



IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF CHILDHOOD IN EUROPE

draft
INVITATION

Working Group on the Quality of Childhood at the European Parliament (QoC)

MEP Anna Hedh
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MEP Nathalie Griesbeck
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This QoC Talk will be hosted by:

MEP Henna Virkkunen
Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), Finland

69th QoC Talk:

**New discoveries in the field of brain science
can contribute significantly to a healthy
childhood and the well-being of children.
Presentation of an initiative in Alberta, Canada.**

The presentation will be given by **Nancy Mannix**, Founder and Chairman of the Palix Foundation and the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (AFWI) in Alberta, Canada.

Time: Tuesday 5 June 2018 from 13.00 until 15h.

Location: European Parliament, Rue Wiertz 60, Brussels, Room A5E3.

Entrance: We will gather at the Entrance at Place Luxembourg at 12.30 h. Please be in time. It is obligatory to take your passport and/or ID Card with you.

Michiel Matthes prepared this programme based on documentation provided by the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (Norlien Foundation, 2013).

1. Introduction

Compelling evidence from a wide range of scientific disciplines tells us that early experiences, combined with gene-environment interaction, lay the foundation – for good or ill – for brain development and nearly all aspects of human development throughout life. The challenge is to fully integrate this knowledge to better inform policy and practice. The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative works as a catalyst to bring this about – to bridge the gap between what we know from science and what we do in policy and practice.

2. A core story of brain development

Ultimately, research, policy, and practice depend upon public awareness, perception, and support. But while scientific knowledge about early childhood development, child mental health, and addiction has advanced dramatically in recent years, very little of this knowledge has percolated into public discourse.

The public still has foggy, often misguided, notions of how the brain develops; what, if anything, can be done to promote healthy development; and who is responsible for doing it. Likewise, under-developed notions about the nature of addiction and what causes it restrict how the public and policy makers think about what can be done to address the problem and who is responsible for doing it.

The core story of early child development and addiction

What actually develops? It all begins with brain architecture. The early years matter because early experiences affect the architecture of the maturing brain. The quality of that architecture establishes the foundation for all of the development and behaviour that follow. Getting things right the first time is easier than trying to fix them later.

The brain's architecture is composed of social, emotional, and cognitive strands that get woven together, strongly or weakly, to support subsequent development. What affects one, affects all.

The process by which the brain gets built is much like the serve and return of a tennis game.

Serve and return happens when young children instinctively reach out for interaction, through babbling, facial expressions, gestures, and cries, and adults respond by getting in sync and returning the same kinds of sounds and gestures. Serve and return works best with adults who are familiar to the child. If adults do not respond, the child's learning process is interrupted and incomplete. Young children need many of these interactions per day, since they are literally the building blocks of brain architecture.

Early learning is foundational to everything that follows.

Children learn very early to pay attention by developing the air traffic control system in their brains. As a child learns to regulate the flow of his or her attention and to focus on tasks, he or she creates mental priorities. This mechanism – called executive function – needs to be geared up as early as possible. This can be done through programs that give children opportunities to practise recognizing roles and sequences and joining in on cue, such as in play-acting or taking turns. This mental flexibility makes it easier to learn new information and use skills in new and complex situations throughout life. Facilitating executive function skills requires parents and society as a whole to create, sustain, and support opportunities for children to use these skills, so that each successive phase of learning and development builds on a solid base.

What matters most, genes or environment?

Experiences and environments count as much as genes and can even influence how genes work. Our genes have instructions on them that tell our bodies how to work. However, the environment has to authorize the instructions for them to be carried out. Positive experiences are environmental signatures that authorize instructions for positive outcomes. Negative experiences, like exposure to violence or abuse, authorize instructions for negative outcomes. Because environmental signatures on a person's genes can last a lifetime, society needs to ensure that genes get positive environmental signatures early on.

What we know and why it matters?

