A critique does not consist in saying that things aren’t good the way they are. It consists in seeing on what type of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established and unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based... To do criticism is to make harder those acts which are now too easy

Michel Foucault
ALL PARENTS IN FOCUS

GOVERNING PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN UNIVERSAL PARENTING TRAINING

Hetty Rooth

2018

School of Health, Care and Social Welfare
ALL PARENTS IN FOCUS
GOVERNING PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN UNIVERSAL PARENTING TRAINING

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Akademisk avhandling

som för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen i folkhälsovetenskap
vid Hälsa och välfärd kommer att offentligen försvaras torsdagen
den 29 november 2018, 13.00 i Delta, Mälardalens Högskola, Västerås.

Fakultetsopponent: Docent Ingrid Söderlind, Linköping university

Hälsa och välfärd
Abstract

The thesis deals with power and control in public health interventions in Sweden using structured parental support programs. The aim is to visualize how parents and children's relationships are described and discussed in manuals and courses intended for all parents with children between the ages of 0 and 17 and how the children themselves describe in their family.

By using theories of power and governing, the thesis aims to study how the parent-child relationship is regulated through normative discourses and power processes in selected parenting courses (Connect and ABC). The thesis also wants to give children a voice about their position in the family. The interest of the thesis is how preventive work, through structured courses, currently used in universal parenting training, can contribute to promote children's health.

Previous research on universal parenting training in Sweden is based primarily on health economic calculations and quantitative assessments of behavioural changes in children and parents. This thesis instead wants to study the values and methodology of parenting training programs and the children's experiences in their family when parents have participated in parenting courses. With a children's rights perspective, the thesis also wishes to highlight the parenting support in relation to the children's situation.

The thesis contains four qualitative studies. Two are conducted with discourse analysis (Study I and III) and two use content analysis (Study II and IV). Study I examines two public investigations from 1947 and 2008, both of which deal with child rearing, parenting and parenting education. Study II explores the contents of the course manuals of the Canadian Connect program and Swedish All Children in Focus (ABC) in relation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Study III examines how principles about parental skills and children’s actions are reflected in the parenting courses. Study IV describes children's experiences of being children in the families where the parents have participated in a parenting course.

The findings in study I show that society's views on parents' relational ability in both investigations creates the prerequisite for acting politically for universal parenting training. The children's position is subordinate to adults in the investigations. Furthermore, in Study II, it appears that the content of both program manuals (Connect and ABC) is in accordance with Swedish public health policies, where parental ability can be seen as a protective factor for children's development. The study also shows that the courses can both restrain and promote children's participation. Study III shows that leaders at course meetings encourage parents to improve their parenting through self-control and conflict management. Parental capacity is seen as a determinant for children's development and health. In study IV, with children’s interviews, the children’s relate their views on the relationship with their parents and the children’s own relational ability.

Throughout the thesis the findings show how an adult perspective is used to deal with conflicts and stabilize relationships in the family. An adult ambition to understand children and promote good relationships within the family is hampered by the concern of both society and parents for the parental child rearing ability. This concern can contribute to an uneven balance of power between adults and children. Preventive manual-based parenting training offers limited scope for children's influence in a health-promoting public health context. Children's experiences should thus be captured when society provides parenting support.
All Parents in Focus

Governing parents and children in universal parenting training

Hetty Rooth
Cover image: Alberto Ruggieri
Abstract

Background: Group based parenting training is normally implemented on two levels, as either selective or universal interventions. In 2008 the Swedish government presented a national strategy for parental support which recommended structured manual based parenting training courses to be available for all parents with children 0-17 years. The courses chosen for universal use in Sweden was made for the selective level, based on principles for behaviour modification and communication skills. Moreover, the arguments for implementing universal parenting training interventions in Sweden to all parents relied on health economic calculations and on international research of the outcomes of parental training on the selective level.

Aim: The overall aim of this thesis was to investigate power relations and rationalities of governing in universal parenting training, as expressed in two Swedish public investigations, two selected programme manuals, course sessions of the two programmes as well as children’s experiences of family life.

Methods: The thesis was undertaken through qualitative methods: discourse analysis and content analysis. The materials for the studies consisted of two official investigations about family life and child rearing (1947 and 2008), course manuals from two parental training programmes; ABC and Connect, recorded oral conversations from ABC and Connect course sessions and interviews with children.

Findings: The findings of the analysis of official investigations exposed a discursive change, from a perspective on children in the present in 1947, towards a perspective on children as becomings, as future adults in the making in 2008. Further, the findings showed that the course manuals of Connect and ABC harmonized with a risk-prevention paradigm in Swedish public health policies. Analysis of the course sessions indicated that both programmes were governed, with evidence based knowledge and expertise, towards self-improvement, self-regulation and parental control. Finally, interviews with children contributed with the children´s reflections on their position within the family, displaying their own integrity and agency.
Conclusion: The major conclusion was that universal manual based parenting training came through in the analysis as a governing of parents and children which relied on normative adult constructions. This raised further questions for future research about how preventive methods, currently used in universal parenting interventions, can contribute to promote children’s health from a participatory perspective.

Keywords: Children, parents, universal parenting training, population level, public health prevention, promotion, children’s rights.
Avhandlingen handlar om makt och styrning i folkhälsointerventioner med strukturerade föräldrastödsprogram som används i Sverige på befolkningsnivå. Syftet är att synliggöra hur föräldrar och barns relationer uttrycks i manualer och diskutereras i kurser som är avsedda för alla föräldrar med barn mellan 0 och 17 år.

Genom att använda Michel Foucaults teorier om makt och styrning, vill avhandlingen bidra till att synliggöra hur föräldra-barnrelationen regleras genom normativa diskurser och maktprocesser i två valda föräldrautbildningar, kanadensiska Connect och svenska Alla Barn i Fokus (ABC). Avhandlingen vill även bidra med barns erfarenheter om sin position i familjen när föräldrar gått en föräldrakurs. Tidigare forskning om det allmänna föräldrastödet i Sverige utgår i första hand från hälsoekonomiska kalkyler och från kvantitativa bedömningar av beteendeförändringar hos barn och föräldrar. Med ett barnrättsperspektiv vill avhandlingen istället belysa föräldrastödets metodik med utgångspunkt från barnens situation.


Resultaten i studie I visar att samhällets syn på föräldrars relationella förmåga motivera politiskt agerande för ett allmänt föräldrastöd. Vidare visar Studie II att de båda programmanualerna (Connect och ABC) överensstämmer med en riskbaserad folkhälsopolitik där föräldraförmågan ses som en skyddsfaktor för barns utveckling. Studien visar också att kurserna antingen kan stävja eller främja barns delaktighet. Studie III visar att ledarna uppmuntrar föräldrar under kursträffarna till att förbättra sitt föräldraskap genom
To my generational mix of Swedish, British, German and Spanish family, who continuously reminds me, that there are different sides to everything.
List of Papers

This thesis is based on the following papers, which are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.


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Of music, joy, life and eternity
John Donne (1572-1631)
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Abbreviations

CA       Content Analysis
CDA    Critical Discourse Analysis
DA     Discourse Analysis
SPHI   Swedish Public Health Institute (Folkhälso-institutet, 1992-2000)

MFoF   Family Law and Parental Support Authority (Myndigheten för familjerätt och föräldraskapsstöd, 2016 -)

PDA    Political Discourse Analysis
PHAS   Public Health Agency of Sweden
        (Folkhälsomyndigheten, 2014 -)

QCA   Qualitative Content Analysis
SBU   Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment and assessment of social services
SOU   Swedish Government Official Reports
SNIP  Swedish National Institute of Public Health (Statens Folkhälsoinstitut, 2001-2013)

UPT   Universal parenting training
WHO   World Health Organization
WPR   What is the problem represented to be?
Governmental policies to improve parental skills with manual-based courses have been familiar policy issues in Sweden and other Western countries since the beginning of the 21st century (Gillies, 2005; Widding, 2011, Dahlstedt & Fejes, 2014). Not only has parenting training been highlighted as a risk related remedy in the course of children’s development, also the concept of parenting training invites us as researchers to reconceptualise the nature of parent-child relationships in a health-promotive public health context.

My own exploratory journey to investigate manual-based parenting training began in 2005 when the Swedish National Institute of Public Health (NIPH) assigned me as a journalist to produce information to municipalities and county councils about parenting training methods which had recently been presented in a report from the Swedish National Institute of Public Health (Bremberg, 2004). This report suggested population-based interventions with evidence-based parenting training to prevent tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse and criminal behaviours during growth (Bremberg, Ed., 2004). My assignment resulted in two booklets, Doing the possible (Bergman & Rooth, 2006) and Parents are most important (Rooth & Bergman, 2006). Two years later I wrote my master thesis in public health science about the Swedish Komet programme, a selective manual-based course for parents who experience problematic behaviour in their children. The Komet study consisted of six qualitative interviews with children aged six to nine whose parent’s had attended the courses.

In 2009 the government presented a national strategy which proposed that parenting training should be available as a universal public health intervention for all parents with children 0-17 (SOU 2008:131). The strategy met with some criticism from scholars and authorities. Universal parenting training as an intervention in private family matters were questioned in media and by scholars and authorities (SBU Rapport 202, 2010). Some questions
concerned society´s intentions and methods of governance. Scholars expressed doubts about the intended beneficiaries of parenting training, on what grounds parenting training could be regarded as beneficial and for whom, for parents, children or society itself? (Featherstone, 2006; Smith, 2010, Sandin & Bergnéhr, 2014).

An excerpt from a governmental petition tells us that:

The purpose of universal preventive parenting support is to via parents promote children´s health and positive development and maximize the child´s protection against unhealthy and social problems. Strengthened support for parents can increase the amount of children who have good relations to their parents, which research has proven to be important for the child´s development (Rskr. 2013/14:87).

The quotation distinguishes two major issues that are used to motivate why parents should be offered expert guidance: a good parent-child relationships can determine children´s health status, and parents in general need support from society to manage good relationships with their children. As Lee et al. (2010) and Lupton (2012) note, today parenting behaviour is deemed crucial for the development of children.

In my doctoral thesis I want to scrutinise official claims of parenting training as a means to modify parental behaviour, prevent mental problems among children and promote their healthy development. My thesis does not seek to confirm or reject any narrative or proposed evidence about the effects of universal parenting training interventions on child development. Instead I have explores what is written about and said about how it is done. I pose my questions from a governmental perspective to explore how normative behaviour is promoted in policy discourses (Gambles, 2010). With a research focus on governmentality I wanted to understand how discourses of power and rights are at play and which rationalities of adult governing of children can be found in parenting strategies disseminated as public health interventions.

How principles of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) are rhetorically or practically disseminated in interventions was also an interest. Since Sweden ratified the UNCRC in 1990, a new generation of young parents have grown up within a rights context which embraces children´s participatory rights. Children´s rights to autonomy and participation has for almost 30 years been a living principle in Swedish child policies, and are expected to feature as such in parenting training interventions.
As a researcher I am part of a normative adult discourse of adult-child relationships. I have strived to follow an itinerary of reflection and self-reflection during my work.

1.1 Structure of the thesis

The thesis investigates how parents and children are governed in universal parenting training. The background section presents the governmental strategy of parental support (SOU 2008:131) and gives a historical background to changes in family training policies, from a welfare perspective towards a public health perspective. The background ends with reflections on how children are dealt with in parenting training, and on children’s welfare and liberty rights. Following rationale and aim, the theoretical and methodological sections describe the chosen research methods: discourse analysis and qualitative content analysis. It is explained how and why the methodologies contribute to the understanding of how parents and children are governed in official investigations, course manuals and course settings, and what we can learn from listening to children. The findings section summarizes the main results of the articles which are elaborated in the synthesis and discussion sections. Finally, the thesis ends with an epilogue, with reflections on future research about how power is embedded in knowledge about children’s lives.
2. Background

Since the beginning of the 21st century structured manual-based parenting training programs have been implemented on a population level as part of Swedish public health policies. These policies were guided by scientific evidence from international interventions involving parents whose children had displayed behavioural problems. With the National Strategy of 2008 as a starting point for the thesis, the background serves to outline how parenting training has developed from a social welfare concern to a public health issue. The theoretical underpinnings of parenting training and research in this field are covered, followed by a section about children’s health and welfare, children’s rights and child research.

