture offered here does not correspond exactly to any of the scientific models of culture, but that is not important. The point is that you can offer your own cultural dimensions to suit your own needs. A youth culture can have a different demand for cultural dimensions than the cultures of adults. Your family cultures can also have unknown dimensions and your school culture may not even exist yet. If your school does not have a school culture the class council could possibly decide a class culture. A class culture can also provide a lowest common denominator for a class and allow smaller groups to build a more specific idioculture on top.

Less fundamental but also interesting are the typical examples of cultural differences in the Wikipedia article about intercultural competence.

Cultural dimension	Family culture	School culture	Youth culture
Perseverance in the pursuit of goals (during play or during selected tasks)			
Curiosity and experimentation or disinterest			
Drawing conclusions from successes and failures			
Confidence in the effectiveness of one's own actions (self-efficacy)			
Focus on longer-term objectives (reward delay)			
Encouragement rather than discouragement as a result of failures or marginal partial successes			
Individualism (individual incentives) or collectivism (group incentives)			
Egocentrism or collective intelligence (e.g. mentoring)			
Femininity (by principle of equality, conflict resolution, orientation to holism and quality of life) or masculinity (competitive orientation)			

Cultural dimension	Family culture	School culture	Youth culture
Education-friendly or educationally deprived			
Weak vs. strong uncertainty avoidance (Need for or resistance to formalism)			
Small vs. large power distance (View of hierarchies, e.g. respect)			
Materialism or post-materialism			
Long-term or short-term orientation			
Ethnocentrism/exclusionism vs. universalism			
Liberalness or restriction/self-restraint			
Higher-order volitions or impulsivity			
Monochronic (time-oriented) vs. polychronic (simultaneous) aspects (e.g. punctuality)			

Sense of time:

Asia	past-oriented (ancestors, values)
Latin America, Africa, Southern Europe	present-oriented
Western Europe, North America	future-oriented (accomplishing goals)

Cultural dimension	Family culture	School culture	Youth culture

?

What is missing in this table? Find your own cultural dimensions and insert them into the table.

- Is "talkative or taciturn" a cultural dimension?
- Is there a relationship between cultural dimensions and personality traits?

Test your youth culture

> The adolescents do neither conform with the so-called "traditional" values such as loyalty, sense of duty, etc.; nor have they fully set "modern" values in their place, which are supposedly more capable to support an individual self-actualization than the value orientation of older generations. The adolescents rather mix their own "values cocktail" from different values, which seem best suited for their individual plans for life.

—Jugend ohne Perspektive? - "Alte" Werte und "neuer" Generationenkonflikt [57], Mathias Albert

What is your youth culture? You can test your youth culture by extending the model of culture table with your own cultural dimensions, which apply to your own youth culture or youth cultures. You can then use the table as a questionnaire and use it to interview teenagers from your social environment. A statistical analysis shows how your common youth culture looks like.

?

- How do you collect ideas for cultural dimensions best?
- How should the table be completed? Which information is needed on the respective cultural dimensions?
- How should the questionnaire be amended to allow the survey to be conducted without extensive explanations?
- Why could the youth culture be important for a parent education course?

If the parent education course is meant to guide parents to better understand teenagers it can be important to explain the youth culture to those parents who do no yet have this understanding, particularly the aspects that are preferably criticized by parents. A democratic education also means to respect the culture of others and to find compromises where possible. Parents will possibly view some aspects of youth culture as a kind of counter-culture.

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This survey can be used as an exercise to rehearse techniques for surveys and evaluations. The more important polls relate to families, education and mentoring. As pupils you are, however, allowed to disagree with this view.

Capitalism as a means to an end

> Especially from an economic perspective the insight has developed that growing material wealth in the developed countries above a certain level does not lead to increasing well-being.

—Wissenschaftliche Bestandsaufnahme der Forschung zu "Wohlbefinden von Eltern und Kindern", German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

An error in the assessment of moral priorities, which in capitalism arises almost like an anti-pattern, is to assign the capitalist system a high priority and also to consider close personal relations and mutual support as an important priority, but to assign the common good only a lower priority. A moral error that results from this perspective is that one would implicitly have to endorse a lower level of education of the general public in order to serve the purpose to attain and to preserve a capitalist advantage for one's chosen social environment. Trivially this is not a particularly moral position.

- Where is the error in the assessment of moral priorities?
- Is the public interest more important than friends and acquaintances?
- Is the public interest more important than capitalism?
- If the error the evaluation as unchanging priorities?

Mentoring consequently constitutes insofar a higher moral level (or at least a refinement of moral evaluation) as the basis is a conscious decision that, while one doesn't have to promote a mentally disabled person to earn a medical degree, arbitrary third parties should have a right to a certain level of support.

Another important argumentation in relation to capitalism is that capitalism is a means to achieve an end. If that means becomes and end by itself, as it can happen in a capitalist society, then the question of the actual purpose remains unanswered. This open question is also evident in the behavior of capitalist organizations: The organizations respond to the orders of their customers, but do not always have own interests and goals beyond that. In that sense the efficient capitalist company is primarily controlled by external interests.

- Is it a purpose of capitalism to serve the common good?
- What is Corporate Social Responsibility?
- What do parents know about Corporate Social Responsibility?
- Why is that important?

Parental skills and other competencies

There are different concepts of competence that describe important competencies in the fields of upbringing and education. An example is intercultural competence, which can be defined as the "ability to recognize, to be proficient in and to be able to negotiate not mutually shared cultural values and communicative rules". Wikipedia can offer, for instance, the terms autodidacticism (the competence for self-directed learning), information literacy (information competence), empowerment, people skills and life skills. In the German Wikipedia the term action competence is found, which is defined as "the ability of the individual to act appropriately, well-thought-out as well as individually and socially reponsibly in professional, societal and private situations" and which requires expertise (professional competence), methodology (methodological competence), soft skills (social competence) and personal competence (closely related to life skills). The exact definitions of competence concepts in the context of the course are deliberately left to the authors of the parent education course. The required considerations for defining the concepts of competence should be helpful to bring about better understanding and new impetus for the parent education course.

