

Fra redaksjonen

The year 2012 marks the beginning of exciting times for the journal *Barn*, with an increasing emphasis on research about children and childhood from all the Nordic countries. Researchers from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden as well as the Faroe Islands and Greenland are encouraged to submit their articles to the journal in Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, or English. With abstracts of all articles published in English, the journal aims to become an important venue for Nordic research, as well as a resource for the rest of the world on Nordic research. Concerning the editorials, these may also from time to time be written in English – as is the case for the editorial of this issue.

Nordic preschools have been a model for quality early childhood programs throughout the globe; their curriculum, policy, and organization, as well as societal commitments to early childhood education, have all received considerable attention. The journal aims to give educators from other parts of the world access to thoughts and ideas about early childhood education in the Nordic countries and, at the same time, strengthen the field at a more local level. Four of the five articles published in this issue report on studies conducted in Norwegian preschools (n. barnehage).

Gerd Abrahamsen, Marit Alvestad, Anders Vassenden, and Janne Thygesen, in their article *Perspektiver på kvalitet i barnehagen*, report on a widely discussed and controversial topic: the influence of organization and size on preschool quality. Group sizes, the number of adults per child, and the staff's

access to professional development are also discussed. The results indicate that medium-sized preschools tend to be able to provide more structural and educational quality for both children and adults.

The article by Mari Pettersvold, *Medvirkning, danning og demokrati i barnehagen*, gives an account of a case study of a project on sustainable development in preschool. The study examined how the children experience democratic influence through participation in the project. The article focuses on the connection between participation, formation, and democracy, using concepts from the political philosophies of Hannah Arendt and Cornelius Castoriadis.

Marit Semundseth and Marit Holm Hopperstad's article, *Voksne i dialog med femåringer som på eget initiativ produserer tekster i barnehagen*, reports on a study of adult participation in dialogues with five-year-old preschool children about the self-initiated texts of children. Furthermore, how the adults' contributions to the dialogues impact the children's text production and early writing.

Mai Brit Helgesen's article, *Forskeren som minst mulig voksen*, discusses methodological challenges connected to the researcher as participant in the construction of empirical data in research with children. The main research method employed was participant observation, and data was gathered in one preschool with children ages 3 to 6 years old.

Finally, an article called *Unge aktører i samtaler med sosialarbeidere om forholdet til mor*, by Solveig Botnen Eide, focuses on

foster-children's participation and contribution in conversations with their social workers about their mothers. The children, ages 12 and 18, gave a clear picture of their experiences and views, and appeared as active and reflective participants.

This issue of *Barn* also reports on 4 new doctoral dissertations by Nordic researchers.

The editors would like to thank all the authors for their contributions and the referees for their important role.

Reykjavik, May 2012

Jóhanna Einarsdóttir, co-editor