



GÖTEBORGS  
UNIVERSITET

INSTITUTIONEN FÖR SOCIALT ARBETE

## Barns röster om växelvis boende:

*Vardagsliv, familjepraktiker och nära relationer*

ISBN 978-91-88267-11-5

av

Rakel Berman

---

Akademisk avhandling

som med tillstånd av samhällsvetenskapliga fakulteten vid Göteborgs universitet för  
avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen framläggs till offentlig granskning  
fredagen den 18 oktober 2019, kl. 09:15 i hörsal Sappören, Sprängkullsgatan 25,  
Göteborg.

Fakultetsopponent är docent Malin Bergström, Karolinska Institutet

# ABSTRACT

**Title:** Children's perspectives on dual residence: Everyday life, family practices and personal relationships  
**Author:** Rakel Berman  
**Key words:** dual residence, shared residence, alternating residence, joint physical custody, shared parenting, children, separation, divorce, family practices, everyday mobility, emotion, children's influence  
**ISBN:** 978-91-88267-11-5  
**ISSN:** 1401-5781  
**Internet:** <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/61729>

Over the past decades, the ways in which children's care is arranged after parental separation have changed significantly in many societies. Dual residence, where children live across two households spending equal amounts of time with each parent, is particularly common in Sweden. Despite the dramatic increase in dual residence in Sweden, knowledge from children's point of view is limited. This thesis aims, through children's perspectives, to provide knowledge about everyday life when lived across two households, with a special focus on family practices, influence and personal relationships. The thesis draws on qualitative interviews with children and teenagers, whose stories, descriptions and reflections have been analysed using thematic analysis. Both theoretically and methodologically, the basis of this thesis is the sociology of childhood, in which the active and reflective roles of children are accentuated. This perspective guides the analysis, highlighting the ways in which children participate in, and influence, decisions regarding how their dual-residence arrangements are put into practice. Family life is understood as a process of doing, and the concept of family practices is adopted to shed light on the particular practices that constitute everyday life for children in dual residence arrangements. The thesis includes four articles, each of which illuminates a separate theme. Article I, II and III are empirical articles highlighting different aspects of everyday life in the context of dual residence, and the fourth article is a literature review. Article I focuses on dual residence as a mobility practice, emphasizing the practical, emotional and relational transitions involved when children live in and move between two homes. Participants' reflections about relationships with parents are discussed in Article II. Article III focuses on children's influence over their residence arrangements and practices therein. Article IV investigates the meta-data of the research on dual residence (when, where, who, and how) and their purposes and study findings (what). In summary, findings illuminate the nuances and the everyday complexities of living in two homes. Routinely managing practical and emotional transitions requires effort, even if they become an ordinary part of life to which many children become acclimatised. These transitions may also lead children to reflect about family relationships and think more explicitly about what they mean to them. Taken together, the thesis demonstrates that dual residence involves both positive and negative aspects where children's experiences differ and change over time. In the final part of the thesis, key elements that influence children's well-being and the way they feel about practising dual residence are discussed. Children's relationships lie at the centre of dual-residence family life and they play a crucial role in the way dual residence is experienced. By focusing children's perspectives, this thesis sheds light on how dual residence can be understood, it highlights the significance of listening to children and considering their views regarding issues that affect their lives.

- I. Berman, Rakel (2019). Children in motion: Everyday life across two homes. In L. Murray, L. McDonnell, T. Hinton-Smith, N. Ferreira, K. Walsh (Eds.), *Families in motion: Ebbing and flowing through space and time* (pp. 195-213). West Yorkshire: Emerald Publishing.
- II. Berman, Rakel (2015). (Re)doing parent-child relationships in dual residence arrangements: Swedish children's narratives about changing relations post-separation. *Journal of Family Research* 2015(10), 123-140.
- III. Berman, Rakel (2018). Children's influence on dual-residence arrangements: Exploring decision-making practices. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 2018(91), 105-114.
- IV. Berman, Rakel & Daneback, Kristian. Children in dual-residence arrangements: A literature review. (Submitted manuscript).