

## Repositório ISCTE-IUL

---

Deposited in *Repositório ISCTE-IUL*:

2024-05-15

Deposited version:

Accepted Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Correia, N. & Aguiar, C. (2023). Children's voices in early childhood education and care. In Sam Frankel (Ed.), *Establishing child centred practice in a changing world: Part B.* (pp. 9-22). Bingley: Emerald Publishing.

Further information on publisher's website:

10.1108/978-1-80455-940-620231002

Publisher's copyright statement:

This is the peer reviewed version of the following article: Correia, N. & Aguiar, C. (2023). Children's voices in early childhood education and care. In Sam Frankel (Ed.), *Establishing child centred practice in a changing world: Part B.* (pp. 9-22). Bingley: Emerald Publishing., which has been published in final form at <https://dx.doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80455-940-620231002>. This article may be used for non-commercial purposes in accordance with the Publisher's Terms and Conditions for self-archiving.

---

### Use policy

Creative Commons CC BY 4.0

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a link is made to the metadata record in the Repository
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

---

## **ESTABLISHING CHILD CENTRED PRACTICE IN A CHANGING WORLD**

### **Title**

Children's voices in early childhood education and care

### **Authors information**

Correia, N., Aguiar, C., & PARTICIPA Consortium\*

Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE-IUL), CIS-IUL

\*The Participa Consortium includes the following researchers and professionals: Helena Taelman (Odisee, University of Applied Sciences), Olga Wyslowska (University of Warsaw), Efthymia Penderi (Democritus University of Thrace), Sílvia Barros (Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Escola Superior de Educação, Centro de Investigação e Inovação em Educação), Isabel Correia (Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, ISCTE-IUL, CIS-IUL), Ula Markowska-Manista (University of Warsaw), Sara Barros Araújo (Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Escola Superior de Educação, Centro de Investigação e Inovação em Educação), Eunice Magalhães (Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, ISCTE-IUL, CIS-IUL), Manuela Pessanha (Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Escola Superior de Educação, Centro de Investigação e Inovação em Educação), Vanessa Figueiredo (Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, ISCTE-IUL, CIES-IUL), Konstantinos Petrogiannis (University of West Attica), Anneleen Boderé (Odisee, University of Applied Sciences), Cristina Mesquita (APEI), Luís Ribeiro (APEI), Christophoros Karachristos (Hellenic Open University), Elias Stavropoulos (Hellenic Open University), Filomena de Almeida (Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, ISCTE-IUL, BRU-IUL), Cristiana Guimarães (Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Escola Superior de Educação, Centro de Investigação e Inovação em Educação), Vera Coelho (Universidade da Maia).

### **Funding information**

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union (Grant Agreement No. 2019-1-PT01-KA202-060950). Researchers from CIS-IUL and Centre for Research and Innovation in Education (inED) are also funded by National Funds through the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P., under the scope of the projects UIDB/03125/2020 and UIDB/05198/2020, respectively.

### **Abstract**

Listening to and considering children's voices shows respectful regard for children's needs, interests, and experiences, and helps discern what is meaningful for them in a particular subject or situation. Creating opportunities for the expression of children's voices implies child-centred practice: recognizing children as active agents, with evolving competences and capacity to understand, think, and choose with some degree of autonomy, thus being able to influence decision-making. Therefore, the commitment to listen to children's voices represents a fundamental step towards empowering children and supporting their participation rights. Importantly, children have the right to be heard and to have their voices considered from the earliest ages, in their significant relational contexts, such as early childhood education and care (ECEC). Listening to and valuing children's multiple voices in ECEC can be done in many ways, ensuring the context, children's background, characteristics, and preferences are respected. In this chapter we address the specificities of listening to children's voices and taking them into account in ECEC. We discuss common challenges that may prevent the full expression and consideration of children's voices, and ways to overcome them, to ensure children's meaningful participation in what matters to them and support them in becoming active citizens in society.

**Keywords:** early childhood education and care (ECEC), ECEC professionals, children's voices, children's rights, child-centred practices, participation

### **Introduction**

Listening to and considering children's voices is crucial for establishing meaningful and effective child-centred practices, developed for and with children (Frankel, 2018). The commitment to listen to children's voices represents a fundamental step towards empowering children and supporting their participation rights, in all matters affecting them, and in spaces co-created and shared by children and adults. Moreover, it shows respectful regard for children's needs, interests, and experiences, and helps discern what is meaningful for them in a particular subject or situation (Carnevale, 2020). Creating opportunities for the expression of children's voices requires recognizing children as active agents, with evolving competences and capacity to understand, think, and choose with some degree of autonomy, thus being able to influence decision-making (Burger, 2018; Lansdown, 2005).

