



‘Overcoming the challenges to ensure inclusive children’s participation in public decision making’

CP4Europe Webinar on

“The participation of vulnerable children in decision-making processes – from theory to practice”



Building a Europe
for and with children
Construire une Europe
pour et avec les enfants

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What are the challenges?



- Challenge 1. Stigma, structural discrimination and marginalisation
- Challenge 2. Building trusting relationships
- Challenge 3. Accessible information/ language
- Challenge 4. Creating enabling environments – possible, safe and worth it
- Challenge 5. Timescales that enable children in vulnerable situations to take a lead
- Challenge 6. Securing appropriate consent
- Challenge 7. Raising awareness of discrimination and of rights
- Challenge 8. Effective, credible and creative methods
- Challenge 9. Transparency about meaning, limits and opportunities of participation
- Challenge 10. Evaluating over longer timescales
- Challenge 11: Lack of investment in participation responding to the pandemic

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Challenge 1. Stigma, structural discrimination and marginalisation

- Children's participation can be strengthened by:
 - **Provision of tools, equipment, relationship and services that ensure all children can connect with schools where their identities are respected and can access education.**
 - **Accessible and relevant health services that promote the best possible health for children and their families.** This makes it possible for children to take part and may reduce the caring responsibilities that children carry in families experiencing poor health.
 - **Adequate family incomes and housing.** This ensures that children are living in conditions where they are more likely to have the energy, time and environments that enable choices to participate.
 - **Promoting positive awareness of Roma and other marginalised groups and challenging all Anti-Gypsyism and other forms of discrimination that are present in political, media and popular discourse.** This can include, for example, challenging Anti-Gypsyism in schools and stereotypes about disabilities.
 - **Building a critical mass.** Linking up with children and young people, families and communities and other people who can help bring about short-term gains and the long-term changes that are needed.
 - **Co-working with marginalised children and families to raise awareness through campaigns, community events, self-advocacy activities about equal rights for all.**

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How can theory help?

Labour

Lead



Provide opportunities for children to set agendas and take decisions about resources – enable don't responsabilise

Larkins, C. (2019). Excursions as corporate agents: A critical realist account of children's agency. *Childhood*, 26(4), 414-429.

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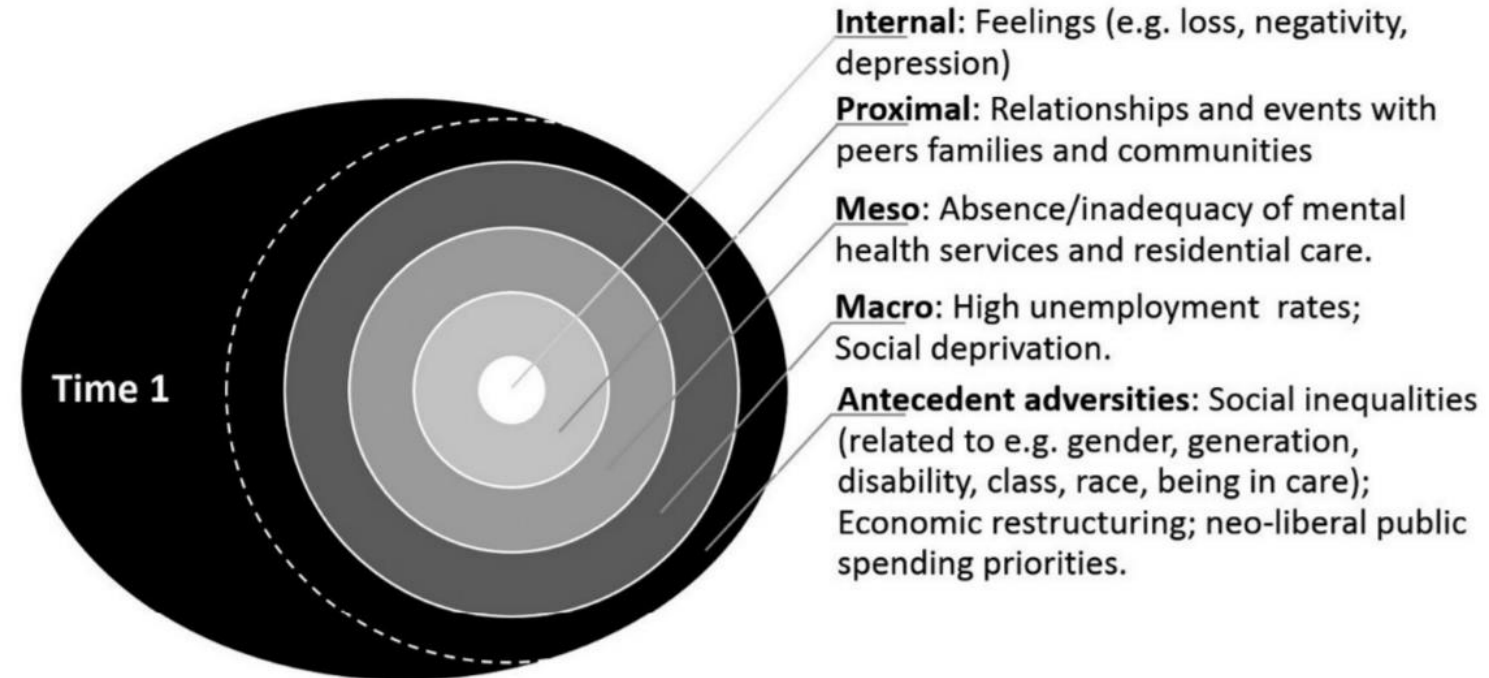
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How else can theory help?

Time
Space

Figure 2: Childhood adversities seen across zones and across time



Work outwards in space and backwards in time to the bigger issues

Larkins, C., et al (2021). Working back to the future: strengthening radical social work with children and young people, and their perspectives on resilience, capabilities and overcoming adversity. *Critical and Radical Social Work*.

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Thank you for your attention

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