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**Children's Rights in Victimology:
Pedagogical-Psychological Contributions
to Professionalization**

May 16th 23



Prof. Dr. Janne Fengler

Children's Rights in Victimology: Pedagogical-Psychological Contributions to Professionalization

1. Introduction
2. Contexts of Participation
3. Pedagogical-Psychological Contributions
4. Exemplary Procedures
5. Professionalisation for the Realisation
of Children's Rights
6. Conclusions and further Perspectives

The SAGE Handbook of
Decision Making,
Assessment and Risk
in Social Work



Engaging Children in
Assessment and Decisions

Janne Fengler and Peter Schäfer

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the involvement of children in the processes that take place in the context of social work when assessing situations, making judgements and making decisions. Social work with children has special features, especially of a legal and pedagogical-psychological nature, whereby legal perspectives partly follow general and organisational perspectives (see Chapters 14, 31 and 42 for further discussion on legal aspects; Chapter 15 on interprofessional aspects; and Chapters 6, 13, 16, 29, 39, and 42–47 on organisational aspects of risk and decision making). There are also aspects to be considered in work with children that are distinct from those in social work with adults (see Chapters 23–24). The inclusion of systems to which the children belong, primarily their families, other relatives or family substitutes, is also mentioned in the sense of a comprehensive presentation, and this dimension is considered further in Chapter 18. The quality of assessment and decision-making processes with the involvement of children is centrally dependent on the careful consideration of the above-mentioned special features. To provide evidence to support the point, this chapter presents relevant historical, disciplinary and implementation perspectives on

children's participation, closing with conclusions and further perspectives.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE PARTICIPATION
OF CHILDREN

Historical Overview

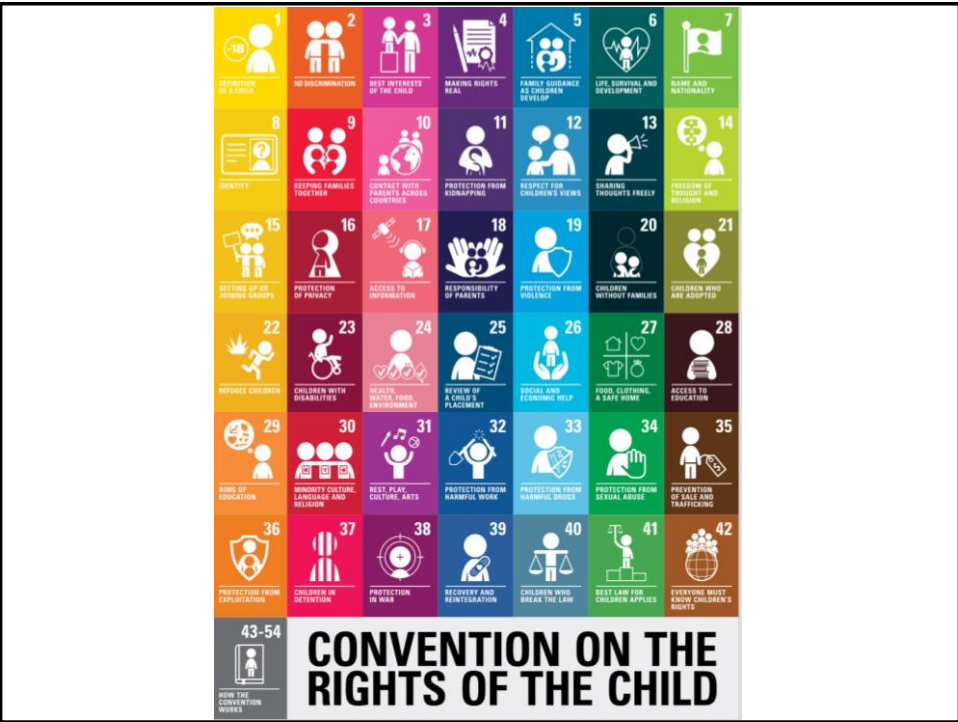
For more than 100 years, concepts deriving from the progressive educational movement of Janusz Korczak (1928/1999) and Ellen Key (1902/1992) reflect children's rights and their participation in all matters concerning them. This does not necessarily mean that children are given a voice accordingly ever since then. In 1989, an important paradigm shift and manifest milestone towards perceiving and treating children as protagonists of their own lives took place when the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was ratified (United Nations, 1989). The CRC has set itself the goal to give children and adolescents a voice. It forms an important frame of reference for the European primary legislation, and policy documents on the rights of the child. Consequently, the European Commission adopted

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1. INTRODUCTION



Article 3

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.
3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.



Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

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2. CONTEXTS OF PARTICIPATION

The fields of practice to give children a voice in institutional, public and private settings are extensive and vary in their complexity, e.g. in settings such as:

- kindergarden / school
- family
- family counseling center
- youth welfare office

...in relation to for instance:

- binding rules for behaviour
- hobbies
- nutrition
- media
- medicine / health
- organisation of institutional environment
- urban planning / politics
- divorce of parents
- child endangerment

**What situations / contexts
do you recall from your life**

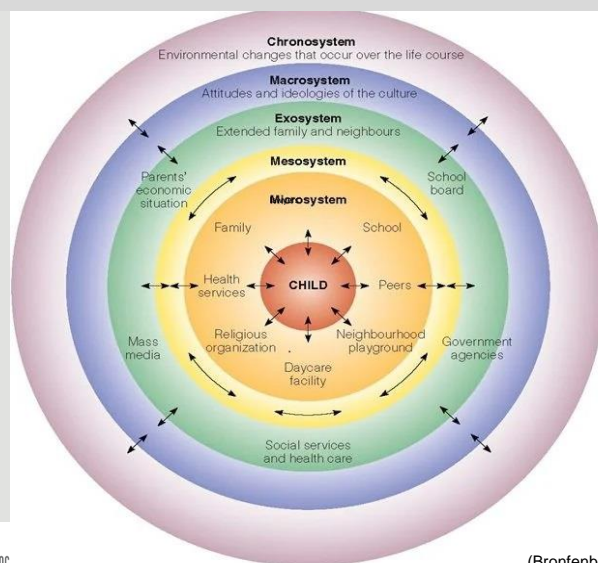
where you were involved in decision-making

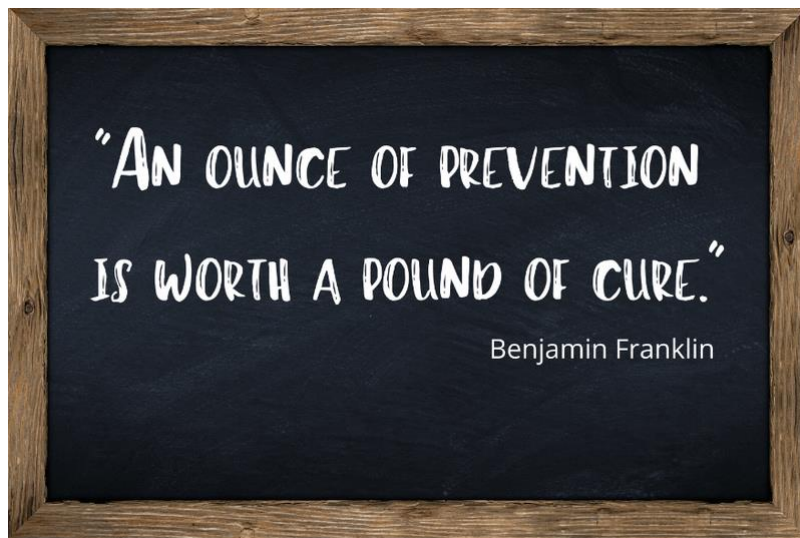
as a child or adolescent,

**where your voice was given space,
where you were encouraged to have a say by adults,
where your participation was actively demanded?**

3. PEDAGOGICAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological-System-Theory

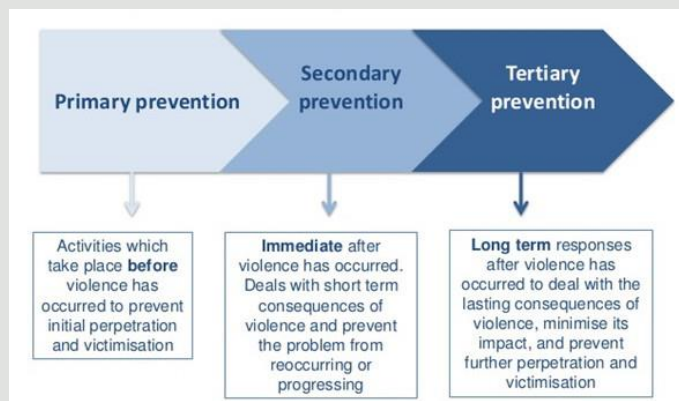




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Approaches of support



(National Education and Research Center, 2023, <https://havenhorizons.com/primary-secondary-tertiary/>)