In this chapter, we focus on the importance of enabling, considering, and amplifying young children's voices in everyday settings. Children have the right to be listened to and to have their voices considered from the earliest ages, in their significant relational contexts, such as early childhood education and care (ECEC) (United Nations, 1989; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2005). Indeed, ECEC is especially well-suited to support the development, expression, and consideration of children's voices in daily activities. Millions of young children spend considerable amounts of time in ECEC settings (European Commission, 2019), where existing pedagogical models, frameworks, and traditions already value child-centred and participatory approaches (e.g., Alderson, 2008; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Lloyd-Smith & Tarr, 2000; Prout, 2003; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008).

Listening to and valuing children's voices in ECEC can be achieved in multiple ways, ensuring that context and children's background, characteristics, and preferences are respected. In this chapter, we address the concept of children's voices, its emergence and growing recognition, the importance of listening to young children's voices and taking them into account in ECEC, and why and how ECEC can support children's participation. We also discuss challenges that may prevent the full expression and consideration of children's voices and ways to overcome them, which may require re-framing and re-shaping institutional practices. The underlying assumption of this work is that supporting young children's voices ensures children's meaningful participation in what matters to them and supports them in becoming active citizens in society.

### **Emergence of children's voices**

When addressing children's voices, it is imperative to consider the paradigm shifts that occurred overtime, which were related with changes in how we understand childhood (Kanyal, 2014). Indeed, until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, childhood was regarded as a period of preparation for adulthood, and existing paradigms described children as underdeveloped adults who were not to be treated differently from adults (Clark, 2010). During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, academics and researchers from anthropology and sociology, and particularly from the new sociology of childhood, paved the way to positioning children as social actors, active agents, competent and rational beings, and relevant participants in research (Corsaro, 2005; James & Prout, 2003).

Gradually, other fields of knowledge, namely social pedagogy (e.g., Cameron, 2011), education, social policy, and psychology, also offered insights regarding children's active role in their own learning, and the important role that social structures play in children's learning and development (Correia et al., 2021; Kanyal, 2014). This led to the emergence and

recognition of childhood studies as an interdisciplinary field (James & Prout, 2003; Spyrou, 2016). These multiple and interrelated perspectives highlighted children's knowledge, competences, and capacities to express their perspectives and voices, as well as their potential to (positively) influence decision making and shape their own environments, with adult support (Clark & Moss, 2005; Hart & Brando, 2018).

Consequently, concepts such as agency, evolving competences, autonomy, and power became crucial to conceive children as active agents, competent to express their voices, views, interests, and needs (Burger, 2018; Correia et al., 2021). Eliciting and considering children's voices is a way of respecting them and capturing their realities, thus supporting their agency (Freeman, 2007; Hanson, 2016; Percy-Smith, 2016; Spencer et al., 2020). Further, acknowledging children's evolving competences is vital to recognising them as active agents, while also considering their growing maturity (Lansdown, 2005). In turn, children's autonomy entails their active role and capacity to express themselves and to make choices (Ruck et al., 2014). Finally, power is associated with control and decision making, and considered the basis of freedom, which is fundamental to the expression of children's voices (Foucault, 2003; Gallagher, 2008).

Changes in the views about childhood entail an increasing demand for listening to and considering children's voices, also at the policy level. In this regard, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989) is particularly important, as it set the legal background for children's rights and particularly for children's influence in decision-making (e.g., Tangen, 2008). Specifically, Articles 12 and 13 of the Convention propose, respectively, that children have the right to express their views, and the right to have them considered, in the family in community settings (United Nations, 1989). In other words, the Convention highlights the importance of listening to children and considering their views and voices.

