

## Towards the Development of Parents' Coaching Skills on their Children's Career Choices

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The training program was a joint project of Edukasyon.ph, the Career Development Association of the Philippines and the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP). One of the objectives of the program where the main facilitator, Ms. Mari Jose and the author gave their contributions is to help parents coach their Grades 7-11 children on wise career decision-making. The trainers were experienced and licensed counselors of the Career Development Association of the Philippines (CDAP).

The Career Awareness and Readiness Seminar (CARES) program covered understanding the characteristics of their children as millennials, the role of communication between parents and children, a little of theories on career growth and development, techniques of career choice coaching and understanding traits that can lead these children to succeed later in the workplace.

The program was pilot tested half day each to parents in 13 public schools in three regions of the Philippines: Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

The parent trainees were those who voluntarily accepted the trainers' invitations for participation through their children who are enrolled in the participant schools. A total of 584 parents underwent the training in Cebu, Cagayan de Oro (CDO) and National Capital Region (NCR). After the input of main and co-facilitators, open forum and discussion among participants, they were assigned to sit down with their child to compare, discuss and communicate to each other their desire in the student's choice of career. Parents' improved way of communicating and developing coaching skills were used for their children's decision-making process.

The effectiveness of the program was determined through the parents' written feedback regarding its relevance in preparing them to meet the expressed needs of their children in making career choices through their proper guidance.

Major findings point to the participants' appreciation of the program for their learning. Out of 583 parents, only 251 submitted their evaluation. A consistent average rating of 4.3 and above (in scale of 1-5) was given to parents' workshop discussion conducted by CDAP.

The following are their categorized feedback from the report prepared by Edukasyon.ph:

- They had better understanding of the K-12 System of education which is new in the country.
- The program gave them opportunity in helping them communicate better with their children.
- It taught them how to guide their children in making better education and career choices.
- They become knowledgeable about Tracks and Strands that helps them to relate better to their children's concerns.
- Parents become more open to students' choice to pursue less traditional kind of tracks like Technical-Vocational Livelihood (TVL) courses.
- In general, parents now are extending support to what their child aims to pursue as career.

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As recommendations also pointed out from Edukasyon.ph report, it would be best to allot time for Q & A portion of the program between parents and students. A reminder to parents must continue about the youth today. Parents are products of their times and they cannot always compare themselves to their children due to changing world, globalization and advanced technology. Some parents claimed that they only got to know the skills, interests and dream career of their children in the workshop, though they are willing to support them in their desire. Some parents may have the same realization. More time should be given to address this concern during the processing of parent-child coaching experience. From the outcome of training, it shows that coaching is the best alternative career development activities at home. Hence, this program must go on.

A continuing study, using the results to improve the program will start as soon as everything has been prepared. Consequent evaluations will be used for further improvements, until it can be extended to train teachers or career advocates in public schools to help students who are unable to benefit from career guidance/education due to the scarcity of licensed and practicing counselors.

The potential long time benefit of this research is the development of more qualified work force/professionals not only in the country but also in Asia (part of ASEAN 2015 goals).