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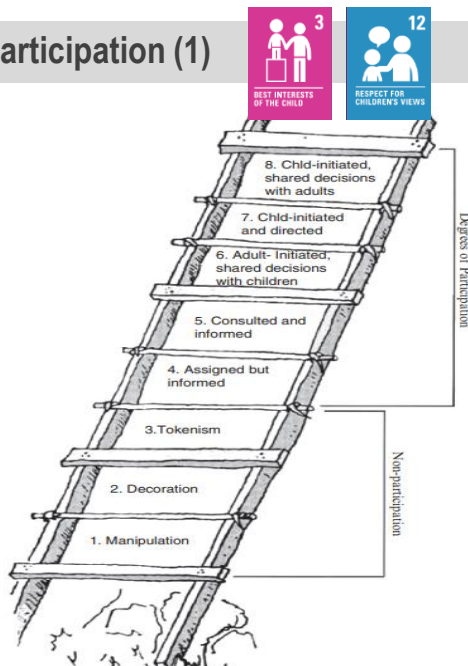
Approaches of support

- kindergarden / school: binding rules for behaviour, organisation of institutional environment,...
- family: hobbies, nutrition, media,...



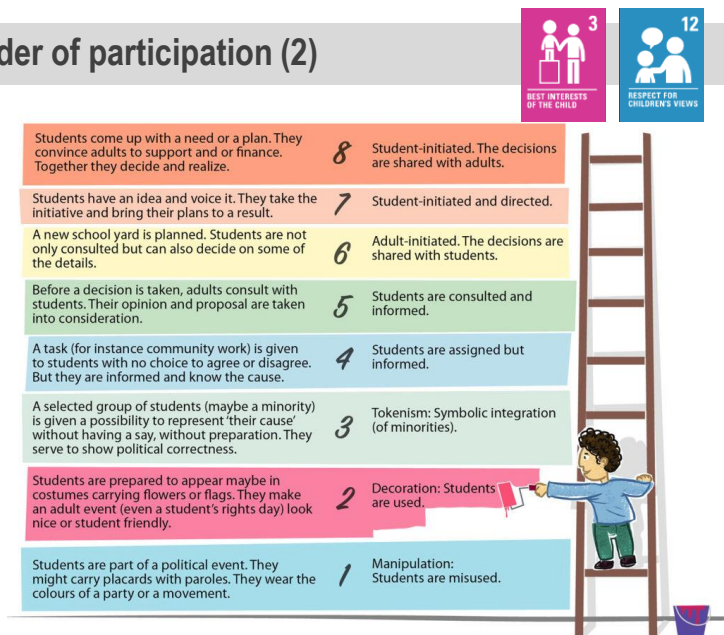
(Caplan, 1964, National Education and Research Center, 2023)

The ladder of participation (1)



(Hart, 2008, 22)

The ladder of participation (2)



Approaches of support

- family counseling center / youth welfare office: divorce of parents, child welfare endangerment,...



(Caplan, 1964, National Education and Research Center, 2023)

Child-appropriateness in victimology contexts

- age-related,
- individual-related,
- context- and situation-related,
- sensitive (appropriate, timely, qualitatively and quantitatively responsive),
- systemically appropriate,
- **ethically grounded,**
- **methodically sound / valid**



