

## PRIMARY TOOLKIT: ENGAGING PARENTS

This guide is a flexible, stand-alone resource for teachers, parents and governors towards career related learning (CRL) in many contexts, with a focus on engaging parents throughout the process.

The practical ideas can be adapted to suit a variety of topics and projects being undertaken over a number of weeks or a shorter enrichment session, and applied to suit the wide-ranging needs of schools and their pupils from years 5 to 6 – although many aspects can be modified for earlier years and into the early secondary phase.

Schools may choose to run the TeenTech City of Tomorrow programme as their core CRL and use this additional resource.

TeenTech City of Tomorrow is a flexible, cross-curricular programme which can be delivered to groups, several classes at a time, and whole year groups.

It offers pupils the opportunity to apply their knowledge of science, technology and engineering to create their TeenTech City of Tomorrow where no ideas are too big, and everything is smarter, kinder and safer than before.

A full set of up to date, free resources, worksheets, lesson plans and materials required to deliver this programme can be accessed by registering on:

<http://teentechcity.com/register-your-interest/>

### Aims

**Reasons for involving parents and carers in their children's career related learning (CRL) as early as possible:**

- Promotes discussion between parents and their children about many changes in, for example, technology, leisure and environment over the timespan of a generation. This can help pupils and parents to understand the context of the pace of our fast changing world on a personal level and the demands for learning new skills for future job roles.
- Raises awareness about the opportunities open to their children at an early age, helping to break down barriers and stereotypes which can otherwise restrict pupil, parental and teacher aspirations, particularly at the point of selecting career choices.
- Informs and encourages parents to engage with their children about the breadth of career opportunities/pathways, instilling greater confidence to explore these themselves and support their children, even if they are considering areas outside the parental 'comfort zone'. **Link:** [Gatsby Benchmarks](#)

- Greater awareness of the important transferable skills required in the modern workplace will encourage parents to help their children develop these skills by providing a range of opportunities and activities. This supports teachers' efforts to prepare their learners for future success in their next steps **Link:** [Ofsted Framework](#)

## Outcomes

### The impact – what will this look like? What should you be aiming for?

#### As a result of strategies to engage parents within your CRL programme:

- A good percentage of parents will participate in any preparatory activities before your CRL project begins in order to stimulate discussion about the topics involved and engage them with the principles of job roles and opportunities open to their child.
- An increased number of parents will attend CRL school events and activities to share the experience of their child and celebrate achievements.
- Parents will provide positive feedback to the school about the CRL project being undertaken by their child, either directly to teachers, via the website, as part of an evaluation completed by pupils, or within the community.
- A number of parents offer to volunteer as employers or employees to support projects in school across the curriculum, or to help with career talks and mini career fairs
- Parents' and carers' attitudes, perceptions and aspirations will broaden relating to their children's education and goals, leading to greater confidence and self-belief in pupils.
- Feedback from parents following CRL activities are positive and the community is increasingly actively involved as this approach becomes more embedded including through feedback cards / social media / attendance at future events

## Strategies

### How to promote parental engagement:

#### 1. Before the project /event\_ - (Approximately 2 weeks)

- Before running your CRL project e.g. TeenTech City of Tomorrow, ask parents to support their child/ren by taking part in a questionnaire as part of research .
- This has been very successful in our workshops, according to both pupil and parental feedback, and initiated much conversation about developments in technology and society as a whole over the years.
- You will find an example 'The task: Changes over time ' in our downloadable resources.
- A research task asking about their childhood and discussing with their child the differences then, compared to now, in their experience

- You can design similar tasks to be conducted by the children at home, designed to encourage dialogue between parent and child about CRL topics, such as changing trends in industry and society linked to current and future career opportunities, skills and personal qualities necessary for children to build upon to embrace future opportunities. **Link:** [Skills Builder Principles](#)
- Our example asks parents to remember their childhood in terms of what they liked about their environment whilst growing up and what they did in their leisure time.
- This can be easily adapted according to the topic (see further ideas below) and approached in different ways, to suit different age groups and educational needs of pupils, eg. interview style – pupil asks parents and writes the response or parents write the response, or responses could be digitally recorded or filmed.

## 2. Using the responses during the CRL project/event:

- The responses can be [shared amongst the class, in groups](#) - the findings to be explained to the rest of the class in turn - or [a Q & A session with the whole participating cohort](#) – this works well during a presentation at the relevant point which links to the topic.
- Alternatively, findings can be [shared during form time or Citizenship](#)
- The findings can be incorporated as part of the presentation and links made with the different skills and qualities demanded of employers now and in the future – [relating this information to the experience of their own families](#) in the past brings the topic to life and puts it into context.

