

FUTURE SPECIAL ISSUE
CALL FOR PAPERS

Childhood and the parent-child relationship in contemporary contexts

Guest Editors

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In this special issue of *Childhood*, we would like to explore how the parent-child relationship is evolving in contemporary turbulent and contradictory scenarios, and how childhood is being produced as a social space within this relationship. Such phenomena are moulded by a variety of processes, some of them local and others transnational. Examples are the increasing precarity of work; new forms of reproduction and filiation; the growing over-schooling of the daily life of children in Western countries; the unregulated growth of large cities, especially in the global South, among others.

In many places, parents feel under pressure to increase control and safeguarding of their children in an environment perceived as increasingly threatening (Faircloth, 2014). At the same time, parents are called on to encourage their autonomy (Araujo, 2016), based both on an optic of personal freedom and on a rationality that, in the context of neoliberalisation, exalts the self-sufficient individual who is capable of adjusting successfully to the coordinates of the free market.

New globally disputed notions of childhood lead to transformations in intergenerational relations within the family, change the forms of production and legitimation of authority and are challenged by neoconservative social movements that see in these transformations a profound threat to their image of “social order”. The parent-child relationship can be seen as a combat zone in the dispute for hegemony, in which the upbringing of new subjects is at stake (Carli, 2002).

Parent-child relationship is configured as one that is essentially social rather than merely interactional. It is constructed in everyday life as well as in a multiplicity of other settings, including political and parliamentary debates, the legal and regulatory frameworks in which it evolves,

court practices, professional procedures, the execution of national and transnational social projects and programmes, and many others. Also of importance is how the school-parent-child and the state-parent-child trinomials are configured in different contexts (Minow, 1986), and the different locations, responsibilities, and modes of interconnection assigned to the parties in each case. Indeed, this social relationship is one of the most closely regulated and monitored that exists, involving a contested border between the public and the private and how the pathways connecting traffic between the two spheres are defined (Llobet & Vergara, 2022).

Aim and Scope: With this context in mind, we invite articles exploring how childhood is shaped and negotiated within the parent-child relationship. Particularly valuable are research articles focusing on children's perspectives on this relationship. We also welcome studies challenging the traditionally assigned roles of children as essentially recipient and dependent beings (Romero Mikkelsen & Christensen, 2009; Vergara, Sepúlveda, & Salvo, 2020) Contributions from childhood studies or related fields, such as socio-critical studies of parenting, feminist research on caregiving, and migration studies, are encouraged, provided that childhood-related aspects remain the primary focus. Articles may also reference different regional settings. This proposal arises from the work of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO)'s Working Group in Critical Studies of Materpaternities, which is a network of more than fifty researchers in this area from different Latin America and Caribbean countries.

Possible themes for papers include, but are not limited to

- Childhood, parent-child relationship, and social transformations.
- Definition and redefinition of the public - private divide regarding children and parents.
- Childhood, parental cultures and neoliberalisation.
- Regulations on parenthood and children's rights.
- Changes in parental authority and negotiations regarding processes of decision-making.
- Parental control regarding technologies, sexualities, time, and space.
- Revisiting care in intergenerational relationships.
- Ethics and morals in parent-child interactions and relationships.

Abstracts should be sent by the 1st of March 2024 to the Managing Editor Ragnhild Berge (ragnhild.berge@ntnu.no). Please include the author's name(s), affiliation(s) and contact information.

Schedule

- Deadline for submission of abstracts: March 1st, 2024
- Invitation sent to possible paper contributors: March 15th, 2024.
- Submission of full article manuscripts: August 10th, 2024
- Reviews and revisions
- Final acceptance of all the material for the Special Issue: August 31st, 2025
- Publication of the special issue as Childhood issue: November 2025

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