

Foreword

The nature of childhood and how we view children has changed tremendously in the 21st century. Cultural shifts, global mega trends and technological developments have shifted what childhood looks like and the types of roles children can and do take in modern societies. Children are no longer seen as passive beings in need of protection and future citizens, but rather as citizens of today. They are increasingly seen as autonomous agents of change who can play important roles in shaping current and future democracies.

These changes beg the question: what does child empowerment mean today and what are the implications for OECD education systems and child well-being?

The authors of this report seek to answer this question by exploring the changing nature of modern childhood, and delving into some of the potential facilitators or barriers to child empowerment. They propose a definition of child empowerment, suggesting that empowered children have the opportunity and ability to act on issues important and relevant to them, can learn by making mistakes, and are key contributors to democracy.

This report looks at various ways in which OECD education systems support child empowerment. This ranges from providing them with the civic skills and knowledge to effectively participate in democracy, to supporting their social, emotional and physical well-being, and reducing inequalities that threaten the empowerment of vulnerable or marginalised groups. It looks at trends in children's lives, including how they interact with media and the digital environment, and how this can be used to support their identity development, well-being and self-expression in new ways. By presenting the state of the art of the literature, and outlining examples of promising policy and practice from OECD countries, this volume provides guidance and insights on how education systems can work together with a range of actors to support the empowerment of children while helping them realise their rights.

Child empowerment is increasingly recognised as a policy goal and priority by governments around the OECD. Many countries have taken effective steps in realising this goal. However we still have far to go in ensuring that all children are empowered today and in the future.



From:
What Does Child Empowerment Mean Today?
Implications for Education and Well-being

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/8f80ce38-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2024), "Foreword", in *What Does Child Empowerment Mean Today?: Implications for Education and Well-being*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9b14170a-en>

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. Extracts from publications may be subject to additional disclaimers, which are set out in the complete version of the publication, available at the link provided.

The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.