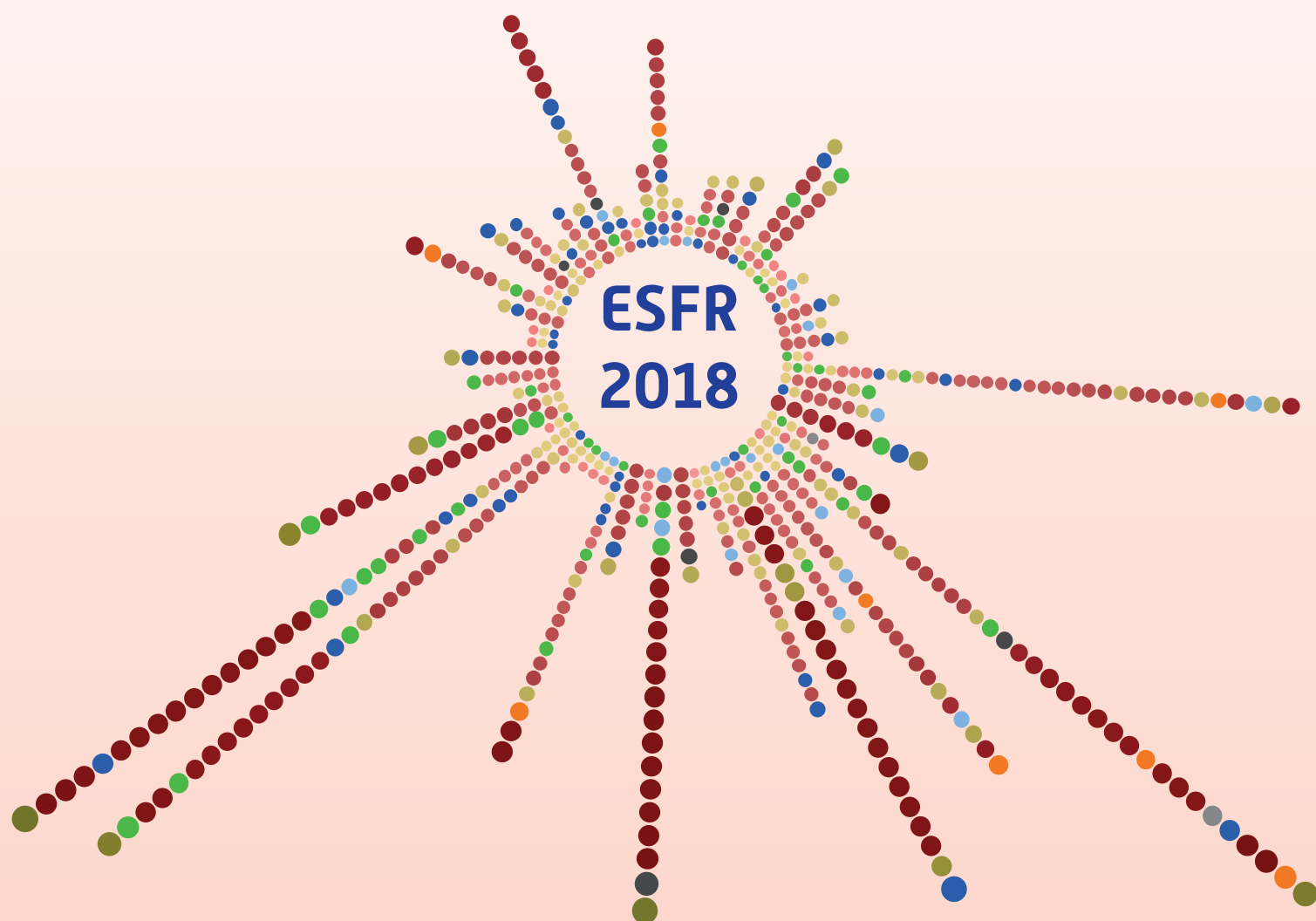


9th Congress of the European Society on Family Relations

Families through the lens of diversity



Book of Abstracts



www.fpce.up.pt/esfr2018

- **Raising a child with disabilities: Mothers' self-forgiveness and well-being**

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Disabilities have been proved to negatively affect not only the diagnosed child, but also the family as a whole. Parents' daily strive to cope with child's disabilities generate negative feelings like frustration, impotence, and intolerance, as well as lower overall psychological well-being (Cramm & Nieboer, 2011; Ha et al., 2008). Literature underlines that mothers are especially exposed to emotional overload and distress deriving from the strains and perceived failures in providing assistance to their disabled child (Lee, 2013). Maternal well-being is particularly important because of its relations with unfavourable parenting practices, poor school performance, and child health problems (Yamaoka et al., 2016). A growing evidence indicates that forgiving oneself for misconducts or mistakes, for which a person feels responsible, helps to reduce their negative effects upon personal and relational well-being (Pelucchi et al., 2017; Whol et al, 2008). However only scant evidence is available on the protective function of self-forgiveness among primary caregivers of disabled persons. The present research intends to address this shortcoming by investigating self-forgiveness among mothers (n=93) having a child with learning disabilities and providing data via questionnaire. Mothers' self-forgiveness for perceived mistakes done in dealing with their child's disabilities was expected to be related to their psychological well-being and parenting behaviors both directly and indirectly, through the mediation of the distress and skillfulness experienced while providing learning assistance to the child. Results will be discussed in terms of the need to consider self-forgiveness when planning interventions for increasing well-being among disabled children's caregivers.

- **Family professionals' views on post-divorce coparenting**

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Divorce ends the romantic relationship between spouses, but not parenting. A major challenge after divorce is how to continue parenting in the child's best interest. Post-divorce coparenting involves parental decisions on such issues as the child's education, health care and social activities. At its best, coparenting is "an enterprise undertaken by two or more adults working together to raise a child for whom they share responsibility" (Hock & Mooradian 2013). It has been shown that parenting after divorce is neither easy nor self-evident, and may require external help and guidance. Coparenting interventions have, e.g., increased father involvement, enhanced coparenting quality and reduced parental conflict and parent-child relationship distress. Despite many intervention studies, knowledge on post-divorce coparenting from family professionals' perspectives remains limited. We address this research gap by focusing on the questions: How do family professionals construct post-divorce coparenting, and what ideals underlie their work with divorced parents? The preliminary findings are based on nine thematic group discussions with 34 family professionals conducted in 2017. Respondents were participants in a "Parenthood after divorce" training program organized by the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters, one of the largest national child welfare NGOs in Finland. The study is constructionist in orientation and utilizes qualitative content and discursive analyses. Preliminary results suggest that coparenting is mainly conceptualized in the context of the nuclear family. Furthermore, the discourse of "the best interests of the child" occupied a prominent place in the group discussions.

- **Motherhood: Maternal instinct in women perspectives through life span**

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The assumption of maternal natural instinct has become a firm belief in our European societies. It means, the inherent and natural attribute of women - and eventually mothers -