

Title: *Parents and The “Trap of Requirements” – Mentorship For Parents With Children in Vocational Orientation*

Facilitator and room number: Jörg Belden; 1.201

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Number of participants: 5

Starting hypothesis/questions:

How can we support parents in the challenges of vocational orientation of their children, which are often especially big in migrant families?

Sequence of content/methods:

The session took place in two rounds of input and discussion all concerning the challenges in vocational orientation.

The rounds dealt with the subjects of (1) the “treasure” (the parents’ input) and (2) the question “how to bridge the gap” between the parents’ facilities and the help their child needs.

Three main results/arguments presented by the facilitator:

To close the gap between the parents’ facilities and the children’s needs, parents have to gain insights into the education system and in concrete vocations. They have to learn impartiality and placidity concerning their children career plans. That helps them to take the role of a companion rather than a consultant. To achieve this, “Schulmentoren” has a parental mentoring programme in which parents help parents in this specific topic.

Main points of discussion:

- (1) Parents have their own interests, wishes and ideas concerning the future of their children formed by their own life experience. However, often parents step out of their children’s vocational orientation and the career orientation process.
- (2) Secondly, the role of the parents in the vocational orientation of their kids was discussed. Which engagement would be appropriate?

Result/s of Session:

- (1) Even though children have to make their own decisions concerning their future, they normally need their parents’ support. Sadly, some parents feel themselves not being the best guides due to a lack of self-confidence but also a lack of knowledge. Sometimes, to them the wishes of their children are hard to understand and it can be disappointing for parents if their interests and their children’s do not match.
- (2) Parents should take the role of accompanying their children during vocational orientation. If they observe talents, they can make adequate suggestions. To do so, parents have to gain knowledge about the education system of the country, which may not be the same as the one they were raised in.

Main statement highlighting the results of the discussion:

Adolescent children are the experts. Parents are the trainees. (Jörg Belden)