Findings from neuroscience, developmental psychology, molecular biology, and economics leave no room for doubt: early childhood matters significantly. Adverse early life experiences – such as abuse, neglect, and growing up with caregivers who have mental health and addiction issues – affect the developing brain, resulting in increased risk for physical and mental disorders, addiction, and learning deficits later in life. Everyone in society has a stake in this issue. The healthy development of all children provides a solid foundation for economic productivity, responsible citizenship, strong communities, and successful parenting of the next generation

How brains get built: the complex dance of genes and environment

Brains are built over time, starting before birth and continuing through infancy, childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. Early brain development involves a complex dance of genetic and environmental factors that interact to influence the architecture of the maturing brain and how it will function throughout the lifespan – controlling cognition, emotion, and physical and mental health. Genes provide the basic blueprint, but experiences shape the processes that establish either a sturdy or weak foundation for all the learning and behaviour that follow. Early life experiences don't actually change the structure of the genes; they change the action of regulatory proteins that bind to DNA and turn genes on or off. Through this process, called epigenetic change, experiences leave lasting chemical "signatures" on genes and change the way they work. There is also evidence that epigenetic changes can be passed from one generation to the next.

Different parts of the brain develop at different rates

The sensory systems for vision and hearing form largely before birth and are fine-tuned during the first six months of life. Language capacities develop later in the first year. The pre-frontal cortex, which controls planning, higher-order decision-making, and emotion regulation, matures later in the teen and early adult years.

The brain starts with a large number of neurons, and over the first three years a large number of connections form between them – more connections than the brain will have at any other time of life. The connections that get used strengthen and stay; those that are not used get pruned away. If a child is read to, talked to, and reasoned with, he or she is using the brain circuits needed for reading, comprehension, and reasoning. Those circuits will be strengthened and stay in place. A child who is left on his or her own for extended periods of time, watching television for example, will not use the same circuits and those circuits will not be strengthened.

Serve and return sets the stage

Scientists now recognize that early positive interaction between a child and one or more caregivers is important for healthy development. Human infants come into the world as social beings ready to attach and to interact with those around them. Within a month they will seek out the eyes of another as a key medium for interaction and communication. By six weeks they are able to perceive others' emotions and produce emotional signals of their own, leading to a back-

and-forth, ever-evolving interaction with a parent or other caregivers. This serve-and-return reciprocity, similar to hitting a ball back and forth in a game of tennis, sets the stage for learning of all kinds that takes place in early childhood, including language learning, cognitive learning, and emotional regulation. These interactions are important for developing competencies that help children do well in school, achieve to their full potential, and thrive in many other domains of development, including social and emotional.

What about stress?

Stress is a key factor in early brain development. There are different grades of stress, which differ in their effects on the brain. Positive stress occurs in response to a challenging situation, such as receiving a vaccination or meeting a new caregiver. Positive stress is moderate, short-lived, and important for healthy brain development and building stress-coping competencies for adulthood.

Toxic stress is intense, long-lasting, and uncontrollable, and occurs in the absence of supportive relationships. For children, it can occur as a result of abuse, neglect, or living with a parent who is unable to provide appropriate care due to mental illness or addiction. Early toxic stress embeds itself in our biological systems and manifests itself in adulthood in any number of chronic conditions and disorders, from cardiovascular disease and diabetes to addiction and mental illness.

One of the best predictors of resilience in children is at least one safe, secure adult relationship, which can buffer against toxic stress. Buffering can come from family members or from other caring adults who play a significant role in a child's life.

Summary of the core story of brain development

The AFWI became aware that most of the above mentioned insights do neither reflect the practices in families where children are raised nor the practices of many organizations that provide services to these families.

3. The strategy of the AFWI: to improve the practices in organizations in order to improve the practices in families

To further this work, the AFWI developed a unique model for knowledge-mobilization that recognizes the need for an interdisciplinary approach to bring about a transformation in policy and practice. A critical aspect of this initiative is to provide the multi-disciplinary science, policy, and practice communities with a common language and framework of understanding based on the latest scientific knowledge about the effects of early childhood experiences on lifelong health and well-being.

4. Can we in Europe benefit from the success story in Alberta?

On the basis of the new insights in the field of brain science the AFWI started a project with the Province of Alberta in Canada to bring together a critical mass of change leaders from the broad range of disciplines, agencies and government departments in Alberta on issues related to early child development, mental health and addiction. With this group seminars were held to inform and to reflect with the participants about the following issues:

- the above mentioned new insights;
- policy issues and cooperation between various departments and services;
- various strategies to improve the situation.

