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Between Caravan and Rollercoaster

Childhood at the Funfair

The lives of showmen's families have always been characterised by many moves and new residences. Despite this, only few showmen's children decide to leave the showmen's trade. Some showmen's families are already the seventh generation in this profession.

Many showmen's children learn the most important tasks in their parents' business already at an early age. Not only basic manual skills and operating the transport vehicles, but also the commercial basics are taught early on. Until the 19th century, this used to be the only training that many showmen's children received. Back then, working in the family business was considered more important than a school-leaving qualification.

The importance of formal school education changed around 1900, with children attending schools at the respective locations. In the 1960s, many wealthy showmen's families decided to enrol their children in boarding schools. Nowadays, so-called base schools at the fairground sites are responsible for their education. During the winter break, the children attend their regular schools at their respective places of residence.

Fun Fact

Many showmen's children visit up to 10 different schools in the course of a year. A school diary is kept to record their level of knowledge. It certifies the attendance and outlines the acquired knowledge.