- How would you define education competence, learning competence and parenting competence? Gather your ideas for each of the terms as a mind map.
- If you consider these competencies desirable, what are the consequences for families?
- What are your conclusions relating to lifelong learning?

The parent education course Triple P defines parenting competence, for instance, through five basic principles of parenting skills:

1. Provide a safe and interesting environment.
2. Create a positive and stimulating atmosphere.
3. Be consistent.
4. Do not expect too much.
5. Observe your own needs.

    See also:

- Eltern können Erziehungskompetenz lernen - mit Triple P [58] (familienhandbuch.de, German)
- ABC's of Good Parenting [59] (education.com)
- Raising Teens: Messages for Parents [60] (education.com)

Respect economy

Respect is sometimes treated as a scarce resource, although there is not always a necessity to do so. The handling of respect is an example of an often ill-considered action, the effects of which can be significant, but which is nevertheless often justified emotionally and not logically. One consideration that may result from the following section is whether the use of respect could constitute one or even several cultural dimensions for your own cultural model.

?

What are reasons for respect

- in your social environment?
- towards celebrities and other people known through the media?
- towards people who don't belong to either group?

What are possible secondary effects of respect? (See also: lack of respect)

One could examine how far the behavior of respect is a question of your own culture and which properties of a culture influence the behavior of respect as a scarce resource. Analyze how respect behaves when people join a group or leave a group and enter a place or leave a place.

?

- Under which conditions does respect behave as a scarce resource?
- Under which conditions does respect not behave as a scarce resource?
- What are characteristics of either category or what are cultural peculiarities that strengthen or weaken the effect?

Another connection between respect and culture are the attitudes and norms that determine how one can earn respect and how one can lose respect. Thus it could be that respect may be used as a scarce resource in order to promote desirable cultural characteristics or personality traits and, consciously or unconsciously, to penalize unwanted characteristics. One could also see it as an aspect of a school grade that a certain degree of respect is reserved for pupils who have shown adequate performance, in this case respect could also be seen as a scarce resource. In games where there is only a single winner or only a relatively small number of best, such as the Olympics, respect is also a scarce resource that is distributed only to a relatively small group. The relationship between culture and respect is for instance also influenced by the cultural dimension "power distance"; if an unequal distribution of power is more acceptable then respect as a resource is consequently redistributed from less influential persons to more influential persons.

?

- Should respect be a scarce resource?
- If respect can be a scarce resource sometimes what are desirable properties of that resource?
- What are personality traits, attitudes or standards that should demand respect?
- What are personality traits, attitudes or standards that actually gain your respect or that of others?

- Can raising standards shift respect and does that mean higher standards could be seen to entail an obligation?
- What obligation could that be?

Idiocultural competence — personal culture and family culture

The term idioculture is derived from the Ancient Greek ἴδιος (idios), which means "one's own"; it describes the set of conventions, norms and values of a single person or a small group of regularly interacting persons, like a family or a circle of friends. In analogy with cultural competence one could describe idiocultural competence as the ability to perceive, to apply or to reach a consensus about the applicability of mutually not shared idiocultural values and behaviors. Understanding for idiocultural elements of another person or group can require exact knowledge of the person or group and its sociocultural background.

- Has a school class idiocultural elements?
- How is the idioculture of a group influenced by other cultures?
- Is an idioculture necessarily primarily a not well thought out, implicit agreement of a group?
- How can a group formally substantiate its idioculture?

A possible way to formalize the idioculture of a group is a personal code of conduct that is known to others and compliance to which can be requested by others at any time. A personal code of conduct doesn't have to describe the whole idioculture of a group, merely the part which should be made formally known to others. A useful hint in a personal code of conduct is that generally every friendly request to comply with the code of conduct will be considered sympathetically. Likewise useful for a code of conduct is the offer of a culture of constructive criticism A code of conduct that describes philosophical positions can also prove to be beneficial for a philosophycracy. When many persons release a personal code of conduct it can be advantageous if individuals do not issue their very own personal variant, but cooperate with a group whose code of conduct they can accept. Smaller groups can also accede to the proposals of larger groups and extend them with their own amendments.

Patterns and anti-patterns

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [61], Portuguese [62], Arabic [63], French [64]

Patterns and anti-patterns are desirable and undesirable situations or behavior patterns a parent education course could help to promote or help to a avoid. More specifically the term anti-pattern is used to refer to a commonly reinvented bad solution to a problem but here it is used in a broader sense, also including undesirable situations that "just happen".

A way to find patterns and anti-patterns with a group of authors is concept mapping or mind mapping. The authors can draw concepts they recognize on a map and connect concepts they see as related. It may be useful to add to one or several concept maps over several days in order to allow sufficient time for reflection. In a following discussion phase the group can refine and thin out the concepts and relations found. Concept maps can start with some of the concepts found in parent education courses and can connect examples, patterns, anti-patterns and other concepts. Colors or symbols can be used to distinguish different types of concepts or types of relations between concepts.

Mind mapping techniques can also be used in a course where a questionnaire allows to gather replies as a mind map. A mind map can promote involvement because everybody has a way to contribute even very minor observations. This may help to involve parents who would otherwise be much more likely to stay passive observers.

Pedagogical patterns

Parent Effectiveness Training

The following patterns can be found in Parent Effectiveness Training.

Active listening

Active listening describes the ability to reflect back in your own words the opinions and emotions of group members. An important goal of active listening is to enable a group member or a child to understand his or her own problems and to deduce solutions independently.

I-messages

I-messages are non-blameful, non-judgmental descriptions of the addressee's behavior, especially where it collides with the speaker's interests. I-messages describe how the unacceptable behavior affects the speaker and how it makes him or her feel. I-messages confront the behaviour of the addressee but do not attack the person. An example of an I-message is:

> "If you throw sand from your sandbox on my carpet I have to spend some time cleaning it and I don't like to do that."