This project in Alberta has been successful and Nancy Mannix, the initiator of the project, will brief us on the project and discuss with us how we could benefit from these new insights and practices in Europe.

Overall objectives of the QoC Talks:

- To gain a better understanding of the Quality of Childhood in the EU Member States. This time we will focus on 'New discoveries in the field of brain science can contribute significantly to a healthy childhood and the well-being of children. Presentation of an initiative in Alberta, Canada'.
- To reflect on the role that the European institutions can play to improve the situation.
- To get to grips with the values, principles and approaches that could lead to improvements for children both in Europe and around the world.
- To form an effective working group and to get a sense of how to move on.

I take pleasure in inviting you for the 69th session on 5 June 2018.

With best regards,
 Michiel Matthes
 Chairman
 Alliance for Childhood European Network Group

Programme Outline for Tuesday 5 June 2018

Time	Subject	Speaker / facilitator
13.00	Opening: research in decision making	MEP Henna Virkkunen
13.05	A reflection from the side of the Alliance for Childhood and of the Learning for Well-being Community	Christopher Clouder, one of the founders of the Alliance for Childhood, and a representative of the Learning for Well-being Foundation respectively.
13.15	New discoveries in the field of brain science can contribute significantly to a healthy childhood and the well-being of children. Presentation of an initiative in Alberta, Canada.	Nancy Mannix, Founder and Chair of the Alberty Family Wellness Initiative and the Palix Foundation.
14.05	A reflection from the side of the ITLA Foundation in Finland	Dr.Petra Kouvonen, Development Leader in the ITLA Foundation, Finland.
14.15	Discussion	Michiel Matthes, Chairman of the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group
14.50-15.00	Closing remarks	MEP Henna Virkkunen

Disclaimer:

The organisers organise this session on a best effort basis. However changes in parts of the programme or in the entire programme may occur due to unforeseen circumstances and the organisers cannot be held liable for that. No rights may be derived from this programme.

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Some Quotations that illustrate the new insights in the domain of brain science

Childhood maltreatment is a very well established risk factor for both mental health conditions and for addiction in young people and adults. I think by understanding a little bit more about the biology that is underlying the effect of maltreatment on psychopathology, we will be able to understand how to help young people that have suffered from traumatic experiences early in life by modifying biological processes related to it.” **Andrea Danese, MD, PhD**

Early experiences influence virtually all aspects of a monkey’s behaviour and biology. Not only do they influence how its behaviour develops and how it learns to regulate its emotions, but it also influences development at the level of stress hormones, metabolism, various neurotransmitters, the structure and function of the brain, and gene expression. That is, early experiences can change the way genes work.” **Stephen Suomi, PhD**

Early brain development represents more than a simple unfolding of a genetic blueprint – it represents a complex dance of genetic and environmental events that interact to adapt the brain to fit a particular environmental context. Your brain is sculpted by a lifetime of experiences, especially in the first few years of life.” **Bryan Kolb, PhD**

It is a myth that destiny is in our genes. Exciting new studies reveal that most human traits and most diseases come not just from genetics and not just from environmental experience, but from a convergence of the two – a mixing of the two into what are called gene-environment interactions. It is this differential expression of the genetic code that turns out to be what really does guide our fate, our ability, and our potential as human beings.” **W. Thomas Boyce, MD**

The neurobiology of addiction has profound implications for everything from treatment to recovery to vulnerability, but the critical part here is that anyone who tries to argue that addiction is a moral problem or a choice problem is missing the key point: it’s a brain disease. The brain has changed and you have to get your brain back to deal with addiction.”

George F. Koob, PhD

References:

Norlien Foundation (2013). *AFWI'S KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY: Transforming Research, Policy, and Practice in Alberta*. Calgary, AB, Canada: Norlien Foundation.

More information:

Please visit the following websites:

www.albertafamilywellness.org

www.palixfoundation.org.

