Under the auspices of the Austrian Commission for UNESCO

the

ACPC Austrian Center of Philosophy with Children

organizes the

International Conference

"Childhood and Democracy"

New Philosophical Challenges

October 20 - 23, 2011 in Graz/Austria

Ann Margaret Sharp und Matthew Lipman - In Memoriam

We live in an era where changes are constantly taking place at an accelerated pace and globalisation is in full flow. Our world has become smaller and intercultural contact is omnipresent. There is no doubt that the so-called modern societies are currently undergoing a process of enormous upheaval. This is reflected in particular in both social and ethical points of view.

This leads to numerous questions, such as those for the possibilities of understanding, judging and criticizing one's own and other cultures, but also those for living conditions, equity, political socialization and the validity of beliefs, standards and practices.

Democracy is about shaping the conditions of life in an active way, taking into account human rights, social justice and, last but not least, the democratisation of all aspects of life. A precondition of democracy as a way of living is to be able to act and participate in a democratic way.

At which stage of childhood should ethical systems with democratic principles be applied, in order to enhance the autonomous development of children within the framework of our 'knowledge' society?

Over the last few decades, Philosophy for Children has laid significant foundations for instigating the philosophical-educational process at a very early age. As part of this process, children are encouraged to become independent personalities as well as to be able to solve problems and be self-critical, not to mention being able to deal with conflicts and develop empathy and a differentiated perception.

In this context, philosophy is faced with a number of global challenges. This year's conference focuses on two main issues:

- When should democratic principles be applied to foster the autonomous development of children in an optimal way? How do children and young people learn to live in a democracy?

- Which models can be selected in order to develop a certain level of independence in childhood by combining ethical systems with fundamental democratic concepts? How can we help to promote the ability to reflect, increase the ability to rationalise and improve both the individual and collective level of independence, in combination with democracy?

This conference will contribute to a repositioning and improvement in the quality of the current curricular models. Innovative philosophical approaches to childhood are included and investigated. Internationally renowned experts from various disciplines and fields will present an overview of the currents state of research regarding the subject of this year's conference. The aim of the conference is to motivate and encourage exciting debates on the fundamental principles based on the various project presentations. It also aims to encourage scientific discussion and personal exchange.

Approximately 200 participants from 18 countries, including 24 speakers, will be provided with an excellent programme that will make this conference both fascinating and eventful.

The themes of the conference cover the following fields:

- Understanding and comprehension of democracy
- Intercultural dialogue
- New Media – new forms of democracy
- Global awareness
- Community of Inquiry
- Philosophy of Human Rights
- Development of democratic teaching
- Democracy as a way of life

Information hotline:	ACPC Austrian Centre of Philosophy with Children, Phone: +43 (0) 316 903 70 201 Mobile: +43 650 830 3019
Place:	Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Meerscheinschlössl, Mozartgasse 3, A-8010 Graz
Conference fee:	€ 50.- (students and members € 30.-)
Organisation:	ACPC, Austrian Centre of Philosophy for Children Schmiedgasse 12, 8010 Graz/Austria email: kinderphilosophie@aon.at Phone: +43 (0) 316 / 903 70 201
Conference languages:	English and German