

# PARENTS

## The Majority among Active European Citizens



October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 – IREFREA/TC-Europe in Palma di Mallorca/Italy  
Johannes THEINER, EPA-President



EPA-The Voice of Parents in Europe



from Norway  
to Malta

from Iceland,  
to Cyprus,

EPA represents more than  
**150 millions** of European citizens.



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# Key Position and Facts

- **Parents are the Primary Educators of their children!**  
**Primary = FIRST**  
**= BEST** – most impacting  
... at least they have the potential to be **“the best”**



Everyone in society could be a parent.  
... represented by **white, middleclass** citizens



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# International Studies on Education

- PISA
- TIMSS
- PIRLS
- ...



“Parents spoil every statistics on education!”

Parental role/influence on academic success?

**Correlation** of success to **socioeconomic** status/index!

## but ...

Sacker et al.: “Parents’ attitude towards education strongly influences the academic success of their children.” (2002)

Charles Deforges: “All *normal* parents can perform as superior educators of their children.”

“It is a matter of parental competence. Required knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be trained.”

(Lecture at the EPA conference “How Parents can Improve the Learning of their Children”, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009)

Ramon Flecha: “Parents from little educated classes are open to education if approached respectfully” (EUCIS-LLL conference, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

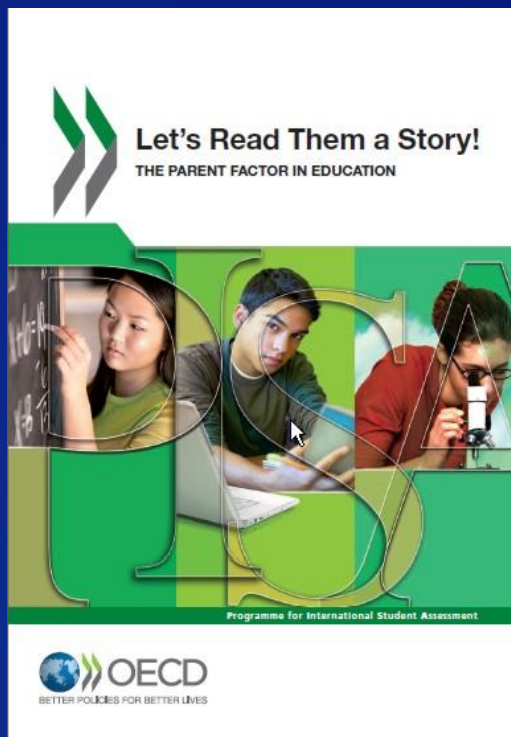
Joyce Epstein: “There is no more need to ask the question whether home-school relations and parental involvement are important for the learning and development of a child: We have clearly proven that this is the case!” (ERNAPE conference, June , 2011)



# ... and from PISA 2009

**“Let's Read Them a Story! The Parent Factor in Education”**, June 17, 2012

<http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/content/book/9789264176232-en>



Most parents know instinctively that spending more time with their children and being actively involved in their education will give their children a good head-start in life. ...

This book from OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has some good news for concerned parents: it does not require a Ph.D or unlimited hours for parents to make a difference in their children's education. In fact, many parent-child activities that are associated with better reading performance among students involve relatively little time and no specialised knowledge. What these activities do demand is genuine interest and active engagement.



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# Parents as Primary Educators



## What makes them so impacting?

- Non-professional
- No scheduled education
- No syllabus
- No assessment
- No certificates

## Factors of success:

- Holistic
- Individualised
- Based on and building mutual trust
- Driven by emotion
- Carried by **love**



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# Representing Parents

**Parental Participation is a legal right in any democratic system!**

- Representation of interests
  - ... on behalf of parents
  - ... on behalf of minors
- Support of youth interests
- Contribution to policy making

**Autonomous organisation of Parents  
as movements in Civil Society**

Right to be

- recognised, involved, heard ...
- supported (structural, financial)