No-lose conflict resolution

The No-lose conflict resolution (Win Win conflict resolution) is based on John Dewey's *six steps to creative solutions for conflicts*. The goal is to find a solution all involved parties can agree with and to invite all parties to the conflict resolution because children, and people in general, are more motivated to comply with decisions which they had a part in reaching.

kess-erziehen

Alfred Adlers individual psychology and the work of Rudolf Dreikurs are the scientific foundation of kess-erziehen. The abbreviation refers to **c**ooperative, **e**ncouraging, **s**ocial and **s**ituation-oriented. The goal of the course is to promote a cooperative, democratic educational style through common rules for family life and consensus that is reached in a family council.

The course promotes the ability of the participants to understand the social needs of children, the disregard of which can lead to undesirable behaviors. Adults and children are seen as equal and the mutual approval of needs is emphasized. Parents and educators learn to develop cooperation, conflict management and to set borders through logical consequences. Consistent, encouraging action is used to promote independence and to allow children to accept responsibility for their own actions.

The participants are guided to act situation-oriented, to offer choices to children and to notice positive behaviors, instead of reacting primarily to undesirable behaviors. Thereby self-esteem and responsible action in partnership are promoted.

Special moments

"Edelsteinmomente" (jewel moments) mean the child is given special attention with a special quality of dedication at certain times. Special moments are meant to convey a special degree of esteem to children.

Special moments can take the form of frequently repeated rituals that convey affection. For younger children such rituals can, for instance, encompass well-known rituals like a round of cuddling in the morning, come-to-my-arms games on reunion or reading a story at bedtime.

IRIS strategy

IRIS strategy means "**I**nterrupt. **R**espect. **I**gnore. **S**elf-determined action" and is a strategy, or rather a set of strategies following a common scheme, to deal with disturbing, aggressive and other types of unwanted behaviors of children. The common scheme is for the parent to stop himself (Interrupt), to consider and respect the perspective of the child (Respect), to ignore the unwanted behavior in order not to reward the behavior (Ignore) and to react, possibly much later, with behavior the parent has considered and sees as appropriate to respond to a potential problem (Self-determined action). Special moments can, for instance, be a reaction to a child that may feel rejected.

Encouragement shower

For children who need encouragement the pattern "encouragement shower" is a way to increase self-esteem: In a circle of relatives or friends everybody tells the child what he likes about the child, what the child does to please the relative or friend or similar encouragements. The child thanks everybody individually and ends with his own assessment of his strengths.

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What can go wrong with this pattern? What if encouragements are not well considered and sound superficial? Is mentoring a logical continuation for older children and teenagers?

Ten point strategy for conflict resolution

The course kess-erziehen offers a ten point strategy for conflict resolution.

- **Phase I** : Explain position and acknowledge feelings

  - Make an appointment - this can be part of a family council.
  - Find out about the feelings of the child.
  - Show sympathy or, at least, understanding for the feelings of the child.
  - Explain your own position - an opportunity to use I-messages.

- **Phase II** : Find solutions

  - Invite the child to participate in the search for solutions.
  - Write down the proposals on a piece of paper.
  - Remove inacceptable proposals.
  - Select the best proposal or find a compromise.

- **Phase III** : Implement the solution

  - Negotiate a try-out time.
  - Verify the success of the chosen solution.

Family council

A family council is a democratic council of a family. The pedagogical purpose is to allow children to experience co-determination, responsibility, involvement, fairness, encouragement and support (See: Mistaken goals). The purpose of a family council can also be citizenship education. The family council is the logical counterpart of the class council and both councils can learn from each other. Educators in both councils can intentionally use references to the respective other council; to avoid Lack of consistency teachers and parents should communicate requirements and ideas concerning citizenship education and pedagogy in general.

> See also:

- Teachers' handbook: Parenting (Assistant teacher course, Wikiversity)
- Spend Time Together [65] (education.com)
- Family Meetings [66] (education.com)

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Consider the Example rules for a family council. What would you recommend?

Commune

The commune pattern adds mostly an attitude to the family council; the attitude is to change roles and to trade obligations to create a different social environment for a while. Older children can be treated as adults living in an (apartment-sharing) living community with their parents and can assume adult obligations and social roles. A goal can be to make children accept responsible roles like taking care of maintaining order and actually deciding on the necessity of certain household tasks and affairs.

Empathy

Empathy can be trained by appreciating, rewarding and otherwise promoting behavior that respects the feelings or perspective of others, including that of animals where appropriate. Empathy can also be shown by an educator in order to offer a role model (see: Pyramid of influence) that appreciates empathy. I-messages are a way to communicate a demand for empathy for the educator him - or herself.

Guidance to question things

Guidance to question things is meant to promote the attitude to form an independent opinion that is not inappropriately influenced by the opinions of others. The educator can occasionally make up something and allow the child or teenager to form an independent opinion whether the invention is real or just a made-up thing. The educator should, of course, also question opinions, prejudices and facts, otherwise the behavior is easily seen through and incomplete. Especially opinions should be discussed with children and teenagers. A Family council can be useful to discuss opinions that are relevant for family life.

See also: Theory Design Lab (Assistant teacher program, Wikiversity)

Questioning behavior

A child may learn to accept parents questioning his behavior if parents who question the child's way of doing something are learned to be an introduction to something interesting. To accomplish that a parent can offer advice on an activity that is primarily in the sphere of interest of the child and is mostly irrelevant to the parent. If the parent offers useful advice to the child unostentatiously and in an activity the child perceives as important the parent becomes a natural mentor. A phrase like "Should this be done the way you are doing it?" or similar phrases can invite the child to reflect on his own behavior and the parent doesn't have to show an unwelcome interest in enforcing certain behaviors in situations were the child can deduce what it should be doing and may be willing to do so, if not pressured. The child can learn to appreciate the benevolent nature of the request. In a sufficiently understood situation a child may be able to deduce or offer logical consequences a parent might otherwise offer.

⚠️

There are, of course, other reasons for being a natural mentor for your own children so the greater credibility when asking the child to apply common sense could be seen as a side effect.