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INTRODUCTION

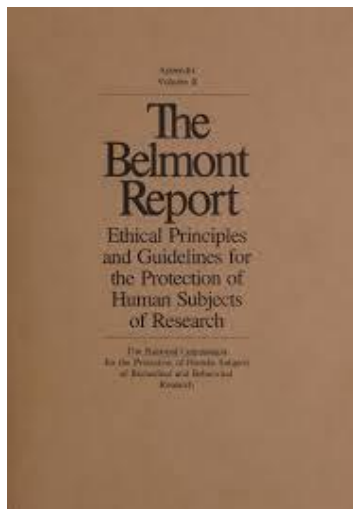
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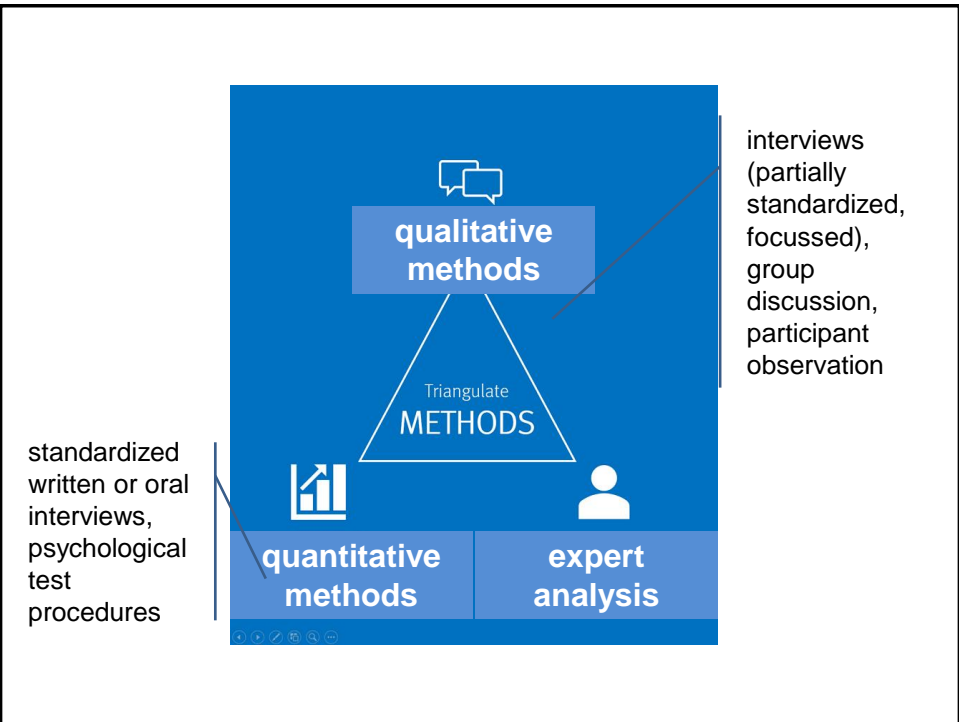
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Subpart D of the report applies to research involving children as subjects:


- research involving no greater than minimal risk (§ 6.404),
- research involving greater than minimal risk, ... but with the prospect of direct benefit to individual subjects (§ 46.405), ... and no prospect of direct benefit to individual subjects, but likely to lead to generalizable findings about the subject's disorder or condition (§ 46.406),
- research that cannot otherwise be authorized and that offers the possibility of understanding, preventing, or alleviating a serious problem affecting the health or welfare of children (§ 46.407),
- requirements for parental or guardian permission and child consent (§ 46.408).



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4. EXEMPLARY PROCEDURES

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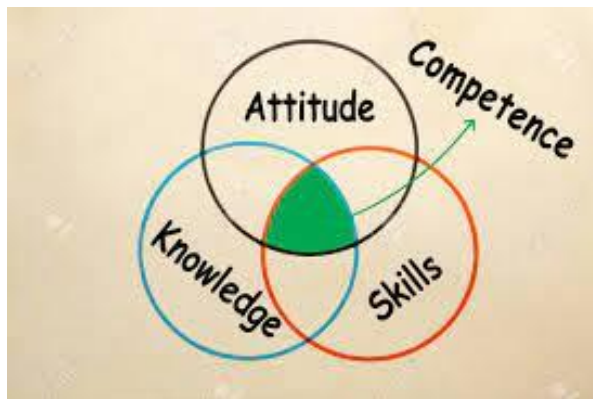
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5. PROFESSIONALISATION TO REALIZE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The European Qualifications Framework

The EU developed the **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** as a translation tool to make national qualifications easier to understand and more comparable. The EQF seeks to support cross-border mobility of learners and workers, promote lifelong learning and professional development across Europe.



What situations / contexts do you recall from your life where you were involved in decision-making as a child or adolescent, where your voice was given space, where you were encouraged to participate by adults, where your participation was actively demanded?



