THE CITY
AT EYE LEVEL
FOR KIDS

Edited by Rosa Danenberg, Vivian Doumpa, Hans Karssenberg

THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS

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Urban95 is the Bernard van Leer Foundation's initiative seeking to make lasting change in the city landscapes and in the opportunities that shape the crucial first five years of children's lives. Urban95 works with urban leaders, planners, designers and managers to ask: 'If you could experience the city from an elevation of 95 cm – the height of a 3 year old – what would you do differently?

Urban95 Challenge is a 2016 global call for innovations to promote well-being for young children (from the prenatal period up to the age of 5) and their families in their places where they live, learn, work and play. 26 cutting-edge ideas were selected, spanning 18 countries across all continents, to receive grants averaging EUR 15,000.

URBAN95

Bernard van Leer FOUNDATION

THE CENTRE FOR THE FUTURE OF PLACES

THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS

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FOREWORD

Maimunah Mohd Sharif (Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director, UN-Habitat)

Children increasingly grow up in urban environments; over half the world's people, including over one billion children, now live in cities and towns. By 2030, an estimated six out of every ten people living in cities will be under the age of 18. Where there is proper urban planning, many of these children enjoy the advantages of urban life: better access to educational, medical and recreational facilities. Where there is not, many children are denied such essentials. Urban planning and design can ensure that children can move safely and freely within their neighbourhoods. It is therefore imperative that we design and build child-friendly and child-responsive cities, co-creating safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces for and with children, especially the most vulnerable.

In principle, what children want in a city is the same as everyone else: safe and clean streets and public spaces; protected sidewalks and bike lanes; access to safe, pleasant and welcoming green and public spaces; clean air to breathe; opportunities for recreation, lingering, wandering and amusement; and a sense of safety and security, both at home and away from home. Designing a public space offers an opportunity to rethink childhood. A child-friendly lens to create a public space can help city leaders, policy makers and urban practitioners envision safe, inclusive and resilient cities and human settlements for all, reinforcing both the right to the city and the right to childhood.

Placing children at the heart of urban planning and design will lead to more lovable, livable, sustainable, safe and inclusive cities for all. We can do this by changing our frame of reference. Let us design streets as places. Imagine a city-wide network of public spaces within walking distance from home. How do we develop social programmes to keep spaces active, fun and inviting for children and families? Can we create multi-use and pluri-functional destinations that people are excited to get to? How can we make walking and cycling attractive and viable options? Children should be our partners and stakeholders in city-making processes. By engaging them in designing and building cities, we can make cities that are better and healthier for our future. We need to make a special effort to reach out to the "under 95 cm" group, the toddlers up to 3 years of age, as referred to by the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development set out goals for "ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages" (SDG 3) as well as "making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (SDG 11). Specifically, it calls for the provision of universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces by 2030, placing public space at the heart of sustainable development. In the spirit of the New Urban Agenda and the commitment to "leave no one behind", local governments should invest in their public spaces, using an integrated and trans-disciplinary approach in partnership with a range of stakeholders to ensure inclusive, safe and accessible public spaces for all.
 "The City at Eye Level for Kids" showcases valuable lessons, imaginative approaches and inspiring practices of how well-designed and managed streets and public spaces, and illustrates how creative co-creation methods help rethink childhood in the city. Streets and public spaces are the strategic axes along which a healthy and prosperous city grows. They allow for a city to be inclusive, connected, safe, accessible, multi-functional and livable, fostering the holistic development of children. This publication shows how people across the different continents are working hard to make their cities better for their children. The contributions of the co-authors are inspiring in their diversity.

The New Urban Agenda was adopted in 2016. Now, we now need the tools to translate knowledge and policy into practice. This book is an excellent example of that. I encourage practitioners and policy makers working in cities across the world to refer to, adapt and adopt the approaches and recommendations provided herein.

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director, UN-Habitat

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Rosa Danenberg, Hans Karssenberg
& Vivian Doumpa

The City at Eye Level is an international programme to develop human scale in our cities, and to put people and their experiences first in urban development. After years of developing knowledge, building global networks, and implementing practice, we felt this focused and important perspective deserves a special programme: how to work on a better eye level experience for the children in our cities?

