

Engaging Parents to Support the Career and Life Development of Non-engaged Youth

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A red pushpin is pinned to a map, symbolizing a specific location or point of interest. The map shows various geographical features like roads and rivers. The background is a soft-focus light gray.

TWO DISCOURSES OF RISK

The two discourses of risk: *NEY as “Youth-at-risk”*

NEY are frequently portrayed as “Youth-at-risk” who exhibit behaviors and attitudes that deviate from conventional norms, and hence have difficulties in fitting into their age-specific educational and social settings. Drifting off-course, they are exposed to various risk factors and dangers that are perceived as having serious consequences to their life developmental outcomes (Etzion & Romi, 2015).

The two discourses of risk: *Parenting in Risk Society*

Parents are expected to support their children to negotiate life choices and dilemmas among a diversity of options in school-to-work transitions and life development, and empower their children to face the life challenges amid the uncertainties and precariousness in late modernity.

➤ The two discourses of risk: *Parents' narrations*

“It is rather hard for living in Hong Kong in the present...I can say, graduates face the similar difficulties...don't you say that the ones not completed the secondary school (have exception)...”

香港而家搵食都...都好艱難，唔好話...讀完大學出嚟都難搵食㗎，你都唔好話呀.....唔好話你地嗰啲中學都讀唔完嘅。人哋讀完大學出嚟都難搵食呀

“Hope he will have epiphany some days as believed, but when he becomes awakened, possibly several years later, the world can't await him, however; that is what I am worried about...Especially because he hasn't completed his secondary three study, this can't be recognized completely by the society. How come he can't complete free (compulsory) education? (Other people should think that) he should have something wrong.”

希望會唔會有一日，好似話齋咁，過幾年會醒呀，但係到你醒既時候，個世界唔等你呢，有時我係擔心呢啲野囉。尤其是佢而家連中三都有完成呢，個社會係完全接受唔到，有咩可能連免費教育你都讀唔完中三，一定係你有問題囉。

➤ The two discourses of risk: *Parents' narrations*

“When I wake up...I am not willing to get up, hope to lie awake. **Soon after I really get up, I then sit on the windowsill in the living room, look at the window, and attempt to jump off from the room; yes, that is the kind of pressure (I have encountered).** Also, when I suddenly wake up at midnight, I walk to the neighboring (son's) room, (and ask myself that) “ it seems that he is not in room; and where is he?”

一起身呢，就唔想起身嘅，醒咗唔想起身。一起身呢就坐喺個廳個窗台度，望住個窗就想跳落去，係呀即係嗰種壓力。同埋你會瞓到半夜你會突然之間呢就會走過隔離房，「咦好似唔見咗個仔去咗邊呢？」

“**I am a failure.** (whimpering) ... like an example that I could not educate my son well, ...at that time, I did not know how to seek help. Erm...all children have been able to go to school except my son....who was frightened not to return to school almost all the time...**(I) did not know how to do at that moment.**”

我自己係好失敗㗎。（哽咽）.....唉.....主要咪咁喺度囉，好似自己...唔識教仔咁樣。.....唉嗰時又唔識得同邊個講。唉...反正人地個個細路仔，人地都有同咁返學。我自己仔又成日...唉...驚到唔敢返學。都唔知點算，嗰時。



**RESEARCH: A SURVEY ON
PARENT CAREER BEHAVIOR
CHECKLIST**

➤ A Survey Study

- The Chinese version of Parent Career Behavior Checklist (C-PCBC) was translated and validated.

Participants:

NEY and their parents

The pilot sample:

N=373

Two domains of C-PCBC

- **Psychosocial Support:** Understanding, respect, appreciation and encouragement
- **Career Actions:** Providing information, showing expectations, problem-solving, conveying career values

➤ Psychosocial Support

- I tell my child I am proud of him/her.
- I encourage my child to choose whatever career he/she wants.
- I express interest in various teenage issues that are important to my child
- I encourage my child to talk to me about his/her career plans



➤ Career Actions

- I have talked to my child about the steps involved in making difficult decisions.
- I have given my child written material about specific careers.
- I tell my child I have high expectations for his/her career
- I ask what careers my child is considering for his/her future

Subscale	Range of subscale	Mean (SD)		p-value of paired sample t-test
1. Psychosocial support	12-60	Parent 42.65 (7.87)	Child 36.25 (9.45)	≤ .001
2. Career action	10-50	Parent 27.85 (6.56)	Child 23.77 (6.93)	≤ .001

Results: Parent-Child Comparison

- A substantial perceptual differences in the degree of the psychosocial support and career actions provided by parents.
- On average, parents rated their own support and actions much higher than their children did.
- Parents could feel they have done a lot but their children might not be able to perceive an equal amount of effort from them.



➤ IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- NEY parents can be regarded as encountering the “limit situation” of their children (the at-risk discourse) that force them to reconstruct the **meaning of parenthood**, reflect on their **parenting priorities**, and obtain **new awareness** in childrearing.
- A parent-child relational perspective for needs assessment and intervention.



Thank you

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