At the European level, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (European Commission, 2021) marked a new chapter towards a democratic, meaningful, and systemic participation of children in decision-making processes. Specifically, the strategy is aimed at putting children and their best interests at the heart of EU policies, by increasing awareness of children's rights, and ensuring the right of the child to be heard and listened to. The Council of Europe (2017) also highlights the importance of considering children's voices and recommended that they be heard since the earliest ages. Relatedly, General Comment No. 7 states that ECEC settings are privileged contexts in which children's voices should be particularly considered and provides a normative framework to monitor the implementation of the CRC (United Nations, 1989) in ECEC (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the

Child, 2005). Consistent with these position statements, the Proposal for Key Principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care (European Commission, 2014) and the European Framework of Quality and Wellbeing Indicators (Moser et al., 2017) underlined the importance of valuing young children's voice(s), as a key principle of high-quality ECEC settings.

### **Listening to children's voice(s)**

Children's voices refer to the expression of children's views, feelings, and expectations, through verbal communication, but also through other modes, such as visual arts, music, writing, drama, movement, facial expressions, or even silences (e.g., Lewis, 2010). Given that children can express themselves in multiple ways, the promotion of children's voices has prompted the emergence of several forms and methods of accessing them (Spyrou, 2011).

Listening to children's voices shows regard for children's needs, interests, and experiences, and constitutes a fundamental step towards empowering children and supporting their participation rights (Harris & Manatakis, 2013). Moreover, listening to children is also a way of fulfilling children's right to respect (Korczak, 2017). The concept of children's voices recognises the multiplicity of children's perspectives and goes beyond hearing, to focus on listening to (i.e., paying attention, attending to) children's thoughts, feelings, preferences, and needs (Murray, 2019). To effectively listen to children in ECEC, positive adult-child interactions (i.e., characterized by sensitivity and emotional availability) are crucial (e.g., Rinaldi, 2006).

Actively listening to children's voices helps professionals and institutions to know and understand children's needs and interests. Also, it provides information that allows professionals to be more aligned with children's perspectives, positively responding to them. Consequently, professionals can develop practices tailored to children's preferences, thus optimising their development and learning (Murray, 2019). In the end, the process of listening to and considering children's voices has the potential to benefit not only children (e.g., enhancing self-esteem, communication, and problem-solving skills), but also adults and institutions (e.g., enhancing professionals' sensitivity) (Shier, 2001; Sinclair, 2004).

Recent studies show that 3- and 5-year-old children were more willing to accept group decisions when their voice was listened to (Grocke et al., 2018). Indeed, voice is one of the conditions that make a procedure, or a decision judged as fair (Folger, 1977; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). In addition, being listened to satisfies a need for positive self-regard and a need of belonging (Lind & Tyler, 1988).

Across time, children's voices have been considered both individually (i.e., representing children's will and perspectives) and socially constructed (i.e., not separated from the sociocultural environment in which they occur) (Komulainen, 2007). Children have been historically considered less competent, less mature, and without a voice. For this reason, discourses on children's voices contributed to give visibility and power to voices that were previously silenced or marginalized (e.g., by the supremacy of adults' discourses) (Moore et al., 2010). In this sense, supporting the development, expression, and influence of children's voices aligns with social empowerment movements (e.g., "Nothing about us without us", Charlton, 1998). Therefore, discourses on children's voices are described as valuable and well-intentioned, as they represent a means of considering perspectives that otherwise would be ignored (L'Anson, 2013).

Importantly, it is not the adult who gives children a voice, as argued by Welty and Lundy (2013). Children have a voice, need to be supported to express it, and should have it considered and listened to. Thus, when framing, listening to, and considering children's voices, both the multiple forms of expression and communication of each child, and teacher-child interactions must be considered (Mannion, 2007), acknowledging the multidimensional construction of voice (Elden, 2012).

### **Supporting young children's voices in ECEC settings**

There are multiple reasons why ECEC is a privileged context for supporting young children's voices. Millions of young children around the world spend considerable amounts of time in ECEC settings (European Commission, 2019). Therefore, the types of experiences children have in these settings matter, as illustrated by the positive developmental outcomes associated with attending high-quality ECEC (e.g., Moser et al., 2017; Sylva et al., 2010).

Naturally, what constitutes high-quality ECEC is socially constructed, changes over time and across cultural contexts, and may differ depending on the perspectives considered (Katz, 2006). Nevertheless, we propose that children's participation and, specifically, the promotion of children's voices should be considered important dimensions of ECEC quality (Sheridan, 2007), understood broadly as the conditions that ensure and promote young children's development, learning, and well-being.

