

Education options going to the field

Euro TCK 2019

Why plan?

- Increase the chances of success both educationally and socially
- An agreed plan with parents, sending church, and mission branches. Better evaluation possible.
- Allows us to make changes and go to plan A with improvements or plan B
- Allows parents to consult with experienced professional teachers, not just friends or on-line
- Part of our duty of care as an organisation

What about the children's education?

- Helping parents establish their education plan
 - Pre-assignment education discussion
 - Consider what it will be like to live and work as a family in a different culture
 - Make a realistic plan that covers both education and social well-being for each child
 - Working with parents, churches, ***and others*** in the mission
 - Matching education plan and assignment

What about the children's education?

- Pre-assignment education questionnaire
 - What will life be like in a different culture?
 - What is important for you for your children's education?
 - What are the strengths, challenges, needs of each child?
- Long-term education plan
 - Desired outcomes for each child
 - Flexibility needed
 - Creativity needed sometimes

Consider each child

- Educational profile for **each child** to be completed
- Questionnaire about **each child** to be completed

What if we fail to plan?

- Long-term risks of educational failure
- Risk of isolation and loneliness for children
- Drift
- Influence by others
- Allows unacceptable and unworkable possibilities to go unchallenged before they begin
- Risk of neglect by parents and organisation
- Failure in duty of care by organisation
- **'NO PLAN, NO SEND' has to be our policy**

Good Plans

A family in East Asia with several children. They all went to the local school while young to learn the local language, make friends and bond with the culture. During that time the parents taught them mother tongue skills to allow for a transition into English-language school later.

The children then went to an international school as day students and were able to successfully re-enter the home country for continuing education. Their knowledge of the East Asian culture and language is good and a significant potential long-term advantage.

Discuss the example

1. What factors made this a success for the family?
2. What factors may have posed a challenge?
3. What could be a problem for others planning to do the same?
4. What if the children had not coped with the local school?
5. Any improvements possible to this plan and how it worked for the family?

Poor plans

A couple had two children aged 13 and 12 at the start of the process. One year of training and transition to serve overseas, children were in school but then home schooled during training. On arrival the children were placed in a local 'bilingual' school – however 90% of the teaching was in the local language and the 10% English part was badly taught as a foreign language.

Social and extra-curricular opportunities were limited as this was a restrictive society. The children were very unhappy and unable to develop performance skills that they were learning in the passport country. Resentment built and eventually after 2 years the parents did follow advice to return home for the children's sake.

Discuss the example

1. What was wrong with the placement for this family?
2. In what way did the parents neglect the educational and social needs of the children?
3. In what ways did the mission fail ?
4. What general lessons can be learnt from a case like this? I.e. improvements to planning and practice.

Planning and review tools

- WEC pre-departure long-term planning questionnaire
- Review questionnaire
- Resources available in 'Serving at the ends of the earth' or download files on request

Why review and assess?

- Helps us identify how children are doing – whether they are falling behind, on target or even ahead
- Helps us identify social needs and gives the possibility to make changes
- Helps us identify if parents or children are struggling with an education option
- Part of our duty of care responsibility.
- Regularly – every 6 months or annually.

What if we don't assess?

- Unacceptable options go unchallenged
- Children may be lonely and isolated with no effort to correct this; parents may be oblivious or unprepared to change
- Children may fall well behind generally or in certain subjects and impair their long-term prospects
- We fail in our duty of care as we are responsible for placing a family and allowing them to stay there under our banner.

Good review

A family with 3 children were advised to use a home education system by colleagues in the host country. After a few months the system proved to be difficult to work with for the children and the gap-year tutor recruited to teach them. When the system was checked out with educational consultants it was shown to be formulaic, uninteresting to the children, and had some basic errors in content. The system was then changed to a better-recognised one with more variety.

This simple change of system allowed home education to continue successfully for a few more years before a transfer to an international school.

Poor review procedure

A family with two children were in transition from one mission location to another over a two-year period. During this time no local or international schools were used and the parents believed that home education was too difficult to organise.

Therefore the children did no formal education, but there were assurances that they were reading a lot, especially their Bibles.

During that time no-one from the mission reviewed or challenged the lack of structured education .

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