The City at Eye Level essentially emphasizes the human perspective and explores how cities are experienced and shaped. The City at Eye Level is founded by STIPO and operates as an international open source learning platform that promotes the quality of the public realm in cities through criteria formulated for its hardware, software, and orgware. The pressing question that sparked the idea for the 'Kids' version emerged from a conversation between Cecilia Martinez, then working with UN-Habitat, and Hans Karssenberg, one of the founders of The City at Eye Level. The relevance for developing The City at Eye Level for Kids became evident after they realized: if inclusivity and accessibility are conditions for the quality of the public realm, to what extent is the quality of the public realm specifically beneficial for children, and how is this represented in The City at Eye Level perspective? Not

long after, the Bernard van Leer foundation launched The Call for Proposals for its Urban95 programme with their leading question- if we would integrate a child perspective, what would we do differently? This aligned with the idea to revisit The City at Eye Level's criteria for identifying scales, dimensions, uses, and approaches significant to children and families.

Similar to our previous programmes, this book is the collaborative and open source work with many of our network partners, resulting in more than 100 people contributing from Africa, North and South America, Asia, Australia and Europe. It is deeply inspiring to see how they are working to improve the city for children in all these very different contexts. This book shares their uplifting practices and bundles lessons, perspectives and insights that are beneficial to the planning and design of cities.

The target group of this book is everyone involved in improving cities: urban planners, local municipalities, architects, politicians, developers, entrepreneurs and those engaged in the well-being and future of toddlers, children, youth and families and their environments.

We are very grateful for the hard work and dedicated time our contributors provided.

March 2018

BASICS

INTRODUCTION

Rosa Danenberg

As more and more families are living in cities, the child-friendly city receives growing attention for recognizing the importance of creating safe, liveable, and playful cities for children and their caregivers. The fundamental principle is that "a city good for children, is a city good for all". The importance of children's perceptions, their well-being, and their development as future urbanites has led to a vast body of knowledge on how to improve physical design, inclusion, and participation towards use and comfort in cities.

What does a child-friendly city look like? How is it imagined by children? These are leading questions that unify a number of disciplines: sociology, pedagogy, anthropology, psychology, environmental psychology, geography, architecture, urban planning, and design, and of course child development and child healthcare.

The city through the eyes of children often brings about different ways of looking at the built environment - for instance tempo and visual sight, in addition to manners to play, learn, reach, and access. The experience of and challenges for children at various scales (city, neighborhood, streets, parks, playgrounds) underpin the urge for scale adjustment and reinterpretation. Further, planners, designers, and policy makers in all parts of

the world are faced with increased rates of urbanization encompassing the growing numbers of children living in cities. Consequently, in consideration of increasing proportions and varying scopes, the complexity behind comprehending and implementing the measures of a child-friendly city becomes a growing concern. In the recognition of this challenging task, measures should be taken to support practice through creating closer connections with the existent theories and knowledge.

The City at Eye Level for Kids is a project initiated as an attempt to narrow the gap between knowledge and practice regarding child-friendly cities. This ambition has led to the development of this book wherein best practices and theoretical underpinnings afford inspiration, insights, and lessons covering a wide range of child-centred topics. This interdisciplinary approach focusing on all children, but with special attention to the age group of young children (0-3), their caregivers, and pregnant women, has been very valuable towards robustly strategizing mechanisms to connect method with expertise.

...FOR KIDS

An explorative action-research project was initiated to bring together practitioners and scholars from varying disciplines and international contexts. To bring this intention to the core of the project, it started with including two young planners who share backgrounds in practice and academia and are situated in rather varying urban contexts. Vivian Doumpa is Greek in origin and returned to Thessaloniki, after having earned her Master's degree in the Netherlands, to engage in creative placemaking with youth. Thessaloniki is challenged with an aging population and underrepresentation of public spaces in the urban landscape. Rosa Danenberg is Dutch in origin and resides in Stockholm where she earned her Master's degree. Her engagement with practice points towards her passion for improving public space, but she nevertheless followed her desire for acquiring more knowledge and academic experience as she currently pursues a PhD in the field of urban planning and design. Stockholm is a growing city and considered green and livable, thus explains its booming attraction for families. Inherently, these aspects of this city pose challenges surrounding the preservation of beneficial characteristics while experiencing vast city expansion. Together, Vivian and Rosa coordinated an iterative learning process that included fostering connections to established practitioners and scholars in the field, collecting a wide range of best practices, and undertaking critical analyses and practical applications in the form of toolkit try-outs in both Thessaloniki and Stockholm. The try-outs, which are more extensively described in the 'Method's' chapter, afforded the chance to practice what they preach; *to learn from children*. A trial-and-error approach was applied for investigating what methods and tools worked, while it also encouraged active participation through listening to and interacting with children in the workshops.