This proposal is consistent with the notion that children's participation should be embedded in their daily lives and community settings, from the earliest ages (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2005). Importantly, it is also consistent with existing pedagogical models and frameworks regarding ECEC, that value child-centred and

participatory approaches (Alderson, 2008; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Lloyd-Smith & Tarr, 2000; Prout, 2003; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). Because of its specificities and long-lasting traditions, ECEC is especially well-suited to support the development, expression, and consideration of children's voices in daily practices, planning, and decision making. Moreover, ECEC has the power to pave the way for other levels of the education system to consider all children's voices, intentionally and systematically.

Considering young children's developmental differences and diverse sociocultural backgrounds, ECEC teachers' sensitivity to multiple forms of expression (e.g., verbal, non-verbal), is paramount to truly listening to all children, regardless of skill level, language spoken at home, temperamental characteristics, among others (e.g., Houen et al., 2016). Ensuring the expression of children's voices requires that children's competence, dignity, and responsibility are acknowledged, respected, and promoted. It also requires that relevant information is shared with children in meaningful ways and that children's expression is facilitated by building their capacity to express views, interests, and preferences (e.g., Lansdown, 2005).

However, listening to young children's voices alone may not be enough, and ECEC professionals need to consider other interrelated dimensions. Based on Lundy (2007), additional conditions necessary to promote meaningful opportunities for children to express themselves, fully participating in decision making and exerting their influence in society, include:

- An inclusive ECEC space (e.g., ensuring appropriate access to materials and high-quality emotional support, providing ample opportunities for children to express their views and promoting the motivation to do so).

- A receptive audience (i.e., identifying responsible person(s) who effectively listen to children's views and ensuring there is a process to communicating and giving due weight to children's views).

- Considering multiple levels of children's influence (i.e., consultation, collaboration, and child-initiation), as appropriate (acting upon children's views at each level and providing children feedback on decision-making processes and outcomes).

These dimensions of space, audience, and influence are important to fully address children's voices in ECEC and may provide guidance to professionals and pedagogical teams in setting a pedagogical agenda (Correia et al., 2021; Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2015).



Given its close connections to other key developmental contexts for young children, such as families and the community, ECEC settings are especially well positioned to advocate for young children's participation rights and effective consideration of children's voices, beyond the walls and fences of the setting. Beyond raising awareness, ECEC professionals can support families and relevant community stakeholders in addressing children's voices, ensuring that children's views, preferences, ideas, and initiatives on topics relevant to family and community life reach the relevant audiences and are given due weight. However, to support and advocate for children's voices in ECEC, in the family, and in the community, ECEC professionals themselves need to be well-aware of the importance of children's voices and participation. Thus, professional development is needed to (a) raise ECEC professionals' awareness regarding the benefits of supporting children's voices, promoting positive attitudes towards children's participation; and (b) enhance ECEC professionals' skills to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate participatory practices. The PARTICIPA project is an example of a European initiative to design and examine the effectiveness of professional development tools supporting participation rights in ECEC (see <https://child-participation.eu/>). Also, some instruments and tools are already available to support assessment, reflection, and positive change regarding children's participation and daily experiences. For instance, the Classroom Assessment Scoring System – Pre-K, a widely used observational tool designed to assess the quality of interactions and practices in ECEC classrooms, includes a dimension that focuses on the extent to which professionals place an emphasis on children's perspectives, interests, and motivations, and foster their responsibility, participation, and autonomy (Pianta et al., 2008). The Council of Europe (2016) also developed a Child Participation Assessment Tool, with a set of indicators allowing professionals, from practice and policy levels, to measure the implementation and the quality of the participation experiences offered to children and young people under the age of 18.

### **Challenges to the consideration of children's voices in ECEC**

Stereotypes and beliefs that the consideration of children's voices is difficult, costly, demanding, and requires expertise, are examples of challenges already identified (Bae, 2009; Lundy, 2007; Malone & Hartung, 2010). In effect, despite the multiple benefits foreseen from listening to children, and despite children seeming to be aware of their right to express themselves, only few consider themselves heard and respected (European Commission, 2021).

This applies to the various contexts of children's lives, and the ECEC context is no exception. Two frequently mentioned challenges that may prevent the full consideration of

children's voices in ECEC refer to professionals' misconceptions about children's competences to express themselves, and to difficulties in combining professionals' demands and children's voices (e.g., Correia et al., 2020; Kanyal & Gibbs, 2014; Lundy, 2007).

