



Parent Partnerships

Professional Development Module



Parent Partnerships

Professional Development Module

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Disclaimer

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→ Introduction



Purpose

The professional development module has been developed to familiarise participants with the components of the *Parent Partnerships – Parent Involvement in the Later Years of Schooling* resource.

The activities have been designed so that participants can replicate them at their school or with parents during a parent evening.

Duration

The professional development module is designed to be delivered in a two and a half hour session. However, the duration may vary according to:

- facilitator and participant knowledge
- whether all activities are presented
- the aim of the session
- the time allowed for discussion and planning.

Overheads

The professional development module includes twelve overheads and notes provided in hard copy.

Activities

The professional development module includes six activities. Each activity includes a purpose, process and the associated overheads and worksheets.

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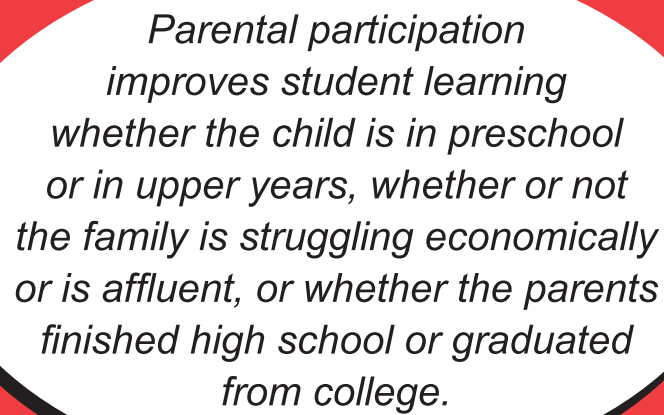
Parent Partnerships

Parent Involvement
in the Later Years of Schooling

Professional Development Module

Knowledge & Skills
Building a Future

Victoria
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*Parental participation
improves student learning
whether the child is in preschool
or in upper years, whether or not
the family is struggling economically
or is affluent, or whether the parents
finished high school or graduated
from college.*

(Davis 2000)

→ Aim

To improve programs and strategies for involving parents to enable them to better support their children in the later years of schooling.



→ Research

1. A literature review
2. School-based consultation and focus groups with parents and staff
3. Key informant interviews with relevant agencies and personnel



➔ Developmental Needs of Young People

- Autonomy
- Competence and Coping Skills
- Belonging

Knowledge Skills
Building a Future
The Next Step

➔ NOTES:

Autonomy

Autonomy relates to a young person's need for increasing independence as they mature. The challenge for parents is to know how to provide support without trespassing into young people's territory. Schools can help parents and young people form mutually supportive relationships that allow autonomy, while still maintaining family support.

Competence and Coping Skills

The later years of schooling are an optimal time to further a young person's socialisation. It is also a time to advance interpersonal problem solving, help seeking behaviours and self-management skills. The development of these life skills is supported by parents, teachers, authority figures, peers and an increasingly wide circle of people as adolescents gain autonomy.

Belonging

A sense of belonging or connectedness to school and family is a prominent feature in the well-being of young people. The competitive nature of the later years can serve to disconnect young people from the school community, hindering their sense of belonging.

School and family support can counter the pressures of the later years, helping students manage many of the key developmental tasks that occur during this period.

Developing parent involvement programs that aim to reduce stress and bolster life skills may help families provide appropriate support in the later years of schooling.

Transitions

With an increase in autonomy, progress in competence and coping skills, and an improved sense of belonging, transition may proceed more smoothly.

In the later years of schooling, key transitional points may be the decision to:

- stay at school
- commence employment
- go to university or further studies.

➔ Key Findings



- A decline in direct parent involvement occurs between primary and secondary schooling
- The later years of schooling is a time of heightened risk
- Many parents, students and teachers perceive that the final years of school lead to high levels of stress and transition problems
- Parental participation improves student learning

ACTiViTY 1

Benefits and Barriers



→ PURPOSE:

To explore the benefits and barriers of parent involvement in the later years of schooling for parents, students and teachers.