Constructive culture of criticism

A constructive culture of criticism is a set of behavior patterns and attitudes that promote and appreciate constructive criticism in general. Constructive criticism differs from mere criticism in making recommendations how to alleviate a problem or how to improve a situation.

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The exact behavior patterns and attitudes may vary from person to person. Describe your personal idea of the necessary behavior patterns and attitudes.

Positive role models

Parents who aim to be positive role models appreciate the fact that the role model a parent offers is a strong influence on a child (see: pyramid of influence).

See also: Tips on Role Modeling [67] (education.com)

Family coach

Teenagers and parents can take turns at being the family coach. The family coach is an individual who, other than the family council, but preferably not instead of the family council, watches over the interplay and cooperation in the family. The family coach can be determined by the family council or the office can be passed on through job rotation. The purpose of the family coach is to become active by himself and to intervene when family members experience problems that do not quickly resolve themselves. The family coach is an advisor and where necessary a mediator. Because everybody becomes the family coach at one time this leads to the improvement of parent education in the whole family through learning by doing and learning by teaching. This should, however, not rule out further training; a mediator training in school or similar trainings should prove to be useful for the role as a family coach.

The family coach should in particular be able to request trainings and carry out trainings. Furthermore the family coach can keep a logbook in which unnecessary confrontations and other noteworthy events are recorded. The family coach can the peruse the entries in the logbook at the earliest opportunity (for instance during a family council) and invite the family members in a sociable, gregarious mood to explain how the problem could have been avoided. Many differences can with enough distance be easily exposed as superfluous. Should this effect not occur or should the family council be unable to resolve the problems one should consider professional advice and parent education courses.

Maintaining relationships

To maintain relationships the terms quality time, sense of self-worth and categorical imperative should be of central importance. Maintaining a relationship as an independent activity, instead of usual social behavior, can for instance become important when a family did encounter problems or when special events require special measures. In everyday dealings with each other, that is in usual social behavior, rituals which allow for quality time or convey mutual respect can be used to maintain relationships. The active maintenance of relationships is, of course, not restricted to fathers and mothers, but also the relationships between teenagers and parents may require attention.

See also:

- Rituale - Ihre Bedeutung für die Paarbeziehung [68] (familienhandbuch.de, German)
- Unsere Familie - ein starkes Team [69] (familienhandbuch.de, German)

Pedagogical anti-patterns

> "Behind every kind of anger is a need that hasn't been fulfilled. Unfortunately most of us haven't learned to think in terms of needs. If our needs haven't been fulfilled we think automatically what mistakes others have made. That's why we criticize our children as lazy if they leave their coat on the sofa - only because we like to see it in the wardrobe. ... Over and over again I made the experience that the moment people start talking about what they need instead of what is wrong with the other the probability to find a way to the fulfillment of all needs rises dramatically."
>
> —Marshall Rosenberg

This book is not a parent education course itself. If anti-patterns are presented without solutions that can be interpreted as an invitation to the authors of parent education courses to invent their own solutions.

See also: Five Most Common Parenting Mistakes: The Potholes and Their Fixes [70] (education.com)

You-message

The you-message is the opposite of an I-messages. A you-message in a conflict puts blame on the other instead of asking for understanding for your own view in the conflict situation.

Lack of parental dedication

Wikinews reports that 13% of all children, 28% of the children of unemployed parents and 35% of the children of employed single parents in Germany complain about a lack of parental dedication. In families with two parents working full-time this applies to 17% of the children, in families with one parent working full-time and one parent working part-time or both parents working part-time it applies to 8% of the children and in families with only one of two parents employed it applies to 6% of the children.

Lack of respect

Lack of respect can be lack of respect of children for parents or of parents for children, more precisely respect can be lacking in the interpersonal communication of any two persons in any direction. Lack of respect can lead to Functional social behavior and can cause aspects of the Alien ecology of extraterrestrial behavior patterns. Respect is often assigned to a person according to academic accomplishments or a job title, which is where sole housewives and househusbands may not receive the greatest amount of respect. Parents can invite teenagers to either respect the work that is being done or to do it themselves for a while (see Commune). Parents (and teenagers) can also decide to leave work that isn't being respected undone. In a capitalist society, where people are likely to require an employment, somebody is bound to do almost any necessary work but in a family a higher standard of motivation can be sought.

Possible mistakes concerning respect are not to demand respect at all or to demand too much respect.

See also: Respect economy (Assistant teacher program, Wikiversity)

Lack of community

Lack of community can be distinguished as Lack of quality time or Lack of socializing.

Lack of socializing

Lack of socializing is a lack of social events or social contacts. Different persons perceive lack of socializing differently, consequently one has to assume the perspective of the person concerned when evaluating lack of socializing; the culture and habits of a person may lead to widely different perspectives.

Lack of quality time

Lack of quality time is different from lack of socializing because community doesn't always mean quality time. A lack of quality time may happen, for instance, if teenagers watch too much TV or play computer games without really enjoying them. Almost anyting can be overdone and teenagers are quite good at exaggerating behavior because they may not yet have learned to limit behavior as appropriate. Lack of quality time can also happen to adults who grow into habits that do no appreciate quality time sufficiently.

A measure to avoid lack of quality time are time schedules and scheduled events that appreciate quality time as such and arrange for community events that are generally appreciated.

Unsuccessful discussions

Silently rejecting arguments

Any argument that is rejected silently or that is assumed to be valid or true notwithstanding the counter-arguments brought against it has the potential to lead to unsuccessful discussions. Obviously the importance of the arguments that are rejected without refutation influence the degree to which the anti-pattern has potential for discordance. Dogmatic religion can in one aspect be seen as an example of arguments that are not meant to be questioned.

Lack of consensus

Lack of consensus between educators causes Lack of consistency and lack of consensus between parents and children may lead to open conflict. Ways to establish consensus are a Family council, No-lose conflict resolution or the Ten point strategy for conflict resolution. A failure to establish consensus can appear for a teenager as Allowing problems to persist, even if the educators do not perceive a problem, because it is easy for the person(s) making the rules not to perceive a problem.

