



# Parents as a family vocational adviser for children

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Conference on  
Education 2009**

# Supercomputing Center of Galicia (CESGA)



- Located in Santiago de Compostela (Spain)
- R+D in computational sciences
- Resource centre for researchers in Spain / Europe



# What is Parents Project?

PARENTS is an educational project financed by the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Program (Grundtvig scheme), which involves seven European institutions.

The Supercomputing Center of Galicia (CESGA) carries out the technological part of the project.



## Project main goal

*PARENTS' project main goal is to tackle the problem of training parents of adolescents to provide their children adequate orientation about studies and future employment options.*

# Project Partners



SWSPIZ Academy of Management ( Poland ) - Coordinator



Die Berater ( Austria )



Association Baobab ( Spain )



University of Oradea ( Romania )



Institute of Education  
Ltd. ( Slovakia )



Training 2000 ( Italy )



CESGA  
Supercomputing  
Center of Galicia  
( Spain )

## Project aims

- To increase awareness of parents that they are an important cell in the chain of their children career making process.
- To broaden parents' knowledge in a handy way: how to help your own child in choosing their professional path.
- Empower peer-parents consultation role
- To encourage constant cooperation in the field of professional orientation between personal counselors at schools and parents of pupils

## Project aims

- To reduce stress among young people that results from making a difficult decision concerning the choice of profession through positive and specialist participation of parents in this process.
- To improve communication between children and their parents as a result of the joint participation in making crucial lifetime decisions.
- To improve the effectiveness of the choice of profession made by young people as a result of acting in accordance with their own interests and abilities as well as correlating the future profession with the demands of the job market



# Platform for trainers and Parents

The virtual environment was initially based on an Open Source software named **Joomla**.

Joomla is a Content Management System, which complied with the basic needs initially identified, and it was adapted to comply with the **training and information needs** of the project.





# Platform for trainers and Parents

The screenshot shows the website's header with the logo, navigation links (home page, contact, site map), and logos for the European Union and the Socrates Grundtvig program. Below the header is a language selection menu and a main navigation menu with links to 'About the project', 'About training for parents', and 'About platform for parents'. The main banner features the text 'Parents as family vocational adviser for children' over a photo of a family in a field. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar and a right main column. The sidebar contains a 'Main Menu' with links to Home, Contact, and Parents Project Site; an 'Access' section with a login form (username, password, remember me, login button) and links for 'Forgot your password?' and 'Forgot your username?'; and an 'Online Users' section. The main column displays the 'PARENTS PROJECT' title, followed by 'About the project' text, 'The project aims at:' with a bulleted list of goals, and 'Target groups:' with a bulleted list of target audiences.

Choose language:

home page contact site map

**PARENTS** Education and Culture Socrates Grundtvig

About the project About training for parents About platform for parents

*Parents as family vocational adviser for children*

Home

**Main Menu**

Home  
Contact  
Parents Project Site

**Access**

Username

Password

Remember Me

Login

Forgot your password?  
Forgot your username?

**Online Users**

**PARENTS PROJECT**

**About the project**

It is an undeniable fact that parents play a crucial role in planning their children's future professional career. Although the researches into this issue have been conducted in the USA and Canada for 10 years, in Europe it is still a new subject matter.

**The project aims at:**

- increase awareness of parents that they are important cell in the chain of their children career making
- broadening parents' knowledge: how to help your own child in choosing the professional path
- empowerment of the peer-parents consultations role in parents education
- encouraging constant cooperation in the field of professional orientation between personal counselors at schools and parents of pupils
- reducing stress among young people that results from making a difficult decision concerning the choice of profession through positive and specialist participation of parents in this process
- improving communication between children and their parents as a result of the joint participation in making crucial lifetime decisions
- improving the effectiveness of the choice of profession made by pupils as a result of acting in accordance with one's interests and abilities as well as correlating the future profession with the demands of the job market

**Target groups:**

- parents of young people who face the choice of making a decision concerning the direction of their occupational education
- young people facing the choice of occupational education



# Platform for trainers and Parents

- Public section
  - Contact
  - Link to Project Website
- Private section
  - Agenda
  - Forum
  - Self Study Exercises
  - Case Study
  - Recommended readings
  - FAQ
  - Search
  - How to use the platform



## Private section – Agenda tool

In the agenda tool, trainers from different countries can add, modify or delete events about their local courses.