→ REQUIREMENTS:

- Markers
- Worksheet 1: Benefits and Barriers (enlarge to A3)
- Overhead 5: The Barriers to Parent Involvement in the Later Years of Schooling
- Overhead 6: The Benefits of Parent Involvement in the Later Years of Schooling

→ PROCESS:

- Divide participants into three groups.
- Provide each group with Worksheet 1 and markers.
- **Group 1** brainstorm the benefits and barriers of parent involvement **for students**.
- **Group 2** brainstorm the benefits and barriers of parent involvement **for parents**.
- **Group 3** brainstorm the benefits and barriers of parent involvement **for teachers**.
- Groups record and then share information following the brainstorming session.
- Summarise the activity by using research from the literature review and focus groups that can be found on Overheads 5 and 6.

WORKSHEET 1

Benefits and Barriers



Circle the group you represent


Students

Parents

Teachers

Benefits

Barriers



→ The Barriers to Parent Involvement in the Later Years of Schooling

- Practical constraints
- Attitudinal barriers
- Structural barriers

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The National Curriculum

→ NOTES:

Practical constraints

- Working hours
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Safety (attending school at night)
- Commitments to more than one school, organisation, sporting club
- Communication – not aware or inadequate notice
- Work and travel time
- Resources (e.g. time, money, skills, knowledge)

Attitudinal barriers

- Schools can be intimidating places
- Teachers often seem to be too busy
- Unsure how or who to make contact with
- A perception of a less than welcoming atmosphere
- Attitudes from own schooling
- Children don't want parents involved
- Children don't convey information
- Lack of understanding of what parents and teachers have to contribute
- Feeling judged in relation to occupation, status or ethnicity

Structural barriers

- Teachers' lack of time and or resources to develop strategies
- Lack of flexibility of options for involvement

It is important to keep in mind these barriers when developing your Parent Involvement Strategy.

➔ The Benefits of Parent Involvement in the Later Years of Schooling



**For
students:**

- Improves academic achievement
- Creates a more positive attitude to school and studying
- Improves school attendance
- Increases satisfaction with tertiary education

**For
parents:**

- Develops closer relationships with teachers
- Increases opportunities for parents to share ideas with other parents
- Reduces family conflict

**For
teachers:**

- Develops a more positive relationship with parents
- Encourages a better understanding of students
- Encourages parental recognition of teaching skills and effort

ACTiViTY 2 What is Parent Involvement in the Later Years?



→ PURPOSE:

To consider different types of parent involvement.

→ REQUIREMENTS:

- Overhead 7: What is Parent Involvement in the Later Years?
- Worksheet 2: Types of Parent Involvement
- Overhead 8: Examples of Parent Involvement
- Overhead 9: Principles that Guide Parent and School Partnerships

→ PROCESS:

- Introduce the activity using Overhead 7.
- Distribute Worksheet 2.
- Ask participants to brainstorm the possible ways in which parents can be involved in:
 - a school initiative — initiated by the school, at the school, for the school
 - a school-home initiative — initiated by either the school or parents, at school or at home for parents, young people and schools
 - a school-community initiative — initiated by any party within the school community for families, young people and the community.
- Record and discuss responses to consider:
 - the strengths of parent involvement in your school
 - whose needs are being met (schools, students or parents)
 - the opportunities that your school could explore to enhance parent involvement.
- Refer to Overhead 8 for examples of parent involvement.
- Refer to Overhead 9 to conclude this activity.

➔ What is Parent Involvement in the Later Years?




Parent involvement in the later years of schooling is a program, strategy or action that involves parents in their child's education at school, home or in the community.

WORKSHEET 2

Types of Parent Involvement



Types of Parent Involvement	Examples
<p>A school initiative, initiated by the school at the school for the school.</p>	
<p>A school-home initiative, initiated by either the school or parents, at school or at home for parents, young people and schools.</p>	
<p>A school-community initiative, initiated by any party within the school community for families, young people and the community.</p>	



➔ Examples of Parent Involvement

A school initiative:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helping in class, supervising on excursions• Participating in surveys• Attending school events• Membership of working parties or school council
A school-home initiative:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A parent education program• Reinforcing school advice at home• Networking with other parents
A school-community initiative:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with community agencies• Community action initiatives• Open days, expos

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Building a Future The Place to Be

➔ NOTES:

A school initiative might include parent involvement through:

- helping in class, acting as a guest speaker, supervising on excursions
- membership of school decision-making bodies, participation in surveys, communication with school staff
- attendance at school events
- membership of working parties (e.g. curriculum, finance, facilities and grounds).