2.1. A national strategy for parenting training

In 2008 the Swedish coalition government appointed a national investigation to develop a population-based strategy for continuous parental support during children’s entire growth. The scope was delimited to “support directly aimed at parents and should primarily include health-promotive, generally preventive efforts. (SOU 2008:131, p.46). After seven months the investigation presented a”broad supply of interventions offered to parents with the aim to promote children’s health and psychological and social development” (SOU 2008:131, p. 45). Proposals concentrated on manual-based parenting training courses to be offered all parents, these were intended to represent a profitable social investment to reduce health problems and reward both people and society in the future (SOU 2008:131, pp.23; 123). Society’s obligation to support parents referred to the UNCRC, (1989):

“the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community” (UNCRC, 1989).
The governmental strategy situated parenting training as a rights-based preventive intervention in the Swedish health promotion context of the 21st century. Its roots though, were embedded in welfare policies and heritage of liberal education of the early welfare state (Sandin, 2017)

2.2 The Swedish context
2.2.1 Concerns of the welfare state

Governing of parents and children through dissemination of knowledge to parents is by no means a recent phenomenon in Swedish social policies (Littmarck, 2017). Political concern with parental upbringing methods can be traced back to the 1920s when the Swedish author Ellen Key published her book “The century of the child” (Bremberg, 2004). During the 1930s new thoughts about family politics and society´s responsibilities towards parents and children were brought forward by the Swedish politician and diplomat Alva Myrdal. The concept of the People´s Home provided a fundamental democratic structure of the welfare state as a tool for creating a “good life” throughout the phases of life (Brunnberg & Cedersund, 2012). The emerging welfare state acknowledged a parental need for counselling (SOU 1946:47) although direct interventions by the authorities in family matters were questioned as not equivalent with democratic values (SOU 1947:46). During the second half of the 20th century discussions continued in public investigations in terms of children´s well-being and changes in society. Littmarck (2017) relates how concerns about children´s and young people´s social and mental problems were raised in the 1960s. Parental shortcomings, developmental trajectories and the inadequacies of the welfare state were suggested as possible reasons for children´s behavioural problems. In 1964 the first parliamentary bill on parent education was written in response to research reports about young people´s problematic behaviour (Littmarck, 2017). The coming decades saw an institutionalisation of family life with new welfare reforms that strengthened society´s role as a care provider. As an example, preschools were made available in 1975 for children at the age of six to compensate for insufficient parenting with a good preschool environment (SOU 1975:33, p.116). Political discussions during the 1970s revolved around child assault, battery and the peril to children with less able and caring parents (Moqvist, 2003, p.121). In 1979 the parliament
decided that recent parents should be offered education on how to improve children’s life conditions. Gatherings for parents with newly born children were provided free of charge by the child health care system from the early 1980s (Rpr 1978/79:168). A Nordic non-formal liberal education model of free and voluntary studies (Vestlund, 1996) was used. Parents gathered in small groups and the sessions were set up as instructive but flexible discussions with leaders using dialogical pedagogy. An official intention was to support a collective contribution to society:

“Parenting education should contribute to a broader insight to how the family’s situation depends on societal circumstances and thus improves the conditions for parents to, together and actively, influence their own and their children’s situation”.

(SOU 1978:5, p. 45).

Two years later, yet another investigation discussed parenting courses as an important preventive measure to safeguard a good child development (SOU 1980:27). Still, as in the 1940s, concerns were raised about the possibly negative democratic implications of governmental meddling in private family matters: “The risk is that parent education could be interpreted as society’s ambition to educate parents to be the right kind of child raisers” (SOU 1980:27, p.13). When parenting training during the following decades developed as a broad public health policy, it was as Lundqvist writes, citing Thelen, “grafting of new elements onto an otherwise stable institutional framework“(Thelen, 2004, p.35, Lundqvist, 2015).

2.2.2 A public health issue in the 21st century

During the 1980s the World Health Organization (WHO) developed the concept of health promotion. The first International Conference on Health Promotion was held in Ottawa 1986. The Ottawa Charter became a foundation for health promotion policies and has since been confirmed and developed in global conferences (Haglund &Tillgren, 2018). Sweden took an active part in the United Nations (UN), WHO and the European Union (EU) to support resolutions about social equity in health and the implementation of social determinants of health e.g. structural living conditions (Dir 2015:60, 2015). Health promotion is recognized by its advocates as a tool for increased
health and welfare, a force for change that touches on society’s basic power relations and economic structures (Ågren, 2005; Lindström & Eriksson, 2006). A central premise is that good health is based on people’s different life circumstances (SOU 2017: 4). The Public Health Institute (Reorganised in 2014 as the Swedish National Institute of Public Health) was established in 1992 to consolidate Swedish public health policies and research results. Reports about children’s mental health problems raised governmental interest in interventions in support of a healthy child development (SoS-rapport 1994:19). At first, traditional health issues such as preventing tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse were targeted. Thus in 1997, the investigation” Support in parenthood” wrote that:

“The Swedish Public Health Institute has an important role to play in developing support for parents on issues of preventing allergies and how to counteract abuse of tobacco, alcohol and drugs”(SOU 1997:161).

Protective factors such as supportive environments were forwarded as important for children’s development in a health-promoting context, but parenting groups for parents with pre-school children were also suggested. Such groups were considered to serve its purpose by strengthening parents’ social networks. The investigation “Health on equal terms” (SOU 1999:137) wrote.

“Children can develop well regardless of shortcomings in the family environment if they have the possibility to connect with other adults” (SOU 1999:137, p 496).

In 1999 the government appointed the Swedish Public Health Institute to capture and disseminate good examples and new methods of parental support (Rskr 1999/2000:137). In 2003 Sweden adopted a national public health policy Goals for Public Health (Rpr 2002/03:35; Ågren, 2003). The policy was based on social determinants divided into 11 objective domains, one of them being “Safe and good conditions during growth”. Improving family economics and social security through preventive interventions was stressed in the document. A possible need for parental support to families with young children was also mentioned. (Rpr 2002/03:35). The report from the National Institute of Public Health was presented in 2004 as “New tools for parents” (Bremberg, 2004). It contained an extensive overview of international research on structured, manual-based parenting courses mainly from the
USA and adhering to developmental psychology. International scientific reports delivered evidence of how interventions which were aimed at parents could reduce the prevalence of mental health problems among children and youth. (Bremberg, 2004). The report acknowledged that parenting training could be scientifically evaluated and questioned from different perspectives and epistemological standpoints. It suggested therefore that, to legitimise parenting training interventions, the natural science should be relied on as a starting point, a “requirement for preventive interventions in the medical field” (SOU 1993:93, Bremberg, 2004, p. 61) Despite its international preponderance the report had a strong impact on the development of parenting training policies during the coming five years. In 2005 the Swedish National Institute of Public Health advocated effective methods for parenting education to strengthen the participants´ competence (S2005/7557). Yet another report, “Recipes for a healthier Sweden” (Ågren & Lundgren, 2006) commented that broad groups of parents with children in all ages should get the opportunity to participate in parenting support groups. The report presumed parenting support to be one of the most cost effective methods of improving children´s mental health. Apart from a possible reduction of children´s mental health problems, health economic calculations were now used politically as a strong argument. In 2007 a new national public health strategy was adopted by the parliament: “A Renewal of Public Health Politics” (Rpr 2007/08:110). This strategy suggested that “interventions targeted at children and adolescents could be regarded as an investment that will reward people later in life”, focusing not so much on promoting the well-being of children as on preventing problems in the future. The above reports demonstrate that interventions with manual-based parenting training programmes were established as a scientifically informed preventive method within promotive public health policies.

2.2.3 Parenting as a health determinant

Structured parenting training courses rely on commonalities in parent–child relationships, which have engaged researchers from different theoretical perspectives (Kerr & Stattin, 2000; Fletcher et al., 2004; Posada et al., 2004). Parental determinism is supported by long established research models of developmental trajectories for prediction and prevention of antisocial behav-
Parenting training is thus politically motivated by scientific assumptions which rely on health indicators related to parent-child relations (Stewart-Brown et al. 2004; Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2017). Good parenting is claimed to be a protective factor for children’s development, while bad parenting is regarded as a risk factor (Bandura et al., 1999; Patterson et al., 1990). Thus parents are the main target for interventions.

2.2.4 Preventive methods in health promotion

There is a diversity of systems and structures in relation to health promotion and prevention policies, programmes and practices (WHO, 2015). In Sweden health promotion has gained increased priority in public health policy documents concerned with social equity on national, regional, and local levels since the 1980s (Haglund & Tillgren, 2018). Even so, a preventive legacy has a strong hold in public health policies. As quoted from the National board of Health and Welfare (2018) disease prevention and health promotion are two sides of public health interventions that can contribute to achieve sustainability and equity in health on a population level. With social equity as a key issue the Swedish parliament adopted a new long term preventive structure for public health in 2018. Such a dualistic Swedish approach is reflected in arguments put forward by scientists, that in practice, prevention and promotion overlap one another, with a common focus on changing influences on health. (Breslow, 1999; Greenberg et al., 2003; Catalano et al., 2004; O’Connel et al., 2009). Thus, in structured universal parenting training interventions, current health promotion goals for child welfare coexist with preventive methods which carry legacies from the 1960s. During the 1960s behavioural parent training (PBT), based on Tharp and Wetzel’s (1969) triadic model, parents were trained in the US as change agents for their children. Time out (TO) was used, as well as extinction procedures, to reduce child noncompliance (Graziano & Diament, 1992, Shaffer et al., 2001). In behavioural modification a therapist worked directly with the parent (mediator) to improve the behaviour of the child (target) (Shaffer et al., 2001). These methods were later developed and reconceptualised for group intervention in programs like The Incredible Years (Webster-Stratton, 1984), Triple P (Sanders, et al., 2000) and similar selective courses. These courses were recommended in Sweden by the Swedish National Institute of Public Health as a means to diminish the risk for development of behavioural
problems in children (Bremberg, 2004). The benefits of preventive measures to promote health were explained in the National strategy for a developed parental support. (SOU 2008:131):

> “By investing in universal prevention efforts, we are able to reduce the proportion of the population who would later have developed problems if no action was taken (...) with great opportunities to prevent ill health among a big group of children who have not yet shown any early symptoms” (SOU 2008:131 p. 53,54. 2008).

Taking the discussion one step further, this thesis considers preventive and promotive interventions from a power perspective. Preventive top-down approaches as opposed to promotive bottom up approaches (Naidoo and Wills, 2009) can play out differently in parenting training as distinct practices of governing of parents and children.

### 2.2.5 Preventive intervention levels

In 1983, Gordon proposed a tripartite classification of public health prevention consisting of three categories of preventive measures: indicative, selective and universal (Gordon, 1983; O’Connel et al., eds., 2009). *Indicative* interventions are aimed at families with diagnosed problems and are primarily implemented as individual consultations (Kiesler, 2000). Group-based parenting training is implemented on two levels, as either selective or universal interventions (Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2014). *Selective* interventions are used for problem-solving with families which have perceived problems with child behavior, and have been in use in Sweden since the late 1900s (Bremberg, 2004). *Universal* interventions were recommended by the National Strategy for Developed Parental Support (SOU 2008:131) and are intended for all parents with children between 0 and 17 years (Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2013). In Sweden universal interventions mainly rely on evidence-based parenting training programmes that were originally designed for selective use to adjust problem behaviour. As a consequence, universal interventions are confronted with theoretical and methodological issues. Selective manual-based courses offered to parents on a population level, are structured, effect oriented and demand a high manual fidelity (SBU, 2010). A variety of selective courses with focus on improving parent-
child relationships (Barlow and Stewart Brown, 2000) have been introduced in Sweden during the last 20 years. Some have subsequently been recommended by the National Swedish Institute of Public Health and have also been implemented for universal use, for example The Canadian Community Parent Education Program (COPE) (Thorell, 2009) in 2000; the Swedish COmmunication METhod (Komet) (Sundell et al., 2005), in 2003, which builds on components from the American Defiant Children programme (Barkley, 1997), Incredible Years (Webster Stratton, 1984) and Parent Management Training (PMT) (Costin & Chambers, 2007); the Australian Triple P in 2008 (Sanders et al., 2000) and the Canadian Connect Program (Moretti & Obsuth, 2011) in 2011. These programmes can broadly be labelled either as interaction or communication programs (Bremberg, 2004), or as relational or behaviour modification programs (Barlow & Stewart-Brown, 2000). Some courses have theoretical underpinnings from two of these categories. Behaviour modification programmes associated with social learning theory (Skinner 1959) are prevalent in Sweden, like COPE, Komet and Triple P. These programmes focus on observable and measurable behaviours which are learned from the environment through the process of observational learning (Bandura, 1977). Relational programs, like Connect, are associated with attachment theory focusing on relational development, security and parental response. (Ainsworth 1979; Bretherton, 1992; 1996. Cassidy and Shaver, 2007).

Generalising selective parenting programs on a population level has met with feasibility criticism, because universal effects of behaviour modification are hard to establish (Thomas & Zimmer-Gembeck; 2007; Vandenbroeck et al., 2009; SBU, 2010; Ulfsdotter, 2016). A Swedish parenting training course for universal use, All Children in Focus (ABC) was developed by the Karolinska Institutet and Stockholm Social Services in 2011 (Lindberg et al., 2013). ABC adhered to social learning theory and partly to attachment theory and the developers were influenced by selective programme effectiveness as reviewed by Wyatt Kaminski et al (2008).

2.3. Evidence base for parenting training interventions

A guiding principal in modern public health policies is that all preventive interventions, including universal parenting training, must be based on scientific evidence (Dir 2008:67; R 2013-5). In a parenting training context the evidence principle is expressed as a political concern to gain clear scientific
evidence of the effects of universal interventions in a Swedish context (SOU 2008:131). An extensive international body of research on the effects of selective parenting interventions has since long indicated that parents and children can benefit from parenting courses (Lundahl et al., 2006; Dretzke et al., 2009; Furlong et al. 2012; Piquero et al., 2016). Research initiatives on families who experience problematic child behaviour have covered aspects of child development from problems such as aggression, delinquency depression, and anxiety to development and cognitive issues like self-esteem, social competence, peer relationships, educational performance and general health and development (Erickson, 1968; Patterson, 1996; Dunn et al., 1998; Gardner et al., 1999; Denham et al., 2000; Wood et al., 2003; Jebb et al., 2004). In a meta-analysis Goodman (2004) suggests that programmes with strong effects on children’s social and emotional development share three characteristics: the programme targets children with a specific need that has been identified by the parents, such as a behavioural or conduct disorder or developmental delay; the programme uses professional rather than paraprofessional staff; or the programme provides opportunities for parents to meet and provide peer support as part of the service delivery approach. (Goodman, 2014). A national multi-center study, investing manual-based programmes for selective and indicative use, was administered 2009 - 2011 by the National Board of Health and Welfare. Effect studies were performed by Örebro University, Lund University, Gothenburg University and Karolinska Institutet. The aim was to investigate the effectiveness of some parenting training programmes in reducing children’s mental illness and social problems and to strengthen parenthood. A total of 1100 parents participated and the effects from one self-help book and four selected programs were studied: the Connect, Cope, Komet and Incredible Years programmes (Stattin et al. 2015). The result of the project, one of largest performed in Sweden, showed that parents felt less stressed, had fewer aggressive reactions and used fewer punishing corrections. Ninety-two percent of the children were reported to have fewer problematic behaviours National Board of Health and welfare, 2015).

