

# EXPLORING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN CAREER GUIDANCE FOR CHILDREN

Authored by:  
College of Career Guidance & Development (CCGD)  
Mobile Phone: +254 743 822 925  
Email: [info@careerguidancecollege.co.ke](mailto:info@careerguidancecollege.co.ke)  
Web: [www.careerguidancecollege.com](http://www.careerguidancecollege.com)  
4th Floor, Regus Offices, Laibon Centre, Lenana Rd.  
P.O. Box 9773 -00100 Nairobi.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	2
1 INTRODUCTION.....	3
2 METHODOLOGY.....	3
3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	3
3.1 Response Rate.....	3
3.2 Thematic Findings.....	4
3.2.1 Concerns and Questions about the Child’s Career and Education .....	4
3.2.2 Parents’ Discussion of Career Options with Their Children.....	4
3.2.3 Child’s Career Clarity.....	5
3.2.4 Confidence in Guiding Child’s Career Decisions .....	6
3.2.5 Career Guidance Support Required.....	7
4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	8
4.1 Conclusions .....	8
4.2 Recommendations.....	8
REFERENCES.....	10

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Response Rate.....	4
Figure 2: Questions/Concerns about Child’s Career and Education.....	4
Figure 3: Discussion of career options with the child (Overall).....	5
Figure 4: Discussion of career options with the child/Learner by school .....	5
Figure 5: Child’s clarity of career interest.....	6
Figure 6: Child’s clarity of career interest by school .....	6
Figure 7: Parents’ confidence levels in providing career guidance to their children.....	7
Figure 8: Parents’ confidence levels in providing career guidance to their children by school.....	7
Figure 9: Needed type of career guidance support.....	8

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a study conducted by the College of Career Guidance & Development (CCGD) to explore parents' involvement in career guidance for Grade 9 learners in the context of Kenya's transition to the Competency-Based Education (CBE) system. The study sought to understand parents' perspectives on career guidance, the extent of their engagement with their children on career matters, and the type of support they expect from the school to better guide their children's career pathways. Data were collected from 130 parents at two schools (anonymized as School A and School B) using a structured questionnaire, resulting in a 100% response rate.

The findings reveal that parents have significant concerns about their children's career and educational decisions, particularly regarding subject selection (77%), the transition after Grade 9 (72%), and understanding available career pathways (71%). However, fewer parents reported clarity about how they can support their children's career decisions at home (48%), suggesting notable information gaps regarding the CBE system and parental roles in career guidance. These concerns highlight the need for better information dissemination and structured guidance to help parents support their children effectively.

The study also examined the level of parent-child engagement in career discussions. More than half of the parents (54%) reported being highly involved in discussing career options with their children, while 11% reported minimal involvement and 5% reported no involvement at all. Parental engagement varied slightly across schools, with higher levels of active engagement reported among parents at School A (60%) than at School B (44%). These findings suggest that while many parents actively support career discussions, a segment remains insufficiently engaged, potentially limiting learners' access to guidance beyond the school environment.

Regarding learners' career clarity, most parents reported that their children were still exploring options. 42% indicated that their children were considering multiple career possibilities without narrowing them down, while 36% reported that their children were fairly clear about their preferred career paths. Only 15% of parents indicated that their children were very clear about their future careers. These results suggest that although learners are beginning to reflect on career choices, many still require structured guidance and exposure to different career opportunities to make informed decisions during this critical transition stage.

The findings further indicate that while a majority of parents (70%) expressed confidence in guiding their children's career decisions, a significant proportion (30%) reported low or no confidence in doing so. This indicates that although parents recognize their role in career guidance, many feel insufficiently equipped with the knowledge and information needed. Parents, therefore, expressed a strong interest in additional support from the school. The most frequently requested forms of support included information on emerging career and labour market trends (74%), regular updates on their children's strengths and career development goals (71%), and opportunities for industry exposure (63%). Overall, the study demonstrates that parents are willing to participate in their children's career development but require clearer guidance, more comprehensive information, and stronger collaboration with schools to effectively support learners' career decision-making within the evolving education system.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Career guidance plays an integral role in preparing learners to make informed decisions about their career pathways. It equips them with the information necessary to make decisions about the careers they want to pursue, based on their passions, interests, and performance in the requisite subjects for those careers. The transition from the 8:4:4 education system to Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Kenya has highlighted the many gaps learners face when deciding on their educational trajectory. Among the many gaps is the inadequate preparation of learners to make decisions about their chosen future careers. This being a cross-cutting issue in the country, it stems from teachers having gaps in the career guidance and development, as shown in a nationwide survey on teachers' perception of career guidance and development that found 59% of teachers had a low understanding of career guidance and 53% had not undertaken career guidance training (CCGD, 2026). The implication of this is that many of the teachers will tend to rely on their general understanding whenever providing career guidance services to the learners, which risks the provision insufficient instruction which may end up influencing learners to choose their career pathways based on a single factor consideration, for example, subjects' performance while disregarding the many other factors that need to be considered when deciding on the career pathway to select.