The selection of the best practices presented in this book are a result of an Open Call for proposals that was answered by 100 proposals across all continents. A careful selection process followed which was further

complemented by an invitation-based selection of chapters covering underrepresented topics and geographical locations. This process, in combination with an expert session at the Placemaking Week conference in Amsterdam in October 2017, and continuous discussions with established scholars and practitioners, provided deep insights in the range of themes intersecting with the child-friendly topic which has advantageously led to the thematic sections that structure this book. This astute process informed a number of key conclusions presented as a long list of lessons learned formulated and supervised by Hans Karssenberg. The route that this process followed is for its largest part thanks to the incredible involvement and engagement of The City at Eye Level's global network that was willing to share, exchange, and contribute for the mutual interest of child-friendly public spaces. This would not have been possible without the generous support from and investigative discussions with The Bernard van Leer Foundation, which we are incredibly grateful for. Also, throughout this project, UN-Habitat and other networking partners have helped and inspired us tremendously. Thank you.

PUBLIC SPACES, ALSO FOR CHILDREN

In contemporary cities, more urgently in fast urbanizing cities, public spaces are the most important places to offer comfort and opportunities to people. Children are depending on public space for emotional, cognitive, physical, and social development. Nevertheless, children's space is often limited to the playground, neglecting the majority of the urban fabric and infrastructure as an everyday place for youth. This not only closes the opportunity for personal development, but also for learning about the importance of public space and being able to take responsibility and claim civic space. Children are the next generation, who will face a range of global problems that our planet has never seen before. They will face immense challenges, e.g. climate, population, migration. Therefore, the urge rises to prepare our children in becoming urban dwellers that are engaged, and are encouraged with longevity to learn about and anticipate on external threats and challenges. This is essentially taught in public space. Public space offers children an arena for making friends, negotiating conflicts, and spending non-screen-time; a precious aspect in the digital era. Beyond

Tourists and locals, young and old; piazzas facilitate for different uses and ages, Venice, Italy

Children's imagination of how to use objects in cities reaches beyond functionality; young girl lays down on an object in a shopping street in Leipzig, Germany

playgrounds, the city scape is as much the territory of children, however too often designed by adults with limited use of participatory processes to include the voices of children. 'Play', as a fundamental aspect in children's life, does not receive its necessary representation and potential in the design and planning of the city outside the playground.

THE CHILD-FRIENDLY CITY

Internationally, there is a trend towards child-friendly cities. Many local initiatives, activist groups, stakeholders, and global institutions such as UN-Habitat are advocating for a more child-focused planning approach. Results are becoming visible; noting the progress on both local and global scale. The theoretical knowledge available on this topic is growing, however, the effective implementation of child perspectives into planning and design of public space still faces a number of obstacles. There is a gap between theoretical knowledge and the practical implementation. What do we in fact know about the child perspective and how to possibly integrate it in city planning? The child-friendliness of a city is not to be measured by single initiatives, but rather by the network of placemaking initiatives and citywide strategies for public spaces that together shape and integrate the child perspective in decision-making. It is the implementation of a child-friendly approach on a city scale that details the multiplicity of public spaces and actors that are connected and intertwined. This addresses both the physical conditions for the children to move safely and independently through a connected web of public spaces, and the joint efforts for prioritizing child-friendliness on the agenda.

BEYOND SCALE ADJUSTING

The contribution of this book is, firstly, to bring together practitioners and professionals from varying disciplines and international contexts, and, secondly, to be involved in the knowledge co-creation that lays between theoretical propositions and practical knowhow, and thirdly, to enhance the dialogue around child-friendly cities. The result is an extensive selection of inspiring and insightful practices supported by theoretical underpinnings. The conclusions are summarized as lessons learned and criteria, which are open for revision as the network evolves.