Effect studies of selective parenting training interventions have constituted theoretical underpinnings for universal interventions (Webster-Stratton and Taylor, 2001; Flay et al., 2005; Hutchings & Lane 2005; Dillon Goodson, 2014; Owen et.al. 2017). However the transferability of selective methods to population level has been hard to establish on an evidence level. While selective interventions can be motivated by research results of positive parent
and child outcomes, results from universal interventions are more obscure (Thomas & Zimmer-Gembeck; 2007; Vandenbroeck, 2009).

2.3.1 Universal parenting training as a research field

Research on universal parenting training is still scare. Studies on universal interventions have until now covered three main areas with predominantly quantitative studies: 1) Measurable effects on parents´ and children´s health, wellbeing and behaviour; 2) Dissemination of programmes and parental participation patterns; 3) Health economic calculations. In Sweden most available research, was performed between 2011 and 2014 with governmental funding of 130 million SEK. The funding was allotted through the National Institute of Public Health to six academic institutions: Gothenburg University, Karolinska Institutet, Linköping University, Umeå University, Uppsala University and Örebro University. 70 million SEK were reserved to investigate local strategies for parenting support in cooperation with municipalities and county councils. These studies dealt with dissemination strategies on a local level including health economic calculations which go beyond the scope of this thesis. 60 million SEK were reserved for development and evaluation of parenting programmes which involved qualitative and quantitative studies about parent and child wellbeing, parents´ perceived self-efficacy, conflict management, children´s behaviour and life quality. Moreover, cultural convertibility, programme implementation among foreign born parents and children´s rights as expressed in the programmes were addressed. A national report on the whole project concluded that major effects of universal interventions could not be expected. As a central result, minor to moderate effects were shown primarily on parent level. Parents sometimes felt strengthened in their parental role and their mental health could be improved (VERK 2010/288).

Some independent effect studies, dissemination studies, and health economic analyses have been performed on universal parenting training interventions in Sweden. Effect studies concern parental needs, risk and health factors and children´s social competence and emotional regulation. Results are contradictory or uncertain, predominantly showing minor effects (Engström Nordin, 2013). A few programmes have been scientifically evaluated, or example the Australian Triple P (Sarkadi, 2014), and Swedish All Children in Focus (ABC), (Ulfsdotter, 2016; Lindberg et al., 2015). Programme trials have demonstrated positive results on parental self-efficacy but without proving
that improved parental well-being translates into better parenting. (Sarkadi et al., 2014; Alfredsson & Broberg, 2016).

A high profile research interest deals with dissemination perspectives (Sarkadi, 2015; Alfredsson & Broberg, 2016). A randomized study of parents in 15 municipalities tackles gender as a dissemination issue which points at a significant difference between fathers’ and mothers’ interest in courses (Thorslund et al., 2014). Other studies have explored the involvement of parents born outside Sweden (Osman et al., 2016; Osman, 2017). Swedish effect and cost studies include RCT studies of the ABC programme (Lindberg et al., 2012; Ulfsdotter et al., 2015; Ulfsdotter, 2016).

Results from Swedish research coincide with contradictions in international studies although research on universal programmes is not abundant. Hiscock et al (2008) report no parental or infant improvement in an Australian study of over 700 mothers. Lindsay & Tatsika (2017) report improved parental self-efficacy from a 12-program trial. A systematic review of 14 academic papers by Pontoppidan (2016) report mixed results with no clear conclusions. A systematic review by Wittkow (2016) of nine databases, reports some changes in parental self-efficacy, with the reservation that results should be interpreted with caution. Triple P, a selective programme which is universally applied, appears to be the internationally most researched programme, but in this case also, the results are contradictory Hahlweg et al. (2014) report positive results from the programme, while Eisner et al. (2012) report no effects on parenting practices. It is obvious that public health policies are contextually sensitive and susceptible to political influences, democratic fluctuations, cultural differences and ideological priorities. (Subramanian et al., 2009; Prinjha, 2010). Subsequently political decisions and strategic public health policies need to be informed by scientific research based on empirical data. (Wilkinson & Marmot, eds., 2003 p.5).

Swedish scientific evaluations of programme contents that problematise parent-child relationships and the implications of parenting programmes for universal use have broadened the scope of research into universal interventions (Pećnik & Lalière 2007 p 15; Lundqvist, 2012; Widding, 2015). Widding (2015) and Lundkvist (2012) are two Nordic examples of new research concerned with values in parenting training. Their studies about governmental norms and ideals, and parent’s own ideals and expectations about parenthood have contributed with important aspects to the process of this thesis. Other international scholars have highlighted important perspectives on society’s governance of parents and children through parenting training interventions (Clarke, 2006; Pain, 2006; Young, 2007; Gambles, 2010;
Smeyers, 2008; Vandenbroeck, 2009; Smith, 2010; Reece, 2013). Further Raemekers and Suissa (2011) have made a solid analysis which shows that parenting which relies on developmental psychology, behavioural psychology and neuro psychology has turned into a parental project of effectiveness and governance.

2.4 Theoretical underpinnings of parenting training
2.4.1 Parental self-regulation and parenting styles

Some of the parenting courses suggested for universal use in Sweden are influenced by Bandura’s theory about self-efficacy (Bandura et al., 1999). Parental self-efficacy is defined as the expectation parents hold about their ability to parent successfully and is important for nurturing positive parenting practices (Wittkowski, 2016). Sanders, the developer of the broadly implemented Triple P programme, claims that parental self-regulation is an important factor to be targeted in parenting interventions (Sanders & Mazzucchelli, 2013; Ramaekers & Vandezande, 2013). Moreover, parenting training courses adhere to a socialization approach by which children are regarded as receivers of parental upbringing methods. Parents’ ability to give their children warmth and to set limits for their agency is a core component (Bremberg, 2004, p.62). The warmth-limits constellation is associated with an authoritative parenting style outlined by the American psychologist Baumrind in the 1960s (Bremberg, 2004). Baumrind defines a typology of four possible parenting styles which adhere to socialisation as a model for parent-child relationship. Based on parental demandingness and responsiveness the typology is structured as: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or uninvolved parenting styles. Authoritative parenting is suggested as the most efficient parenting style (Baumrind, 1966). According to Baumrind (1991) authoritative parenting which combines warmth with limits, produces children who will not misbehave and are highly responsive to even the most subtle communication of parental disapproval (Baumrind, 1991). The Baumrind typology (1991) has been moderated by other scholars (Maccoby, 1992), and has been researched for theoretical consistensy and applicability in parenting interventions. In Sweden the authoritative parenting style has gained influence on parenting policies which is documented in policy texts and reports about parenting and parenting training (Bremberg, 2004 pp. 48, 62; R2011:06, 2011, p. 21; Sarkadi (ed), 2014, p. 9). However, critics claim that authoritative parenting presupposes a child to be
subordinate, docile and dependent (Darling 1999) and that parental influence on child behaviour is over emphasised in research (Statin & Kerr, 2000; Kerr and Statin 2012). Moreover, Baumrind has been criticised for insufficiencies regarding differences in parenting contexts (Smetana, 1994), lack of cultural convertibility (Chau, 1994) and tolerance of spanking as a disciplining method (Gerschoff, 2002; Baumrind et al., 2002). A nurturing caregiving parent-child relationship has repeatedly been shown to be important for children’s development and wellbeing (Bitsko et al., 2016; Sheffield Morris et al., 2017). As an example, a Swedish research study shows that parental warmth is positively correlated with children’s agency (Gurdal et al., 2016).

2.5 Children in parenting training
2.5.1 Interest in children’s health and well-being

Children’s health and well-being is internationally recognised as an important health and welfare issue for society as a whole. In Sweden the childhood period is covered by political concerns about how to improve conditions by a combination of preventive and promotive measures (Swedish National Institute of Public Health, 2011). For the benefit of public health strategies, children’s well-being is today broadly acknowledged as a multidimensional concept which is measured in cross-country studies. (Morrow and Mayall, 2009). Public health research addresses quality of life aspects and children’s own notions of happiness and positive emotions. Social determinants are used as a guidance for interventions, such as material assets, health and safety, education, peer and family relationships, behaviours and risks (Adamson, 2013). Studies have assembled children’s subjective perceptions of life satisfaction as indicators in research and for political decisions (Adams et al., 2016). Different methodological directions offer a variety of choices for public health agencies to improve children’s living conditions through policy interventions (OECD, 2009).

Since the 1980s Swedish public health policies interventions have been guided by surveys in which children and young people have been asked questions about their subjective perceptions of their living conditions. A salient survey element in these studies is the quality of the parent-child relationship, regarded as an important determinant of children’s well-being and agency. A majority of Swedish children above 10 years report that they get
on well with their parents (R 2011:9). These results have been constant since 1985 when Sweden started doing surveys in cooperation with the WHO (2011). Similar results were presented in a national Swedish survey of children 10-15 years where nine out of ten children answered that they experienced that their mothers always or nearly always had time to talk with them or do something with them, slightly less so for their fathers (Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2014).

The interpretation of statistical material on children’s well-being for policy purposes, has been described as based either on a developmental perspective or on a children’s rights perspective (Pollard & Lee, 2003). Statham and Chase (2010) suggest that a developmental outlook on well-being is likely to use indicators of future risks as precursors of problems in adulthood and for the next generation (Christensen, 2004). A rights perspective on the other hand, would put more focus on children’s well-being in the present (Morrow and Mayall, 2009; Statham and Chase, 2010). A predominantly developmental perspective has steered public health interventions towards parenting training in the 21st century (Bremberg, 2004; SOU 2008:131). Even so, children’s rights as expressed in the UNCRC (1989) have influenced Swedish social policies since the 1990s and are, in European context, regarded as a primary consideration in parenting (Daly, ed., 2007).

2.5.2 Children’s welfare and liberty rights

The nature and definition of children’s rights is of interest as it can be controversial in parenting interventions. Do adult rights take precedence over children’s? How do health rights relate to human rights more generally? (Roberts & Reich, 2002, p. 1055). Embedded in this controversy, the UNCRC (1989) has been described as suffering from an intrinsic contradiction between parental rights and children’s rights to participation. The protection principle is predominant in the convention as a parental task to act accordingly in a family situation (Archard, 2010). A possible conflict between parental authority and children’s rights to make decisions for themselves was noted already when the convention was processed. The dilemma was preliminarily solved by referring levels of child autonomy to a developmental understanding of increasing age and maturity (Hammarberg, 1990). Age-based rights have since been disputed by scholars as an adult creation, a hierarchical social order of inclusion and exclusion (Näsman, 2004; Sundhall, 2017). Wall (2008) claims that regardless of the implementation of
children’s rights, children will remain second class citizens until the very idea of human rights is rethought in the light of childhood. Swedish child policies handle the rights concept pragmatically as a parental obligation to retain an informed power position of control, while acknowledging children’s freedom and rights to be actors in their own right. Sweden’s national “Strategy to strengthen the rights of the child” describes parenting training as an "activity that gives parents knowledge of the child's health, emotional, cognitive and social development and / or strengthens their social networks, based on evidence-based models, methods and applications with a set of values based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child” (Rpr 2009/10:232).

The UN committee on the Rights of the child (2003) stated that different kind of rights are inseparable and should be viewed as a package. (Reading et al., 2009). In a welfare context, rights can thus be interpreted as protecting important child interests such as health and well-being (Archard, 2010). Welfare rights are expressed in article 3.1 of the UNCRC: ‘In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration’ (UNCRC, 1989).

Moreover, children’s rights can be interpreted as liberty rights, e.g. rights to participate and be heard, to choose, to practice a religion, and to associate (Archard, 2010). Liberty rights are found in the article 12: ‘States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child’ (UNCRC, 1989). These two articles 3 and 12 are interpreted in this thesis as sliding between visions of a protected vulnerable child and a socially active young human being. Research has shown that children’s experiences of social and moral agency are complex and multifaceted (Fattore et al., 2016). Children construct their own selves within existing relationships while simultaneously reconstructing these relationships in a “circular” movement (Wall, 2008). How the ontological status of the child is conceptualised has profound implications for research methods (Mayes, 2015). Society’s health and social welfare structure offers a framework which sets limits or opens possibilities for agency. As Archard (2010) writes, it is not possible to unambiguously describe the best interests of a child in terms of a hypothetical adult self. Any objective adult interpretation will be the subject of contested views. (Archard, 2010). Children’s knowledge and
experiences can, with this reasoning, contribute to transforming what is meant by human rights as such (Wall, 2008).