A school-home initiative might include parent involvement through:

- a parent education program that improves parent's capacity to support their child (e.g. parent programs, study skills, driver education)
- reinforcing school advice at home (e.g. suggested homework habits, social behaviour, television viewing)
- networking with parents of other students to provide parenting support.

A school-community initiative might include parent involvement through:

- working with community agencies to support families and young people
- responding to community action initiatives (e.g. local youth issues)
- supporting attendance at open days, expos.

➔ Principles that Guide Parent and School Partnerships



Though there is little evidence to support any particular approach to parent involvement, there is endorsement for two main approaches:

- encouraging parents to model at-home behaviours that promote learning and demonstrate that education is valued
- conducting activities at school to support the teacher–parent relationship

➔ NOTES:

Parent Involvement in Drug Education, Guidelines for Schools (DE&T 2005) also provides information for schools employing a range of strategies to involve a broad cross-section of parents. These include:

- involving parents in planning and implementing programs
- creating a variety of roles for parents within the school
- providing adequate training for staff and parents to ensure parent involvement is meaningful and well supported
- conducting activities in parent's first language
- providing information in a range of community languages
- informing parents of the options for contacting school staff.

ACTiViTY 3

Parental Concerns



→ PURPOSE:

To explore the issues for parents with students in the later years of schooling.

→ REQUIREMENTS:

- Worksheet 3: Continuum Cards
- Overhead 10: Parental Priority Areas

→ PROCESS:

- Ask participants to form a horseshoe.
- Hand out cards from Worksheet 3.
- Place the 'Most Important' sign at one end of the horseshoe and the 'Least Important' sign at the other end.
- Ask participants to place the cards along the continuum in response to:

*In relation to parent involvement in the later years, what issues does your school address.
Rank in order of importance.*

Note: Most important means that the most time and resources are devoted to the issue.

- Ask participants to share reasons for their card placement.
- Record the eight most important responses.
- Show Overhead 10: Parental Priority Areas (results from the parent focus groups).
- Discuss responses
 - are the four parental priority areas represented in the top eight responses?
 - if any of the parental priority areas have not been represented, what can the school do to address these?

→ ISSUES:

children leaving home
happiness
further study
feeling powerless
stress
depression
community involvement
teachers
sexual issues
alcohol and other drugs

other interests (e.g. music, sport)
part-time work
being marginalised
career prospects
physical appearance
friendships
family relationships
parties
academic results
homework



**children leaving
home**

happiness

further study

**feeling
powerless**

stress

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**community
involvement**

teachers

sexual issues

**alcohol and
other drugs**

**other interests
(e.g. music, sport)**

part-time work

**being
marginalised**

career prospects

**physical
appearance**

friendships

**family
relationships**

parties

**academic
results**

homework

**MOST
IMPORTANT**

**LEAST
IMPORTANT**

➔ Parental Priority Areas



The four priority areas that seemed particularly relevant to parents in this project were:

- Protecting their child's health and wellbeing
- Improving their child's academic performance
- Becoming involved in decision making that affects their child's future
- Maintaining a supportive relationship with their child

➔ NOTES:

1. A healthy and balanced lifestyle between school, work and relaxation/recreation will optimise performance. Depending on the individual's coping mechanisms, stress can result in either a negative or a positive response. The frequency and effectiveness of communication and mutual support may help to reduce stress for both the parent and the young person.
2. Criticism or constant questioning may have the contrary affect to what is intended. Positive reinforcement, encouragement and understanding will be more helpful. Schools might also offer information to parents about providing their child with an environment conducive to learning.
3. Many parents become anxious about the career choices of their children. Schools that create opportunities for parents to be involved in the decision-making process may help to reduce anxiety about their child's future.
4. Schools may facilitate opportunities for parents and their children to have open and honest communication, and for parents to demonstrate support for their child. It should be a time for relaxation and enjoyment together.

ACTiViTY 4 Exploring the Support Material



→ PURPOSE:

To familiarise participants with the range of handouts provided in the support material section of the resource.

→ REQUIREMENTS:

- Overhead 11: Parent Partnership Support Material
- Worksheet 4a: Four Major Tasks
- Worksheet 4b: Success without Stress – Study Skills Survey
- Four photocopied sets of the Support Material handouts from the *Parent Partnerships* resource, pages 25 to 50.