One of the key insights is *the staging independency throughout childhood*. The obvious tells us that children expand their sense of independence as they grow older and wiser. From being bound to a stroller, to taking first steps, to playing without the supervision of parents, and lastly to going to school independently all asks for varying city scales. Yet, is the built form recognizant of this process, in particular with concerns for toddlers and youth up to 95 centimeters tall (the focus of Urban95)? The potential is that city affordances can be facilitative and supportive, recognizing the process of children growing physically, cognitively, and enjoying more independence. The child learns to depend on their own judgement, senses, and abilities. Being able to move around in a safe but challenging space teaches children and parents about

Street performer attracts children to interact with the bubbles on a warm day in Spring in South Bank London, UK

The walls of water make rooms magically emerge and disappear; children-oriented public space in London, UK

The water well is turned into busy play space with many things to do and as meeting space for caregivers in Venice, IT

This zebra crossing on a main street is well defined and supported with the ramp dropped for easier crossing with a stroller, Stockholm, Sweden

Mom and daughter on bikes through city show the easiness, safeness and perceived freedom of cycling mobility supported with the necessary infrastructure, Stockholm, Sweden

a new range of possibilities and boundaries. Remarkably, the concept of independency is commonly used in the transport discipline limited to mobility issues. However, we argue that the child's independency must interpreted more holistcally and include various disciplines beyond transportation and mobility. The city should cater to educating children to become city dwellers through playful stimulating urban environments, while it also comforts and challenges parents to enlarge and encourage their children's sense of independency and curiosity.

The staged independency is to be reflected by the varying urban scales and respective child-conscious designs and planning strategies. Responsive to the needs of the parents and children, we identified the urban scales and criteria that impact comfort, safety, play, and functional use for various stages of independency. An alteration to the existing analytical framework of *The City at Eye Level* was applied to anticipate to the finer human scale of

children, thus resulting in the following urban scales:

– **micro spaces scale** where parents/caretakers are bound to be careful and conscious about the child within clearly defined borders and with small-scale comfort both the parent/caretaker and child can enlarge and explore each other's boundaries (e.g. sandbox, picnic table, play object, bench etc.)
– **public space scale** offer spaces where children in eyesight of parents/caretakers are stimulated and supported in the exploration of their personal space within the surroundings while moving within semi-clearly defined borders and visible objects (e.g. a street corner or part of a park and plaza with engaging ground floors, water fountains, natural elements and so forth)
– **neighborhood scale** extends beyond the supervision of parents/caretakers and playfully triggers exploration of places and boundaries for children, by themselves, together with their friends, or with their parents/caretakers
– **city scale** is the strategic level for advocating for the child-friendly city agenda as well as the largest implementation level where public spaces and actors are connected to lay out a city-wide urban agenda anticipated to child-friendliness.

The criteria for each of the urban scales can be found in the 'Criteria' section. The 'Lessons' section details what can be learned from the cognitive, physical, and participatory processes of implementing these criteria for a more child-friendly city. How we have gathered and developed the knowledge from the practical input is described in the 'Action-Research Methods' section. If you are interested in what the experts on child-friendliness think of this action-research project, we recommend you read the 'Expert Meeting' section. The best practices presented in this book are categorized by themes and the Urban95 focused chapters are earmarked for easier search convenience. Lastly, the appendixes give an overview of the contributors, the cities and so on.

The City at Eye Level for Kids is open source. By sharing knowledge and methods we hope to strengthen the global network to improve the quality of our cities for children. Please find, download and share the book, all the articles, tools and new updates on www.thecityateyelevel.com.