The issue of inadequate knowledge to guide learners in selecting their preferred career trajectories is prevalent not only among teachers but also among parents. The transition in the education system has thrown many parents into confusion, leaving them with schools serving as the primary guides for their children's career-path choices. The implications of limited parental information can have ripple effects, especially when parents misinform their children, leading them to focus on educational fields they perceive as lucrative. Parental understanding of career guidance is of utmost importance, as the responsibility should not be left solely to teachers. The parents play a critical role in shaping their children to pursue careers in which they have the greatest potential and passion. Parents act as the first point of contact for their children, spend more time with them, and can learn their children's passions at a very early stage. In this regard, the parents need to take an active role in identifying the children's strengths and work collaboratively with the teachers to guide the learners accordingly. Empirical evidence shows that parents' career expectations predict adolescents' later career expectations and plans, and that family approval of the chosen profession affects career choice (Söner & Gültekin, 2024). Additionally, studies indicate that family support is important for career development and positively affects career adaptability (Taş & Özmen, 2019). The role of parents in guiding their children's career decisions cannot be overstated; they are a major source of interpersonal support and can influence their children's self-efficacy, professional expectations, interests, and career goals (Marcionetti & Zammitti, 2023). In light of this abridged background, the College of Career Guidance and Development (CCGD) undertook a study to understand parents' views on career guidance, their involvement with their children on this subject, and their expectations of the school in guiding their children in selecting their career pathways. The inquiry was conducted in two schools, School A and School B, and targeted Grade 9 parents as respondents.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

The study employed a non-experimental design and collected quantitative primary data from parents via a self-administered questionnaire. A structured, systematic desk review was conducted to triangulate the primary findings with the existing empirical evidence. The study sample comprised 130 parents, a sample scientifically computed using the Cochran formula and contextualized to the scope.

## 3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 3.1 Response Rate

The response rate was 100% as the target sample was attained fully, with School A having more participants than School B, i.e., 62% and 38%, as illustrated in Fig 1 below:

