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She is currently working on her doctoral thesis, while also doing work as a Communications Consultant. Sanna Heikkilä also works as a Project Manager for the City of Vantaa.

She is currently a board member of the Finnish Children's Parliament.



Sinikka Mäntysalo-Lamppu is a Training Manager at the Finnish Children's Parliament.

She is working for promotion of child rights; focusing on the right of the child to express an opinion and participate according to child's age and ability in any matter or procedure affecting the child on personal or societal level.

Sinikka Mäntysalo-Lamppu works in the team, which has developed the procedures for children networking at national level. She is supporting parishes where the mechanisms for children participation have developed.

In cooperation with other specialists she has developed training materials for basic school (age group 11-16) regarding participation and involvement.

Children's Influence in Society and the Possibilities of Internet-based Participation

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Our paper discusses the challenges and experiences of child participation in Finland. The Finnish Children's Parliament is creating systems and developing practices through which children can become involved in society's shaping processes.

The relevant questions in this issue are how can we create meaningful participation? What are adults' and children's positions in this dialogue? Who will benefit from the dialogue and how? How can we promote the process successfully?

The Finnish Children's Parliament is an official children's action system in Finland. Over 200 communities in Finland have already joined the Children's parliament. Each city involved has child representatives and additionally through an internet-based parliament its communications can reach local levels. Developing an Internet-based dialog has shown that children are capable of using tools that have been considered to be for adults only.

The important issues for the national Finnish Children's Parliament are the following:

1. The empowerment and courage of the children involved
2. Peer group knowledge and emotional capacity
3. The ideas and actions of children and the emotional resources from these processes