



PACCS Convention 2006

Racket Hall Country
House Hotel,
Roscrea.

Struggling with the Juggling

- Theme
- Why me....expert?
- Background...Teacher, Principal, Parent + ACCS
- Personal Perspective

School...Parent/Guardian...Student

- ...(sch) an institution for training or instruction, especially one for children...
- ...(par) a living thing which produces other similar living things; a mother or father...
- ...(par) a source of origin of something...
- ...(guard) a person who has the right and duty to protect another person...
- ...(stu) a person who studies at a school or other institution...

Challenge is....

- How to get the mix right to make all elements work together for the good of the student
- Effective communications...listening skills
- Good relationships based on trust (small...)
- Home and school work in partnership
- Rights of all respected

Parents must...

- Know their child
- Know their capabilities and aptitudes
- Know their strengths and weaknesses
- Encourage, comfort and support
- Be patience....have some ambition
- Motivate and nurture
- Expectations of child...theirs or yours?

Parents/Students

- Rights
- Constitution:
 - primary educator
 - right to & access to education to 16 years
- Legislation: particularly
 - Education Act 1998
 - Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Education Act 1998.....Students

- Entitlement toschool year
- Involvement of parents (S23)
- Right to establish students council (S27)
- Over 18 years ...right to Section 29 appeal
- School to provide for educational needs of all students: gifted to special needs + accommodation

Education Act 1998.....Parents

- Support services for all students
- Parental choice
- Establish Parents' Council
- Membership of BOM
- Inspectorate: statutory duty to advise p/assoc.
- Access to records
- Consulted on school plan
- BOM & Section 29 appeals (enrol/suspension)
- Consultation on regulations (NPCpp)
- School managed for good of students & parents

Education Act 1998.....BOM..1

- Educational needs of all Students
- Manage school for benefit of students & their Parents
- Have regard:
 - DES policies & directions
 - Ethos of school
 - Efficient use of resources
- Publish School Policies: admissions, discipline

Education Act 1998....BOM...2

- Minister has power to appoint a person to report in relation to the discharge of a function (S19)
- Establish procedure to keep local partners informed on operation of school (S20)
- Arrange the preparation of school plan (S21)
- Establish procedure to keep students informed concerning activities of the school (S27)

Education Act 1998..Teachers/Principal

- Encourage & foster learning in students (T)
- Regularly evaluate and periodically report exams (T)
- Promote co-operation between school & community (T)
- Day-to-day Management of school (P)
- Leadership (P)
- Create school environment supportive of learning (P)
- Promote professional development (P)
- Set objectives for school & monitor achievements (P)
- Encourage involvement of parents in children's educ.

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

- Compulsory education (16 yrs. Or 3 years ed..latest)
- Entitlement of student to certain min. educ.
- Compulsory attendance at recognised schs.
- Preventative measures

National Educational Welfare Board

How:

- Promote appreciation of education
- Promote & foster environment that encourages students to attend
- Research into reasons for non-attendance
- Assist schools meet obligations
- Advise/Assist students & Parents
- Reviews & guidance to teachers... strategies
- Advise NCCA on curriculum that impacts on attend.
- Assessment of students with parents approval

NEWBPart 3, Sections 17 &18

- Cause children to attend recognised school
- Notify school of reasons for student absence
- Know that school has clearly defined procedures concerning recording of parent notification, record system etc.
- EWO involved after 20 days....6 days suspension...consults with...

Where is the struggle

- Knowledge is the key
- Know what is required?
- So much data to remember
- All must work together!
- If it can go go wrong, it probably will
- Learn from mistakes, problems + share?
- Blame resolves nothing
- Get informed and take an interest
- It your child's future....only happens once!

Why the struggle?

- Know rights and entitlements
- Know my child.....angel + I'm interested
- Know all about the school?
 - prospectus
 - code of behaviour/discipline
 - school policies.....enrolment, bullying, complaints, harassment, so welcoming etc
 - ask other parents.....question

Where does it go wrong?

- It's the schools fault?
- It's the teachers fault
- Its my fault
- It's the other students
- Its.....my Johnnie or Mary
- I never knew....excuses

The scene has changed for the next generation

- Education the passport to future employment prospects
- Your ambitions for Johnnie/Mary
- College.....happiness
- They won't make the same mistakes I did
- Economy booming
- Expectations & realism

Why did you pick this School

- Why you pick this school?
- Prospectus, word of mouth, heard good things
- Neighbours kid go there
- Investigated matters
- Met principal and/or staff
- Open day
- No other options... only school

School

- Support the school
- Take interest & become informed of its educational programmes & activities
- Ask questions of what goes on
- Wrong vibes....get answers...visit school
- Student only gets one chance at this stage
- School may not work for all

School is full of

- Personalities
- Mix of attitudes
- Personal challenges
- Opportunities for personal growth & development
- Opportunities for conflict
- Influences
- So much to remember....do best you can

Life is different today?

- Our attitudes have changed:
 - Drink
 - Drugs
 - Sex
 - Authority
 - Opportunity to return to education
 - affluence....cars, tv, homes, entertainment
 - Money....plenty of it!!!
- No longer.....in my day...when I was your age...you don't know how well off you are...
- It's a struggle to keep calm and focused

Become familiar with...