2.5.3 Research involving children

The 1980s and 90s were described by James et al. (1990) as the decades when the “new social studies of childhood” were formulated as an ontological upheaval. According to Prout (2011) four theoretical trails merged into one during this ideological shift: that the concept of socialization renders children passive (Dreitzel, 1973), that childhood is not a permanent feature of social structure (Quartrup et al., 1994), that children are an oppressed minority group (Mayall, 1994) and that childhood is a relative discursive construction (James et al., 1990/1998). A former dualistic adult-child dichotomy was replaced by an interdisciplinary approach to childhood “in keeping with destabilisation and pluralisation of both childhood and adulthood”. (Prout, 2011). Moreover Söderlind has shown that it is problematic to identify children as a group in statistics and even to make comparisons over time. (Söderlind et al., 2013). Childhood research has since moved towards a re-conceptualization of childhood as a mutual constitutive, contingent nature of subjectivity at all ages (Mayes, 2015). Instead of handling children as “outcomes” of parenting training, researchers are challenged to reveal how children make difference to relationships, decision-making, and to social assumptions or constraints (James, 2011, p.34; Mayall, 2002, p. 21). Still some scholars claim that children´s and young people´s expectations mirror future society (Alm et al., 2012). Kiörholt (2005) suggests that fundamental questions such as ‘what is science’, ‘what is a child’, and what is children’s place in society need to be addressed and discussed from a philosophical and ethical point of view when conducting child research and research with children. There is a need to reflect on and illuminate the difference between a child perspective and the child’s perspective. A natural consequence of ethical considerations in child research is to incorporate children’s views in research. Capturing children’s perspectives requires adults, parents and health professionals to be attentive, sensitive and supportive of each child’s expressions, experiences and perception (Sommer et al., 2011; Söderbäck et al., 2011). Epistemological and ontological challenges should be considered in research about parenting training. New developments in child research adhere to how
children and childhood are constructed and placed in the social and generational order. Solberg (1996) questions that research with children is ‘special’ and whether what children are ‘doing’ might be more important than who they are ‘being’. In other words, age may not be relevant and childhood as a construction, may not always exist in a research context (Madge & Wilmott, 2007). Similarly James et al (1998) claims that a lingering reliance on developmental psychology in science tends to problematise age without attention to social structures and power relations. In Popkewitz´ words - if a concept of productive power is applied to research the starting point for investigations about children is inverted (Popkewitz, 2013).
3. Rationale

A guiding principal in public health policies is that all interventions, including universal parenting training, must be based on scientific evidence. The positive effects of selective parenting interventions for families who perceive problems, are well established. International and Swedish studies have reported improved parental well-being and reduction of conduct problems among children. In Sweden, selective programs have been implemented on population level, supported by a national public health strategy for developed parental support in 2009. Public health authorities and researchers have since struggled to establish how children benefit from universal interventions with parenting training from a health and welfare perspective. Positive outcomes of interventions with families where problems have not yet occurred have proved hard to establish. Important innovative studies of universal parenting training research have been done by scholars within the social sciences who have pushed the boundaries for research beyond well-established binary constructions of parent-child relationships. A power perspective will be used to contribute with an understanding of the intrinsic mechanisms in parenting training interventions; how power and knowledge is regulated through family interventions and how parents and children’s identities are constructed.

The thesis will focus on the practices of parenting training by asking questions about how parent- and child relations are expressed in official investigations, course manuals, course-setting and through the children’s experiences in their families. The thesis will contribute an understanding of how parent-child relationships are regulated by normative discourses and power processes in parenting training and will highlight children’s position as meaning-makers and knowledge providers in the family.
4. Aim

The overall aim of this thesis was to investigate power relations and rationalities of governing in universal parenting training, as expressed in two Swedish public investigations, two selected programme manuals, course sessions of two programmes as well as children’s experiences of family life.

The aims of the separate studies were:

Study I  To analyze the discourses of parenting training in official inquiries (1947 and 2008) that explicitly deal with the bringing up of children and with the role as a parent.

Study II  To reveal how parent–child interaction is outlined in two manual based parenting training programs implemented by Swedish services for universal use: the Canadian Connect manual and the Swedish All Children in Focus (ABC).

Study III To explore how discourses about parenthood and childhood are expressed in manual-based parenting training courses in a Swedish context, the Canadian Connect programme and the Swedish All Children in Focus (ABC) programme.

Study IV To explore how children, describe their interactions in the family where the parents had taken part in manual based parenting training courses.
5. Theoretical and methodological frameworks

5.1 Social constructionism

As a theoretical framework this thesis adheres to social constructionism which in the 1980s challenged a long established paradigm of academic realism, beliefs in universal truths, and science as an objective, neutral and absolute perception of reality (Moss & Petrie, 2002, p. 26; Burr, 2015, p. 9). From a social constructionist perspective facts can be represented and interpreted in different ways and truth is just a relative and changing representation of reality (Edwards et al., 1992). Social constructionism was useful for scrutinizing normative statements and social practices that are regarded as inevitable, for example prevailing views on childhood and children’s place in society (Boghossian, 2015). As an analytical guideline, social constructionism offers means to deconstruct what is generally taken for granted and to depict alternative scientific possibilities (Vandenbroeck, 2011).

An epistemological understanding of social constructionism guided the thesis and was used to depict concealed knowledge. Such knowledge is regularly silenced by dominant groups in society (Foucault, 1984; Foucault, 2001). As an example, children’s opinions are often deemed as less important than adults’, not true or erratic. An epistemic interpretation of research involving children is offered by Burman and Mayall who argue that adult-centered conceptions of children and childhood have produced a considerable amount of knowledge based on adult construction (Burman, 2008; Mayall, 2000). Epistemological choices thus also have ethical implications, as Fricker (2010) suggests, such as rejecting someone’s word for either good reason or out of mere prejudice (Fricker, 2010, p. 3). An alternative to adult centered epistemology is suggested by Murris (2017) and is reflected upon in this thesis. She calls for epistemic justice in research—representing children as holders and producers—and for understanding of children’s capacities.

“Denying someone the credibility they deserve is one form of epistemic injustice; denying them the role of a contributing epistemic agent at all is a dis-
distinct form of epistemic exclusion” (Carel & GyÖrff, 2014, p.125.). The thesis attempts to explore children´s position as knowledge producers in a parenting training context. As an effort towards epistemic justice, children´s own experiences within their families, were conveyed in the thesis by to exploring children´s experiences in families who had taken part in parenting training courses.

5.2 A discursive framework

Based on the key premises of social constructionism this thesis draws on Michel Foucault´s writing on discursive relationships of knowledge, truth and power (McNaughton, 2005, p.5.) Foucault writes in History of sexuality that “discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (Foucault, 1978, p. 101). Discourse, which literally means speech, has for decades been linked to linguistic determinism and has been used for analysis of language (Hekman, 2010; Bacchi & Bonham, 2014). A strong linguistic focus places language as central to lived experience, thus methodologically exploring the grammatical structure of narratives (Barthes, 1988; Van Dijk 1985). This “linguistic turn” has been disputed by critical realists for its downsizing of the material which allows linguistic structure to shape or determine our understanding of the world (Barad, 2003). By contrast, Carol Bacchi and Jennifer Bonham (2014) claim that Foucault refers to discursive practices as knowledge formations, rather than to linguistic practices or language use. Focus should thus be on how knowledge is produced through plural discursive practices across different sites (Bacchi & Bonham, 2014). Bacchi´s and Bonham´s reading of Foucault has guided the exploration in this thesis of how disciplinary technologies are used in parenting practices. The reasoning was, that it is possible to explore discursive practices beyond pure linguistics, without downplaying linguistics as an important analytical tool.
5.2.1 Dimensions of power

Different aspects of power technologies have been outlined in Foucault’s work (Foucault, 1984) and their relevance to parenting training research involves exploration of how disciplining of children is disseminated in parenting strategies and practices which are outlined in manual based programmes used for universal interventions. Initially, it will be presented how practices of discursive power can be understood in parenting training. The section ends with an account of how governmentality and pastoral power are used in the project.

Foucault describes the family as a sovereign patriarchal institution, and the power that parents have in a parent-child relationship as sovereign rather than disciplinary (Taylor, 2012). ‘[I]t seems to me,’ he states, ‘that the family is a sort of cell within which the power exercised is not, as one usually says, disciplinary, but rather of the same type as the power of sovereignty’ (Foucault, 2006, p. 80). Insofar as children are disciplined in family, these practices have merely been grafted onto the institution, and the family could and often does function without them (Taylor, 2012). Since the 1990s family patterns and constellations have gone through many changes in the West. It is reasoned in this theses that relatives and other caregivers could execute both sovereign and protective disciplinary power over children below the age of 18. In Study II and III which draw on program manuals and talks during course deliberations, components of protection and leadership are explored in relation parental power practices.

Structural power is yet another analytical frame drawn from Foucault’s theory of technologies of control. Structural power has a theoretical impact on this research project as it involves children’s positions in the family directly (Study IV) and indirectly (Study I, II and III). Foucault exemplifies how power can operate as purely structural by categorizing certain groups as others or norm breakers (2003 a). In a parenting training context children’s agency could be limited not only by sovereign or disciplinary power technologies but also by pure societal structures. People, here exemplified by adults in a parenting training context, thus function as vehicles of power rather than as subjects or objects of power (Fricker, 2010, p. 11).

5.2.2 Governmentality

This thesis draws on Foucault’s theories about governmentality and power regimes, which are relevant to the exploration of how power technologies
are used to regulate parent-child relations in a parenting training context. In the French language the semantic connection of governing (gouverner) and modes of thought (mentalité) indicates that technologies of power are linked to the political rationality underpinning them (Lemke, 2002). But Foucault does not limit the concept of governmentality to institutions or the political power of the state. He frames governmentality broadly as a ‘conduct of conduct’ a power over the “selves”, the autonomous individual’s capacity for self-control, linked to forms of political rule and economic exploitation. (Lemke, 2002). Governmentality thus involves guidance of the family, the children, management of the households as well as directing of the soul (Foucault, 1984a; Foucault, 2003; Rose 1993, 1994; McKee, 2009). Applied to this study of parenting training, interventions involving children were explored as governmental (Study I) and parental regulations of power, responsibility and resistance which are embedded in broad networks of relations (Studies II and III).

5.2.3 Pastoral Power

We live in a society that encourages narratives of the self (Brooks, 2000; Miller, 2000; Furedi, 2008). According to Foucault (1978), our narratives have Christian roots related to pastoral guidance. Narratives are justified today by psychology and psychiatry on scientific grounds. Metaphorically, pastoral power describes how a majority of the people, like a flock of sheep, are guided by a few shepherds to improve themselves. (Rabinow & Dreyfus, 1982). The individual is indirectly coached to change her behaviour via self-confessions and mutual deliberation (Lazzarato, 2010). By way of governing self-regulating processes, society uses both normation and normalisation to regulate its population. Normation is used to discipline the individual and normalisation to conform the selves on a population level. (Foucault 2003b; Smith, 2014). Society facilitates the confessional speech, filters statements, and guides the speech in a specific direction (Foucault, 1978, Hennum, 2012). A take on pastor power in a parenting training context was consistent with public health interventions involving parents who volunteer to be trained to develop their parenting skills. Analysis of pastoral power technologies was thus used in the analysis of discussions during parenting training courses as means to understand the parental identity formations that took place during the course sessions (Study III).
5.3 Methodological approaches

Theories about childhood and child development are regimes of truths about how children should be understood, handled and disciplined, (Walkerdine, 1984; Cannella, 1997; Alloway, 1997; Mac Naughton, 2005) A social constructionist approach to such regimes of truth calls for critical ontology and epistemology in studies involving children, What makes a study “critical” is not just the methodology but the framework used to think within, through and beyond the text (Beach et al., 2009). Methodologies for critical analysis based on social constructionism were used in this thesis to locate power in social practices by understanding, uncovering, and transforming conditions of inequality. CDA and a Discourse Theory approach were used in this thesis (Study I, Study III) to explore how upbringing of children were constructed as a problem in techniques of governing and the development of parent´s and children´s identity constructions in parenting training. Qualitative content analysis served to reveal norms and strategies embedded in programme manuals (Study II) and to uncover children´s views on their experiences of family relations (Study IV).

Tools for discourse analysis are methodology flexible, contingent and multifaceted as the theoretical approach itself. Discourse theory (Laclau & Mouffe 1969), discourse psychology (Wetherell et al., 2004) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012) are all frequently used in social sciences. Suggestions of how discourse analysis can be performed are abundant in the literature. The discourse theorist Norman Fairclough reasons that researchers use different approaches according to the specific nature of the project, as well as their own views of discourse (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). Variations in methodology and design mirror the chosen issues from different perspectives to discover new angles of the problem

5.3.1 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a linguistic analysis that adheres to social constructionism, and involves the use of discourse analytical techniques to interrogate social phenomena (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004). Linguistic analyses do not disregard social processes. In a dynamic way, linguistic
practices coincide dialectically with social practices as properties of text, talk, verbal interaction or other communicative events interact in the (re)production and challenge of power (Van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough, 1995). In Study I, which deals with two public investigations, I draw on two analytical tools for CDA: Carol Bacchi’s model for structuring the analysis “What is the problem represented to be?” (WPR) and Fairclough’s model for examination of political texts, political discourse analysis (PDA) (Bacchi, 2009; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). Bacchi’s and Fairclough’s analytical models help to show that society’s governmental achievements need goals to be set up through practical reasoning based on both circumstantial and normative premises. In Study I, modality expressed the emphasis in reasoning and actions. Modality is a common CDA tool, used to reveal levels of truth and obligation that are displayed through language. Levels of modality indicate how governmental intentions are embedded in the discourse practices (Fairclough 1995, pp.160). As an example, subjective modalities express the sender’s power position either by use of categorical statements, or by statements modulated to various degrees (Fairclough, 1995; Jørgensen, and Phillips, 2002).

