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This publication consists of talks given by a range of experts to the Working Group on the Quality of Childhood at the European Parliament (QoC) and invited papers. All chapters contained in this volume are available for download on the website of the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group.

www.allianceforchildhood.eu/publications
The book can also be ordered from www.amazon.co.uk

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF CHILDHOOD IN EUROPE

VOLUME 6

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Editors: Michiel Matthes, Lea Pulkkinen,
Belinda Heys, Christopher Clouder, Luis Manuel Pinto

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The Alliance for Childhood European Network Group and the Universal Education Foundation are engaged in the Learning for Well-being Community.

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PREFACE

It is with great pleasure that we present the sixth volume in the series *Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe*, and the second volume to be jointly published by the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group and the Universal Education Foundation.

We represent the two organisations which work together to hold the sessions of the Working Group on the Quality of Childhood (QoC) in the European Parliament, which we call QoC Talks, and the dialogues after these sessions, which we call Post QoC sessions. Today we have held these talks every two months since December 2006, i.e. in total 60 times. This volume is based on four QoC Talks in the period March until November 2014. On top of that five authors were specifically invited to contribute to this book.

The motivation of the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group is to find ways of improving the quality of life in society which are beneficial for children and adolescents and also for the societies in which they grow up. The motivation of the Universal Education Foundation / Learning for Well-being Community is that it believes that these activities, aimed at improving the quality of childhood in Europe, will render our societies more inclusive and supportive, where children, young people and adults respect each other as competent partners and learn how to realize their unique potential throughout their lives.

We believe that when a group of experts and advocates engages in disciplined thought about a certain subject this will eventually result in positive outcomes such as increasing awareness of and discussion about current issues.

The chapters in the book have been written by authors of seven different nationalities. Each author looks at the subject of children and childhood from a different perspective and together they provide the reader with a rich kaleidoscope of new insights, new ideas for action and new prompts for forming alliances with other parties to bring about the necessary change. Every author's biographical data can be found after each chapter. The British and American English spelling may vary in this book depending on the background of the author. All chapters can be downloaded from the website: www.allianceforchildhood.eu.

Many people have contributed to the production of this book. Our thanks go to the Members of the European Parliament, who have hosted the QoC Talks included in this book:

MEP Gerald Häfner

Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, Germany

MEP Jürgen Klute

Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left, Germany

MEP Julie Ward

Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, United Kingdom

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Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left, Greece

MEP Deirdre Clune

Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), Ireland

MEP Arne Gericke

European Conservatives and Reformists Group, Germany

MEP Nathalie Griesbeck

Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, France

MEP Anna Hedh,

Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, Sweden

MEP Karin Kadenbach

Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, Austria

MEP József Nagy

Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), Slovakia

MEP Evelyn Regner

Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, Austria

Many thanks go to the authors of the chapters (and in one case, the speaker who allowed us to use his material for writing a chapter) for sharing their knowledge about their subjects with you, our readers. We also thank the team of editors and all the people who attended our meetings and contributed to our discussions. Now we invite you to read and enjoy Volume 6 in the series *Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe*.

Michiel Matthes

Chairman

Alliance for Childhood European Network Group

Daniel Kropf

Executive Vice Chair

Universal Education Foundation

Brussels, September 2016

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