



## Family Learning

### Learning as a factor in health enhancement and prevention.

By health enhancement and prevention we mean the process, which enables a person to control and improve his or her own state of health.

Not being able to cope with the personal challenges arising from an ever more complex and globalized everyday life, can produce both stress and anxiety, while, on the other hand, being able to cope with them improves one's health as well as one's quality of life; therefore, it is necessary to focus on the area of general learning.

An idea for a concrete project would be to create a space for helping ordinary people who are simply finding it difficult to manoeuvre in the information society with its many demands for new skills (involving e.g. dialling services, computers, filling in forms to obtain certain rights or options etc.).

Again, it is possible to distinguish between prevention and health enhancement in terms of a distinction between general academic qualifications (e.g. in Danish, mathematics, computer studies and English) on one hand and learning skills on the other.

Learning can in this way become both preventive (in reducing stress and anxiety) and health enhancing (in improving the quality of life). This applies to general learning in e.g. Danish, mathematics and computer studies, which improves the ability to meet the challenges of the information society, as well as to general learning skills, which improve the ability to care for the well-being of oneself and one's family.

One new initiative, which could work in this way, could be 'parent learning' whose purposes are:

1. to offer Danish and mathematics to parents of children in primary and lower secondary school
2. to enable parents to help children with their school work and thereby enhance the effect of teaching in primary and lower secondary school
3. to raise the general level of education in the region
4. to help provide a well-educated workforce for the regional business community

The inspiration for the project came from a TV programme (on DR 1) about Djursland municipality, where the Adult Education Centre (VUC) collaborated with the local authority in offering courses in elementary mathematics for parents.

The aim was to enable parents to help children with their homework and thereby increase the children's profit from the teaching. A further aim was to integrate the schoolwork into the framework of the family's social life.

At the same time the parents' improved skills in reading and mathematics will make them better equipped to hold on to jobs. Furthermore, the general regional level of competencies will rise with better chances of retaining and creating jobs as a result.

In the long term, the aim is to incorporate and develop the concept of 'family learning'. One aspect of family learning is the question of how you learn, meaning the learning style of the individual family member as well as the learning of the family as a whole. How, for instance, do we create a good learning environment in the family (e.g. by abolishing television)? Or how do we accommodate the different learning profiles (cf. Gardner's philosophy) within our family?

This "parent learning" initiative runs from August 2006 until May 2007, at the VUC-institutions (Adult Education Centres) in Ribe County in Denmark





# Regional Key Competencies

- a way to manage structural changes [AT6]

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