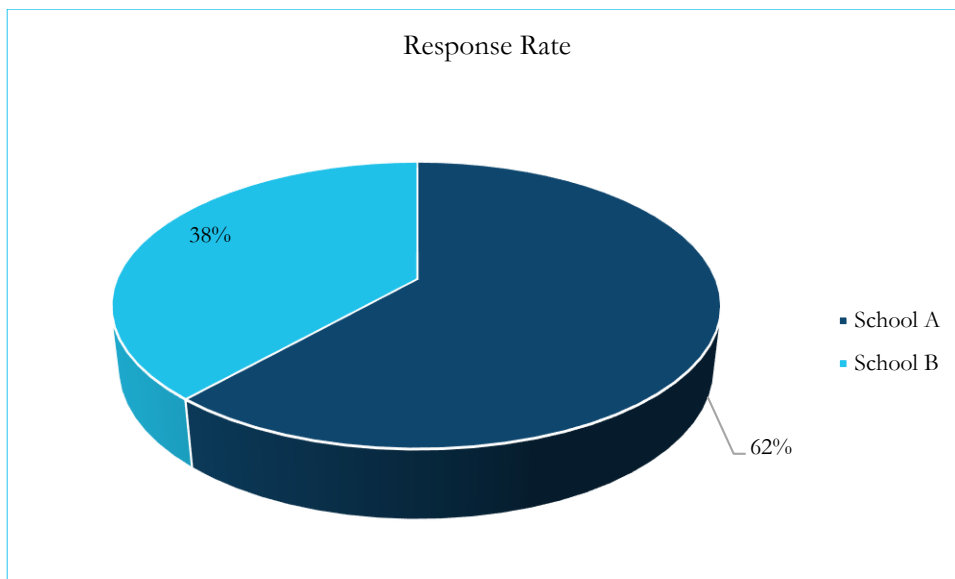


Figure 1: Response Rate

## 3.2 Thematic Findings

### 3.2.1 Concerns and Questions about the Child's Career and Education

The parents expressed various opinions on the main concerns and questions about their children's careers and educational journeys. The top three concerns shared by the parents were choosing the right subjects (77%), transition after Grade 9 (72%), and understanding available pathways (71%). The query "How to support my child at home with career decisions" received the fewest mentions, accounting for 48%. These findings show that the parents had many information gaps regarding CBE and how to chip in and guide their children. On the same note, lower scores on how parents can support their children in career decisions point to confusion following the new education system, as many parents have a limited understanding of how to guide their children effectively.

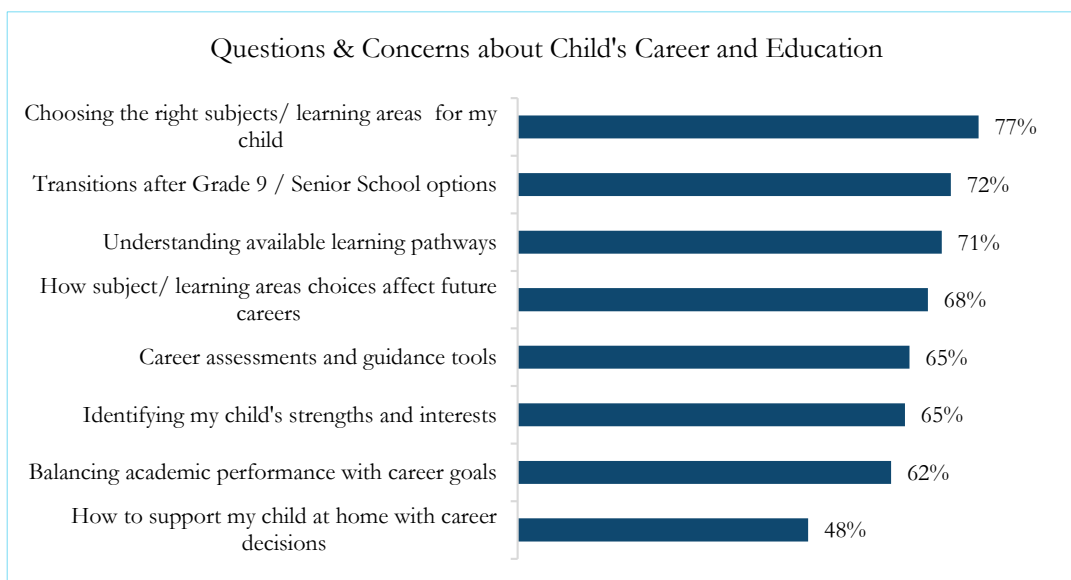


Figure 2: Questions/Concerns about Child's Career and Education

### 3.2.2 Parents' Discussion of Career Options with Their Children

Fifty-four percent (54%) of the parents confirmed that they were very involved in discussing career options with their children. Overall, 5% of parents reported not being involved in discussions of career options with their children, and 11% reported being minimally involved, only briefly touching base with their children on the subject, as illustrated in Fig 3 below. The low participation of parents, or their non-

participation at all, in their children’s career guidance leaves learners with only their teachers for guidance, underscoring the need for teachers to be well-equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills in career guidance to support learners who are the nation’s future workforce. Analysis of parents’ discussions of career options with their children by school showed that more parents in School A (60%) were very involved in career options discussions and subject choices than in School B (44%), as shown in Fig 4 below.