ACTION-RESEARCH METHODS

Vivian Doumpa & Rosa Danenberg

INTRODUCTION

The various routes and challenges of practicing a child-friendly approach in the city's public realm inherently calls upon participatory design methods, as well as the practitioners involved. Following action-research, we have proactively situated ourselves on the crossroad of theory and practice to deepen the understanding and learning behind inclusivity within the public realm. We have applied a selection of existing methods and so-called toolkits in practice. This chapter reports back from the action-research project including the implementation of small-scale interventions in two different contexts, namely, Thessaloniki, Greece and Stockholm, Sweden. *The City at Eye Level's* framework for analysing the public realm with three distinct components - design (hardware), activities and uses (software), and participation and management (orgware) - has been re-scaled to the child-perspective. We extracted the three components from existing methods and toolkits, integrated the components in a balanced manner in the intervention selection process, and lastly reflected on the outcomes. In addition, we have paid special attention to the variety in scaling and needs of a group, which has often been neglected in past discussions, practices and policies. Importantly, the lense of the Urban95 approach and perspective, sets as a special target group children aged between 0-3, pregnant women, parents and caregivers.

OPEN CALL FOR BOOK CHAPTERS

The multidisciplinary nature of our team intersects at the shared background

in urban planning education and the expertise on public space and placemaking. Urban planning is considered one of the many disciplines feeding into the interdisciplinary concept of the child-friendly city. Therefore, we utilized the pre-phase for familiarizing ourselves with existing sources of knowledge, including methods and toolkits from the other involved disciplines. The open-ended interviews we held with experts in the field helped to expand and deepen our comprehension of the groundwork and recent developments, which has also led to the network of partners engaged in this book. Mapping the inspiring and useful approaches that prioritized the child-friendly focus in planning and placemaking practices brought us closer to the field of practice and eventually led to thematic sections and the structure of this book.

In September 2017, we launched an international Open Call for Chapter Proposals for *The City at Eye Level for Kids* book. The idea was that the chapters would provide a large variety of experience-based knowledge and demonstrate both the context-specific variations, as well as common needs of children and their caregivers around the world. The call received great response and our team collected and reviewed an unexpected amount of proposals. Our selection criteria helped us to select 70% of the proposals, which fulfilled the theory-practice balance, the interdisciplinarity of the topic, a clear presentation of key factors or tools of the approach, a clear linkage to *The City at Eye Level* approach (software-hardware-orgware), a connection to one of the three cityscapes (the level of the building, the street, and the context) and a global geographic balance. Furthermore, we selected some that specifically focused on Urban95 (children aged between 0-3, caregivers, and pregnant women) and some that featured the participation and inclusion of children in the planning and placemaking processes. With these intertwining criteria in mind, we established personal communication with all the selected authors, and initiated the editing process by providing feedback for the full-chapter contributions.

TRYOUTS IN THESSALONIKI AND STOCKHOLM

The chapters in the book exemplify not only the vast quantity, but also the quality and advancement of existing methods and toolboxes for participation, design, and activation of the public realm for child-friendly cities through the lens of placemaking. For us who intend to apply action-research, the observing, listening, and interacting with children and their caregivers has taught us in detail how *The City at Eye Level* framework needs to be rescaled and reinterpreted for a child-conscious focus. Thus, the tryout involved a combination of various existing methods and toolboxes that together cover the soft-hard-orgware components of *The City at Eye Level* framework. Choosing two significantly different cultural contexts helped to acutely alter interpretations, juxtaposition apprehensions, and acknowledge the critical role of cultural background in methodologies. The two cities used for implementation are:
– Thessaloniki is the second largest city in Greece and is correspondingly

Discussion and reflection among the parents facilitated by Vivian Doumpa as part of the Try Out in Thessaloniki, GR

A short interview with a mother and her 1 year old daughter is performed by Rosa Danenberg as part of the Try Out in Stockholm, Sweden

built in high density and populated with multi-storey buildings. Interestingly, Thessaloniki possesses rather limited availability of public and open spaces. Moreover, the city is characterized by interesting variations of uses and functions featured on the ground floor found even in the small streets of residential areas. Notably, Thessaloniki is situated along a waterfront. Some of the city's current challenges include the aging population, the unbalanced proportion of access to safe and comfortable public and open spaces among the neighbourhoods, urban management, and civic participation in governance.

– Stockholm is the capital of Sweden and is built on islands that distinctively shape and separate its districts. The inner-city districts are densely populated and form the commercial and cultural centre of the city with many urban parks, while the suburban population is concentrated around public transportation hubs surrounded by nature. The city's challenge is to create meaningful public space where people from different backgrounds and ages can not only meet, but also interact concurrent to the rapidly expanding population due to both the high fertility rate and influx of immigrants.