With the support of the following organisations:



For background information please visit our respective websites:

www.allianceforchildhood.eu

www.learningforwellbeing.org

This programme was developed in cooperation with the **Alliance for Childhood European Network Group**, whose members are:

Alliance ELIANT, Brussels
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QoC Talks held / to be held in the period 2006-2017:

QoC Talk in 2006	
5 December 2006	1. 'The Toxic Childhood Syndrome and the Quality of Childhood' with Christopher Clouder (UK) and Professor Hans van Crombrugge (Belgium). Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
QoC Talks in 2007	
9 January 2007	2. 'Really Improving the Education in the European Union requires Systemic Changes' with professor Luc Stevens (Netherlands) and Professor Ferre Laevers (Belgium). Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
6 March 2007	3. 'The Quality of Child-Adult Relationships in Families and School' with Jesper Juul (Denmark). Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
15 May 2007	4. 'The Child: his/her Networks and Neighbourhood' with René Diekstra. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
September 20 2007	5. 'How can we improve in the European Union the Early Childhood Educational Systems' with John Bennett, the author of the OECD Study Starting Strong. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
November 6 2007	6. 'How to let children and adolescents acquire key competences for the world of the 21st century?' with Dr. Martina Leibovici-Mühlberger from Austria and Geseke Lundgren from Sweden. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits
QoC Talks in 2008	
January 8, 2008	7. 'Attachment, what it is, why it is important and what we can do about it to help young children acquire a secure attachment?' with Sir Richard Bowlby. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
March 4, 2008	8. 'A vision on children and childhood in the European Union' by Michiel Matthes. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
May 14, 2008	9. Professor René Diekstra about 'The Changing Face of Adolescence. Accounting for changes in adolescent development and their effects on education and social policies'. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
July 1, 2008	10. Professor Steen Hildebrandt (University of Aarhus, Denmark) about the 'Multiple intelligences in the knowledge-based society'. Host: MEP Rovana Plumb.
September 16, 2008	11. Presentation of the report of the Fundación Marcelino Botín entitled 'Social and Emotional Education, An International Analysis' by Christopher Clouder and Fátima Sánchez Santiago. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
November 12, 2008	12. Professor Boris Cyrulnik from France: 'What measures can we take to improve the quality of childhood in the European Union?' Host: MEP Rovana Plumb.
November 17, 2008	13. Organisation of a Symposium in Bucharest, Romania at the request of MEP Mrs Rovana Plumb: 'A European Policy Agenda for the Quality of Childhood with special emphasis on the case of the children of Romanian migrant workers'.
QoC Talks in 2009	
January 27, 2009	14. Dr. Michel Vandenbroeck (University of Ghent, Belgium) about 'Diversity and Equity in Early Childhood Services'. Host: MEP Karin Resetarits.
March 3, 2009	15. 'Taking stock of what has been achieved with the Working Group since December 2006 and looking forward' with Michiel Matthes, Secretary-General of the Alliance for Childhood European Network. Host: MEP Karin