Scepticism, lack of awareness, and cultural beliefs regarding adults' authority can hamper professionals from listening to children's voices and to share power with them. For instance, professionals can see children and, consequently, their perspectives, as immature, incompetent, and not meaningful (Horwath et al., 2011; Lundy, 2007). Thus, even when listening to and considering children's voices, some professionals may do it without entirely recognizing children's voices as agential and without acknowledging their power to positively influence decisions affecting them (e.g., Carnevale, 2020).

Relatedly, some practices of ECEC professionals are characterized by the use of directive language and communication styles, or by interactions characterized by adult power and control (Koran & Avci, 2017). These practices may compromise children's comfort and confidence to express themselves, becoming a deterrent to the consideration of their voices (Thornberg & Elvstrand, 2012).

Also, in practice, professionals may encounter difficulties in recognising and understanding young children's modes and purposes of communication. For example, younger children may not use verbal communication; therefore, adults need to be aware of other forms of expression such as smiling, crying, or pointing. The recognition and understanding of children's various modes of communication can be facilitated in the context of interactions characterised by sensitivity, reciprocity, reflexivity, and intersubjectivity (Murray, 2019). In this regard, professional development initiatives may be fundamental for professionals to reflect on their practices and become more aware of such interactions (Correia et al., 2021).

Regarding difficulties in conciliating professional demands and children's voices, they are often related with the contextual limits and barriers that ECEC professionals encounter (Vieira, 2017). They may be, for instance, related with bureaucracy, intense workload, with the existence of a strict curriculum to follow, or with high adult-child ratios that can hinder the effective consideration of children's voices (e.g., Venninen et al., 2014). In this regard, the alignment between macro-policy agendas (e.g., recognizing the importance of a pedagogic space providing opportunities for practitioners to listen to and act on children's voices) and children's agendas (i.e., focused on children's views, interests, and needs) seems to be crucial to the full consideration of children's voices (Frankel, 2018; Murray, 2019).

Addressing children's voices and child-centred practices in teacher's initial training, professional profiles, and ECEC curriculum guidelines, may support and encourage

professionals to overcome obstacles to the promotion of children's voices and participation in ECEC (Theobald, 2019). In addition, investment in professional development initiatives may be important to disseminate and translate evidence-based knowledge about the promotion of children's voices, thus fostering professionals' positive attitudes and skills towards the adoption of more participatory, child-centred practices (e.g., Emilson & Folkesson, 2006).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we reflected on the meaning of listening to and acting upon young children's voices, on the need to consider multiple expressions of voice, and on the importance of acknowledging the capacities of young children to frame a view – a meaningful view - and make their perspectives known. We discussed the importance of ECEC settings, where millions of children all over the world spend considerable amounts of time, as pivotal to ensure children experience their agency as consequential. We also discussed ECEC as a context for implementing opportunities for supporting citizenship from an early age.

ECEC settings are in a privileged position to become beacons for the support and elevation of children's participation rights in their communities. Naturally, building and implementing a shared vision around the importance of children's voices, in ECEC and in the community, requires continuous professional development, teamwork and reflection, and intentionality in planning for and monitoring the extent and meaningfulness of children's participation. However, when these conditions are in place, there is much that ECEC professionals and, preferably, ECEC teams can do to actively support children's voices.

While other participation models are useful, the rationale shared in this chapter was specifically informed by the Lundy model (2007) and its components of space, voice, audience, and influence. Each of these dimensions poses relevant questions for ECEC settings regarding how to support the development, expression, and consequence of children's voices. The responses to such questions can both inform the evaluation of current practices, and the definition of pedagogical and organizational goals related to children's voices and participation rights. Based on this rationale, Wysłowska et al. (2021) developed a self-assessment tool for ECEC professionals (i.e., teachers, assistants, and coordinators) aiming to support them in delivering high-quality ECEC through participatory practices at the classroom and centre-level. Drawing from this work, and looking into the future, we propose that ECEC professionals and teams consider the questions below to identify future steps, when seeking positive change in how they support children's voices and participation. Obstacles to the promotion of children's participation have been identified (e.g., Venninen et al., 2014); however, the current

understanding of children's rights requires going forward and deeper in promoting children's voices in ECEC. This is both a responsibility and a shared mandate.