Our goals for the tryout are multifaceted:

– to assemble various existing methods and tools used in child-friendly city practices and to consolidate those within The City at Eye Level framework (hard-soft-orgware)
– to tryout the implementation from collecting methods and tools, and further, to evaluate how children and caregivers respond to various formats;
– to give children and their parents/caregivers the chance to influence and participate in this project and experiment in adopting the perspective 'how would our city look different from children's perspective?;
– to reflect on the extent that these practices can inform the criteria and lessons learned to develop The City at Eye Level for Kids framework.

PREPARATIONS

We decided to test the methodology in different phases of the project and in two different contexts: in Thessaloniki, Greece in the beginning of the editorial phase of the book and criteria, and in Stockholm, Sweden, in the middle of the project timeline. This approach facilitated a learning curve in between the two tryouts.

A few practical details can be shared for how we organized the try outs: one of us each fulfilled the role as a main organizer (Vivian Doumpa in Thessaloniki and Rosa Danenberg Stockholm) while we collaborated with local experts to embed ourselves in the local context and culture of child-friendly city practices in the city. In Thessaloniki, Ms. Katerina Gagaki and arts educator, expert on designing interdisciplinary programmes that use art as a basic

tool and Ms. Maria Sitzoglou an architect and urban designer specialized in child-friendly design provided this research with local knowledge. Additionally, Common Benefit Enterprise of Thessaloniki Municipality (KEDITH) assisted our endeavours. In Stockholm, Ms. Amanda Larsson the founder of Magiska Barnarkitekter ("magical children architects"), and expert on workshops for child-friendly cities with focus on play and shifting perspectives, as well as Ms. Helena Friman, member of BUMS ("Children's outdoor environment in the city") an advocacy group by retired city dwellers for a child-friendly city for their younger generations aided the Stockholm tryout with local knowledge. Additionally, The City of Stockholm aided the respective tryout.

For promoting the tryouts, we reached out through social media channels, our professional and personal networks, and spread printed material. The tryouts were located in parks in mixed-use residential areas with close proximity to both neighborhood streets and main streets which have commercial functions on the ground floor, as well as proximity to schools and kindergartens. The tryout in Thessaloniki took place on Saturday morning February 10, 2018 and in Stockholm we expanded with a weekday: Friday and Saturday afternoons April 20 and 21, 2018.

TRYOUTS

The actual implementation differed slightly compared to the original ideas and formulation. The tryout was promoted to parents and caregivers as to be part of an participatory process that allowed them to experience and analyse public space and the neighbourhood with playful activities and observation through the eyes of their children. The aim of the workshop(s) was formulated as a pilot application of a newly developed participatory design methodology. This method aims to focus on learning and awareness-raising regarding the needs, wishes, and demands (criteria) for child-friendly public and open space, as well as the neighbourhood as a whole. The methods were deriving from a broadscale of interdisciplinary trajectories; such as non-formal education, arts education, child development, and of course, urban planning and placemaking.

The original structure of the tryout was set up as follows:
1. Parents/caregivers and children roam independently around the park and through creative and playful activities and tasks they will "read" and analyse the elements of public and open space in an embodied way.
2. After that, parents/caregivers discuss their observations on how the neighbourhood and its public space could be improved - having the child at the epicentre. While children draw, create and compile their dream neighborhood and do small visualisation games to express wishes and needs.
3. Finally, parents will reflect on how they have experienced the participatory process, whether anything has changed the way they "see" the public space and the neighbourhood from a child's perspective.

The more specific formats that were used are presented here:

	THESSALONIKI	STOCKHOLM
Registration	Pre-registration	Drop-in
Formats	The workshop consisted of two parts: 1. Arranged in the park and neighbourhood. The participants would be briefly be introduced to the scope and methodology and then try out for themselves a "Game Form" that we have designed, with various tasks (see page 25). 2. An indoor reflection process allowed all of us to offer feedback on the experience of participating in such a game, on the reception that tasks had from both the adults and the children, and on how we could improve the tasks and the process. For this aspect, we used participatory planning and facilitation tools (e.g. photographs and voting, facilitated discussion, etc.) as well as elements of arts education (e.g. drawing the "neighbourhood of our dreams" in a group). Additionally, and quite organically, the participants engaged in a discussion regarding the child-friendliness of their neighbourhood and city, and they begun to note proposals and aspects that they could also improve on their own.	The workshop covered two days. Friday: we held a workshop just after the Parklek's weekly storytelling session with pre-registration through email. Saturday: we held a drop-in workshop. Both turned out to be a mix of participatory drop-in sessions where we encountered parents/caregivers and children in the outdoor playspace. We alternated between the following formats: – Sit-down interviews with the parent/caregiver addressing and reflecting on elements of the public realm and discussing the crucial aspects while the child played or exercised the tasks nearby – Walk-and-play interviews where we followed the parent/caregiver who performed the tasks together with the child while we observed and reflected with the parent/caregiver on issues that emerged – Co-creation session in which multiple children and their caregivers participated and interacted throughout the course of the completing the tasks.
Weather and contextual influences	It was a relatively cold morning and therefore less people showed up.	It was the first sunny weekend of the spring season where playing outside and enjoying the weather was hard to compete with.

THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS

NAME: [ ]   AGE OF YOUR CHILD(REN): [ ]   STROLLER: YES / NO
PHONE NR: [ ]   EMAIL ADDRESS: [ ]

PARTICIPATORY AND PLACEMAKING WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN AGED 0-5 AND THEIR PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, PREGNANT WOMEN AND THEIR PARTNERS.

COMPLETE THE TASKS TOGETHER WITH YOUR CHILD, WHILE YOU OBSERVE AND DISCOVER HOW YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCES PUBLIC SPACE. TAKE PICTURES!

TASK 3
TAKE THE TRACES OF THE CITY!
FIND A SURFACE THAT YOU LIKE AND TRACE IT WITH CRAYON
* USING PAPER AND CRAYON

TASK 1
CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TELL WHAT YOU HEAR

TASK 4
SHOW YOUR BEST PLACES FOR
1. JUMPING   2. CLIMBING UP
3. LAYING DOWN   4. RUNNING TO
*DO ALL OR AS MUCH AS YOU CAN

TASK 2
CAN YOU FIND A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN HIDE?

TASK 5
GO ON A TREASURE HUNT AROUND THE BLOCK
(FOR SMALLER ONES, AROUND THE SCHOOL AND TO STREET)

REFLECTION AND OBSERVATIONS
FOR PARENTS TO FILL IN WHEN THE TASKS ARE COMPLETED

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT KIDS IN OPEN AND PUBLIC SPACE, THROUGH YOUR OBSERVATIONS?
[ ]

DID YOUR CHILD AND YOU FEEL SAFE AND COMFORTABLE DURING THE PROCESS, AND HOW DID IT DIFFER BETWEEN THE PLAYGROUND, PARK AND STREET?
[ ]

WHAT ELEMENTS CONTRIBUTED TO CHILD-FRIENDLY AND PARENT-FRIENDLINESS? LIST
[ ]

TOWARDS A THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS TOOLKIT

Our aim is not to provide yet another toolkit, rather it is to see how the interdisciplinarity of the existing tools of different fields can be synthesized through the lens of *The City at Eye Level* and placemaking. This coalescence seeks to activate parents/caregivers, provide stimulation to young children and caregivers, and eventually produce some data and proposals. Having a toolkit ready would have been a dream coming true, however, it is a precious process to produce a robust toolkit that works in various contexts and situations.

The two tryouts have been a good start and allowed us to apply the action-research methodology. For example, the reflections from the first tryout were implemented in the second tryout, resulting in the reflections below. We hope it offers insightful developments that can be considered by anyone organising a workshop, which nevertheless needs more experimentation, reflection and expertise for it to be generalizable across cultures, urban settings and ages and so forth.