	Resetarits.
April 28, 2009	16. Professor Peter Moss (University of London) about young children and their services: developing a European approach. Host: MEP Rovana Plumb.
September 8, 2009	17. 'Continuing to work on improving the Quality of Childhood in the European Union during the present economic downturn' with Professor Emeritus Richard Wilkinson, co-author of the book 'The Spirit Level, Why More Equal Societies Almost Always do Better'. Host: MEP Rovana Plumb.
November 17, 2009	18. The Technical University of Dortmund won the tender issued by the European Commission to execute a Research Project to identify the key research questions regarding families and family policies. The leader of this project, Professor Dr. Uwe Uhlenborff gave a briefing on this Project and spoke about 'Developing a European Research Agenda for Families and Family Policies'. Host: MEP Livia Járóka.
December 8, 2009	19. Why Love Matters: How Affection Shapes a Baby's Brain, and the policy requirements in this respect with Sue Gerhardt, author of the book with the similar title. Host: MEP Evelyn Regner.
QoC Talks in 2010	
January 12, 2010	20. The PISA Study and lessons learned regarding the Quality of Childhood with Andreas Schleicher, Head of the Indicators and Analysis Division of the OECD Directorate for Education. Host: MEP Evelyn Regner.
March 2, 2010	21. 'Improving the Quality of Childhood in the European Union: the Case of Roma Children' with Ivan Ivanov, Executive Director of the European Roma Information Office (ERIO) and Bernard Rorke, Director of the Roma Initiative Programs of the Open Society Institute (OSI). Host: MEP Gerald Häfner.
April 13, 2010	22. Improving the Quality of Childhood in the European Union: the Aspect of Parental Leave Policies by Professor Peter Moss of the Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London. Host: MEP Gerald Häfner.
June 8, 2010	23. 'The City for the Children'. Key-note speaker: Vanessa Pallucchi, Director for Education of Legambiente, Rome, Italy. Host: MEP Vittorio Prodi and MEP Karin Kadenbach.
August 31, 2010	24. 'The impact of television and screen media on the Quality of Childhood and what are good policies in this respect on the level of the family, on the level of the country and on the EU level?' with Dr. Aric Sigman, author of the book 'Remotely controlled, how television is damaging our lives'. Host: MEP Karin Kadenbach.
November 17, 2010	25. 'The proposed research agenda for the European Commission re families and family policies' with Professor Dr. Uwe Uhlenborff of the Technical University Dortmund, Germany. Host: MEP Mr Gerald Häfner
QoC Talks in 2011	
January 11, 2011	26. 'The Quality of the Physical Environment of the Child, the Current Problems in this area, and what needs to be done?' together with the Health and Environment Alliance and the INCHEs Network. Host: MEP Gerald Häfner.
March 1, 2011	27. 'Educating the Art of Life: Resilience and Creativity in Contemporary Education' with David Brierley, Associate Professor at the Rudolf Steiner University College, Oslo Norway. Host: MEP Evelyn Regner.
March 29,	28. 'A reflection on the European Commission's High Level Group on

2011	Literacy' with emeritus Professor Margaret Clark from the UK. Host: MEP Lambert van Nistelrooij.
May 31, 2011	29. 'Learning to move and moving to learn. Why physical development in the early years supports later learning, behaviour and achievement' with Sally Goddard Blythe, Director of The Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology in the UK. Hosted by MEP Edward McMillan-Scott.
September 6, 2011	30. Presentation of the report 'Learning for Well-being: a Policy Priority for Children and Youth in Europe, A Movement for Change' by Professor Ilona Kickbusch, Director of the Global Health Programme at the Graduate Institute of International Development Studies in Geneva. Host: MEP Karin Kadenbach.
November 8, 2011	31. Alcohol Nation, How to protect our children from today's drinking culture' with Dr. Aric Sigman. Host: MEP Gerald Häfner.
QoC Talks in 2012	
January 10, 2012	32. Presentation of a Proposal to set up a European Academy for Complementary Pedagogy by Jesper Juul. Host: MEP Judith Merkies.
March 6, 2012	33. 'What Contribution can the Digital Environment make to the Improvement of the Quality of Childhood?' with Professor Martine Delfos from the Netherlands and Thibaut Kleiner of the Cabinet of Euro-commissioner Neelie Kroes. Host: MEP Evelyn Regner.
April 11, 2012	34. 'Improving the Quality of Childhood as a challenge to European institutions: Reflections from the Ombudsmen for Children' with Maria Kaisa Aula, the Finnish Ombudsman for Children. Host: MEP Liisa Jaakonsaari.
5 June 2012	35. The State of Affairs of the Child in the City, and What Needs To Be Done? with Dr. Jan van Gils, President and founder of the European Network of Child Friendly Cities and President of the International Council for Children's Play. Host: MEP Karin Kadenbach
4 September 2012	36. '500,000 Preterm Births in Europe Each Year. What are the Dangers, and What are the Main Components of a Successful Strategy to Address this Challenge?' with Professor Luc Zimmermann (Belgium / Netherlands), Professor Dominique Haumont (Belgium) and Silke Mader (Germany), all working with the European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (EFCNI). Host: MEP Peter Liese.
13 November 2012	37. 'How can we help children to reach their unique potential and how can we support the parents, caregivers and teachers in their role vis-à-vis children' with Dr. Gordon Neufeld from Vancouver, Canada. Host: MEP Gerald Häfner.
QoC Talks in 2013	
9 January 2013	38. 'Children and their connection with nature: why it is important and how can it be stimulated?' with Tim Gill from the UK. Host: MEP Judith Merkies and MEP Gerald Häfner.
5 March 2013	39. 'IFFD's Family Enrichment Courses: the Case Study Method applied to Family Settings. What it is and how to provide it to more families?' with Marina Robben, President of the International Federation For Family Development (IFFD). Host: MEP Anneli Jäätteenmäki and MEP Anna Záborská.
9 April 2013	40. Finland has the best literacy score in the European Union. What are the main elements of its strategy and to what extent can it be copied by other countries? with Professor Heikki Lyytinen. Host: MEP Liisa Jaakonsaari.