### Conversation starters

- To what extent do we implement child-centred practices, and ensure that every child experiences a **positive, stimulating, accessible, and inclusive environment**?
- To what extent do we engage in continuous reflections on the **unique ways each child expresses** his/her perspectives, preferences, needs, and expectations?
- To what extent do we provide sufficient and **developmentally appropriate information** to children, to support the formation of their perspectives?
- To what extent do we ensure that children's perspectives are **listened to and considered in decision-making** at the classroom and centre level?
- To what extent do we support children in **identifying who has the responsibility to listen** to their views and ensure that their perspectives reach the target audience?
- Do we ensure that children know the **extent to which their views were considered** and understand the rationale for the decisions eventually made?
- To what extent do we address children's voices and participation in our **mission statement** and ensure the development of a **common vision** about their importance?
- To what extent do we **support and engage families and community stakeholders** in enabling, considering, and amplifying young children's voices?

### References

- Alderson, P. (2008). Children as researchers: Participation rights and research methods. In P. Christensen, & A. James (Eds), *Research with children: Perspectives and practices* (pp. 276–290). Routledge.
- Bae, B. (2009). Children's right to participate: Challenges in everyday interactions. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 17(3), 391-406. doi:10.1080/13502930903101594
- Burger, K. (2018). The subjective importance of children's participation rights: A discrimination perspective. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 89(1), 65-76. doi:10.1037/ort0000343
- Cameron, C. (2011). Social Pedagogy: Past, Present, Future. In R. Jackson (Ed.), *Discovering Camphill*. Floris Books.

- Carnevale, F. A. (2020). A “Thick” conception of children’s voices: A hermeneutical framework for childhood research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19, 1-9. doi:10.1177/1609406920933767
- Charlton, J. I. (1998). *Nothing about us without us*. University of California Press.
- Clark, C. (2010). *In a Younger Voice: Doing Child-Centered Qualitative Research*. Oxford Scholarship Online
- Clark, A., & Moss, P. (2005). *Spaces to play: More listening to the mosaic approach*. NCB
- Correia, N., Aguiar, C., & Amaro, F. (2021). Children’s participation in early childhood education: A theoretical overview. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 1-20, doi:10.1177/1463949120981789
- Correia N, Carvalho H and Aguiar C (2020) Teachers’ ideas about children’s right to participate in early childhood education. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 111, 1-11. doi:10.1016/j.chilyouth.2020.104845
- Corsaro, W. (2005). *The sociology of childhood*. Pine Forge Press.
- Council of Europe (2017). *Young people’s access to rights. Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 and explanatory memorandum*. <https://rm.coe.int/1680702b6e>
- Council of Europe (2017). *Child participation assessment tool*. <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806482d9>
- Dahlberg, G., Moss, P., & Pence, A. (2007). *Beyond quality in early childhood education and care: languages of evaluation*. Routledge.
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2015). *National strategy on children and young people’s participation in decision-making, 2015-2020*. NIR: Government Publications. [www.dcyia.ie](http://www.dcyia.ie)
- Elden, S. (2012). Inviting the messy: Drawing methods and “children’s voices.” *Childhood*, 20(1), 66–81. doi:10.1177/0907568212447243
- Emilson, A., & Folkesson, A-M. (2006). Children’s participation and teacher’s control. *Early Childhood Development and Care*, 176(3-4), 219-238. doi:10.1080/03004430500039846
- European Commission. (2021). The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee. *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021DC0142>