5.3.2 Identity constructions in discourse analysis

Discourse Theory operates within the same social constructionist framework of relativism as critical discourse analysis and political discourse analysis. With roots in structuralist linguistics, social phenomena are turned into language, and language into an object for analysis (Pedersen, 2009) Study III draws on Laclau’s and Mouffe’s Foucault-influenced thinking (Laclau & Mouffe, 1989) with a focus on pastoral power as a technology of governance for dissemination of parenting skills and child identity formations. Laclau’s and Mouffe’s Discourse Theory was chosen for its focus on how identities are discursively constructed which is relevant in a parenting training context. Still, their theories leave room for modifications as they offer little advices on methodological issues. That discourses are fully constitutive without any dialectic interaction with something else (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002) is disregarded here, as too rigid and unnecessarily constraining on the analytic process. Methodologically useful for the study was the metaphoric description of discourses as a fishnet where people are positioned as knots in the net. Laclau & Mouffe call these positions nodal points (Jørgensen & Phillips,
2002) around which discourses develop in an ongoing struggle for hegemony. By defining nodal points and key concepts the analysis of linguistic interaction in Study III investigated parents’ and children’s were positioned in course settings, not just as individuals, but also as members of social categories like parents and children who construct identities through discourse (Van Dijk, 1997).

5.3.3 Content analysis

Qualitative content analysis can be of a descriptive or exploratory nature based on inductive (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) or deductive reasoning, with a considerable overlap in terms of methods and procedures (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Content analysis (CA) is a flexible conceptual approach to understanding what a text or an interview is about, while considering content from a particular theoretical perspective (Beach et al., 2009). Qualitative research deals with interpretations that vary in level of abstraction, by extracting, coding and categorising meaning making sentences from the texts (Patton, 2015; Silverman, 1985). In this way CA was used in study II and IV with a focus on a critical exploration of parent-child relationships and parenting practices in a parenting training context. The task of producing additional knowledge calls for a reflective mind during the whole process (DeSantis & Noel Ugarriza, 2000). A critical content analysis draws methodologically and theoretically on a social constructionist framework (Beach et al., 2009). Research questions in Study II and IV move within the same field of interest as Study I and III, but differ in approach. The discursive question how parents and children are governed (Studies I and III), corresponds to a content analytical question of what language, and messages are used to govern parents and children (Study II and IV). The four studies are thus included in a unity with aspects on reality interpreted by different methodological approaches. Ideally qualitative analysis contributes understanding of the material which can be used to grasp the dynamics of the investigated discourses. For Study II, which explores the content of two manual-based programmes, content analysis offers an insight in what strategies of governing of children are used in parenting training. For study IV a content analytical approach helps to explore children’s experiences of relationships in a suggested family structure of interactions between parents and children, as expressed by the children.
6. Method

6.1 Overall design

Qualitative study designs were used for all four studies with the aim of widening the knowledge base about governing and normative claims embedded in universal parenting training.

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<td>Aim</td>
<td>To analyze the discourses of parenting training in official investigations that explicitly deal with the bringing up of children and with the role of the parent.</td>
<td>To reveal how parent-child interaction is outlined in two manual based parenting training programs implemented for universal use.</td>
<td>To explore how discourses about parenthood and childhood were expressed during the Canadian Connect course and the Swedish All Children in Focus (ABC) course.</td>
<td>To explore how children, describe their interactions in the family when their parents had taken part in parenting training.</td>
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<td>Material</td>
<td>Two official commissions dealing with parent education of 1947 and 2008</td>
<td>Two structured parenting training manuals of the Connect course and the ABC course.</td>
<td>Sessions during two manual based parenting courses of the Connect and ABC courses.</td>
<td>Interviews with eleven children aged 5 to 9 years whose parent(s) had attended either a Connect or ABC course.</td>
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<td>Analysis</td>
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<td>Qualitative content analysis (CA) with an inductive approach.</td>
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*Figure 1 Overall design*

6.2 Material and analysis

The material used for the four studies were two national investigations (Study I) two parenting training manuals (Study II), transcribed audiotaped records from parenting training sessions during two courses (Study III) interviews with children whose parents had attended parenting training courses (Study IV). Discourse analysis was applied for Studies I and III and qualitative content analysis for Studies II and IV.
6.2.1 Study I: Trusted and doubted: Discourses of parenting training in two Swedish public investigations in 1947 and 2008.

It was of interest for the project to begin with an investigation of how parenting was problematised in governmental texts during different periods in Sweden. For this purpose two national Swedish investigations initiated by the government in 1947 and 2008 were selected for the first study: The 1947 investigation, “Family Life and Domestic Work” (SOU 1947:46) was the earliest Swedish investigation to address parenting education in a social welfare context. The 2008 investigation, “National strategy for a developed parental support – A benefit for all” (SOU 2008:131) was the first broad national strategy suggesting universal parent education in a public health context. Studious reading of the two investigations depicted the broad traits in each document as well as their ethos and intentions. Each investigation was then analysed separately with CDA, exploring the governmental constructions of problems and their causes, solutions and required political actions. Text excerpts from each document were chosen and structured in a three-step template affiliated to PDA: circumstances in which parenting policies were situated; practical reasoning about parenting problems; and claims for political action to solve these problems. After analysing each investigation, the findings were compared and concluded to highlight how child rearing were described as a problem from a governmental perspective when political goals within each time period were set up and suggested to be forwarded by dissemination of knowledge.

6.2.2 Study II: An Assessment of Two Parenting Training Manuals used in Swedish Parenting Interventions.

For the second study the project settled on exploring how parent-child interaction was outlined in two structured universal parenting training manuals: The Canadian Connect programme (Moretti & Obsuth, 2009) produced by the Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre and Simon Fraser University in Canada (Moretti & Obsuth, 2009; Moretti et al., 2011) and All Children in Focus, ABC (Ulfsdotter, 2015) produced by social services in cooperation with researchers at Karolinska Institutet and in communication with munici-
palities in and around Stockholm. Both courses had been introduced in Sweden in 2011 and were recommended for use by the Swedish National Institute of Public Health (since 2014 named The Swedish Public Health Agency). The two courses were selected because they both, in different ways, offered alternatives to the majority of programmes used in Sweden on population level. The most commonly used courses were of Anglo Saxon origin, converted from selective programmes and based on social learning theory. The Connect programme was imported from Canada but based on attachment theory. The ABC programme was produced in Sweden uniquely for universal use and had a declared adherence to the UNCRC. Both pointed towards eventual new directions in parenting training methods.

Connect was initially designed as a selective programme for parents of pre-pubescent and adolescent children diagnosed with severe behavioural disorders and mental health problems. It has also been implemented in Sweden as a universal programme for all parents of children aged 8–17. Connect has been evaluated in effect studies in Canada and in Sweden (Stattin et al., 2015; Moretti et al., 2015; Högström et al., 2017; Osman et al., 2017; Moretti et al., 2017; Alfredsson et al., 2018). All Children in Focus, ABC (Ulfsdotter, 2015) produced by social services in cooperation with researchers at Karolinska Institutet and in communication with municipalities in and around Stockholm. ABC draws primarily on social learning theory and was designed for universal use, aimed at all parents with children aged between three and 12 years. The ABC programme has been evaluated in Swedish effect and cost-effectiveness studies (Lindberg et al., 2013; Ulfsdotter et al., 2014; Enebrink et al., 2015; Ulfsdotter et al. 2017; Ulfsdotter, 2017).


Study III was designed as an observation study of course proceedings during one Connect course and one All Children in Focus (ABC) course. The research project now took a step away from the terra firma of the written word to representations of the spoken language. Oral interactions between course leaders and parents were observed and audiotaped during seven Connect sessions and four ABC sessions.
The final documentation consisted of the collected oral information and flip chart notes made by the leaders, role play by the leaders and films, oral course evaluation and course evaluation forms anonymously filled in by some of the parents. The transcribed material was read several times to get an understanding of the ethos and pedagogical layout of the two courses. Drawing on discourse theory each course was then analysed one at a time. The key concepts of both courses, identified as the parent and the child, were used as nodal points in the analysis. Nodal points were interpreted as partial fixation of meaning around which discourses were formed. By attaching meaning to nodal points and positioning parents and children with subject identities, their positions in the developing discursive processes were displayed. Pastoral power as a technology to disseminate normative truths (Foucault, 1978) was used as an analytical tool to display how parents´ and children´s subject positions were constructed in the discursive processes.

6.2.4 Study IV: Being a child in the family. Young children describe themselves and their parents when their parents have attended universal manual-based parenting courses.

So far, only adult perspectives on parent-child relations had been investigated in the project. Study IV involved children whose parents had taken part in courses. The study was designed as a semi open interview study with 11 children whose parents had participated in either Connect or All children in Focus (ABC). Children aged 5 to 9 were selected by subjective and homogenous purposeful sampling, which is relevant when a limited number of people are knowledgeable about or experienced with the topic of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Patton, 2015). The children came from different parts of Sweden, selected in a long process involving course administrators, course leaders, and parents from both courses. Whether the parents had attended Connect or All Children in Focus (ABC) did not influence the structure of the interviews as the children´s answers in the end could not be affiliated with either the Connect course or ABC course. The following analysis was therefore performed without reference to either course. The analysis used an inductive process according to Elo & Kyngäs (2008). Initially a manifest analysis allocated two domains of the children’s experiences. The analysis then followed how the children described their own position and interaction in the family. Meaning units in the texts were coded and grouped
together in four categories of each domain for understanding of the children’s experiences of themselves as persons, their parents’ actions and their perceptions of norms and values when interacting within the family.

6.3 Ethical considerations

Study III and IV involved adults and children, which brought on ethical challenges in all stages of the research process. In Sweden, applications for ethical approval must precede research where human beings are involved. Applications must contain the study design, aim, research questions and expected knowledge contributions and give details of the research procedure including analytical choices. Complementary information must be given about documentation, data protection procedures and handling of archive material; sampling decoding and confidentiality; insurance and economy of concern for the project and the people involved. Moreover procedures for informed consent should be accounted for as well as how the result will be disseminated. Studies III and IV were ethically approved by the Regional Ethical Review Board in Uppsala [Dnr 2015/027; Dnr 2016/028]. No ethical approval was required for studies I and II.

6.3.1 Research with adults (Study III)

Formal ethical approval of a project is just a starting point in research where ethics is embedded within the entire research process (Morrow, 2008). Ethics were thus dealt with as a ‘set of moral principles and rules of conduct’ (Sieber, 1993, p.14) and as ontological and epistemological choices. Study III involved parents who took part in parenting training and other adults connected to the courses: social services officials, course administrators and group leaders. All involved received written information about the purpose of the study, its ethical approval and its procedures. The information was straightforward on order to avoid misunderstanding and undue expectations. It was clearly stated that questions were welcome during the whole process and that everyone was at liberty to leave the project at any time. Oral consent was given by officials, administrators and course leaders and written consent was gained from the parents.
6.3.2 Research with children (Study IV)

Study IV was based on interviews with children aged five to nine whose parents had taken part in universally implemented parenting training courses. Children´s identities in research are not fixed but performed in the study context (Butler, 1990). Nevertheless, adult power towards children is a matter of concern for most researchers and raises several ethical issues that have been critically discussed in the literature (Christensen and James, 2008; Clark & Moss, 2011). The imbalance that exists between researcher and respondents in all research contexts, has distinct and significant aspects concerning children. Children are seen as potentially vulnerable to exploitation in interaction with adults (Lansdown, 1994). Moreover, adults can have different epistemological standpoints in child research, as knowers or as advocates of children´s right to have their say, in respect of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989). The latter position would entail a moral, ethical and political responsibility for giving strength to children´s voices (Mazzoni & Harcourt, 2013). Where children are concerned an adult perspective is to some extent inevitable. During the research processes, sampling, methods, and analyses were given ethical consideration to ensure they adhered to the studies’ ontology and epistemology. In the interview situations, to accomplish a secure and permissive encounter attention was paid to choices of environment, body language on the part of the researcher, as well as clothing and ways of addressing the children. Ethical considerations have both short-term and long-term characteristics. As far as possible, care was taken during the entire research process not to modify, misinterpret or corrupt the children´s opinions. In sensitive research with humans, confidentiality is necessary, including removal of all possible personal identification from the material and coding. In both studies, transcribed material was kept within the research group before being securely archived at the university.
7. Findings

7.1. Study I: Discourses of parenting training in two Swedish public investigations 1947 and 2008

The findings of the first study showed how governmental reasoning about parenting and parental needs were described as problems connected to upbringing of children in discourses of trust and doubt. Both in 1947 and 2008, Swedish public investigations prompted society’s concern for parenting with issues of rapid change and societal complexity. At the centre of argumentation was concern about the parents’ abilities as child raisers and about children’s healthy development. In the investigation of 2008, adults assumed a questioned position of trust and doubt which called for strong governing and structured expert guidance. In 1947, when parents seemed to be more relied upon as trusted adults, the investigation merely suggested dissemination of knowledge to keep parents updated.

Problem descriptions in the documents entailed balancing between issues of trust and doubt with strong affiliation to child constructs and views on childhood. In 1947 the investigation reasoned that parents should be helped to foster a “child environment” where children could develop safely in relation to family, friends and society. Inspired by expanding scientific knowledge the investigation proposed to enhance parental knowledge about child development. New theories about child development in the upcoming field of developmental psychology were cited and referred to with interest but some uncertainty. Children were described as subordinated, vulnerable ‘beings’ who would be socialised through cooperative governance. Childhood was regarded as a period of transition in which children’s developmental position in society was defined and supported by adults.

In 2008, with reference to the UNCRC (1989), the investigation suggested that parents should be strengthened in their parental role and learn to act as...
responsible and informed parents. The investigation’s child development discourses were inter-discursively dependent on developmental psychology as a normative matrix for child development and were connected to a deterministic public health paradigm of risk and prevention. A preventive adult approach dominated the content, as parenting was claimed to be a decisive protective factor for child development. Children were thus positioned as both dependent and as exposed to risks related to their future health and welfare. The focus had moved from child health in the current life, which was the case in 1947, towards a perspective of children’s health as future adults in the making.