Parents can check information about the development of their courses.

# Private section – Agenda tool






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Grundtvig

[home page](#) | [contact](#) | [site map](#)

Choose language:       

[About the project](#) | [About training for parents](#) | [About platform for parents](#)



*Parents as family vocational adviser for children*

Home → Agenda

**Main Menu**

- [Home](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Parents Project Site](#)

**User Menu**

- [Agenda](#)
- [Forum](#)
- [Self study exercises](#)
- [Case Studies](#)
- [Recommended readings](#)
- [Evaluation of the platform](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Search](#)
- [How to use the platform](#)
- [Profile](#)

**Access**

Hi chema,

**EVENTS CALENDAR**

←← 2009 →→

See by year

See by month

See by week

See Today

Search

Jump to month

May 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7 <b>incontro di coordina ...</b>	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 <b>Incontro 1 Curs I Romania</b>	16
17	18 <b>Curs II Romania</b>	19	20	21	22 <b>Curs III Romania</b>	23 <b>Incontro 2</b>

**Events Calendar**

«« October 2009 »»

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

«« November 2009 »»

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5



## Private section – Forum tool

The forum tool is used for sharing ideas among parents and also, among parents and trainers.

There is a main forum (in English) where parents and trainers from different countries can share ideas, and there are six forums (in Polish, Italian, Spanish, Romanian, German and Slovak) where parents and trainers from each country share ideas, exchange information etc.

# Private section – Forum tool

A screenshot of a forum thread with four posts. Each post includes a user profile picture, name, and status (OFFLINE | PROFILE). The posts are: 1. User 'english' (OFFLINE | PROFILE) with a photo of a person in a white shirt, posting 'Re:Prova' 5 Months, 2 Weeks ago with the text 'Test'. 2. User 'Mioara' (OFFLINE | PROFILE) with a photo of a yellow lightbulb, posting 'Re:Prova' 5 Months, 1 Week ago with the text 'Hello from Romania! I am Mioara, mother of two adolescent girls and I am glad to meet you all and to change Experience with you!'. 3. User 'Training2000' (OFFLINE | PROFILE) with a photo of a man at a desk, posting 'Re:Prova' 4 Months, 3 Weeks ago with the text 'Hi from Italy! It is nice to have this international exchange. Let's get more people here in the forum. Greetings. Elmo'. 4. User 'Anna' (OFFLINE | PROFILE) with a photo of a person's face, posting 'Re:Prova' 4 Months, 1 Week ago with the text 'Hi, Elmo, Yesterday w strded our pilot. Everything is going very well!!'. Each post has a 'Report to moderator' link, a 'Logged IP' field, and buttons for 'QUICK REPLY', 'REPLY', 'QUOTE', 'DELETE', and 'EDIT'. Post numbers #65, #105, and #165 are visible on the right side of the thread.



## Private section – Self study exercises

Self study exercises are available for parents, to identify their children personality, temperament, etc.

This area has a theoretical section with activities and online forms.

# Private section – Self study exercises

Parents as family vocational adviser for children

Home → Self study exercises

Main Menu

- Home
- Contact
- Parents Project Site

User Menu

- Agenda
- Forum
- Self study exercises
- Case Studies
- Recommended readings
- Evaluation of the platform
- FAQs
- Search
- How to use the platform
- Profile

Access

Hi chema,

SELF STUDY EXERCISES

### 1. Recognition of the child

**Theoretical Introduction**

The educational - professional choice is a continuous process through which the individual develops ability and acquires tools that allow him/her to be aware and critical in front of the reality which surrounds him/her and, to carry out responsible choices both on an individual and social level.