Negative role models

According to the Pyramid of influence the role model of an educator is a very strong influence for a child or teenager. Negative role models are role models who show behavior patterns that could be seen as anti-patterns, who show Alien ecology behavior patterns or who show behavior that is not properly understood by the observer and may lead to detrimental or otherwise undesirable behaviors that are learned as acceptable behavior by the observer.

Lack of consistency

Lack of consistency can be related to Unsuccessful discussions with children but includes inconsistent pedagogical ideas or lack of communication between educators. An African proverb says "It takes a village to raise a child". While the idea to have many natural mentors may sound appealing one of the possible problems with a large group of educators is lack of consistency. Lack of consistency can cause educators to contradict each other or, possibly worse, to contradict each other's pedagogy, which can be confusing for teenagers and also has the potential to teach teenagers to look for loopholes.

Lack of consistency can be intentionally employed as Guidance to question things.

Positive feedback

Why is positive feedback an anti-pattern? Giving children feedback they perceive as "positive" is seldom an anti-pattern but the term can also refer to a vicious circle, which is the sense that is meant here. The anti-pattern occurs whenever educators allow vicious circles to exist in social communication. Simple as that may sound detecting a vicious circle that reinforces a psychological effect may require psychological insight and imagination.

One example is a teenager who understands a remark as an encouragement to do the opposite of what is being asked and that behavior again provokes the same or a similar remark, closing the feedback loop. Negativism is, for instance, used by adolescents as a way to assert their autonomy from their parents. An adult might also decide to compliment a teenager on behavior not shown and leave it to the teenager to understand that the compliment was a complement and the teenager didn't actually behave as described; this can, however, lead to the very same problem, if the teenager understands this as encouragement to pretend to show a preferable behavior and derives a license to show the objectionable behavior. The intended educational effect (understanding the false compliment) may be inverted into undesirable positive feedback here.

Trying to apply reverse psychology intentionally to motivate a certain behavior may also be easily seen through, which can cause reactance against the intended behavior instead of the verbalized offer, which may again result in a positive feedback.

Positive feedback can be categorized as a failure to anticipate, to measure or to understand the influence of one's own actions on others.

> Individuals use one another so as to get desired results, without reference to the emotional and intellectual disposition and consent of those used. Such uses express physical superiority, or superiority of position, skill, technical ability, and command of tools, mechanical or fiscal. So far as the relations of parent and child, teacher and pupil, employer and employee, governor and governed, remain upon this level, they form no true social group, no matter how closely their respective activities touch one another.

—Democracy and Education, John Dewey

Functional social behavior

> Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only

—Second formulation of the categorical imperative, Immanuel Kant

Why is functional social behavior an anti-pattern? The term could be interpreted to mean function-oriented social behavior, which is the sense that is meant here. Function-oriented social behavior (this is probably the better term) reduces interaction with persons to the function of a person in a specific context. Further consideration for the person and his or her needs are not required. While this type of behavior may be appropriate in some situations (e.g. in a busy waiting queue in a supermarket) it can be seen as an anti-pattern in many other situations. Let's retain the title "functional social behavior" to make the point that functional (function-oriented) social behavior is more usually **not** considered functional (functioning) social behavior.

Allowing problems to persist

Allowing problems to persist is a motivation for children to learn to tolerate the problem state. An example is that parents sometimes mean well but fail to communicate their good intent properly. Behavior that appears aggressive and is allowed to persist can motivate a child to learn to tolerate and even expect the aggressive behavior, which is not a desirable outcome. Any behavior that is socially difficult from a person that is an attachment figure for a child can disturb the relationship. A conclusion from this anti-pattern should be that parents should recover their role as positive role models consciously and should not allow problems to persist for a longer time. An avoidance strategy can be to deliberately inquire about perceived problems during a family council.

Alien ecology of extraterrestrial behavior patterns

The wording of this pattern may make it especially accessible for some teenagers. The "alien ecology" is an ecology of behavior patterns that can grow and reproduce themselves like an alien ecology, if left unchallenged. The means of propagation are psychological effects like unreflected imitation and psychological reactance but the behavior patterns can have almost any complexity or relevance and affect areas of life one could expect to be controlled by reason. The implication here is that the "alien ecology" is brought forth through the absence of higher-order volitions, metacognition and collective intelligence (and probably the presence of an alien-nation somewhere) and functions like another ecology or civilization, competing with proper civilization. The implication means that no person can be seen as an alien but that everybody can contribute to the "alien ecology" through absentmindedness or general lack of higher-order volitions, metacognition or collective intelligence.

Anti-parents

Anti-parents are not an anti-pattern because this is merely an inappropriate generalization. Adding the word to a parent education course is the anti-pattern, which this section is meant to prevent. The word is a pun and therefore bound to be invented by some pupils. If pupils insist on inventing the word "anti-parents" one can deduce two types of problems:

- The pupils haven't thought enough about their work because including this word is not conducive to the goals of a parent education course.
- The proposers may be experiencing major problems, which makes a successful parent education program even more important.

Motivation soup instead of super motivation

This anti-pattern is also formulated in a way that may be appealing for young people. The motivation soup is a jumble of motivations, all swimming in "water", are sometimes contradictory and show no clear objective. The opposite of a motivation soup is a super motivation, one might get for instance from a mentor who has thought about a topic. The super motivation is a motivation that is meaningful for a teenager from his personal perspective and can possibly cause renewed interest in an otherwise boring topic or shows an interesting way to approach a topic. The super motivation can also simply be a a new understanding for the importance of a topic.

It is important to understand that a wide range of average motivations exist between the motivation soup and the super motivation. The distinction between motivation soup and super motivation is therefore a false dilemma, or presents merely the the two extreme positions of a spectrum.

