



International Perspectives and Empirical Findings on Child Participation: From Social Exclusion to Child-Inclusive Policies

By Tali Gal, Benedetta Duramy

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The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has inspired advocates and policy makers across the globe, injecting children's rights terminology into various public and private arenas. Children's right to participate in decision-making processes affecting their lives is the acme of the Convention and its central contribution to the children's rights discourse. At the same time the participation right presents enormous challenges in its implementation. Laws, regulations and mechanisms addressing children's right to participate in decision-making processes affecting their lives have been established in many jurisdictions across the globe. Yet these worldwide developments have only rarely been accompanied with empirical investigations. The effectiveness of various policies in achieving meaningful participation for children of different ages, cultures and circumstances have remained largely unproven empirically. Therefore, with the growing awareness of the importance of evidence-based policies, it becomes clear that without empirical investigations on the implementation of children's right to participation it is difficult to promote their effective inclusion in decision making.

This book provides a much-needed, first broad portrayal of how child participation is implemented in practice today. Bringing together 19 chapters written by prominent authors from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, and Israel, the book includes descriptions of programs that engage children and youth in decision-making processes, as well as insightful findings regarding what children, their families, and professionals think about these programs. Beyond their contribution to the empirical evidence on ways children engage in decision-making processes, the volume's chapters contribute to the theoretical development of the meaning of "participation," "citizenship," "inclusiveness," and "relational rights" in regards to children and youth. There is no matching to the book's scope both in terms of its breadth of subjects and the diversity of jurisdictions it covers. The book's chapters include experiences of child participation in special education, child protection, juvenile justice, restorative justice, family disputes, research, and

policy making.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Tali Gal, PhD, is Assistant Professor and Head of the MA Program at the University of Haifa School of Criminology. Dr. Gal's research interests, teaching, and publications involve children's rights, restorative justice, victims' rights, and therapeutic jurisprudence. Her book *Child Victims and Restorative Justice--A Needs-Rights Model* was published by Oxford University Press in 2011. Prior to her academic career she practiced law as a children's rights advocate and Legal Advisor at the Israeli National Council for the Child.

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