It is an evolutionary process which interests all the experience time frame of a person, who interacts in a dynamic way with a reality which becomes more and more complex and articulated. This particular activity involves several competences of the person: the knowledge he/she has, abilities and personality, but also further elements such as: motivation, future expectations, educational results, etc...

John L. Holland (1973, 1997) theorized that career choices are largely a function of personal factors (e.g. personality traits) and environmental factors (e.g. family and school). In making career choices, individuals seek the type of environment that matches, or is congruent with their personality type.

This chapter deals with ten factors: abilities, skills, behaviour, personality, expectation and plans, family vocational history, health and body condition (described by Adriana Borza, Romania), interests, stage of child development, Temperament Children representation of jobs and vocations, and values system (described by Luisa Cherubini and Anita Engelen,, Italy).

[Read more...](#)

Events Calendar

«<< October 2009 >>»

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

«<< November 2009 >>»

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5





## Private section – Case study

Case studies are online exercises available for participant parents.

This section has a brief introduction for each example case and then self evaluated possible activities with online forms.

# Private section – Case study






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[home page](#) | [contact](#) | [site map](#)

Choose language:      

[About the project](#) | [About training for parents](#) | [About platform for parents](#)



*Parents as family vocational adviser for children*

Home

**Main Menu**

[Home](#)

[Contact](#)

[Parents Project Site](#)

**User Menu**

[Agenda](#)

[Forum](#)

[Self study exercises](#)

[Case Studies](#)

[Recommended readings](#)

[Evaluation of the platform](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Search](#)

[How to use the platform](#)

[Profile](#)

**Access**

Hi chema,

**1. Case Study: Thompson's Family. (Kateřina Bryndová, Slovakia)**

**Description of the situation**

The members of Thompson's family are parents Laura and Jack and three children Philip, Joseph and Theresa. Laura works as a nurse for a paediatrician, Jack works as a police investigator. Philip is the oldest child, he studies at a university to become a doctor. Theresa is the youngest and visits primary school.

Joseph is in his last year of primary school so he has to decide where to go now. He is a very good student; he excels nearly in all subjects, especially in maths. He loves and admires his older brother and wishes to be like him. However he may be not really gifted for the profession of a doctor, because he is not as good in biology and he does not like this subject much. He often tries his fathers' police uniform and imagines he is a policeman. But he has some problems with his schoolmates regarding this theme. These children under the influence of other people's opinion don't like police profession and they consider policemen silly, useless and corrupt. Joseph does not share this opinion, but he is afraid to admit that he is just considering this career option.

Philip supports Joseph in his plan to be a doctor. He offers him to help him with his studies.

Only the youngest member of the family Theresa knows about Joseph's idea to be a policeman, because she has seen him when he was trying their fathers' uniform. She loves his brother as well as secrets.

Laura and Jack want to help Joseph with his vocational choice. How should they proceed?

Laura and Jack are aware of the wish of their second son to become a doctor and are pleased with his choice. However, they are a bit afraid because of his school results in biology. So they decide to visit his teacher. The teacher tells them the situation is not as

**Events Calendar**

**<< October 2009 >>**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**<< November 2009 >>**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5



## Private section – Recommended readings

In this category, there are two sections available for parents/trainers: one folder per country and a general one.

Both are available for trainers, so, they can upload contents for the parents of their pilot course and also upload materials for all groups in English language.

# Private section – Recommended readings



home page contact site map

Choose language: 

About the project About training for parents About platform for parents

*Parents as family vocational adviser for children*

Home → Recommended readings

Main Menu	Folders/Files	Events Calendar																																										
Home	 Austria (0/0)	<p>&lt;&lt; October 2009 &gt;&gt;</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14																																						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21																																						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28																																						
29	30	1	2	3	4	5																																						
Parents Project Site	 Italy (0/3)																																											
User Menu	 Polska (0/1)																																											
Agenda	 Romania (0/4)																																											
Forum	 Slovakia (0/0)																																											
Self study exercises	 Spain (0/0)																																											
Case Studies																																												
Recommended readings																																												
Evaluation of the platform																																												
FAQs																																												
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How to use the platform																																												
Profile																																												
Access																																												
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## Private section – FAQ

In the FAQ category, trainers have placed a collection of frequently answered questions for their course users.