→ PROCESS:

- Refer participants to the World of the Adolescent handout and the four major tasks that young people need assistance with in the later years of schooling.
- Divide participants into four groups.
- Distribute Worksheet 4a: Four Major Tasks.
- Allocate each group one of the tasks
 - time management
 - resource management and organisation
 - stress management
 - fatigue management.
- Ask groups to brainstorm the possible ways in which schools and parents may assist young people. Using the support material, identify the handouts that may be of assistance.
- Ask groups to record and share responses.
- Distribute Worksheet 4b: Success without Stress – Study Skills Survey to all participants.
- Ask participants to complete the survey individually.
- Discuss how this survey could be used at a parent information session for:
 - self reflection for staff and parents on their own study habits
 - identification of similarities and differences between parents and their child's study habits
 - support and assistance to students developing a study skills profile.

➔ Parent Partnership Support Material



1. World of the Adolescent
2. Health and Wellbeing
3. A Note to Parents
4. Supportive Relationships
5. Resilient Families
6. The Difficult Emotions – Depression and Anxiety
7. Young People and Drugs
8. Success without Stress
9. Pathways to the Future
10. Communication and Parent Networking

WORKSHEET 4a

Four Major Tasks



Major tasks	Ways to assist
Time Management	School
	Parents
Resource Management and Organisation	School
	Parents
Stress Management	School
	Parents
Fatigue Management	School
	Parents

WORKSHEET 4b Success without Stress – Study Skills Survey

One of the more common causes of stress for parents and their children is the issue of study. Parents often wonder whether their child is doing too much or too little. Young adults often are more stressed about their parents worry than they are about their study. To overcome unnecessary stress a study skills survey has been developed to assist you in developing your own study plan.

Please complete all five sections of the survey before scoring and plotting your responses. Remember this is not a test! It is a self-assessment of your current study techniques.

NOTE TAKING

1	If I think I'll remember something, I don't write it in my notes even if it seems important.	True	False
2	When taking notes in class I never abbreviate words.	True	False
3	I take notes on loose-leaf pieces of paper rather than notebooks.	True	False
4	I take notes after I have completed a reading assignment rather than as I go along.	True	False
5	I recopy my notes as soon as possible after class.	True	False
6	I usually take notes in class.	True	False
7	I usually take notes in class and then never look at them again.	True	False
8	My notes are so boring even I can't stand to look at them.	True	False
9	I often lose the notes I do take.	True	False
10	I only ever write down what the teacher writes on the board.	True	False

Score

STUDY HABITS

1	I use the headings of a chapter to get an idea of the outline before reading it.	True	False
2	Before reading a chapter, I write down several questions to focus my reading.	True	False
3	When studying a book I try to remember the exact words.	True	False
4	I often study with the radio or music on.	True	False
5	I try to break large bits of information into smaller areas.	True	False
6	I usually wait until I'm too tired to do anything else before I start doing homework.	True	False
7	I often find it hard to concentrate.	True	False
8	It seems to take me longer than most people to do homework.	True	False
9	It takes me a long time to get ready to do homework.	True	False
10	I have to be in the right mood to do homework.	True	False

Score

MOTIVATION

1	I sometimes wag classes.	True	False
2	I use facts I learn in school to help understand events out of school.	True	False
3	I feel comfortable asking questions in class.	True	False
4	I use the facts I learn in one subject to help me in another subject.	True	False
5	I usually just learn enough to pass the subject I'm studying.	True	False
6	I generally don't study for teachers I don't like.	True	False
7	I already know the marks I want to get in each of my subjects.	True	False
8	With really boring subjects, I try to keep my goals for my life in mind.	True	False
9	I think people can get smarter if they stick with things; intelligence isn't a fixed thing.	True	False
10	I don't like my friends seeing me try hard to do well at school.	True	False

Score

PLANNING

1	I often sit down to study only to find I don't have all the books, notes or materials I need.	True	False
2	I often don't have reports ready on time or they are done poorly to get them in on time.	True	False
3	I leave school assessed work to the last moment.	True	False
4	In my school diary, I don't just write down when something is due in, I also write reminders.	True	False
5	I have set times to do homework during the week and pretty much stick to it.	True	False
6	I spend some time each week pulling information together in a way that is easy to remember for me.	True	False
7	I have a specific place for studying at home.	True	False
8	When I start to do homework I think about how much I want to get done in a set period of time.	True	False
9	I often discover I've read several pages without knowing what was on them.	True	False
10	I write down in my diary the most important thing I want to get done in each subject each week.	True	False