4 June 2013	41. 'The commercialisation of childhood in the USA: what is the current situation, to what extent is it harmful for children, what needs to be done and what are the lessons for the European Union?' with Susan Linn, Founder and Director of the 'Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood'. Host: MEP Anna Záborská.
3 September 2013	42. 'The Human Biotechnology Revolution is opening the door to the creation of genetically modified 'designer babies': what is the current situation?, what is at stake at the moment?, what needs to be done?, and what role could the European Union play in this respect?' with Enola Aird, Founder and Director of 'Mothers for a Human Future'. Host: MEP Anna Záborská.
12 November 2013	43. 'Positive human development: a spontaneous or guided process?' 45 years of experience with longitudinal research and the policy lessons that can be drawn from it' with Professor Lea Pulkkinen. Host: MEP Anneli Jäätteenmäki.
QoC Talks in 2014	
7 January 2014	44. 'Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Systems in Europe: what are the current trends and what needs to be done?' with Professor Dr. Mathias Urban, Professor of Early Childhood and Director of the Early Childhood Research Centre, University of Roehampton, London, Great Britain. Host: MEP Gerald Häfner.
4 March 2014	45. Parents' partnership stability and quality as a context for child development. What are the challenges, and what policies and programmes are in place? Some insights from Germany' with Professor Dr. Sabine Walper, Research Director of the German Youth Institute in Munich, Germany. Host: MEP Jürgen Klute.
18 June 2014	46. 'Make the European Parliament a global Child Rights Champion'. The presentations will be given by members of the Child Rights Action Group (CRAG) a.o. Jana Hainsworth of Eurochild, Deirdre de Burca of World Vision and Lilana Keith of PICUM. Host: MEP Gerald Häfner.
8 July 2014	47. 'Youth employment in the EU member states: what is the current situation?, and what is the role of the European Commission in the domain of the Youth Initiative and the Youth Guarantee? Discussion of the Commission's Country Specific Recommendations' with Jeroen Jutte of the European Commission, Head of Unit, DG EMPL, Unit C1 European Employment Strategy and Governance. Host: MEP Julie Ward.
9 September 2014	48. 'Developing inclusive systems across Education, Health and Social sectors for early school leaving prevention' with Dr. Paul Downes of Saint Patrick's College, Dublin City University. Host: MEP Julie Ward.
18 November 2014	49. 'The Mental Health Situation of Children and Young People in the European Union: What is the Current Situation and What could be done?' with Professor Ulrike Ravens-Sieberer and Dr. Veronika Ottova-Jordan. Host: MEP Anna Hedh.
QoC Talks in 2015	
6 January 2015	50. 'The effect of the Great Recession on Southern European Children's and Adolescents' Adaptation and Wellbeing: Risks and Resilience Processes. What is necessary at this moment?' with Professor Frosso Motti-Stefanidi, PhD. Host: MEP Kostas Chrysogonos.
3 March 2015	51. '4000 City Councils for Children in France: how do they operate and what makes them successful?' with Jonathan Lévy. Host: MEP