- European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice. (2019). *Key data on early childhood education and care in Europe: 2019 Edition. Eurydice Report*. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Folger, R. (1977). Distributive and procedural justice: Combined impact of voice and improvement on experienced inequity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 35(2), 108-119. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.35.2.108
- Foucault, M. (2003). *Society must be defended*. Penguin.
- Frankel, S. (2018). *Giving children a voice: A step-by-step guide to promoting child-centred practice*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Freeman, M. (2007). Why it remains important to take children's rights seriously. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 15(1), 5-23. doi:10.1163/092755607X181711
- Gallagher, M. (2008). Foucault, power and participation. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 16(3), 395-406. doi:10.1163/157181808X311222
- Groce, P., Rossano, F., & Tomasello, M. (2018). Young children are more willing to accept group decisions in which they have had a voice. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 166, 67-78. doi: 10.1016/j.jecp.2017.08.003.
- Hanson, K. (2016). Children's participation and agency when they don't 'do the right thing' [Editorial]. *Childhood*, 23(4) 471-475. doi:10.1177/0907568216669222
- Harris, P., & Manatakis, H. (2013). *Children as citizens: Engaging with the child's voice in educational settings*. Routledge.
- Hart, C. S., & Brando, N. (2018). A capability approach to children's well-being, agency and participatory rights in education. *European Journal of Education*, 53(3), 293-309. doi:10.1111/ejed.12284
- Horwath, J., Hodgkiss, D., Kalyva, E., & Spyrou, S. (2011). *You respond. Promoting effective project participation by young people who have experienced violence. A guide to good practice through training and development*.  
[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.ispcan.org/resource/resmgr/you\\_respond\\_booklet\\_for\\_dow.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.ispcan.org/resource/resmgr/you_respond_booklet_for_dow.pdf)
- Houen, S., Danby, S., Farrell, A., & Thorpe, K. (2016). Creating spaces for children's agency: 'I wonder...' formulations in teacher-child interactions. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 48(3), 259-276. doi:10.1007/s13158-016-0170-4
- James, A., & Prout, A. (2003). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood*. Routledge.

- Kanyal, M. (2014). Children's rights: 0-8 years. In M. Kanyal (Ed.), *Children's rights 0-8: Promoting participation in education and care* (pp. xi-xiv). Routledge.
- Kanyal, M., & Gibbs, J. (2014). Participation: Why and how? In M. Kanyal (Ed.), *Children's rights 0-8: Promoting participation in education and care* (pp. 61-78). Routledge.
- Komulainen, S. (2007). The ambiguity of the child's "voice" in social research. *Childhood*, 14(1), 11–28. doi:10.1177/0907568207068561
- Katz, L. (2006). Perspetivas atuais sobre a aprendizagem na infância [Current perspectives on childhood learning]. *Saber (e) Educar*, 11, 7-21.
- Koran, N., & Avci, N. (2017). Perceptions of prospective pre-school teachers regarding children's right to participate in classroom activities. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 17(3), 1035-1059. doi:10.12738/estp.2017.3.0325
- Korczak, J. (2017). *A Child's Right to Respect*. Ombudsman for Children
- Lansdown, G. (2005). Can you hear me? *The right of young children to participate in decisions affecting them (Working papers in early childhood development No. 36)*. Bernard van Leer Foundation
- L'Anson, J. (2013). Beyond the child's voice: Towards an ethics for children's participation rights. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 3(2), 104–113. doi:10.2304/gsch.2013.3.2.104
- Lewis, A. (2010). Silence in the context of "child voice." *Children & Society*, 24, 14–23. doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2008.00200.x
- Lind, E. A., & Tyler, T. R. (1988). *The social psychology of procedural justice*. Plenum.
- Lloyd-Smith, M. & Tarr, J. (2000) Researching children's perspectives: a sociological dimension. In A. Lewis, & G. Lindsay (Eds.), *Researching children's perspectives* (pp. 59-70). Open University Press.
- Lundy, L. (2007). 'Voice' is not enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child. *British Educational Research Journal*, 33(6), 927-942. doi:10.1080/01411920701657033
- Malone, K., & Hartung, C. (2010). Challenges of participatory practice with children. In B. Percy-Smith, & N. Thomas (Eds.), *Handbook of children and young people's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice* (pp. 24-38). Routledge.
- Mannion, G. (2007). Going spatial, going relational: Why "listening to children" and children's participation needs reframing. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 28(3), 405–420. doi:10.1080/01596300701458970