Robot psychology

The term "robot psychology" is obviously not a scientific term, but a metaphor. What could this metaphor mean? Robots are made of metal, so one could possibly catch one's reflection on a robot's surface. Translation: The robot psychology includes the repetition of observed behavior following the maxim ("If others are allowed to do that I can do that, too"), even though there may often be reasons why one should not imitate ("mirror") certain behaviors. The metaphor implies a lack of understanding for psychology and the categorical imperative, because psychological reasons and moral concerns are common reasons why one should not imitate behavior. Very simple robots explore their environment by making every mistake at least once, like bumping into walls, for instance. The robot psychology would also be a metaphor for excessive learning-from-experience without adequate planning, or the general willingness to make mistakes. A further interpretation is that robots behave according to their program, instead of a code of conduct; thus in case of doubt the robot follows the wrong code.

Behavior of children and adolescents

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [71], Portuguese [72], Arabic [73], French [74]

A parent education course is not complete without addressing possible misconduct of children and this is were teenagers are undoubtedly experts. The authors should make use of the mind-map again and gather ideas for misconduct. Does the misconduct have a relation to pedagogical patterns and anti-patterns? The authors should explain behaviors for their own parent education course they consider important themselves. If there is a primary target audience for the parent education course the opportunity to cover the specific problems of the target audience should not go unused either.

To collect the problems and behaviors the authors should first conduct a brainstorming session, where ideas are categorized. A mind-map with problems and behaviors can be created for each category. It is also possible to use a questionnaire-based survey in the class, the school, community centers, youth centers or meeting points for teenagers. The questionnaires can gather ideas for the different categories and statistical information about the incidence of certain problems.

See also: Mit Jugendlichen reden, ohne dass sie "dicht machen" [75] (familienhandbuch.de, German)

Educational problems and behavior problems of children

For educational problems and behavioral problems of children the mind-map can be used yet again. The author group should try to prepare an overview of the known problems of younger children and arrange them in categories. The professional parent education courses also sometimes offer advise for specific actions that are not described with behavior patterns. Another option is to offer parents the knowledge what the children's psycholoy makes of a certain situation and not to try to describe behavior patterns. Even with this approach one should at least make some recommendations how parents should behave, because not all parents are capable to derive sensible reactions from ab abstract description of the children's psychology. Thinking about the children's psychology should, however, be seen as beneficial, because parents can train their metacognition this way.

If a course offers behavior patterns it is also useful to allow parents to make decisions, both in class and in everyday situations. Good advice in the course would consequently ask the parents to determine a selection of possible behaviors that can be tried out in everyday situations. It is also possible to suggest behaviors in the course that are not recommended. The parents will be motivated by the "dietary fiber" in the course to think more about the offered knowledge. The course should, however, make sure that the parents recognize and sort out intentional errors by the end of each course unit reliably. Intentional errors should also be documented in a supplemental booklet for the course in order to allow course instructors and teachers to read up on the didactic approach of the course. Since not every child reacts the same choices can also allow parents to get to know their child better: How does the child react to what behavior of the parents?

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- Which educational problems do exist and in which categories do they fall?
- Which behavior problems do exist and in which categories do they fall?
- What are the differences to be observed in different age groups?
- Which educational methods and parenting styles are supposed to help?

    See also:

- Mistakes: What Parents Can do to Help Their Children be Less Fearful about Mistakes and Setbacks [76] (education.com)
- Controlling Parental Anger [77] (education.com)
- The Uphill Struggle – Getting Young Children To Clean Up Their Rooms [78] (education.com)
- Discipline and Challenging Child Behavior [79] (education.com)

Reciprocation between behavior of adults and adolescents

Which interactions exist between the behavior of adults and adolescents, a parent education course should explain? An example is positive feedback. Some interactions might already be known as anti-patterns, others may be of a more special nature oder may be less noticeable or less disruptive, possibly making the classification as an anti-pattern appear unnecessary.

To recognize interactions between the behavior of adults and the behavior of adolescents requires reflection on observed behavior of parents, teachers, friends and acquaintances, but observations from TV series on education and purely theoretical considerations are, of course, also allowed.

?

- What behaviors of adults trigger which other behaviors of teenagers?
- Why do adults and young people react like that?
- Which prejudices, misconceptions and psychological effects lead to misbehavior?
- What would be better behaviors?

In order to collect information on interactions you can conduct a questionnaire-based survey, which allows to collect more information than just from the immediate social environment of the authors. A questionnaire should have an introduction, so that the respondents know exactly what is meant. It should also guide the respondents so that the respondents consider the right details; the more thought-provoking impulses the questionnaire offers the more precise the answers may become. The questionnaire can, for instance, ask directly for behavioral triggers that make discussions fail or for behavior that causes stress.

Adolescence

The following typology groups adolescents in four rough categories, which represent their orientation towards education and leisure. The categories are not meant to represent a permanent ordering of an adolescent into one of the four groups; quite to the contrary it is assumed that teenagers change their orientation over time and move into another group or orient in-between groups, without meeting the criteria for a single group clearly. One could consequently see it as an oversimplification to try to assign an adolescent to exactly one single group.

	educational orientation ↑	
assimilation	integration	**leisure orientation** →
diffusion	segregation	
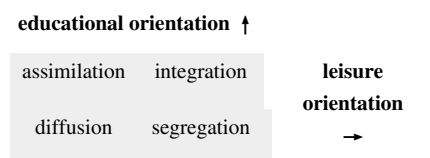
The terms used here have a special meaning, in particular integration has nothing to do with the integration of immigrants into a society, which would be a more usual connotation. Assimilation refers to a high level of educational orientation and little interest in recreational activities without educational aspects. Integration represents the combination of educational and leisure interests. Segregation means a rejection of the adult society in favor of a youthful leisure culture and diffusion is the, possibly early or undecided, opposition to both education and leisure orientation.

See also: Erwachsen werden - Jugend als Bildungszeit oder Freizeit? [80] (familienhandbuch.de, German)

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- How would you classify yourselves?
- How would others classify you? Is there a different perception between classmates who know you better and classmates who know you less well?
- Can you recognize a connection between the four categories and the different cultural dimensions?

