

Children's Resilience to Environmental Change: Exploring the opportunities and limits of a child centred approach to adaptation

Browyn Hayward, Elin Selboe

In the International Year of Youth, this interdisciplinary panel will give voice to children's experiences of resilience, particularly children's capacity for agency in response to environmental change. The panel will debate the opportunities, and limits (ethical, political, cultural and practical) of children's roles in adaptation and will identify conditions that support and constrain children's resilience in the face of injustice, oppression or instability. Papers are welcomed which are sensitive to the contexts of children's lives and children's' needs, rights, aspirations and concerns. The aim of this panel is three fold:

- To develop knowledge about child-centred approaches to resilient adaptation
- To facilitate conversations between resilience researchers and organisations responsible for supporting children confronted by environmental change.
- To advance a publication about child-centred resilience in adaptation.

In a 90 minute format speakers will present short research summaries emphasising children's experiences. Overarching themes will then be robustly debated by a review panel of children's advocates, followed by audience participation. Initial expressions of support have been forthcoming from UNICEF's climate management unit, the United Nations African Economic Commission (Ethiopia), and Oxfam International.

The following have offered full abstracts (abridged):

Children, Resilience and Urban Flood: context and ideology
Jo Moran-Ellis and Kate Burningham University of Surrey; Will Medd
University of Lancaster; Sue Tapsell University of Middlesex; Marion Walker
and Rebecca Whittle University of Lancaster

The concept of 'resilience' has great significance for the life-chances of individuals caught up in traumatic situations. However resilience can be diminished if conceptions are too individualistic or too embedded in hegemonic ideologies. Drawing on our research with children in Hull (in England) whose homes and schools were extensively flooded in June 2007, children's experiences of the flood event and their contribution both to survival and response at the time and in the two years following is used to draw examine the role of context in resilience.

Voices of the Future: Values and visions of Norwegian children and youth on responses to climate change.

Elin Selboe, University of Oslo.

How do Norwegian children and youth perceive their futures, and what fosters their sense of responsibility and action? This paper will review conditions and factors that influence children's variable social resilience and the possibilities for their participation as agents of transformative change.

Innovative child-centred approaches for building community resilience
Thomas Tanner (Institute of Development Studies, UK) and Katharine Haynes
(Centre for Risk and Community Safety, RMIT, Australia)

This paper investigates the multi-scalar processes of community disaster resilience from a child-centred perspective. Empirical data from participatory video methods with young people in the Philippines and Indonesia is presented. A political ecology analytical framework is used to understand how processes of risk perception, communication and reduction are socially constructed and politically mediated. The risk and resilience environment is dominated by competition between interest groups who compete for power over the control of resources and the distribution of costs benefits. Discussion considers how child-centred perspectives on community risk reduction and resilience challenge ecological systems thinking. A transformative framework for risk reduction needs to engage both with children as active citizens in disaster risk reduction processes, and to focus on the way political processes from household to international level mediate disaster risk and resilience.

SEEDs of Citizenship: Politicising a child centred approach to resilience
Bronwyn Hayward University of Canterbury, New Zealand

This paper argues that more resilient citizenship is nurtured when young people are exposed to key "citizenship seed principles". Drawing on the interviews with New Zealand children, this paper identifies four key political dimensions of children's resilience in post-industrial economies: political agency; environmental experience; beliefs about justice; and attitudes towards democracy.

Panel participants and papers:

Jo Moran-Ellis, Kate Burningham, Will Medd, Sue Tapsell, Marion Walker, Rebecca Whittle - "Children, Resilience and Urban Flood: context and ideology"

Elin Selboe - "Voices of the Future: Values and visions of Norwegian children and youth on responses to climate change"

Bronwyn Hayward - "The Seed principles of resilient ecological-citizenship"

Thomas Tanner, Katharine Haynes, Frances Seballos - "Innovative child-centred approaches for building community resilience"