# Private section – FAQ

Home → FAQs

**Main Menu**

Home  
Contact  
Parents Project Site





**User Menu**

Agenda  
Forum  
Self study exercises  
Case Studies  
Recommended readings  
Evaluation of the platform  
**FAQs**  
Search  
How to use the platform  
Profile

**Access**

Hi chema,

**FAQS**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. How can I become a patient parent?**

First you have to stay cool and calm in every situation with the help of deeply breathing and exercising. Then you should pre-plan and have foresight, communicate with your child, keep real expectations about your child, try to see everything through your child's eyes and give him space.

**2. What is the best way to avoid stereotypes in vocational advising?**

If your child may be influenced by gender stereotypes show him examples of people who defy them. Try to find them in your neighbourhood. Draw your child's attention to female truck driver living in by-street, to your male friend who works as a nurse or to mother of his schoolmate who is a master builder.

If you have doubts that your child perceives particular job positions in a stereotypical way you should have a talk about it. Try to name advantages as well as disadvantages of such job positions to your child and explain why it is not right to see anything from just a one point of view.

**3. My son/daughter doesn't know what s/he wants to study and s/he has to take a decision next year. How can I help him/her to find information about the professional careers? Where can I find information about the characteristics of the jobs?**

The employment services of the public administrations usually have classified information about the characteristics of the main jobs, sorted by categories, and with a definition of the characteristics of the jobs as well as the knowledge and skills necessary to fill them. This information is normally available in the offices and in the web sites of the employment services.

In Catalonia (Spain), this information is available in the website of the Servei d'Ocupació de Catalunya (Catalan Employment Service) :  
[http://www.oficinadetreball.cat/socweb/opencms/socweb\\_ca/ciutadans/orientacio\\_feina/coneixer\\_feines.html](http://www.oficinadetreball.cat/socweb/opencms/socweb_ca/ciutadans/orientacio_feina/coneixer_feines.html)

**Events Calendar**

**<< October 2009 >>**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**<< November 2009 >>**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5



## Private section – Search

With the search tool, parents and trainers can search anything contained in the virtual environment.

They can search by keyword, free words, exact phrase, etc.

# Private section – Search






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[home page](#)   [contact](#)   [site map](#)

Choose language:       

[About the project](#)   [About training for parents](#)   [About platform for parents](#)



*Parents as family vocational adviser for children*

Home → Search

**Main Menu**

- [Home](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Parents Project Site](#)

**User Menu**

- [Agenda](#)
- [Forum](#)
- [Self study exercises](#)
- [Case Studies](#)
- [Recommended readings](#)
- [Evaluation of the platform](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Search](#)
- [How to use the platform](#)
- [Profile](#)

**Access**

Hi chema,

[Log out](#)

**SEARCH**

Search Keyword:

All words  
  Any words  
  Exact Phrase

Ordering:

Search Only:  Articles    Web Links    Contacts    Categories    Sections    News Feeds

Search Keyword

Total: 0 results found.

**Events Calendar**

<< **October 2009** >>

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

<< **November 2009** >>

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5





## Private section – How to use the platform

In this section trainers and parents can find tutorials that briefly describe the functionalities of the virtual platform.

So, basic information such as how to register, how to use the virtual platform works, etc. is shown here.



## Private section – Profile

In this section parents and trainers can edit their own details, so they can change their password and also select their preferred language to use in the platform.



## Summary

Vocational guidance and vocational counselling are able to make full use of the advantages of the Information and Communication Technologies. So professionals of this field together with parents and children can be clearly benefited from its use.

The project initial report showed that both groups are ready to make use of ICT as a complement for face to face lessons, and are willing to take advantage of its flexibility and possibilities.



# Any question?

Thanks for your time!



**[e-learning@cesga.es](mailto:e-learning@cesga.es)**