



WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS

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CTD: 18CY - CHILDREN, YOUTH AND CHILDHOOD: CROSS CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES
SUB-DOMAIN: 5. CHILD ABUSE, CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD RIGHTS

PANEL TITLE:

ARE THEY LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE? CHILDHOOD AND DISABILITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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ABSTRACT

Anthropology of childhood always seeks to understand the different social worlds children belong to. Following Lancy and Montgomery, much anthropological research has already confirmed that there is no single, universal understanding of childhood. It provides an important window of opportunity to lay the foundation for life-long learning and participation. But any form of physical and social challenge provides potential delays by preventing development in children. Anthropology has also been involved in disability/ studies of people with special challenges, because of its ethnological approach to 'otherness', 'difference', and 'not of us'. These challenges occurs only when individuals experience 'perceived' limitations in their functional capabilities. Despite being more vulnerable to developmental risks, children with special challenges, are often overlooked in mainstream programmes and services designed to ensure child development. They fail to receive the specific support required to meet their rights and needs. Their families are also confronted with barriers, including inadequate legislation and policies, negative attitudes, inadequate services, and a lack of accessible environments. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) highlight how children with disabilities have the same rights as other children. Ensuring access to appropriate support can fulfil the rights of children with disabilities, promoting rich and fulfilling childhoods and preparing them for full and meaningful participation in adulthood. Against this milieu, this panel proposes to initiate dialogues on the following issues:

- What is the global perception of disability in the contemporary era?
- Are the children with special challenges/ disabilities getting a rich and fulfilled childhood?
- What kinds of social barriers are their families confronting and how much supportive the existing programmes and policies are?
- What kinds of sustainable strategies and multi-sectoral approaches can be brought to guarantee the rights of children with disabilities and their families?

Keywords: Childhood, children, disability, development, difference

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