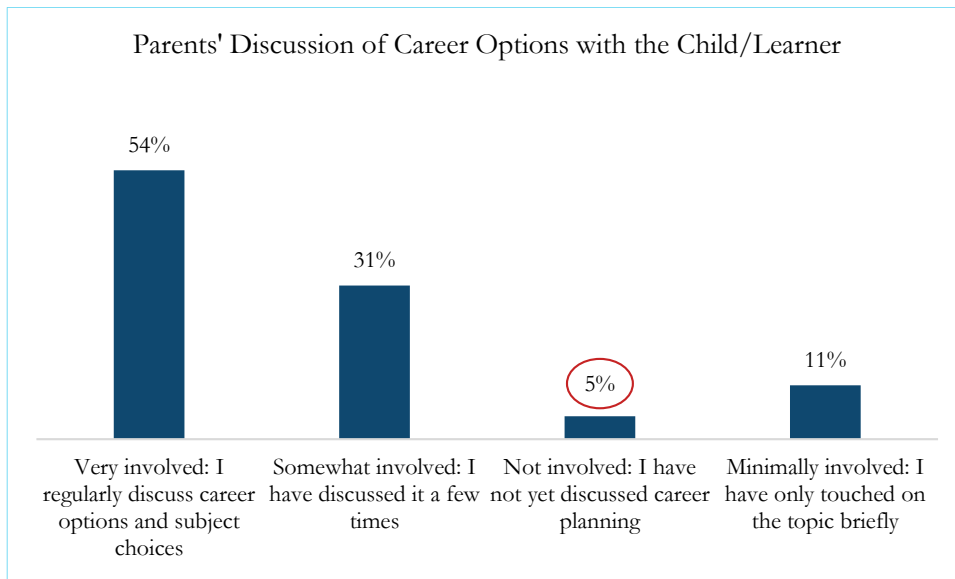


Figure 3: Discussion of career options with the child (Overall)

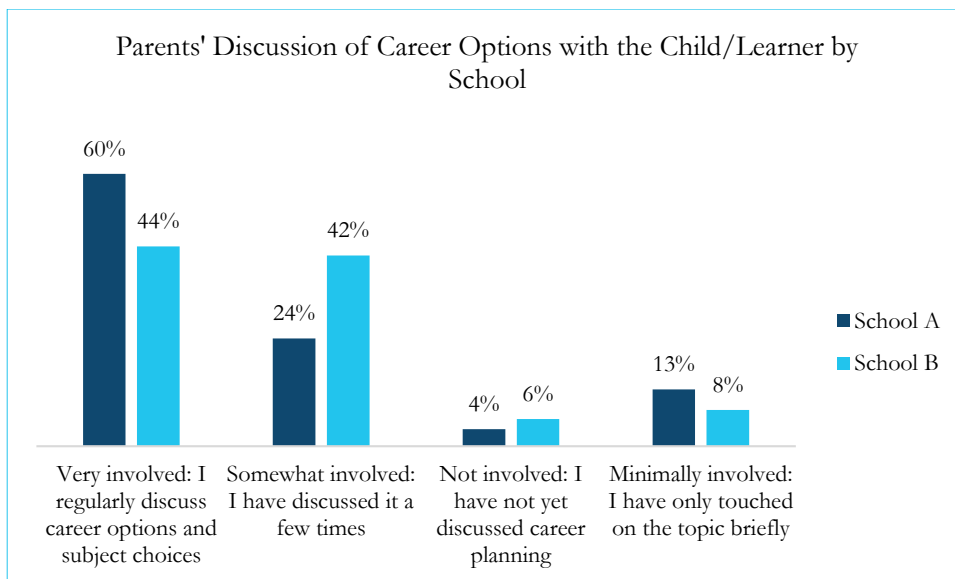


Figure 4: Discussion of career options with the child/Learner by school

### 3.2.3 Child’s Career Clarity

Although some parents are not in touch with their children and others are minimally involved in career discussions, most confirmed that their children have made significant progress in identifying their career trajectories. Most of them (42%) reported that their children were considering different options and had yet to narrow down their choices, while 36% confirmed that their children were fairly clear about their career trajectory. Only 15% reported that their children were very clear on the career they wanted to pursue. On the contrary, 6% were uncertain, and 1% were unsure of their children’s career interests, as shown in Fig 5 below. Although these statistics generally show a positive trajectory, it is worth noting that no child

should be left behind or ignored when it comes to guidance and information about career options, especially at a critical stage of education, such as Grade 9, when children transition to senior secondary school.

No significant differences were noted in the above attribute across the schools. Nonetheless, the parents who were unsure of their children’s career interests were from School B, as illustrated in Fig 6 below. This indicates the need for continuous sensitization of parents about their role in their children’s schooling and career direction.