Conclusively levels of modality in the analysis showed that parents’ comparatively weakened societal position in 2008 made a stronger governmental case for implementation of universal parental training in 2008 than in 1947. Children’s position was subordinate in 1947 and still so in 2008. In a risk-related public health context, preventive measures were more used in 2008 than in the social welfare framework of 1947.

7.2 Study II: Assessment of Two Parenting Training Manuals Used in Swedish Parenting Interventions.

The findings in Study II show that the course manuals of Connect and All Children in Focus (ABC) harmonise with a risk-prevention paradigm in Swedish public health policies as displayed in Study I: A promotive/preventive adult approach to parenting by which parenting is seen as a decisive protective factor for child development. Moreover, both manuals demonstrate a reliance on universal developmentalism but with strategic discrepancies regarding power relations between adults and children. The Connect manual uses a promotive and rights-based approach considering children as autonomous agents in relation to adults in a mutual developmental process. The ABC programme takes on a more preventive-authoritative approach, connected to adult-driven regulation and control, with weaker adherence to child autonomy and children’s rights.

A conclusive analysis of the Connect manual is embodied in the theme "Contemplate yourself and recognise your child", picturing that parents are encouraged to reflect on their own life experiences and behaviour patterns, while acknowledging their children as individuals with their own experiences and ways of expressing values and needs from a developmental perspective. Parents are encouraged to relate to their children based on human
equity, and attempts are made to compare and scrutinise children’s and adult’s different life perspectives.

A conclusive result of the analysis of the ABC programme is embodied in the theme “Damming the brook”, expressing a process of prevention where parents are encouraged to gain self-control, strengthen their leadership, and understand the mechanisms behind their children’s reactions of aggression and non-compliance. The role of the parents is to step back, control anger and impulsive actions and recognise their task of acting as role models. Although parents are inspired to understand their children better, an adult perspective is prominent, as children are universally constructed as dependent objects in the child-parent context.

In relation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child these findings show that parenting strategies, as conveyed by structured manuals, can either hinder or support implementation of children’s rights beyond rhetorical ‘best interests’.

7.3 Study III: Competent parents with natural children: Parent and child identities in manual-based parenting courses in Sweden

Discussions during the courses showed how a discourse of both uncertainty and competence developed back and forth as during sessions. Analysis of course sessions shows that both Connect and All Children in Focus (ABC) parents were governed towards self-improvement, self-regulation and parental control by the aid of evidence-based knowledge and expertise. This self-regulating process of confession was monitored by the leaders who structured the dissemination of the manual contents. In discourse terminology, the observed parenting training courses displayed a discourse order, and a shared space of prefixed adult commitment. Due to high manual fidelity, similarities and differences permeated the sessions of the Connect and ABC courses, as was observed in study II. Normative goal-oriented methods were used in both courses, and adult centred child constructs were accompanied by unidirectional parenting strategies. In general parents were positioned as protagonists in a parenting training discourse, while children were positioned as secondary actors and subordinate others. Still the two courses differ in ethos and thus in how advice and guidelines are displayed. Connect relies on developmental psychology and evolutionary theory and the leaders use expressions associated with human relationships - connection, lifelong attachment, natural conflicts, empathy and slow change. ABC relies more on behavioural
psychology and natural sciences with a linguistic affiliation to positive discipline. Leaders use expressions associated with regulation of human behaviour - show feelings, choose battles, critical situations and natural consequences.
During the Connect sessions, parents’ identity formations moved from being problem-oriented, inflexible, and incapacitated to interpretive, reflective, and mediating. The ABC parent identities moved from being impatient, uncontrolled, and inconsistent to supportive, balanced and leading. The children’s subject positions were upgraded on a positive note rather than altered. In Connect, the child was initially positioned as self-centred, immature and relationally obstructive but developed towards being natural, human and progressive. In ABC, the ambiguous child was attributed as pliable, impulsive and wilful but developed towards being natural, intuitive and manageable.
Conclusively, parental determinism was an intrinsic guiding principle during both courses. Competent parenting and parental control emerged as the goal of the pedagogical quest.

7.4 Study IV: Being a child in the family. Young children describe themselves and their parents when their parents have attended universal manual-based parenting courses.

The children’s experiences, wills and expectations were conveyed as experienced interactions within and outside their family. The domain “Describing oneself as a child in the family” involved two themes as “Defining one’s own space” and “Interacting outside one’s own space”. Within the theme to define one’s own space the categories included Self-protection, as to cherishes one’s own thoughts, withdraw from the adult company and to set limits for the own space. The category Generational positioning included to quarrels with siblings, tolerate them as well as to spend time with friends.
The theme “Interacting outside one’s own space” involved ‘Togetherness’ by taking part in decision making, a will to compromise and a wish to behave in a good way. The children saw themselves as taking a natural position on equal terms in family decisions and reflected on the complexity of interacting “I usually badger a bit but then it blows over and after a while we agree” (Lotta, age 8).
The other category ‘Moving borders’ included being curious and a wish to manage on your own but also to be listened to.
“Parents should listen and let the child speak. It is like this with my dad, he can interrupt me in the middle of a sentence. I get so angry because it has happened so many times. Let me finish!” (Linda, age 9).

The domain “Describing one’s parents in the family” also involved two themes as “Relational shortcomings” and “Learning possibilities”. Within the theme Relational shortcomings the parents were experienced by unbalanced attitudes including that they are stressed, are arguing with the children and with each other. The category with experiences that the parents faltering attentiveness included experiences of them being occupied, turning their backs and seeming not to bother. The theme “Learning possibilities” involved the children’s experiences of their parents as adults with competences, social knowledge and practical skills to teach children. They further experienced their parents’ availability by emotional presence, listening to them and offering security.

7.5 Synthesis of the findings

The power perspective of the thesis directed an understanding of parents’ and children’s position in parenting training. A synthesis of the findings suggested that children’s right to autonomy and participation, as described in the UNCRC (1989) was downplayed by societal distrust in parental competence as well as an adult ambiguity towards children as human agents. Moreover, the synthesis showed that society’s argumentation for risk prevention could hinder the fulfilment of promotive policies for children’s health. Four perspectives on parenting were traced in the findings: public health policies of risk and protection; methodologies of parental control and self-reliance; parental concern for good relations and wellbeing of their children; children’s trust in themselves and in their parents.

A risk based parenting discourse developed in the 21st century public health policies to strengthen adult control over children. Risk reasoning relied on scientific evidence about parenting as a strong determinant for child development, rather than parenting as one of many dimensions of children’s lives. The “strong parent” discourse in parenting training aimed at preventing poor family relations from hindering a healthy child development (Studies I-III).
A comprehensive picture emerged from the findings, of a societal ambivalence towards parental competences, both responsible and uncertain (Study I). Children’s position in parenting, was correspondingly set as both dependent on adults and autonomous (Studies II, III). These findings suggested that a double ambivalence towards parents and children was a strong prerequisite for the preventive methods used in universal parenting training. The findings showed that when implemented on a universal level, parenting was conceptualised in programme manuals and during courses as adult control towards children with skills and methods to make everyday life run more smoothly (Studies II and III). A risk discourse was embedded in the manuals as a parental obligation to control family interaction. Children, who could and would let themselves be controlled were presupposed to develop in a positive direction.

During courses the leaders were involved in an adult community building which served to shape parents into preventive agents for their children’s wellbeing. Children were during courses, generally dealt with as objects of parental care with limited agential space towards adults (Studies II and III). However, parents also constructed a relational community which involved their children. This relational discourse had promotive undertones with no apparent risk reasoning attached. Similarly, the children (Study IV) expressed trust in themselves as qualified active members of the family, and in their parents as providers and protectors with good intentions.

A synthesis of these findings demonstrated that there is a discrepancy between risk-based preventive parenting policies and promotive family where concerned parents and knowledgeable children together promote health and wellbeing. Divergent policies and realities thus suggest that ontological and epistemological choices lead to different routes in universal parenting training (Figure 2). Parenting training intervention which adhere to a risk based preventive policy use a top-down perspective with focus on adult views and adult capacities connected to children’s welfare rights. On the other hand, relational and promotive approaches use a bottom up perspective, which includes children’s own knowledge, connects to children’s liberty rights, and involves children in the process to strengthen parent-child relationships.
Universal parenting training: preventive and promotive approaches

Interventions with parenting training adhere to a risk prevention paradigm

- Parenting is a strong determinant for children’s future health and well-being
- Parenting is explained as parenting styles, skills, practices and strategies

Interventions with parenting training adhere to a health promotion paradigm

- Parenting is one of many components in multi directional health processes
- Parenting is understood through children’s experiences and knowledge

Figure 2. An illustration of how ontological and epistemological choices lead to different routes in universal parenting training.
8. Discussion

The overall aim of this thesis was to investigate power relations and rationalities of governing in universal parenting training, as expressed in two Swedish public investigations, two selected programme manuals, and the course sessions of two programmes, as well as to explore children’s experiences of family life. The findings demonstrated an ambiguous societal governing of children, which permeated the investigated parenting training interventions. Ambiguity was expressed by trusting and not trusting parents, and by positioning children as both vulnerable and challenging. A predominantly adult perspective was present throughout the parenting training process. Adult norms were expressed by the state’s governance of parents and children, proclaimed as adult governmental tools to handle parent-child relational problems in programme manuals, and formulated as shortcomings in parent-child relationships during course sessions. The children’s experiences in the study of being in the family provided an important piece of the relational picture of parent-child interaction. The children’s narratives contained both compliance and resistance to adult norms and regulations.

Four aspects of the findings are discussed: rationalities of governing, regulations and cooperation, adult governing of children and children’s rights. The discussion of the findings ends with a perspective on risk prevention and health promotion in a universal parenting training context.

8.1.1 Rationalities of governing

Governmental parenting discourses in 1947 and 2008 were explored in the first study. The aim was to understand how the prerequisites for society’s long-term interest in parenting had changed focus during Sweden’s transition from a traditional welfare state towards a neo liberal risk society (Ryner, 1999). A range of scholars contributed with revealing analyses of how the state controls its citizens and how adult-child relations play an important part.
in society´s continuity and stability. In the 21st century the state has developed an increasingly interventionist role in childhood (Batty, 2009). Rose and Miller (1992) describe the political rationalities of governing as an “intellectual machinery or apparatus for rendering reality thinkable in such a way that it is amenable to political programming”. Discourses of parenting run parallel with discourses of parenting training. Political views connected to parenting norms and values were influenced by European parenting discourses in times of globalisation during the late 20th century. Moqvist (2003) describes how at the end of the 20th century, international trends to consolidate family life extended the parenting task from child care to prevention of juvenile crime, promotion of mental well-being, and reduction of family breakdown (Moqvist, 2003). The conclusion of the thesis is that a neo liberal rationality which positioned all children as being at risk, made way for universal parenting training interventions in Sweden during the first two decades of the 21st century. In the national strategy for developed parental support (SOU 2008:131) children were positioned as exposed to risks and parents as potential managers of protective skills. Suggestions that all children are potentially at risk appeared in parallel with societal demands for an extended parenting task to secure children´s future (Lee et al., 2010). The findings of the thesis depicted that society perceived that the parenting task was in jeopardy. A faltering reliance on parental responsibility fuelled calls for stronger governing interventions, and ended up as a national strategy. A strong governmental modality for parenting training interventions in 2008 (Study I) confirms findings in another Swedish study, which showed that governing schemes with parenting training connect to a dominant societal discourse of parental insecurity, and a governmental wish to support ideals about responsible, involved, and intense parenthood (Widding, 2015).

8.1.2 Regulation and cooperation

As Foucault has shown, successful governing entails knowledge about those who are being governed as well as cooperation with them. Foucault endeavoured to show how the modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other’s emergence (Foucault, 2003 a; Foucault, 2006). Both the investigations that were explored in the first study validated parents as to their expected performance as adult care givers. A 1947 image of a basically trusted parent was transformed into a not quite so stable and responsible parent in 2008. The latter parent was positioned as uncertain and
in need of support while society was seen as a disseminator of objective expert knowledge. Parenting training could thus with reasonable certainty be realised as a public health-based governmental project. To strengthen parents in their parental role became a purpose in risk-related parenting discourse in the years to come (SOU 2008:131, p 24; Rsk 2013/14:87). As Furedi (2008) suggests, parenting was deemed as far too important and difficult to be left up to parents. Studies II and III dealt with the Connect and ABC programmes. The findings from the analysis of the manuals revealed how strategies of attachment and control were intended to strengthen parental skills. The third study explored how these strategies were deliberated upon by leaders when they handled and conquered parental uncertainty. Self-regulation as a key to the concept of governmentality in contemporary neoliberalism showed that social control operated through the cooperation of individuals who deliberately regulated themselves in the best interests of the governing society (Lupton, 1999; Ayo, 2011). Moreover, Foucault was interested in the ways in which humans come to engage in self-constituting practices; in other words, how individuals are made into particular types of subjects (Markula & Pringle, 2006). The findings of the second and third studies showed how practices of child management were used to regain parental confidence and control, e.g. to construct a new parent in cooperation between leaders and parents. Arguably, cooperation that builds on trust between leaders and parents as well as parents’ trust in the state as a knowledge holder, is a prerequisite for universal parenting training.

