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Taking the child's perspective

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Taking the child's perspective

Exploring children's needs and participation
in the Dutch child protection system

Helen Bouma

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**rijksuniversiteit
 groningen**

Taking the child's perspective

Exploring children's needs and participation in the Dutch child protection system

Proefschrift

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Preface

In 2015, I started my PhD trajectory within the *Hestia* research project. Hestia refers to the Greek goddess of hearth, home and family and is an international research project on policies and responses towards child maltreatment in England, Germany and the Netherlands. This international research project, funded by NORFACE, consists of a policy analysis, case file study and interview study on parents' experiences. In addition to Project Hestia, we introduced research project *Hebe*. This project is partially funded by Pro Juventute. Hebe refers to the Greek goddess of youth, and investigates the experiences of children with a trajectory in the Dutch child protection system (CPS).

While working on Project Hestia and Project Hebe, I developed my PhD study. Under the supervision and with the support of prof. dr. Hans Grietens, prof. dr. Erik Knorth and dr. Mónica López López, I investigated the participation and needs of children in the Dutch CPS. First, we investigated the concept 'meaningful participation' of children in child protection, its embedding in Dutch child protection policy, and professionals' views on and experiences with this in Dutch child protection investigations. Furthermore, we examined parents' and children's experiences with a trajectory in the Dutch CPS.

Conducting these different studies would not have been possible without the support and contributions of the following persons and organizations; I am very grateful for their effort, contributions and support!

The *children, parents and professionals* who participated in the interview studies

The *children and professionals* who advised us on the development of Project Hebe

Veilig Thuis & Raad voor de Kinderbescherming supported us in the development, the data collection and recruitment of the different studies

De Academie voor Praten met Kinderen, Stichting Augeo, De Jongerentaskforce & De Kinderombudsman advised us on the development of Project Hebe and supported us in the recruitment and dissemination of this project

My PhD-colleagues in Project Hestia *Floor Middel & Marleen Wessels* closely collaborated with in the overall project and different Hestia-studies

My colleague *Esther Piersma*, who was involved in Project Hebe and delivered a great contribution to this project

The student assistants involved in Project Hestia and Project Hebe: *Mirjam Boelens, Jorinde Broekman, Sophie Driessen, Salo Anthony, Miriam Tolsma & Debbie Rutten*

The international research team of Project Hestia: *Helen Baldwin & Nina Biehal* of the University of York; *Susanne Witte, Laura Miehlbradt, Eric van Santen, Heinz Kindler & Sabine Walper* of the German Youth Institute; and *Marit Skivenes, Doris Buhler, Fred Wolczyn & Nick Frost* of the Hestia Steering Committee

The reading committee: *Nuria Fuentes Peláez, Katrin Križ & Tom van Yperen*

My supervisors: *Hans Grietens, Erik Knorth & Mónica López López*