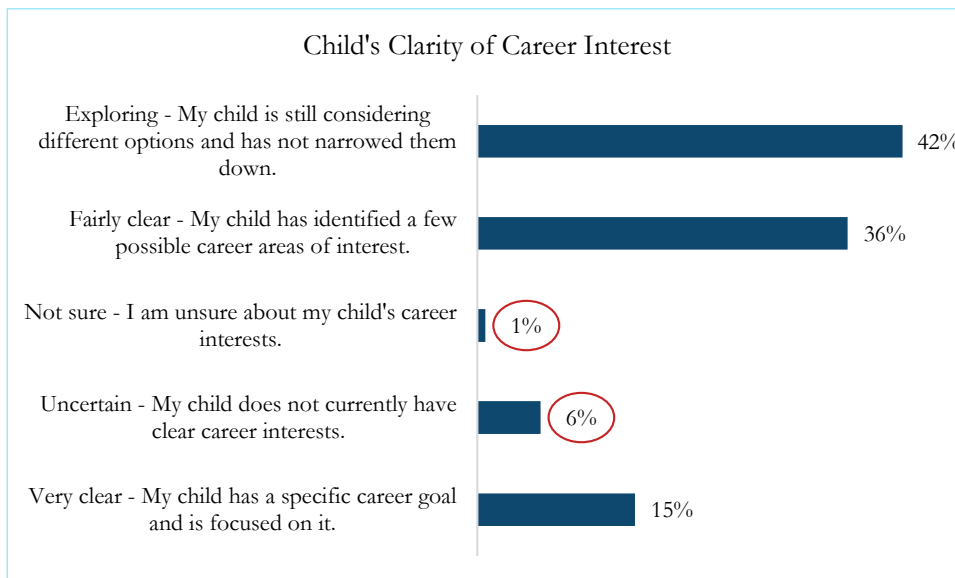


Figure 5: Child's clarity of career interest

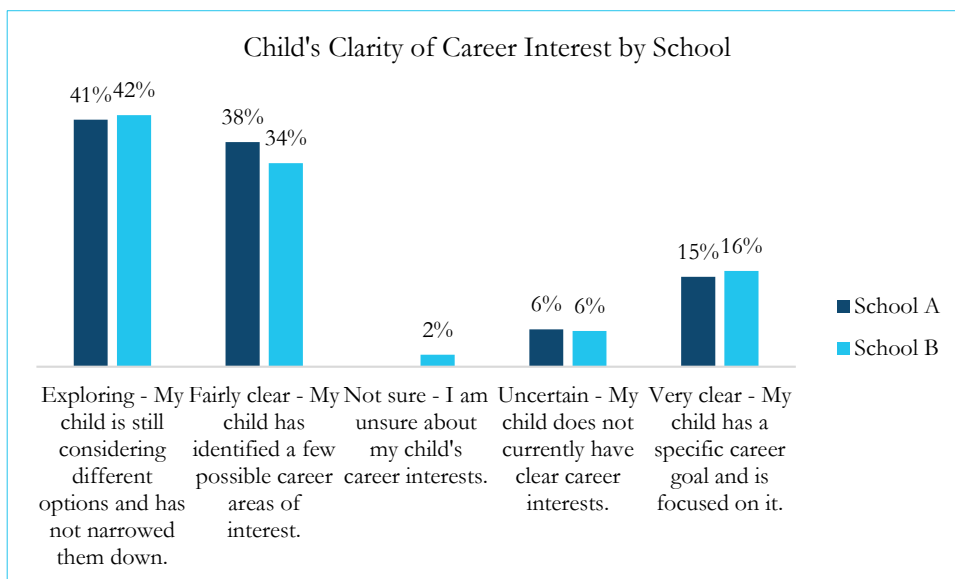


Figure 6: Child's clarity of career interest by school

### 3.2.4 Confidence in Guiding Child’s Career Decisions

Most parents (70%—55% very confident and 15% confident) expressed confidence in guiding their children’s career decisions. The other 30% expressed low to no confidence in guiding their children’s career decisions (see Fig 7). This points to the need to equip parents with some knowledge of career guidance to help them better guide their children toward appropriate career decisions. Analysis of the findings by school showed no significant differences in confidence levels between the two schools, as shown in Fig 8 below.