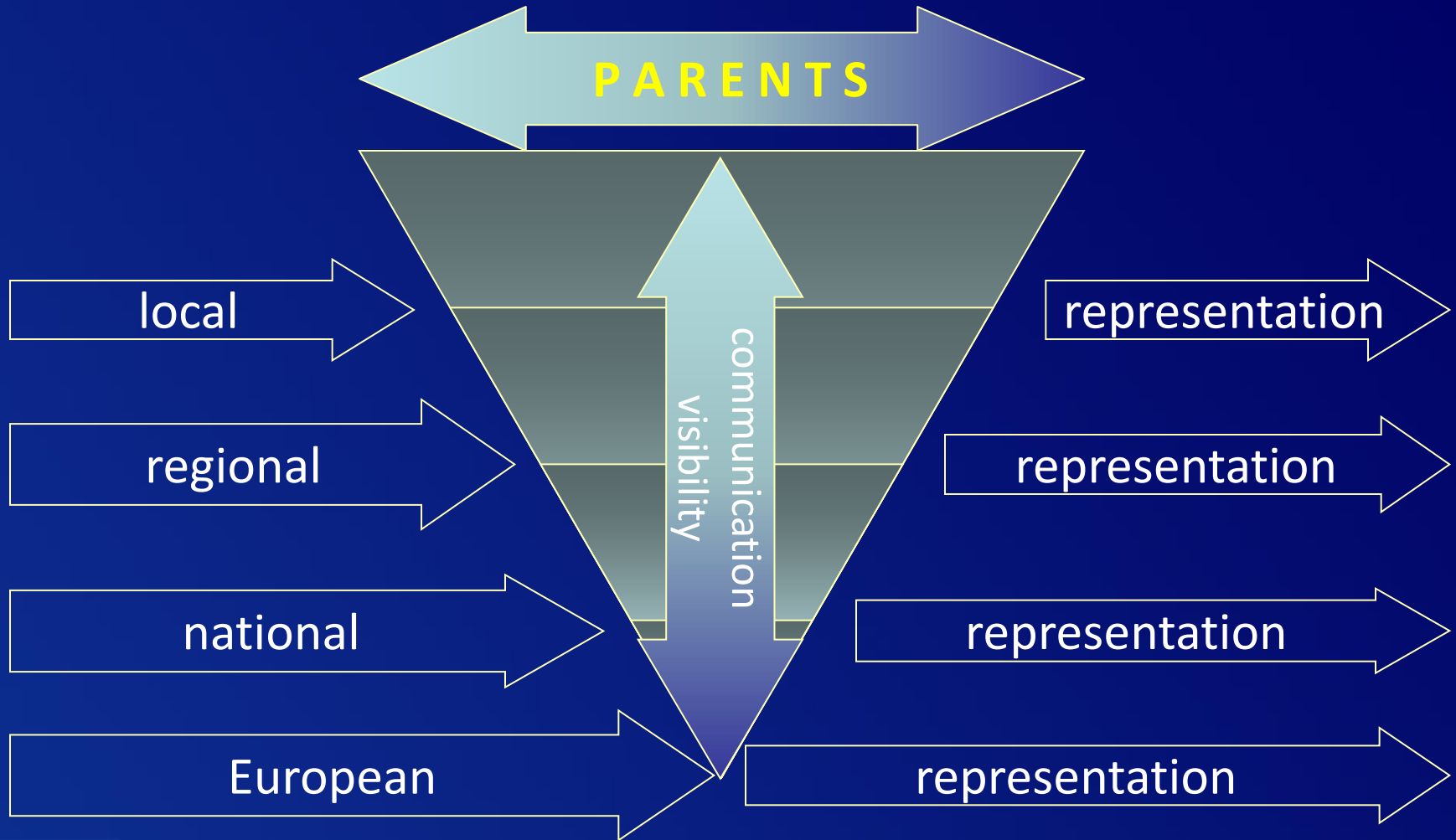
(Code of Good Practice ...,  
Council of Europe, 2009/10)



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# The Challenge of Subsidiarity



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# Acting on behalf and for Parents

## EPA's traditional Alcuin-Award

... named after **Alcuin of York**  
(*Alcuinus*, *Ealhwine*, nicknamed *Albinus* or *Flaccus*,  
804)

“Education Minister” at the court of Charlemagne

“Father” of post-Roman European education

... granted annually for a project fulfilling all the following criteria:

- Originality
- Contribution to education
- Involvement of parents as a characteristic
- Constructive home-school relationships
- easy dissemination and applicability



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# Alcuin-Award 2012

## „Plattform Elterngesundheit“ (Austria) *Parents' Health Platform*

Addressing ...

- Parents as Educators
- Parents as stakeholders  
Ministries of Education,  
Health, Social Affairs, ...  
Service Providers
- Parents as Learners

Targeting ...

