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The meaning and making of childhood in the era of globalization: Challenges for social work

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Abstract

Little attention has been paid in social work literature to the ways in which forces of globalization are shaping understandings of childhood, policies affecting children and youth, and the everyday lives of young people. The authors argue that this lack of attention is problematic given the growing evidence of the effects of globalization on the experiences of children and youth and the implications for social work practice with young people in the U.S. The authors explore the relationship between childhood and globalization, paying particular attention to the social construction of childhood and the logic and practices of neoliberalism. Five distinct yet interrelated processes through which globalizing forces affect children's lives are put forth and addressed: marketization, marginalization, medicalization, militarization, and mobilization. The authors argue that these processes shape not only the experiences of children and youth but also social

work policies and practices. They offer diverse examples of ways in which these forces play out and consider the implications for contemporary social work practice.



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Keywords

Childhood; Globalization; Neoliberalism; Marketization; Marginalization; Medicalization; Militarization

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