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**Tilte**

**Rethinking the role of adults in relation to children's participation**

**Abstract**

Changing paradigms in the view of the child and childhood result in repositioning the child in contemporary society. There is an emphasis on understanding and respecting children's perspectives and the perception of the children as active participants in their own lives. The repositioning of the child was further enhanced by reflections on children's rights, especially after the adoption of the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989). The abovementioned changes have led researchers to re-examine the child's role within society.

Nowadays, pedagogy is founded in a child-centred approach. Whether we discuss the child as *the centre* or *in the centre* (Chung & Walsh, 2000), the child has a main role. Depending on the perspective, children's active role may be questioned. However, when positioning the child as the centre (of the world, of the learning), we may deny his/her real participatory role. We let the adults organize children's learning from an adult perspective. Putting the child in the centre of his/her own learning should result in respecting the child's perspective.

These approaches may influence the adults' role in children's lives and learning. While teachers are professionals, and mostly aware of this paradigmatic shift, parents may re-question their possibilities to take responsibility for children's care and education. We are witnessing new parenting styles (i.e. helicopter parenting, overwhelming parenting, curling parenting). Do children's participation eliminate adults' responsibility for children? What is the role of professionals in relation to children's participation? These questions need to be further discussed within the scientific and professional community in order to clarify the adults' role, at a time dedicated to implementing child participation.