8.1.3 Adult governing of children

The findings showed that societal uncertainty in parental capability and ambiguity towards children was partly embraced by parents during courses (Studies II and III). Such a generally unstable attitude towards parenting as a capability has been suggested by Widding (2015). Lee (2005) writes that a destabilisation of adulthood could have an impact on how authority is distributed between age groups (Lee, 2005, p.19). Parents’ authoritative uncertainty thus correlates with an adult view on child participation. A feeling of threat to parental control and a wish to stabilise adulthood could moderate child autonomy and agency. Consequentially, attempts to strengthen parental authority by enhancing self-reliance were made during the courses (Studies
II and III). As Pain (2006) reasons, interventions with parenting training dis-
seminate adult strategies to regulate the boundaries of the common space
shared by children and parents in daily life (Pain, 2006).
Foucault claimed that a sovereign discipline controlled family life by family
bonds and heritage rules (Taylor, 2012). In today´s governing of children,
sovereign discipline seems overruled by disciplinary power.
The suggestion in this thesis is that a shift from sovereign to disciplinary
power could jeopardise the implementation of children´s rights in public pol-
ices. A reclamation of adult control in terms of strong and confident
parenthood (SOU 2008:131) can backfire on children as social actors and on
children´s participatory rights.

8.1.4 Children´s welfare and liberty rights in parenting training

The interviews with children (Study IV) were informed by a constructionist
understanding of children as agents within the family, acknowledging chil-
dren´s desire and capacity to be active participants in valuable relationships
(Mullin, 2011). The findings depicted how the children balanced their own
integrity and ability with respect for the parental care and adult competence.
Through the interviews ran a strong wish to be listened to and to be taken se-
riously by the adults. The children offered their cooperation with the parents.
At the same time, the children demonstrated a trust in their parents´ will and
ability to meet their expectations.
However, the findings showed that the programme manuals and courses of
Connect and ABC did not deal explicitly with children´s rights (Studies II
and III). These findings confirm Widding´s & Olssons´s interviews, which
found that the course leaders were aware of the intentions of the UNCRC
(1989), but did not discuss children´s rights during the courses (Widding &
Olsson, 2014). A conclusion of this thesis from the studies (Studies II, III
and IV) was that neither children´s own perspectives on parent-child rela-
tions nor the children´s participatory expectations were met in the parenting
training interventions. One explanation for this is that children´s welfare
rights and liberty rights had different standings in parenting training inter-
ventions. Welfare rights, e.g. health and well-being (UNCRC, 1989, Art 3.1)
were embedded in interventions, in adherence to a public health perspective
on children´s health and welfare. (SOU 2008:131). On the other hand, chil-
dren´s liberty rights, e.g. rights to participation (UNCRC, 1989, Art 12) were
limited by an adult position of strength which, despite parental uncertainty,
was implicit, invisible and fundamental (Sundhall, 2017). According to Gallagher (2008) children’s participatory rights are traditionally analysed from three broad perspectives: the balance of decision-making between children and adults (Hart, 1992; Treseder, 1997), the impact of participation (Kirby & Bryson, 2002; Lansdown, 2005) and processes involved, such as consultation, self-advocacy and representative versus participative influence (Lansdown, 2005; Cockburn, 2005; Cairns, 2006). A conceptualisation of children’s liberty rights in parenting training could thus be a way forward. Children’s engagement can be dealt with as a circulation of power, rather than an adult/child division or an adult end point (Foucault 1978, Baker, 1998, Tisdall & Davis, 2004, 2010). Saying this, Baker’s writing about children’s participation in education applies to a parenting context, where adults become aware of “the positioning of ourselves and move out of wrong-headedness about change and progress into a new space that seeks change by not prescribing it” (Baker, 1998 p.174).

Leaving room for children puts demands on adults to offer children space by changing the prerequisites for participation. As Wall (2008) and Murris (2013) argue, children’s participatory rights can be discussed as a human rights discourse, and hindered by a conceptualisation of liberty rights as a means for human development (Wall, 2008; Murris, 2013).

### 8.1.5 Top down and bottom up interventions

When the Swedish National strategy for developed parental support was initiated in 2008 the government called for a common theoretical knowledge base embracing risk, and protective factors and effective interventions. The investigation was assigned to “discover, prevent and help children with or at risk to develop mental illness.” (SOU 2008:131, p, 22). Around the same time Lee et al. wrote that it is hard to overestimate how far the concept ‘at risk’ has expanded when applied to the area of social life (Lee et al. 2010). In social policies children are constructed to motivate interventions both as causes of problems and targets of solution (Burman, 1997). Study I in this thesis showed that in 2008 children still were positioned in parenting training as dependent on adults from a top-down perspective. Children are consequently turned into bearers of future social and moral risks (Furedi, 2008; Cottam & Espie, 2014). Studies II and III confirmed that children’s dependence is represented by risk preventive measures of conflict reduction, and by
execution of parental control in terms of strong and confident parenthood from a top-down perspective.
Antonovski (1996) has suggested that without adequate theoretical guidance from a theory or model that is consistent with principles of health promotion, the field is at risk of stagnation. His comment highlights the importance of theoretical underpinnings in universal parenting training interventions. An epistemological and ontological revision of parenting training programmes using a top-down bottom-up framework could be a way forward. As Baum writes, epistemology can be confused with methodology in public health, but in reality it helps to untangle different theoretical strands (Baum, 1995).

8.2 Methodological discussion

8.2.1 Validating qualitative research

There are alternative ways to validate qualitative research which are applicable to the four studies of the thesis. In qualitative research, opinions differ on how to handle evaluation. Sometimes alternative terms such as trustworthiness, authenticity, dependability or credibility are used (Jørgensen & Phillips 2009). However, what all forms of qualitative analysis have in common is that they should include quality control in all phases (Hallberg, 2002). As an example, Larsson (2005) discusses three aspects of quality control for qualitative research: overall presentation, results, and discursive quality. The overall presentation includes reflexivity of the researchers’ pre-understanding, the theoretical stance and of the researcher’s own role in the research process. In addition to reflexivity, internal logic exists as regards the aim, research questions, references and results, leaving no questions unanswered and no answers without previous questions. Finally, ethical considerations must be included for overall quality of the study. In the following, four aspects of the findings will be discussed: pre-understanding, trustworthiness and credibility, quality and consistency, strengths and limitations.

8.2.2 Pre-understanding and trustworthiness

Public investigations and programme manuals (Studies 1 and II) differ from material derived from observations or interviews (Studies III and IV). Investigations and manuals have a purpose; they convey a message that contains
the sender’s analysis of the message’s meaning. For studies I and II special care was taken to manage pre-understanding, remain neutral, and to reflect with openness on previous research in the field. The analysis aimed for a consistent, conscientious and transparent presentation of the analytical process. The texts that were used as material for the analytical process were therefore supported by quotations that confirmed the accuracy of the study (Bergström & Boreus, 2012). That said, any study which is interpretative by its nature, should be ontologically and epistemologically motivated and chosen tools should be described with care so other researchers can make new readings of the material. These matters were closely considered in studies I and III.

When the observation and interview studies were performed (Studies III and IV) the imbalance between researcher and respondents (parents taking part in the courses and interviewed children) was acknowledged as possibly compromising the research credibility. Power-related considerations were especially considered for the child interviews (Morrow, 2008). Children’s opinions and thoughts were acknowledged as dependent on the conceptualising of the relationship between the children and the adult researchers (Mazzoni & Harcourt, 2013). Therefore, matters of credibility and dependability are the responsibility of the researcher, whose pre-conditioned limitation as an adult in a power position could jeopardise the trustworthiness of the outcome.

8.2.3 Consistency

Consistency was regarded during the research processes as a supreme quality criterion ensured by “disciplined investigation”. This meant that all parts of the four studies were intended to have enough quality to survive hard scrutiny and peer review (Larsson, 2005). Choices of ontological standpoint had an impact on methods and, accordingly, on analytical outcome and were thoroughly reflected upon during the research process.

8.2.4 Strengths and limitations

Structure and richness is important in all social science research. A researcher should carefully avoid conveying just “common-sense” knowledge (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 1999). Thus, the findings were valued and regarded
in the light of previous research to circumvent reiteration and triviality. Study II focused on children’s rights to protection and participation while analysing the material from a parenting perspective. This was regarded as a strength, as the results contributed new knowledge about the content of parenting training in the light of children’s rights. However, the material was limited to two universal programme manuals and more studies are needed in order to understand how and to what extent parenting training adheres to the intentions of the UNCRC (1989).

Study III used observed material, which raised specific methodological issues. Material was collected by passive audiotaped observation of discussions. Methodologically this approach could be criticised from a reliability point of view. A participatory observation approach might provide material which is interpreted by the researchers rather than being close to the subject’s own experiences. On the other hand, passive observation without interference during collection can be regarded as a strength. Observations of other groups under different conditions and at other times could offer variations of content for analysis. Moreover, the researchers’ pre-understanding and analytical limitations are decisive for the interpretation of the findings. Study IV was designed as an interview study, which by its nature put restrictions on the respondents’ participation. Use of a non-participatory method could be regarded as a structural epistemic injustice to the children (Murris, 2013). Children’s voices are rarely brought into parenting training research. Even so, as in the case of study III, the material was limited and further research is needed.

All things concerning children in society are defined by adults, inevitably affecting the positioning of children as well as adults in the political discourse order (Foucault, 1984; Lewis, 1998). When conducting critical research it should be the task of any researcher to reflect on the normative prerequisites of the work. Any adult thinking about children and childhood, including research into children and childhood, is done from a position of power (Furedi, 2008) Therefore, researchers are, as Walkerdine (1989) claims, obliged to contest ways of seeing that ignore the impact of patriarchal norms on children (Walkerdine, 1989). Foucault (1989) suggests the “deliberate practice of liberty resists the uneven power by discourses of developmentalism as regimes of truth” (Mac Naughton, 2005).

To show how adult norms are reflected in parenting training and how given truths about parent-child relationships can be contested is a hard task because as an adult, parent and grandparent, I was myself part of the normative structure in which children are limited on a daily basis. As a researcher I
have been part of the discourses that I have investigated, sometimes trapped by presumptions about children and guided by the context of my own social world. I have thus made assumptions in my studies that can be contested, and I have presented interpretations of reality which represent my own understanding in a given moment with temporal limitations. Unlike objective research and generalisation of findings the material presented in this thesis can be organised and analysed differently, depending on the purpose of the study, material selection, and research questions. On a positive note the usefulness of a critical perspective lies in seeking other interpretations of reality and in the openness to disparate understandings of taken-for-granted assumptions, as an adult and as a researcher. It is through meaning-making that we assign meaning to children, parents, and parenting.

The work on this thesis has both been a personal project and a joint process with experienced researchers. The initiative, the research question, study designs and material collection were the responsibility of the author, which has been both a strength and a limitation. The analyses have been made in close cooperation with more experienced researchers, whose input and support in theoretical and methodological issues have been very important. Universally implemented parenting training has been critically analysed in this thesis. It has shown how assumptions about parent-child relationships have permeated parenting training interventions.

*A critique does not consist of saying that things aren't good the way they are. It consists of seeing on what type of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established and unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based ... To conduct criticism is to make harder those acts which are now too easy.*

*Michel Foucault*
9. Epilogue and future research

All things concerning children in society are defined by adults, inevitably affecting the positioning of children as well as adults in the political discourse order (Foucault, 1984; Lewis, 1998). The first study, which explored two public investigations from 1947 and 2008, displayed that the word childhood was not used at all in either document, childhood was euphemistically spoken of as early years (1947) or growth (2008). A political reluctance to label the first years of human life as belonging to the children, with their own secrets, opinions and claims, could reflect an adult anxiety to lose power. Rose withholds that childhood is the most strongly governed sector of personal existence (Rose, 1999). Children are, as Derrida (1976) argued, socially constructed and sometimes repressed and silenced as “others” in relation to adults. Children are often treated as not yet rational, as adults in the making (Verhellen, 2000; Lee, 2001; Roose & Bouverne-de Bie, 2007; Gadda, 2008).

In this thesis, stabilization of an ambiguous adulthood has stood out as the main task for parenting training. As Lee suggests, destabilisation of adulthood has an impact on how authority is distributed between age groups (Lee, 2005). Thus, parenting training is used, not only to stabilize society through children but also as a means to re-stabilize adulthood rather than enhancing child autonomy and agency. Rather than acknowledging children as social actors parenting discourses reclaim adult control in terms of a strong and confident parenthood (SOU 2008:131). Jupp and Gallagher (2013) write that pragmatically, parenting, as a set of skills, is a form of ‘early intervention’ in the lives of children. Going even further, adult technologies to execute power over children in a parenting training context could, taking an extreme view, be interpreted as a form of adult oppression over children (Le François, 2013). The findings in this thesis have revealed both adult governance and uncertainty towards children and childhood. In the light of the present body of research based on parents’ views further research with children is called for. The children’s voices demonstrated that children are not to be ontologically and epistemologically downplayed (Jones, 2008) As Wall
(2008) writes societies conceived of as webs of otherness will be able to include the full range of bottom-up, top-down, and developmental forms of human rights at once (Wall, 2008).

9.1 Future research

This thesis investigated parenting training from a perspective of governing and normative values. The findings contributed to available research with a power perspective on parent-child relationships and insights in children’s position as meaning-makers and knowledge providers in the family. However, the thesis has no ambition to be all-encompassing in its scope. In the future parenting training research would benefit from an interdisciplinary collaboration between scholars from different scientific fields.