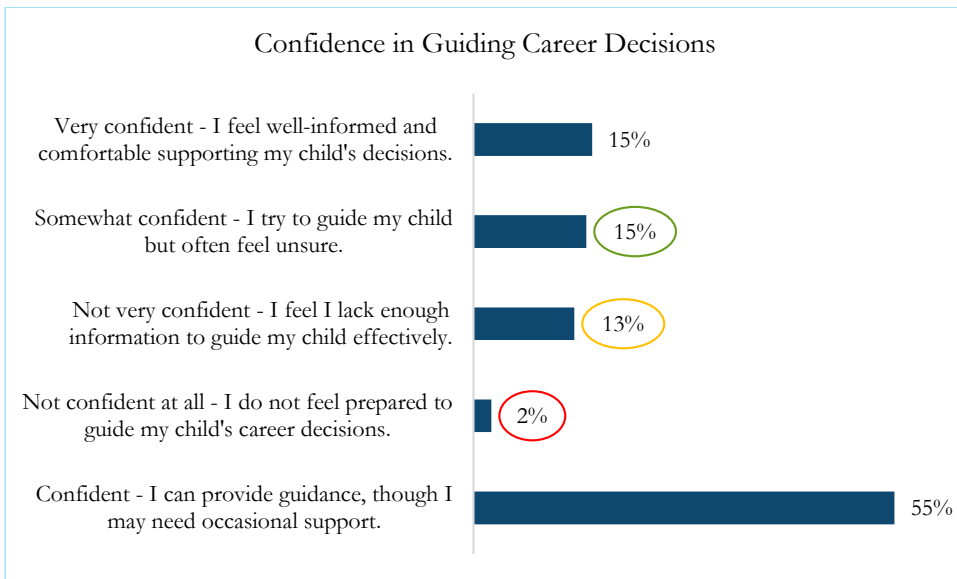


Figure 7: Parents' confidence levels in providing career guidance to their children

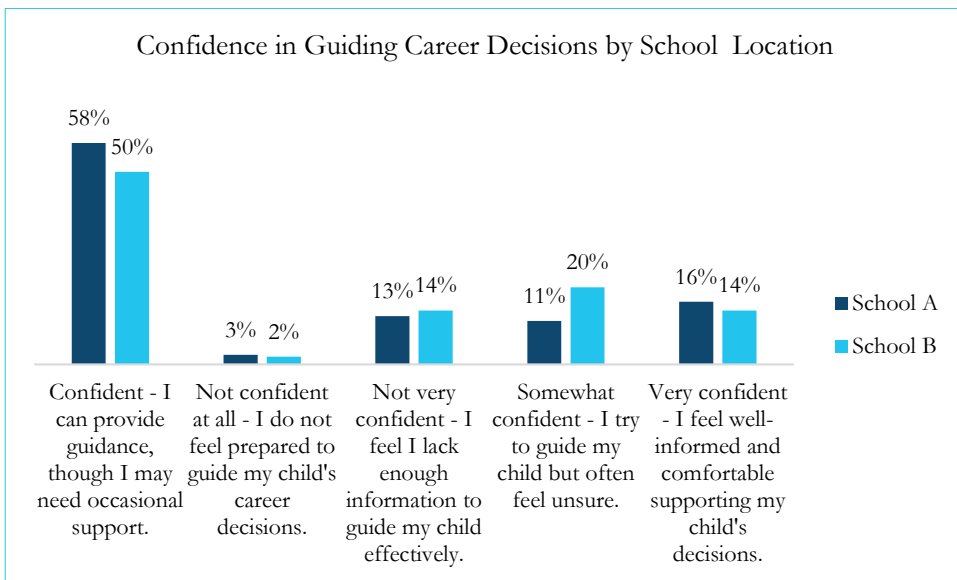
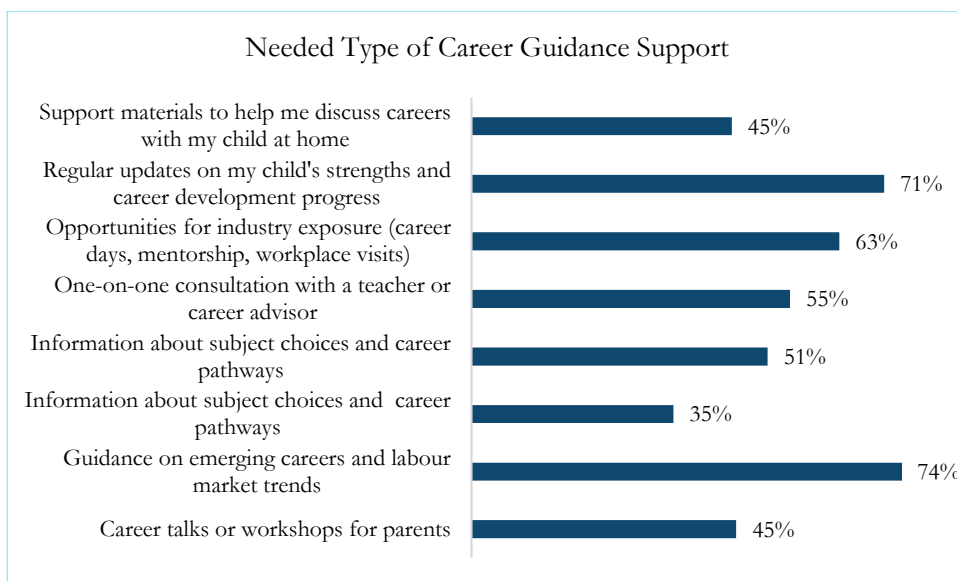