- Children's health education
- **trans-sectorial co-operation**
- Parents' health, awareness for healthy lifestyle, **role models**



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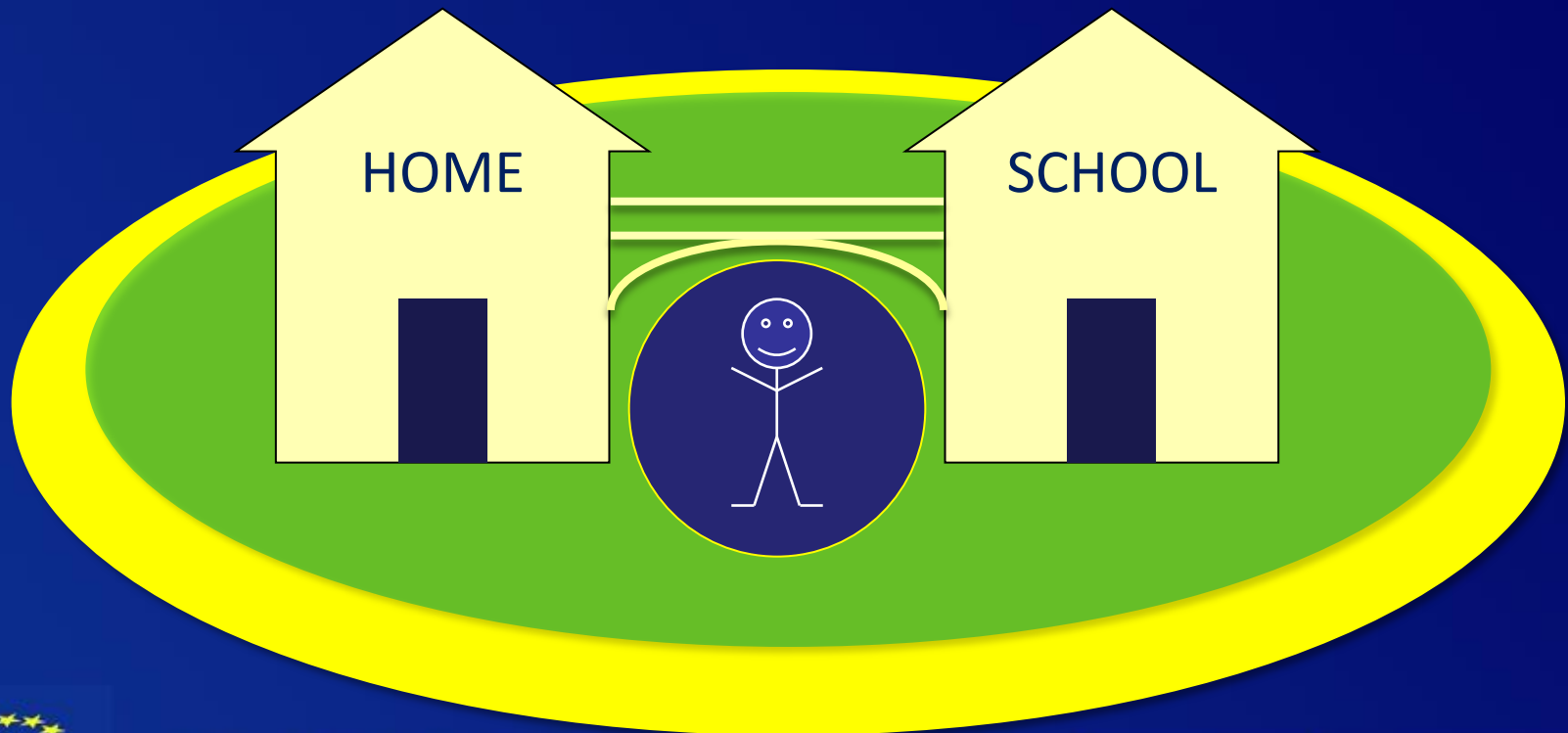
... put the **child**/learner in the center

... provide appropriate **learning opportunities**

... bond **home** and **school** with bridges of trust and co-operation

... build a strong **community** to provide the full richness of learning

... get beyond sectorial responsibilities to **trans-sectorial co-operation**



Thank you for your attention!

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<http://www.epa-parents.eu>



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# „PASS“ – Parents As Successful teachers



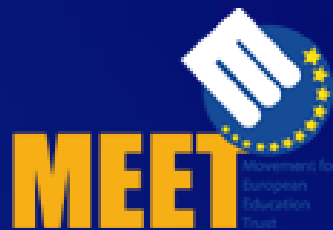
**Final conference hosted by EPA**

- **November 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in Vienna/Austria**
- **<http://www.ta-parents.eu/> → Conference 2012**



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*(Movement for a European Education Trust)*

European Citizens' Initiative

**High quality European Education for All**

<http://www.euroedtrust.eu>



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UNESCO proposed that by 2015 **every child** in the world should have access to **free public primary education**. Today **more than 80 million children do not have this opportunity**.

Bi-annual consultation meetings like the world-economic forum in Davos. “... to create momentum for the required change as global citizens.”

Initiated by Ton Duif, President of ESHA  
(European School Heads' Association)

<http://www.worldeducationforum.com>



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