Important questions for future research were raised in the process, suggesting that parent-child relations in a parenting training context need to be further investigated. One possible research area concerns how children and parents regulate their joint family spaces in comparison to the parameters for family life which are outlined in today’s parenting training programs. Research which addresses children’s and parent’s relational knowledge, could contribute to further development of policies for parent and child support. Health promotion as a theoretical base for interventions can be further researched in relation to children’s agency and participatory rights. As an example Christensen (2004) has developed a framework for empirical studies of how a health-promoting family can promote children’s health, well-being and agency. Gender as an aspect of parenting training is of scientific interest, but was not addressed in this thesis. Daly (2013) problematises parenting training interventions from a gender perspective, as not only gender neutral but also gender blind. Values underpinning gender issues in intervention policies as well as in course contents and practices, need yet to be investigated.
10. Acknowledgements

First of all, my warmest thanks to the children and the parents who trusted me to listen to them for purpose of my research. Thank you also to the course organisers and group leaders who arranged these meetings and made this project possible.

I am grateful to the Nuclear School of Public Health (NHV) in Gothenburg, for accepting me as a doctoral student in 2012, and to the Academy of Health, Care and Social Welfare (HVV) at Mälardalen University (MDH), for taking me on in November 2014 when NHV had closed with short notice.

Four supervisors have guided my work during these two periods. Maja Söderbäck, my main supervisor at MDH, who has shared her broad knowledge and experience of research with and about children.
Keeping me on track when needed, and getting me back on track when this was called for.
Ulla Forinder, Professor at the Department of Social Work and Psychology, Faculty of Health and Occupational Studies, University of Gävle, my main supervisor at NHV, who from the very start, supported my choice of topic and encouraged me to follow my intentions and ideas. I was lucky when Ulla decided to accompany me to MDH as a co-supervisor.
Katarina Piuva, Associate Professor at the Department of Social Work, Stockholm University, who with sharp-sightedness has tutored me in discourse analysis towards theoretical and methodological insights.
Eija Viitasara, Associate Professor at Department of Health Science at Mid Sweden University, who supervised my master thesis and volunteered to be my co-supervisor at NHV, always an engaged listener and good adviser.
I also give my thanks to Per Tillgren for advising me on public health matters, and to my other teachers at Mälardalen University, Stockholm University and Karolinska Institutet, whose courses have developed my knowledge and broadened my horizons.
At my final seminar, Ulrika Widding Associate Professor at the Department of Education at Umeå University and Helena Blomberg prepared and inspired me with insightful readings and comments, to finish my work. Häkan Stattin, Professor at the School of Law, Psychology and Social work at Örebro University, became my mentor late in the process, offering me well-grounded answers to my doubts and questions. Häkan trusted me to do a qualitative study about the Connect program for Örebro University in 2011, which was crucial for my decision to carry on with my studies. Lene Povlsen, my teacher at NHV who made everything seem easy by saying: Of course you should write a doctoral dissertation. Everyone should!

Many people have been important to me during these years. All of you, some not named but not forgotten, have helped me through the hard days and joyed in with me during the good ones. What would life be as a doctoral student, without colleagues and friends? My warm thanks to Zlatana Knezevic for hours and hours of good discussions, laughs and shared interests beyond the doctoral student horizon. Warm thanks also to Esa Kumpula whose door opposite the copying machine always was open for a chat or a serious discussion alike; and to Astrid Värnild, Heléne Appelgren Engström and Julia Callegari for many good talks and nice reunions. My roommates over the years, Linda Sellin, Anna Stålberg and Calle Johansson: thanks for being good companions.

The importance of letting ones thoughts fly for a while, moving the limits for things possible, must not be forgotten. For this I thank the entire seminar group of Critical Theory and Methodology (CTM) at HVV, as well as the Discourse Analysis seminars at the Department of Child and Youth Studies at Stockholm University.

Friend and colleagues from other parts of my life have influenced my thesis work in different ways. Going back to my master thesis I thank my dear friend and colleague Lena Bergman, who worked at the Swedish National Institute of Public Health in 2007. I had decided to write my thesis in public health science about the parenting training program Komet, and she said to me: Why don´t you ask the children? And that was that. Warm thanks to Karin Ekermann for being a good friend and dedicated project leader at Studiefrämjandet. Karin, and all the good people who are part of the non-formal education project Älskade Barn (Beloved child) have been a great inspiration to me, and helped me to keep my focus on children in parenting
training. Thank you also to my longtime friends Kerstin Diamant and Tia Hammmarbäck who have read and spell checked my writing; and to Annika Nordin, my wise journalist friend who keeps a healthy, critical and reflective eye on the world.

My eternal love to my daughter Vicenta and my grandchildren Alex and Dorian. Thanks for just being there. And finally, thanks to my beloved dogs for their infinite good humor, and for dragging me from my computer to run around with you in the woods, throwing balls and sticks on a daily basis.
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12. Appendix
Forskningsstudie om barns rätt till skydd och delaktighet som värdegrund i föräldrastödskurser.

Jag heter Hetty Rooth och är doktorand inom akademin för hälsa, vård och välfärd, HVV, vid Mälardalens högskola i Västerås. Mitt avhandlingsområde är föräldrastödsprogram in relation till FN:s Barnrättskonvention om barns rätt till skydd och delaktighet.

Under våren planerar jag att genomföra en studie där jag följer två föräldrastödskurser inom ABC och Connect-programmen. Det finns få studier av föräldrakurser som undersöker hur vuxna ser på relationen mellan barn och föräldrar med utgångspunkt från barns rätt till skydd och delaktighet i familjen. Jag hoppas att denna studie ska kunna bidra till utvecklingen av föräldrautbildningar i Sverige.


För att kunna genomföra studien behöver jag samtycke från dig som gruppledare och individuella samtycken från samtliga deltagare i kursen. Bifogat finns informationsbrev till föräldrar samt blankett om medgivande för dig och för vårdnadshavare. Om du samtycker till att delta i studien ber jag dig att skriva under den medföljande blanketten och skicka tillbaka till mig i det bifogade svarskuvertet.

Har du frågor är min mailadress är x,x@x
Telefonnummer: xxx- xxx xx xx

Du kan även kontakta min handledare Maja Söderbäck, docent vid Akademin för hälsa vård och välfärd, HVV, Mälardalens högskola. Tel: xxx-xx xx xx,x,x@x

Vänliga hälsningar

Hetty Rooth
Study information for parents, Study III

Forskningsstudie om barns rätt till skydd och delaktighet som värdegrund i föräldrastödskurser.

Jag heter Hetty Rooth och är doktorand inom akademin för hälsa, vård och välfärd, HVV, vid Mälardalens Högskola i Västerås. Mitt avhandlingsområde är föräldrastödsprogram i relation till FN:s Barnrättskonvention om barns rätt till skydd och delaktighet.


Jag har bett kursledarna om tillstånd att delta i kurserna som observatör, under våren. Det ska gå till så att jag sitter med under träffarna och lyssnar på hur ledare och föräldrar tänker kring relationer mellan föräldrar och barn, om barnens utveckling och barns rättigheter. Jag kommer att använda bandspe- lare, men inte delta i samtalen.

Självklart deltar föräldrar/vårdnadshavare och gruppledare helt konfidentialt. Inga personliga uppgifter kommer att lämnas ut, alla namn tas bort och allt som sägs behandlas konfidentiellt.

Om du samtycker till att delta i studien ber jag dig att skriva under den medföljande blanketten.

Har du frågor är min mailadress är x,x@x
Telefonnummer: xxx-xxx xx xx

Du kan även kontakta min handledare Maja Söderbäck, docent vid Akademin för hälsa vård och välfärd, HVV, Mälardalens högskola. Tel: xxx-xx xx xx,x,x@x

Vänliga hälsningar

Hetty Rooth
Informed consent for parents, Study III

Forskningsstudie om barns rätt till skydd och delaktighet som värdegrund i föräldrastödskurser.

Namn:............................................................................................................................

Jag har informerats om studien. Jag har fått möjlighet att ställa frågor och jag har fått dem besvarade.

Jag är medveten om att det är frivilligt att delta i studien och att det när som helst går att avbryta deltagandet utan förklaring.

Jag samtycker till att delta i studien och att mina personuppgifter behandlas med sekretess så som det beskrivs i informationen om studien.

Jag är medveten om att resultatet behandlas med sekretess och att enskilda personers svar inte kommer att kunna spåras.

☐ Kryssa JA för godkännande av att delta i studien
   Jag samtycker till att medverka i studien

Underskrift.............................................................................................................

Namnförtydligande .................................................................................................

Ort och datum .......................................................................................................

Telefon ....................................................................................................................

E post.....................................................................................................................
Study information for course leaders, Study IV

Samtal med barn vars föräldrar deltagit i Alla Barn i Centrum (ABC) eller Connect. Forskningsstudie om värdegrunden i föräldrastödskurser.

Jag heter Hetty Rooth och är doktorand inom akademin för hälsa, vård och välfärd, HVV, vid Mälardalens Högskola i Västerås. Mitt avhandlingsområde är föräldrastödsprogram i relation till FN:s Barnrättskonvention om barns rätt till skydd och delaktighet.


För studien behöver jag kontakt föräldrar som nyligen avslutat kurserna och som kan tänka sig att barnen deltar konfidentiellt i undersökningen. Helst bör föräldrarna inte ha avslutat kursen tidigast under våren 2016. Efter inledande kontakt med dig, som kursledare, får de föräldrar som kan tänka sig att deras barn deltar i studien, ett informationsbrev och en samtyckesblankett. Om föräldrarna sedan samtycker får deras barn ett eget brev och en egen samtycksblankett där de kan tacka ja eller nej till medverkan.


Har du frågor är min mailadress är x,x@x
Telefonnummer: xxx- xxx xx xx

Du kan även kontakta min handledare Maja Söderbäck, docent vid Akademin för hälsa vård och välfärd, HVV, Mälardalens högskola. Tel: xxx-xx xx xx,x,x@x

Vänliga hälsningar

Hetty Rooth
Study information for parents, Study IV

Samtal med barn vars föräldrar deltagit i Alla Barn i Centrum (ABC) eller Connect. Forskningsstudie om värdegrunden i föräldrastödskurser

Jag heter Hetty Rooth och är doktorand i folkhälsovetenskap inom Akademien för hälsa och vård och välfärd, HVV, vid Mälardalens Högskola i Västerås. Mitt avhandlingsprojekt handlar om innehållet i föräldrastödskurser. Jag utgår från FN:s Barnrättskonvention om barns bästa och deras rätt att bli lyssnade på.

Som en del av forskningsprojektet har jag tidigare gjort en studie om vad föräldrar och ledare pratar om under föräldrastödskurser. Under vintern 2017 kommer jag att avsluta projektet med att samtala med barn om hur de tycker och tänker om relationen mellan barn och föräldrar. Det finns få studier gjorda, där barn kommer till tals i samband med föräldrastödskurser. Jag hoppas därför att min studie ska kunna bidra med kunskap om barns egna åsikter.


Om du/ni säger ja till att ert barn deltar i studien, ska ert barn också ge sitt samtycke på en egen lapp med ja eller nej. Barnens namn tas bort i materialet och ingen obehörig kommer att få ta del av barnens svar. Barnen är också helt fria att avsluta medverkan när som helst om de vill.

Om du/ni samtycker, ber jag dig/er kontakta mig på mail eller telefon. Naturaligtvis går det också bra att maila eller ringa om du/ni har några frågor. Med det här brevet följer en samtyckesblankett som ska skrivas under och som jag samlar in när vi träffas. Har du frågor är min mailadress är x,x@x Telefonnummer: xxx- xxx xx xx

Du kan även kontakta min handledare Maja Söderbäck, docent vid Akademien för hälsa vård och välfärd, HVV, Mälardalens högskola. Tel: xxx-xx xx xx,x,x@x

Vänliga hälsningar

Hetty Rooth
Informed consent for parents, Study IV

Samtal med barn vars föräldrar deltagit i Alla Barn i Centrum (ABC) eller Connect. Forskningsstudie om värdegrunden i föräldrastödskurser

Namn:..........................................................................................................

Jag har informerats om studien. Jag har fått möjlighet att ställa frågor och jag har fått dem besvarade.

Jag är medveten om att det är frivilligt för barnen att delta i studien och att mitt barn när som helst kan avbryta deltagandet utan förklaring.

Jag samtycker till att mitt barn deltar i studien och att mitt barns personuppgifter behandlas med sekretess så som det beskrivs i informationen om studien.

Jag är medveten om att resultatet behandlas med sekretess och att enskilda personers svar inte kommer att kunna spåras.

☐ Kryssa JA för godkännande av att delta i studien
  Jag samtycker till att medverka i studien

Underskrift.................................................................

Namnförtydligande ...........................................................

Ort och datum ..............................................................

Telefon ...........................................................................

E post ............................................................................
Study information for children, Study IV

Samtal med barn vars föräldrar deltagit i Alla Barn i Centrum (ABC) eller Connect. Forskningsstudie om värdegrunden i föräldrastödskurser.


VEM ÄR JAG?

VAD HANDLAR DET OM?
Projektet handlar om vad barn tycker om att föräldrarna går på kurs. Vet barnen vad kursen handlade om? Märker barnen vad föräldrarna har lärt sig? Tycker barnen att det är någon skillnad hemma?

VARFÖR VILL JAG FRÅGA BARN?
Jag tycker att det är viktigt att du och andra barn berättar vad ni tycker om att föräldrar går på kurs.

VAD HÄNDER OM DU VILL VARA MED?

MÅSTE DU SVARA PÅ FRÅGORNA?

VAD GÖR JAG MED DINA SVAR?
VEM KOMMER VETA ATT JUST DU HAR SVARAT PÅ FRÅGorna?

KAN DU ÅNGRA DIG OCH TACKA NEJ?
Även om du säger ja så kan du alltid ångra dig. Vill du inte längre vara med säger du bara till mig.

Om du har några frågor kan du ringa mig på telefonnummer: xxx- xxx xx xx

Tack

Hetty