Generation Internship

The term "Generation Internship" is meant to reflect the "formative trend and lifestyle" of the young generation. The author Matthias Stolz of the German newspaper ZEIT refers to the continuous internship of the Generation Internship as "floundering period" and to the ongoing trainees as "flounder people". The changed living conditions of the Generation Internship in Germany and other countries are characterized by lack of prospects and means for many of them the transition from one internship to another, without any prospect of a permanent position.

A feature of the changed living conditions of the Generation Internship appears to be a greater mobility in search of work; the frequent relocations can, however, adversely affect private relations. It is also reported that a gladly chosen path of this group supposedly lacking prospects is the flight into self-employment and independence.

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- Which age group is this about?
- What is the described formative trend and lifestyle?
- Is the concept important for a parent education course?
- What can you learn from it?

Happiness research

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [81], Portuguese [82], Arabic [83], French [84]

The constitution of Bhutan even specifies happiness as a national objective.

> **Article 9, paragraph 2**: The State shall endeavor to promote those conditions that allow the pursuit of gross national happiness.

At the Willy-Hellpach school in Heidelberg there is a new subject Happiness [85] since September 2007. The head teacher Ernst Fritz-Schubert means to promote life skills,

Gross national happiness

enjoyment of life, personality development, personal satisfaction, self-confidence, self-responsibility and social responsibility with this subject. What he deems necessary for this purpose are self-esteem, empathy, friendship, love, spirituality, humor and optimism.

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The head teacher of the Willy Hellpach school sees happiness as a basic need.

- Where would you put happiness in the hierarchy of needs?
- What do you think about the ingredients of happiness (self-esteem, empathy, friendship, love, spirituality, humor and optimism)?
- What do you know yourself (or believe to know) about the psychology of happiness?

An important observation is that happiness occurs in many situations in response to a change, so you can react in these situations only to that event or a shorter or longer phase with happiness and well-being. After the event or after a certain time a habituation effect can occur, which means you get used to the state that initially made you happy and you perceive the pleasant event or the comfortable state as normal.

A good example are computer games or listening to music; both of which can be used to enhance the mood, to feel in a good mood for a limited time, but both can also be exaggerated, so that the effect decreases and a habituation occurs. In case of homework one could distinguish for instance if the homework is unpleasant enough, so that an artificial improvement of one's mood appears necessary, or whether the intellectual challenge may be motivation enough. To turn off music before the homework can be seen as delayed gratification as well as a necessity in order to achieve the necessary concentration. (If the homework is always unpleasant that could be a topic for the class council.)

Longer-lasting happiness results however, for instance, from the fulfillment of some of the basic needs in the hierarchy of needs, especially on the steps three (social needs), four (esteem) and five (self-actualization).

At level four of the hierarchy of needs respect, self-esteem, recognition and wealth can be found as examples. In a capitalist society all these terms can easily be associated with "wealth", which makes capitalism an end in itself instead of a means to an end. An interesting question could thus be: How much money does one need to be happy? The ZDF-study about happiness of children in Germany reports that children in families with a household income of less than 1.500 Euro described themselves as less happy.

?

- What can you do to help families who possibly do not earn enough?
- What forms of cooperation with other families do exist?
- Is the income the actual cause or merely an indicator? What are possible causes?
- What can you do about these causes?

An example for a measure could be a pupil company that works as an educational coaching agency and employment agency for unemployed parents; the same pupil company could for instance offer and organize parent education courses and parent service and organize additional leisure and educational offers for pupils.

School

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [86], Portuguese [87], Arabic [88], French [89]

> " Families should have the opportunity to carry information and ideas that are conducive to the educational processes of their children into schools and playschools. Conversely playschools and schools influence families and show them ways to better support the educational process. "

> —The meaning of the family for educational policy, conclusions from the PISA study [1], Scientific Advisory Council of the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Class council and family council

The class council of a class and the family council of a family are both democratic committees that serve the purpose to facilitate learning processes for social and democratic behavior. Many families can benefit from assistance for family councils through their schools.

?

Which forms of cooperation between the class council and the family councils are recommended and why?

- Example rules for family councils.
- Recommendations of the class council to the family councils.
- Votes on issues of the class in the family councils.
- Votes on issues of families in the class.
- Assignment of tasks to family councils through the class council.
- Formal requests from family councils to the class council.

Philosophycracy

Philosophycracy is a made up word, but the meaning is generic and can be deduced from the components "philosophy" and "krátos". The term philosophy comes from the Ancient Greek word φιλοσοφία (philosophía) and means love of wisdom. The root word κράτος (krátos) is also of Ancient Greek origin and means strength or power, such as in the word democracy. The philosophycracy would consequently be the "rule of the love of wisdom".

?

Can one design a council so that all votes have to be based on the philosophical positions of the voters?

The voters would have to determine their philosophical positions in advance and commit to vote in accordance with their philosophy or possibly to abstain from voting. In general it may be almost impossible to anticipate all possible exceptions and conflicts of interest, however, exceptions should be rare enough so that one could at least establish the general positions. Whether a council recognizes an exception or a conflict of interest and allows a deviation from the philosophycracy rule can be left to the council to decide.

A benefit of the prior determination of philosophical positions is that every member of the council gets to know every other council member. To discuss the philosophical positions of other council members could thus be regarded as valuable social behavior.

Parent service

> There is much evidence that the furtherance of children in programs outside of the family benefits if likewise the parents can be won over to give the educational processes of their children more attention and support.

—The meaning of the family for educational policy, conclusions from the PISA study [1], Scientific Advisory Council of the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

In the U.S. some private schools require that all parents must collaborate in school. Both, services for parents as well as services by parents can be referred to as "parent service". These services may include assistance with school events but also in education. Often merely the family is required to serve a certain number of hours, for instance four hours per month; the family members can then discuss in a family council who accepts this duty in each case, which should also be seen as a positive motivation for discussions. A further psychological effect is that children and teenagers will appreciate the cooperation of their parents if a duty could just as easily be assigned to them. An occasional compulsory school attendance for parents can, however, be used for parent education.