Score

TEST AND EXAM TAKING

1	I panic before tests.	True	False
2	I 'freeze up' in exams and go blank.	True	False
3	I try to get examples of past questions or exam papers.	True	False
4	In revising my notes, I use highlighters with different colours to distinguish main ideas from less important ideas.	True	False
5	I consider what questions are likely to be asked, and write mini-answers to them.	True	False
6	I write down the formulae, quotes and key concepts on small cards and use these to test my memory.	True	False
7	I develop acronyms to make it easier to remember my notes.	True	False
8	I do the hardest questions on an exam first.	True	False
9	I stick with a question on an exam until I feel I've got it right.	True	False
10	I study late the night before an exam.	True	False

Score

SCORING KEY

For each item, you can either get a score of 0 or 1. At the end of each of the five sections, total your scores.

	Note Taking		Study Habits		Motivation		Planning		Test & Exam	
	True	False	True	False	True	False	True	False	True	False
1		1	1			1		1		1
2		1	1		1			1		1
3		1		1	1			1	1	
4		1		1	1		1		1	
5	1		1			1	1		1	
6	1			1		1	1		1	
7		1		1	1		1		1	
8		1		1	1		1			1
9		1		1	1			1		1
10		1		1		1	1			1

Study skills profile

Strong 10					
Moderate 5					
Weak 0					
	Note Taking	Study habits	Motivation	Planning	Test & exam taking

To determine your study profile plot your results in the grid. This will assist you to determine your strongest study area and those areas which require more time and energy.

Identifying those areas for improvement will enable parents and a teacher to assist you to develop your study plan.

Parents can then assist their children to implement the plan by being more involved with some agreed elements, and allowing their children and teachers to take responsibility for the rest. The study plan could be reviewed by the student, parent and teacher at set review dates.

ACTiViTY 5

Assessing Current Communication Practice



→ PURPOSE:

To inform parent involvement in the later years of schooling strategies by exploring the means of communication between parents and schools.

→ REQUIREMENTS:

- Worksheet 5: Assessing Current Communication Practice

→ PROCESS:

- Distribute Worksheet 5 to each participant.
- Ask participants to rate the means of communication at their school.
- Divide participants into groups of approximately four.
- Ask groups to discuss the most prevalent means of communication for the school community.
- One person from each group reports back their findings.
- As a whole group
 - discuss the barriers/enablers for enhancing communication between parents and school (refer to Overhead 5 if necessary)
 - consider how schools can improve on the means of communication identified as never or only occasionally being used
 - discuss and record the strategies to overcome the barriers identified.

WORKSHEET 5 Assessing Current Communication Practice

Means of communication	Never	Occasionally			Often
	1	2	3	4	5
Inducts new families					
Conducts annual survey (e.g. to canvas needs, measure satisfaction)					
Reviews the accessibility of all communications (e.g. readability, clarity, form, frequency)					
Provides administrative/material support to parent groups					
Caters for parents with specific needs (e.g. ESL/CLD, culturally appropriate, disabilities)					
Maintains easily accessible channels of communication (School-home/Home-school)					
Encourages teachers to maintain communication with families					
Includes parents in student interviews and provides regular reports					
Involves parents and students in planning					
Provides support materials for families to assist their children					
Other means of communication					

ACTiViTY 6

Developing a Strategy



➔ PURPOSE:

To plan a strategy to enhance parent involvement in the later years of schooling.

➔ REQUIREMENTS:

- Overhead 12: Developing a Parent Partnership Strategy
- Worksheet 6: Developing a Parent Partnership Strategy

➔ PROCESS:

- Discuss Overhead 12.
- Distribute Worksheet 6.
- Refer to 'Developing a Plan for Involving Parents' on page 10 in the *Parent Partnerships* resource, to assist in completing the worksheet.



→ Developing a Parent Partnership Strategy

1. Getting Started
2. Gathering Information
3. Analysing the Data
4. Developing Recommendations
5. Developing a Parent Involvement Plan
6. Informing the School Community
7. Evaluating the Initiative

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→ NOTES:

1. Getting started

Gain support from the key stakeholders. Form a working party and establish clear and common aims.

2. Gathering information

Information may be gathered through questionnaires and/or interviews/focus groups. Questionnaires will provide quantitative information while interviews/focus groups will provide qualitative information.