## 3. Engaging parents during the CRL event:

- If a workshop event or enrichment activity is taking place, [invite parents in](#) to see the pupils' work and presentations at the end of the day. They can take part in feedback activities, quizzes, etc which will help raise awareness of the purpose of their child's experience and encourage continued support.
- It may also help break the mould of stereotypes and raise their aspirations for their child if they see the range of opportunities available to suit children of all abilities and backgrounds.
- If a [business ambassador](#) is present, parents will benefit from hearing about what they do and learn more about the opportunities available to their children in the future. This should enhance further dialogue at home and help raise awareness about the career paths available in the modern workplace.
- Invite [local media](#) into the school for your event – this will raise the profile of your CRL and create extra engagement with your parents – especially if parents are there and able to be interviewed.

**4. Post – event / project parental engagement:**

- **Create materials** for the school to create displays which are prominent in the reception area or hall – this could include photos, 3D objects made by pupils during the project, written work, evaluations, designs, planning, or even a video film running on the screen at the school entrance. This will prompt parental discussion and sustain interest in the experience and knowledge gained
- Celebrate achievements and success stories, along with input from any industrial/business links on the **website and through social media**. Share and promote ongoing activities. This will create a real buzz amongst the school community!
- Share materials with parents during **assemblies/ open day and evening events**. Pupils involved in the project could provide short presentations about their experience which will add value to the programme, not only in terms of raising awareness of CRL to parents, other pupils and teachers, but developing pupils’ core skills, personal qualities and confidence.

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CITY OF TOMORROW

## What we found out from our parents

**Changes in technology – when they were our age they had-**

- TV’s – Black & white; only 3 or 4 channels! Ceefax and Teletext. No remote control!
- Amstrad/ Sega mega drive computer – Donkey Kong. Spectrum games console– used cassettes to load games
- Landline plug-in dial telephone
- Video recorders (VHS)
- Music – cassettes, Walkman player, vinyl record player
- Polaroid / Film cameras



## APPENDIX 1 Other possible topics for parents to discuss with their child before a project.....

### When they were the same age as their child is now.....

- How they spent their leisure time
- Their local environment
- Food and mealtimes
- Farming
- Shopping experience
- School – lessons, equipment, facilities
- Music, TV, entertainment
- Their family life/ parents' jobs and careers
- Travel and transport
- Clothing / fashion
- Holidays



- The emphasis from the findings can support discussions about changes in demand for different services and career skills overtime, alongside exploring current trends and what the future might hold.
- Discussions could lead to further research about inventions and innovations over time and lead to an appreciation about how the future can bring many diverse opportunities for them to aspire to!

## APPENDIX 2 Further Ideas about how to engage parents.....

- **Thinking about the future** – provide the opportunity for parents to share their thinking on the skills their children would need to help them thrive in a fast-changing world via a questionnaire from their own perspective (eg their own confidence in knowing how to support their child develop skills and qualities outside of school, or finding out about careers advice) Parents could be asked to rate the importance of skills and qualities such as creativity, communication, team work, problem solving, resilience, reflecting the Eight Essential Skills. This in turn will help teachers understand where gaps may arise in their CRL curriculum, enabling them to deliver specific strategies which support pupils and their parents further.
- **Invite parents in** to see their children presenting their ideas at the end of the workshop. Parents will also benefit from connecting with visiting industry ambassadors.
- Create and distribute a **parent information sheet** about the project and follow-up opportunities for their child relating to the project – such as visits, exhibitions, assemblies, competitions, and working with employers. This will inform parents about the range of opportunities available and promote discussion at home about topics relating to CRL.
- Put a request out to parents in a **newsletter or email asking for volunteer support** from anyone working in particular careers and industries for particular projects – eg STEM / STEAM events, Food and Farming, Construction, Local Council Departments, Business, Computing, etc. This could lead to mini career fairs, talks to whole year groups, individual classes or to set challenges for pupils to work on within the school or wider community, opening up a vast array of inspirational experiences which enriches the curriculum and makes learning relevant. It also helps to make the CRL programme more sustainable as relationships are strengthened.

Teachers can register for the complete set of TeenTech City of Tomorrow resources here :

<http://teentechcity.com/register-your-interest/>

Teachers and Parents wishing to deliver the project as a virtual experience, in school or at home can register for the free resources necessary here: : <http://athome.teentechcity.com>