	József Nagy.
13 May 2015	52. 'Children's Well-Being Indicators: a Powerful Tool to Improve the Well-Being of Children. Launch of the European Report of Children's Worlds' with Professor Ferran Casas, Professor Sabine Andresen and Professor Jonathan Bradshaw. Host: MEP Nathalie Griesbeck
2 June 2015	53. 'Health Assets for Young People's Health and Well-being. A New Basis for a set of Indicators for Policy and Practice?' with Dr Antony Morgan from the Glasgow Caledonian University, London Campus, UK Host: MEP Marie Arena and MEP Jana Zitnanska
1 September 2015	54. 'Elham Palestine: a multisector national partnership towards making schools more conducive to children's well-being. What is the philosophy and approach of Elham? What positive outcomes have resulted? In which way can we apply the same approach in a European context?' with Professor Dr. Marwan Awartani. Host: Julie Ward.
17 November 2015	55. 'Prosperity without growth: a vision of a lasting prosperity for all' with Professor dr. Tim Jackson from the University of Surrey, UK. Host: MEP Molly Scott Cato.
QoC Talks in 2016	
12 January 2016	56. 'Curious Minds: The English approach to offer rich educational and cultural programmes to all children and young people' with Derri Burdon. Host: MEP Julie Ward.
1 March 2016	57. 'Refugee and immigrant children and youngsters: some reflections on the successful integration of them in the receiving societies' with Professor Frosso Motti-Stefanidi, PhD and Lilana Keith. Host: MEP Caterina Chinnici.
26 April 2016	58. 'What constitutes good education and what are the roles of measurement and evaluation in it?' with Professor Dr. Gert Biesta. Host: MEP Liisa Jaakonsaari.
14 June 2016	59. What we can do to establish a good education and which new pedagogical approach we may propose? with Martine Reicherts, Director-General for Education and Culture in the European Commission. Host: MEP Julie Ward.
6 September 2016	60. 'Toward media literacy or media addiction?', contours of good governance for healthy childhood in the digital world' with Professor Dr. Paula Bleckmann. Host: MEP Julie Ward.
8 November 2016	61. 'How to empower parents for a better Quality of Childhood?' with Professor Ramón Flecha. Host: MEP István Ujhelyi
QoC Talks in 2017	
10 January 2017	62. Children with imprisoned parents: 'How to support children to cope with their parent's imprisonment and enhance their potential to lead safe, included, happy, achieving lives?' with Kate Philbrick and Hannah Lynn from 'Children of Prisoners Europe' (COPE) network. Host: MEP: Julie Ward.
7 March 2017	63. 'Innovation in Education, Improving Learning & Well-being' with Professor Dr. Els Laenens. Host: MEP József Nagy.
11 April 2017	64. 'Primary Health Care for Children in Europe. Similarities and Differences between Countries - what do they Mean? Interim findings of the Models Of Child Health Appraised (MOCHA) Horizon 2020 Project ' with Professor Michael Rigby and Dr. Denise Alexander. Host: MEP Hannu Takkula.
20 June 2017	65. The pros and cons of OECD's International Early Learning Study (IELS, or Baby PISA) with Rowena Phair and Professor Mathias Urban. Host: MEP Mary Honeyball.

5 September 2017	66. Art education promotes the development of the child and society with Dr. Eeva Anttila. Host: MEP Julie Ward.
7 November 2017	67. 'The new educational curriculum in Finland, goals, underlying values, guiding principles and how and why it was brought about' with Irmeli Halinen. Host: MEP Hannu Takkula.
QoC Talks in 2018	
6 March 2018	68. 'Well-being and involvement as key indicators for quality. Implications for educational policy' with Professor Ferre Laevers. Host: MEP Evelyn Regner.
5 June 2018	69. 'New discoveries in the field of brain science can contribute significantly to a healthy childhood and the well-being of children. Presentation of an initiative in Alberta, Canada' with Nancy Mannix. Host: MEP Henna Virkkunen.

Five yearbooks were published with the reports of these sessions:

session 1-16: Improving the Quality of Childhood in the European Union: Current Perspectives.

session 17-23: Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe 2011, Volume 2.

session 24-30: Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe 2012, Volume 3.

session 31-37: Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe 2013, Volume 4.

session 28-44: Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe 2014, Volume 5.

session 45-49: Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe, Volume 6.

Volume 1-6 can be downloaded free of charge from: www.allianceforchildhood.eu/publications or ordered at www.amazon.co.uk.