3. Analysing the data

From the information gathered, identify the strengths and areas for improvement of:

- parent involvement in school activities and programs
- parent involvement in their child's schooling
- consider the priorities of parents, students and staff

Refer to Overhead 10: Parental Priority Areas and Activity 2: What is Parent Involvement in the Later Years?

4. Developing recommendations

Formulate recommendations to enhance parent involvement.

5. Developing a parent involvement plan

Develop a parent involvement plan that outlines the strategies, resources, timelines and key responsibilities necessary to address the recommendations. Refer to 'Things to be mindful of when developing strategies' identified in the *Parent Partnerships* resource on page 11.

6. Informing the school community

Communicate the proposed action plan to the broader school community.

Note: Multiple communication strategies result in the likelihood of reaching more parents.

7. Evaluating the initiative

Evaluation is an essential element of any strategy.

WORKSHEET 6 Developing a Parent Partnership Strategy

WHAT needs to be done?	WHO will have responsibility?	WHEN will the task begin/finish?	WHAT RESOURCES will we need to help complete the task?
1. Getting started			
2. Gathering information			
3. Analysing the data			
4. Developing recommendations			
5. Developing a parent involvement plan			
6. Informing the school community			
7. Evaluating the initiative			

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & TRAINING

Parent Partnerships

Parent Involvement
in the Later Years of Schooling

Professional Development Module



*Parental participation
improves student learning
whether the child is in preschool
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the family is struggling economically
or is affluent, or whether the parents
finished high school or graduated
from college.*

(Davis 2000)



→ Aim

To improve programs and strategies for involving parents to enable them to better support their children in the later years of schooling.

→ Research

1. A literature review
2. School-based consultation and focus groups with parents and staff
3. Key informant interviews with relevant agencies and personnel

➔ Developmental Needs of Young People



- Autonomy
- Competence and Coping Skills
- Belonging

➔ Key Findings



- A decline in direct parent involvement occurs between primary and secondary schooling
- The later years of schooling is a time of heightened risk
- Many parents, students and teachers perceive that the final years of school lead to high levels of stress and transition problems
- Parental participation improves student learning

➔ The Barriers to Parent Involvement in the Later Years of Schooling



- Practical constraints
- Attitudinal barriers
- Structural barriers

➔ The Benefits of Parent Involvement in the Later Years of Schooling



- For students:**
- Improves academic achievement
 - Creates a more positive attitude to school and studying
 - Improves school attendance
 - Increases satisfaction with tertiary education
- For parents:**
- Develops closer relationships with teachers
 - Increases opportunities for parents to share ideas with other parents
 - Reduces family conflict
- For teachers:**
- Develops a more positive relationship with parents
 - Encourages a better understanding of students
 - Encourages parental recognition of teaching skills and effort

➔ What is Parent Involvement in the Later Years?



Parent involvement in the later years of schooling is a program, strategy or action that involves parents in their child's education at school, home or in the community.



➔ Examples of Parent Involvement

A school initiative:

- Helping in class, supervising on excursions
- Participating in surveys
- Attending school events
- Membership of working parties or school council

A school–home initiative:

- A parent education program
- Reinforcing school advice at home
- Networking with other parents

A school–community initiative:

- Working with community agencies
- Community action initiatives
- Open days, expos



➔ Principles that Guide Parent and School Partnerships

Though there is little evidence to support any particular approach to parent involvement, there is endorsement for two main approaches:

- encouraging parents to model at-home behaviours that promote learning and demonstrate that education is valued
- conducting activities at school to support the teacher–parent relationship

➔ Parental Priority Areas



The four priority areas that seemed particularly relevant to parents in this project were:

- Protecting their child's health and wellbeing
- Improving their child's academic performance
- Becoming involved in decision making that effect's their child's future
- Maintaining a supportive relationship with their child

➔ Parent Partnership Support Material



1. World of the Adolescent
2. Health and Wellbeing
3. A Note to Parents
4. Supportive Relationships
5. Resilient Families
6. The Difficult Emotions – Depression and Anxiety
7. Young People and Drugs
8. Success without Stress
9. Pathways to the Future
10. Communication and Parent Networking

➔ Developing a Parent Partnership Strategy



1. Getting Started
2. Gathering Information
3. Analysing the Data
4. Developing Recommendations
5. Developing a Parent Involvement Plan
6. Informing the School Community
7. Evaluating the Initiative