- School Code of Discipline/Behaviour
- Anti-bullying code
- Data outlined (copy) at enrolment...activities
- Parents charter.....students charter
- Complaints procedures (PACCS)
- Code: Sexual Harassment of teacher by student
- Right to appeal.....BOM & S 29 (EWO)
- Role of Parents' Council & PACCS

President NPCpp

- Mr. Jim Jackman
- Irish Independent 2/3/06
- Parents/Guardians “can easily forget especially when they are dealing with uncommunicative, hormonal and anxious teenagers, that the people they (the teenagers) value and want most to please are indeed their own parents”

School Personnel Who Will Assist Parents When Asked....

- Principal/Deputy Principal
- Year Head
- Tutor
- Chaplain
- Career Guidance Personnel
- Special Needs Assistant?
- Director of Adult Education
- Adult Education Guidance Service
- Adult Education Organiser
- Education Welfare Officer
- Special Education Needs Organiser

Terminology

- NEPS, NEWB, EWO, SENO, NCCA, NCSE
- Clarify & question
- Don't be put down or intimidated
- It's a struggle but get help
- Become informed
- Chat with the student on what you hear
- Keep the channels of communication open

Struggle with Study

- Homework/Study: Benefits, facilities, school study club
- Home environment....quite...no telly...headphones
- How long must they study
- I don't know what he/she is doing up there...
- Breaks & patience
- Meals & snacks
- Help from school (ask)

Struggle with Finances.....grows on trees....free education

- Books, Uniform, P.E.....assistance
- Meals, gaeltacht,summer camps
- School may be able to assist in confidence
- Tours.....not possible
- Gear
- Homework club
- Part-time work (own money)...raise expectations
- Realism
- Communications.....blowing top unhelpful

Struggle with Extra-Curricular Activity Programme

- Miss class V school activity
- Benefits.....balance
- Over committed
- Teachers missing with activity
- Results important.....future
- Education is?
- Encourage & support

Struggle with demands on Time

- Drama/Musical/Sporting activity...attend
- Other family members need time also
- Take interest....benefits
- Cannot be everywhere.....explain
- Parents Association meetings
- Open days
- Parent Teacher meetings

Struggle at home

- Uncommunicative.....meal times a disaster
- Intolerant with siblings
- Loud music
- Friends always in the house
- Never does as told/requested
- Hits siblings
- Shouts at everyone
- Lacks understanding of the needs of other
- Always the referee

Struggle with Subject & Programme Choices

- Core curriculum
- Optional subjects
- Programme differences: LCA, LCVP, LC, PLC
- Choices V Career pathways
- How do I advise student
- Level;s: Higher, Ordinary, Foundation

Struggle with Mistakes

- Students
- Teachers & School
- Personal
- Accept mistakes will occur....learn from them...no repeat
- Laugh at yourself off where possible
- Keep up the positive & supportive stance

Struggle with Examinations

- Pressure
- Expectations of school
- Expectations at home
- Finding life difficult
- Criticism does not work
- Encouragement works
- Talk, listen, communicate
- Poor results.....what should we do now...plan
- Prayer helps

Struggling with Failure

- What is failure.....student/parent/student
- Lost opportunity
- Stuck in the groove
- Future life/career prospects not good
- Qualifications can be obtained
- National Qualifications framework
- Further studies possible.....23 years +
- Never too late

Struggle with Appeals

- Rights
- Appeal to School Management & BOM
- Section 29 (DES c/l 48/01)...DES...Appeals Committee...fear of unknown
- Supports available:
 - husband/wife/partner
 - parents' association
 - legal?.....BOM wary
 - not personal.....decisions impact on your child

Discipline: Natural Justice

- Right to be heard in one's own defence
 - anyone affected by a decision has the right to be told what case is being taken against him/her and allowed an opportunity to respond.

Included are:

- right to fair procedures
- right to call witnesses in one's defence
- right to be heard
- right to be represented
- right to cross-examine
- right to be informed of the charges
- right to appeal

Natural Justice....2

- The rule against Bias
 - the decision maker must not be biased
 - a person cannot be a judge in one's own case
- Procedures:
 - take decisions which are within one's jurisdiction
 - abide by the two laws of natural justice

Deed of Trust states

- “Subject to the provision of these articles and to the direction of the Board, the Principal shall control the internal organisation, management and discipline of the School, shall exercise supervision over the teaching and non-teaching staff and shall have power for any cause which he or she judges adequate to dismiss subject to the approval of the Board or to suspend pupils from attendance but on the dismissal or suspension of any pupil the parent shall be informed that he or she has the right to appeal to the Board.”

2nd schedule, Articles of Management, Par. 10 (ii)

Where am I at..... the future?

- My child
- Cradle to the grave
- Do my best
- Give all my love & support
- They can do no wrong
- Take positive interest in all they do
- It's a labour of love
- Become informedknowledge is the key
- Keep on addressing the struggle
- Communicate, communicate, communicate!