Figure 8: Parents' confidence levels in providing career guidance to their children by school

### 3.2.5 Career Guidance Support Required

With three in ten parents expressing little to no confidence in guiding their children's career decisions, the study explored the types of career guidance support parents wanted to effectively guide their children. The top three types of career guidance support that the parents wanted included guidance on emerging career and labor market trends (74%), regular updates on my child's strengths and career development goals (71%), and opportunities for industry exposure (63%), as illustrated in Fig 9 below.



*Figure 9: Needed type of career guidance support*

Parents also had so many questions regarding the career guidance, where some expressed confusion with the curriculum change, others had queries regarding the pathway and the possibilities of change after grade 10, others pointed out the need to expose children to industries, and guidance on best and sustainable careers with so many changes in technology, amongst others. These concerns show that there is still more to be done to equip parents with career guidance skills, enabling them to prepare their children better to select careers that suit their talents and passions.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Conclusions

The study highlights the critical role that parents play in supporting their children's career development, particularly during the transition to senior secondary school under Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE) system. Findings indicate that while many parents are actively engaged in discussing career options with their children and a majority express confidence in guiding career decisions, significant information gaps remain. Parents are particularly concerned about subject selection, transition pathways after Grade 9, and understanding the range of available career options. Although many learners are exploring potential careers, only a small proportion demonstrate strong clarity about their future pathways, suggesting that structured guidance is still needed at this stage.

The results also reveal disparities in parental engagement and awareness, as well as uncertainty regarding how parents can effectively support career decision-making at home. At the same time, parents demonstrate a strong interest in receiving additional guidance, especially on emerging career trends, regular updates on their children's strengths, and opportunities for industry exposure. Overall, the findings underscore the need for stronger collaboration between schools and parents to ensure learners receive informed, holistic career guidance that aligns with their interests, strengths, and evolving labour market opportunities.

### 4.2 Recommendations

1. **Strengthen parent career guidance awareness:** Schools should organize regular workshops or seminars to educate parents on the CBE pathways, subject combinations, and evolving career opportunities.
2. **Provide structured career information resources:** Develop and share simplified guides, newsletters, or online resources that explain career pathways, labour market trends, and educational requirements.

3. **Enhance school–parent communication:** Establish mechanisms for periodic updates to parents on their children’s strengths, interests, and career development progress.
4. **Facilitate industry exposure opportunities:** Schools should collaborate with professionals and institutions to organize career talks, mentorship sessions, and industry visits for learners and interested parents.
5. **Build teachers’ capacity in career guidance:** Provide continuous professional development to ensure teachers are well-equipped to guide students and engage parents effectively.
6. **Promote parent–child career dialogue:** Schools should encourage parents to engage more consistently in career discussions with their children through structured activities such as career reflection exercises and goal-setting sessions.

## REFERENCES

CCGD (2026). *Teachers' Perspectives on Career Guidance and Development Training*.

Marcionetti, J., & Zammitti, A. (2023). Perceived support and influences in adolescents' career choices: A mixed-methods study. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 25(2), 423–446. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-023-09624-9>

Söner, O., & Gültekin, F. (2024). Middle school students' career parental support and adolescent–parent career congruence: The mediating role of self-efficacy. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 25(3), 981–1003. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-024-09658-7>

Taş, M. A., & Özmen, M. (2019). Relationship between family support and career adaptability in career choice: Mediation role of positive future expectation. *Eurasia Journal of International Studies*, 7(16), 736–761. <https://doi.org/10.33692/avasyad.543865>