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Scale of Parenting Style (1-11)

SCALE OF PARENTING STYLE
Abdul Gafoor K., & Abidha Kurukkan

Name: Subject: Place:
School: Male/Female:

Instructions Given below are statements to know how your mother/father deals with you. For each statement 5 options namely 'Very right' (5), 'Mostly right' (4), 'Sometimes right, Sometimes wrong' (3), 'Mostly wrong' (2), 'Very wrong' (1) are given. Tick Mark against each statement, on the left side about mother and on the right side about father, on the option that suites the behaviour of your mother or father in relation to you. Take care to mark your responses against all statements. Observe the example.

| About Mother | | | | | STATEMENT | About Father | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| ✓ | | | | | Eg: Enquires about my matters with teachers. | | ✓ | | | |
| | | | | | 1. Does whatever I tell. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 2. Spends free time with me. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 3. Points out my mistakes in the manner that I understand. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 4. Gives money for my needs. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 5. Discusses the benefits and detriments of my learning topics. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 6. Considers my likes in food. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 7. Controls my game when in excess. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 8. Shows love to me. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 9. Enquires the reason for my failure. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 10. Helps me in studying. | | | | | |
| | | | | | 11. Confers responsibilities in accordance with my growth. | | | | | |

Scale of Parenting Style (12-38)

| | | | |
|--|-----|--|--|
| | 12. | Has faith in me | |
| | 13. | Enquires the reasons for reaching home late | |
| | 14. | Accepts my privacy | |
| | 15. | Takes care of my dressing | |
| | 16. | Fulfills my desires with available means | |
| | 17. | Makes me aware that the responsibility of what I do is mine itself | |
| | 18. | Accepts when I say no to what I dislike | |
| | 19. | Tells how I should behave with their friends | |
| | 20. | Talks to me praising about their friends | |
| | 21. | Tries to frame my likes and dislikes | |
| | 22. | Appreciates when I try to become independent | |
| | 23. | Punishes for my mistakes | |
| | 24. | Shows love when I do any mistake | |
| | 25. | Enquires who my friends are | |
| | 26. | Has given me freedom to select the subject for study | |
| | 27. | Organizes time for my play | |
| | 28. | Gives priorities to my preferences in studies | |
| | 29. | Demands me to be systematic in studies | |
| | 30. | Emphasizes my successes | |
| | 31. | Advices me | |
| | 32. | Celebrates in my successes with me | |
| | 33. | Discourages unhealthy foods | |
| | 34. | Gets anxious when I am late to reach home | |
| | 35. | Inquires how I spend money | |
| | 36. | Buy dresses for me according to the latest trends | |
| | 37. | Enquires how I spend my free time | |
| | 38. | Gives me timely advices | |

Parental behaviors characterizing the four parenting styles

| | High Control | Low Control |
|---------------------|---|--|
| High Responsiveness | Authoritative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firm and consistent control Monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct Give priority to child's needs and abilities Implying age appropriate maturity demands Encourage children to be independent Attentive Forgiving Encouraging autonomy Offering democratic climate | Permissive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent expression of warmth and affection Low enforcement of rules and authority High acceptance Taking the role of friend rather than parent Allow the child to make their own decision Minimal punishment |
| | Authoritarian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firm in control practices Expecting strict, unquestioned obedience to parental authority Not ready to accept individuality of child Disobedience is dealt by forceful and punitive discipline Relative neglect of child's needs Little communication between parent and child Highly directive behaviors | Negligent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inattentive behavior Neglecting the child Little interaction with child |

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER PERSPECTIVES

- 1. The already sufficiently established international reference frameworks and procedures for children's participation in assessments and decisions should be wished for further dissemination.**
- 2. Suggestions from empirical research with children should be taken for children's participation in finding out about their perspectives on (victimological) matters that concern them.**
- 3. Involving children in issues that affect their lives should be seen even more than before as a cross-sectional task on all system levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1971) as well as in the corresponding fields of action of social work and victimology, taking into account the relevant parameters from an educational and psychological perspective (cf. Fengler & Schaefer, in print).**

4. **Low-threshold and integrated into everyday life or in the context of primary and secondary prevention, all systemically involved professionals can familiarize themselves with the concept of participation, thus opening up an important step towards further professionalization of the field (Caplan, 1971). When children's participation is experienced by them as commonplace, the likelihood of fruitful participation processes increases in possible future life situations where serious negative dynamics, such as secondary victimization, are in prospect as a risk due to aggravated, conflictual initial situations.**
5. **Professionalization as a life-long process is always to be understood on the skill, knowledge and attitude level. The formation of an attitude among experts that sees children as experts of their own lives and at the same time recognizes their need for protection is an important basis for moving from law to the realization of law.**

Thank you for your attention.

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