See also:

- Parent service (Assistant teacher course, Teachers' handbook)
- Spend Time Together [65] (education.com)
- The Impact of Caring Adults in Families [90] (education.com)

Mentoring

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [91], Portuguese [92], Arabic [93], French [94]

> The culture of growing up, which the Tenth Children and Youth Report alludes to, demands such a well attuned framework of personal relationships and supporting facilities in which knowledge, values and norms are taught and can be acquired and that allows the acceptance of responsibility through children and adolescents.

—The meaning of the family for educational policy, conclusions from the PISA study [1], Scientific Advisory Council of the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

You can find more on ideas for mentoring organizations in the Mentoring Handbook. Parent education ideas are, for example, an actual parenting driver's license and parenting awards.

Mentoring is likely to be a valuable experience for the participating mentees and for the participating mentors beyond the scope of a parent education course. Mentors can also write their own mentoring handbook.

Cross-age peer mentoring

> Cross-age mentoring by peers may offer several advantages to school-based programs that utilize adult mentors, including reduced costs; simplified recruiting, training, and supervision of mentors; and the potential for benefiting both younger (mentee) and older (mentor) youth participating in the program.

—Handbook of Youth Mentoring, Sharon G. Portwood und Penny M. Ayers

Cross-age peer mentoring means mentoring between adolescents of similar age, in which the somewhat older teenager takes on the role of the mentor. A good age difference is three to five years, because this age difference may cause respect for the older peer, but also allows the shared similarities of teenagers to improve mutual understanding beyond the occasionally less understanding relationships between adults and adolescents.

Another advantage of cross-age peer mentoring is that the teenage mentor, through his role as a mentor, may learn something himself. A mentor who taught self-motivation and learning motivation will be more capable to think about his own motivations and to motivate himself; otherwise the mentor would call into question his own teachings. It is also difficult to advise others in relation to higher-order volitions, without thinking about one's own higher-order volitions.

A teenage mentor finds himself in a responsible position and possibly in an area of conflicting interests between mentee, parents, teachers and tutors. This situation could be seen as valuable training for social skills and especially for diplomatic skills. The role of a pedagogue should also be beneficial for a mentor to develop an extensive active mental vocabulary for metacognition and adequate social goals towards his mentee.

Mentoring should also be fun because one assumes a responsible position that can command respect of younger pupils, peers and adults. Working in a responsible position in a team is also often associated with job satisfaction in working life.

Psychosocial and instrumental mentoring

The difference between psychosocial mentoring and instrumental mentoring is that psychosocial mentoring focuses on a social relationship (belonging, empathy and candidness) while instrumental mentoring focuses on accomplishing a goal (attainment of knowledge, planning, behaviors or other work objectives). Psychosocial mentoring is also described as process-oriented and instrumental mentoring is also described as a problem-oriented.

In the scientific literature a stronger component of psychosocial mentoring is described as more suitable for girls and young women. The reason for this is that girls and young women appreciate emotional support more than boys and young men. That should not lead to the conclusion, however, that women have no need for instrumental mentoring at all. The best way in which the mentor can build a relationship to his mentee or deals with problems between mentor and mentee can possibly depend on the gender of the mentee.

?

• Do any consequences for parents (and natural mentors) follow from this observation?
• Is the observation sufficiently universal or should the mentor adapt to the character of the mentee?

Intercultural mentoring

> " Because of the within-group differences in how much individuals uphold a particular value, it is better to actually measure the cultural values of individuals than to assume the cultural values of individuals based on group membership. "

—Handbook of Youth Mentoring, Bernadette Sánchez und Yarí Colón

Intercultural mentoring means mentoring with consideration and respect for cultural differences between people from different cultures; different cultures are, however, not supposed to be idiocultures in this case, even though a good understanding for the sociocultural background of a mentee should include his idioculture(s). The social contact between very different population groups is also referred to as a bridging social capital. Social capital in particular refers to support, assistance, recognition, knowledge transfer and sociability for and towards people with different sociocultural backgrounds.

One could view the preparation for cross-cultural mentoring as a useful step to prepare a mentor for the more subtle and less striking differences within heterogeneous populations of the same culture. In any case the willingness to analyze, understand and respect the culture of another person is a valuable part of the training of a mentor.

?

- If dolphins had a culture, what would be the culture of dolphins?
- What other unusual cultures could be analyzed?
- How can intercultural mentoring be trained?

Health mentoring

The role as a health mentor is particularly important, because one obviously does oneself and others an important favor by taking care of health issues. Many people have a wrong diet, do not exercise enough or make other mistakes concerning their health. The job of a health mentor is not clearly described, so it's up to the mentor to decide what he chooses to do or what he should care about. Interesting for young people is that as a health mentor one can give useful advice to adults. So one can easily turn around the usual distribution of roles and advise the adults, even in an area that logically should be important. The main topics for a health mentor should be diet and exercise, but preventive advice and training are also possible in many other areas. A special search engine on the internet for sites with health information is maintained by the Health On the Net Foundation [95].

?

- Aren't there enough doctors, are health mentors really sensible?
- Does a mentoring program make sense for a health mentor or is natural mentoring preferable?
- Whom should one help in the role of a health mentor?
- What should health mentors aim to accomplish?

Quality control

This chapter in other languages: German, Spanish [96], Portuguese [97], Arabic [98], French [99]

The quality control can be performed by a working group or by the whole group. It is recommended that the course should be implemented in collaboration with a trained instructor for a professional planet education course, which can also be a teacher of the school, if the parent training course will be offered at a school. It is also possible to assemble several alternative course proposals from the completed parts of the course. The best overall concept or concepts can then be determined in a democratic vote.

A combination with a professional parent education course can for instance also be done as a combination of two courses. Thus the professional parent education course is not modified, which may not necessarily be permitted. Your self-made course may, of course, refer to concepts of parent education or measures from other courses without

any restriction. One could even see it as a quality defect of a self-made course if references to professional courses are scarce.

?

- How can you compare the quality of your course with other parent education courses?
- How can you ensure the quality of content?
- Can one test the parent education course?
- Can teachers grade the parent education course?

See also: Qualitätsanforderungen für Elternkurse [100] (familienhandbuch.de, German)

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