

Family learning does not only concern formal learning - communication between generations is also an essential part of it. This was the subject of the [Grundtvig Project Education for Parents - School of Intergenerational Communication. \(link\)](#)

Education for Parents - School of Intergenerational Communication (Grundtvig Project 2004 – 2006)

Family Learning concerns both children and their parents. It involves not only formal academic education but also learning about roles, relationships and responsibilities in a family. Successful communication between generations is of great importance. It is a condition that needs to be met to help family play its part and make all its members happy. The better parents communicate with their children the more positive influence they have on their personal and educational development. Therefore, such a communication is a talking point and subject of disputes in various institutions dealing with Family Learning. A few international projects concerning intergenerational communication have also been realized to work out common methods of dealing with this issue. One of them was **Education for Parents - School of Intergenerational Communication** coordinated by **Institute of Creative Proceedings, Poland**.

The project was initiated by both problems of young generation and problems with young generation. There have always been the latter ones but nowadays they are drastically getting stronger and stronger. It may be assumed that such a situation is caused by abrupt transformations taking place in Europe currently. As a consequence, „old” authorities and behavioural patterns are no longer valid. Young people have no guidelines allowing them to find their place in a society. Parents’ task of upbringing is also made more difficult by these abrupt changes. Preparing young people to adult life is no longer passing on traditional patterns to them since they became outdated. Parents do not know **how to talk with their children**. The situation is additionally complicated by the necessity of both parents’ vocational activity which limits the time they can spend with their children.

According to the main assumption of the project, parents are thought to be the ones who strongly influence young generation and should prepare their children to enter conscious adult life in its private and public sphere. Therefore, they should be supported in increasing their pedagogical awareness and provided with upbringing tools appropriate to the situation we face nowadays.

The final project product was educational programme for parents in the area of communication with children. Its aim is to prepare parents to deal with upbringing and prevent the pathology themselves without any help of psychological advice centres. The programme is aimed at developing features and attitudes typical of **mature personality** (self-consciousness, tolerance, responsibility, openness, empathy, creativity etc.) and increasing **skills of widely understood communication** with children. It initiates parents’ constant need for consideration on upbringing (its aims, parent’s role etc.), as well as on essence of interpersonal relations in a family. Therefore, it involves them in a form of education which can be recognized as Family Learning.

The realization of the programme takes the form of a course. Conducting it does not mean establishing new institutions since a course can be provided as a part of activities usually taken by borstals and educational centers extending slightly the range of their competences. It should be emphasized that school is a very convenient place for parents’ education as it is natural for them to visit it because of the meetings for parents or other occasions. Effective and successful cooperation between parents and school influences children’s development positively.

Different European institutions dealing with education for adults took part in the project. They all shared their experience in order to work out a common course programme dealing with a parent-child communication. Final product of the project includes School of Intergenerational Communication handbook which contains a number of ready-made exercises which can be used during workshops for parents or can be an inspiration for preparing new ones.

There was a pilot course organized by **Institute of Creative Proceedings** and it met its participants' approval and satisfaction. They unanimously agreed that having participated in the course they became more conscious and responsible parents who are no longer afraid of being unable to talk with their children.

The originator and merit coordinator of the project was Professor Aldona Pobjewska.

Family Learning is gaining popularity in Poland, even in summer holidays. The national action ["Getting Children out of Intellectual Poverty" \(link\)](#) activates both children and parents in their summer spare time.

"Getting Children out of Intellectual Poverty" - Holiday Family Learning

Apart from regular Family Learning activities, there are also some holiday forms of supporting family members' development. In Poland, children have summer holidays lasting over two months which means there is a lot of time to make good use of. It can be spent not only for resting but also for learning something useful and taking care of children's and parents' development.

One of such a possibility is taking part in the **national action „Getting Children out of Intellectual Poverty”**. It has been organized three times so far. Its originator is Jarosław Berger, a councilman of Łódzkie voivodeship regional council. Various institutions and organizations join this social action every year and it is gaining more and more popularity. Its main idea is to "take over" free time of children who do not go anywhere for their holidays and spend them in their places of living. This project makes it possible for them to spare their time doing something interesting and useful for their academic and personal development instead of roaming about in the streets.

There is always a wide variety of activities to choose from – painting in the open air, dancing lessons, sport, music, theatre, literary activities etc. There are so many options and possibilities for all age groups that everyone can find something interesting to do. What is important, not only children but also parents can join events which take place as a part of this action. It is more and more popular especially among these ones who do not have time to spend it with their children during academic year and now, while being on their annual leave, can dedicate attention to their children and learn together with them.

More and more schools, psychopedagogical service centers, leisure and community centres share Berger's idea and join the action offering new promising ways of spending free time. It means Family Learning is gaining popularity in Poland.