- Moore, R., & Muller, J. (1999). The discourse of voice and the problem of knowledge and identity in the sociology of education. *British journal of Sociology of Education*, 20(2), 189-206. doi: 10.1080/01425699995407
- Moser, T., Leseman, P., Melhuish, E., Broekhuizen, M., & Slot, P. (2017). *European framework of quality and wellbeing indicators. Report D6.3, CARE: Curriculum quality analysis and impact review of European early Childhood education and care*. University College of Southwest Norway.
- Murray, J. (2019). Hearing young children's voices. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 27, 1–5. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2018.1563352>
- Pianta, R. C., LaParo, K. M., & Hamre, B. K. (2008). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System Manual: Pre-K*. Brookes.
- Percy-Smith, B. (2016). Negotiating active citizenship: Young people's participation in everyday spaces. In K. Kallio, S. Mills, T., & Skelton (Eds.), *Politics, citizenship and rights: Geographies of children and young people* (pp. 1-18). Springer.
- Prout, A. (2003). Participation, policy and the changing conditions of childhood. In C. Hallett, & A. Prout (Eds.), *Hearing the voices of children: Social policy for a new century* (pp. 27-41). Routledge.
- Shier, H. (2001). Pathways to participation: Openings, opportunities and obligations. *Children & Society*, 15(2), 107-117. doi:10.1002/chi.617
- Sinclair, R. (2004). Participation in practice: Making it meaningful, effective and sustainable. *Children & Society*, 18, 106–118. doi:10.1002/chi.817
- Spencer, G., Fairbrother, H., & Thompson, J. (2020). Privileges of power: Authenticity, representation and the “problem” of children's voices in qualitative health research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19, 1-8, doi:10.1177/1609406920958597
- Rinaldi, C. (2001). The pedagogy of listening: The listening perspective from Reggio Emilia. *Innovations in early education: The International Reggio Emilia Exchange*, 8(4), 1-4. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/526fe9aee4b0c53fa3c845e0/t/540fce31e4b00c94d884e002/1410321969279/Pedagogy+of+Listening+-+Rinaldi+-+Fall+2001.pdf>
- Ruck, M. D., Peterson-Badali, M., & Helwig, C. C. (2014). Children's perspectives on nurturance and self-determination rights: Implications for development and well-being. In A. B. Arie, F. Casas, I. Frønes, & J. E. Korbin (Eds.), *Handbook of child well-being* (pp. 2537-2559). Springer.
- Sheridan, S. (2007). Dimensions of pedagogical quality in preschool. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 15(2), 197-217. doi:10.1080/0966976070128915



- Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Taggart, B. (Eds.), (2010). *Early childhood matters: Evidence from the effective pre-school and primary education project*. Routledge
- Spyrou, S. (2011). The limits of children's voices: From authenticity to critical, reflexive representation. *Childhood, 18*(2), 151-165. doi:10.1177/0907568210387834
- Tangen, R. (2008). Listening to children's voices in educational research: Some theoretical and methodological problems. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 23*(2), 157-66. doi:10.1080/08856250801945956
- Theobald, M. (2019). UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: "Where are we at in recognising children's rights in early childhood, three decades on...?" [Guest Editorial]. *International Journal of Early Childhood, 51*, 251-257. doi:10.1007/s13158-019-00258-z
- Thibaut, J., & Walker, L. (1975). *Procedural justice: A psychological analysis*. Erlbaum.
- Thomas, N. (2005). Has anything really changed? Managers' views of looked after children's participation in 1997 and 2004. *Adoption & Fostering, 29*(1), 67-77. doi:10.1177/030857590502900108
- Thornberg, R., & Elvstrand, H. (2012). Children's experiences of democracy, participation, and trust in school. *International Journal of Educational Research, 53*, 44-54. doi:10.1016/j.ijer.2011.12.010
- Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2005). *General comment No 7 (2005): Implementing child rights in early childhood*. [www.refworld.org/docid/460bc5a62.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/460bc5a62.html)
- United Nations. (1989). *The United Nations convention on the rights of the child*. United Nations.
- Venninen, T., Leinonen, J., Lipponen, L., & Ojala, M. (2014). Supporting children's participation in Finnish child care centers. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 42*(3), 211-218. doi:10.1007/s10643-013-0590-9
- Vieira, I. F. (2017). *A participação: Um paradigma para a intervenção social [Participation: A paradigm for social intervention]*. Universidade Católica Editora.
- Welty, E., & Lundy, L. (2013). A children's rights-based approach to involving children in decision making. *Journal of Science Communication, 12*(3), 1-5.
- Woodhead, M., & Faulkner, D. (2008). Subjects, objects or participants? Dilemmas of psychological research with children. In A. James, & P. Christensen (Eds.), *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices* (pp. 26-55). Falmer Press.

Wysłowska, O., Taelman, H., Boderé, A., Markowska-Manista, U., & members of the PARTICIPA Consortium. (2021). *Promoting children's participation rights in early childhood education and care: Self-assessment tool for professionals*. PARTICIPA, Project No. 2019-1-PT01- KA202-060950. ISBN: 978-989-781-456-3. [www.child-participation.eu](http://www.child-participation.eu)

ACCEPTED