Before the workshop
– Familiarize participants with the place, method and facilitators:
  – Organize a pre-meeting for the parents/caregivers to gain comfort and confidence around the practicalities and the concept, as well as familiarity with the place, so that during the workshop the parents can focus on catching the emotional responses of the child.
  – It is important for parents to get familiar with information about the workshop during a time they are not distracted (for instance to read the workshop material at home) in order to prepare for practical outlines, to learn about the goals, and understand what is expected from them to be able to concentrate on the child during the workshop.
– Focus on the "why" behind the participation in the workshop. "Beat" any other competing activities:
  – The challenge is to convince parents on an intellectual level about the importance and relevance of participating in the workshop that overrules the "fun" of the workshop for the child or is a substitution for playing time. It should be clearly formulated for the parent what there is to gain, for them to know what they are willing to invest in "the greater good of child-friendly city" while realizing that they are about to encounter a new shared and fun experience that offers a new perspective of seeing their child as a future urbanite.
  – The requirement of pre-registration for taking part in the workshop generally leads to a group of already interested and relatively available parents that sign up and participate
  – The show-up rate for workshops is subjected to prioritized commitment of families with small children for participating in a workshop during the weekends. Other weekend activities such as playing outside the neighborhood or engaging in sports are sometimes difficult to compete with. The duration of the workshop and level of commitment (can one

Workshop forms and balloons as promotion material to attract children and caregivers to the drop-in workshop in Stockholm, Sweden

Short interview with a mom and her daughter about the evaluation of the child-friendliness of their neighborhood, Stockholm, Sweden

Mom and son evaluate the park through investigation of the various surfaces and materials, Thessaloniki, Greece

leave halfway?) are therefore important factors. Drop-in workshops of maximum 20 minutes are relatively easy to commit to and time may pass quick. The parents that are involved tend to stay longer, despite that it may be unfair to keep them longer in this way.

– Promise a comfortable and safe environment: Parents are more inclined to come if they have been assured that there are facilities such as access to restrooms, drinking water and an indoor space to rest and refresh. It also supportive to mention that there will be activities and a facilitator specifically for the children. This also makes them stay longer.

Role of the workshop organiser

– A so-called 'Icebreaker' activity helps to shift the caregiver's point of view toward the through-the-eyes-of-the-child perspective. What worked well is to encourage the parent/caregiver to connect with one's childhood through a sharing round where everyone is given the chance to answer "What did you like to do when you were at the age of your child?" as that may detach the parent from their fears and protectiveness and reconnect with the joy, freedom and learning experiences in their childhood.

– The capacity of the workshop organiser to be adaptable and flexible is almost just as important as the workshop format itself. Therefore, being well-organised and operating as a team is crucial for being able to anticipate group dynamics, especially when keeping in mind the sensitive needs of the young children, their caregivers, and pregnant women.

– The workshop organisers should be aware of the local culture for purposes of smooth communication, understanding social norms and codes, and interpreting parents' opinions and behaviours. For instance, parents in Thessaloniki seemed to decide on whether to attend the tryout, whereas the parents in Stockholm let the child decide.

– Gaining the trust of the parent/caregiver is essential for releasing them from their sense of responsibility and control over the child and the situation. The goal is to let the parent/caregiver feel safe and secure to handover the responsibility and control of the workshop to the workshop organisers.

Workshop

– For the purpose of establishing an inclusive co-creative process, it is essential to find the right tone of voice that speaks both to the parent/caregiver as well as the child (to some extent). This starts with the invitation, but also includes the content and design of the workshop form, and the language and presentation of the workshop instructions.

– Pay attention to both the child's, as well as the parent/caregiver's well-being. During the workshop, parents/caregivers are confronted with many things to handle at the same time: to listen for their own intellectual interest and engagement, to care for the child, to make sure it is entertaining for the child, all while also paying attention to and following the workshop format and what is expected. Other forms of empowerment should counter the feeling of disappointment for situations where they could not complete all the tasks or were not able to contribute as much to the discussion as these

Family with young children and a stroller participate in the Try Out in Thessaloniki, Greece

moments can lead to insecurity about being of value.

– Anticipating the personality and circumstances of the young child is key for making them feel empowered in the process. It is best to alternate between the visual, audio, and expressive abilities and activate their senses. For instance, the answers given by the children sometimes need to be unpacked. Children generally only point out things that they like. The capacity to concentrate, the wish to play, the struggle to put words to things etc. should be positively directed to how they can express their ideas and preferences.

REFLECTIONS ON OUR ACTION-RESEARCH PROCESS

Action-research offers an iterative and interactive inquiry process where trial-and-error and feedback loops are integrated parts. The team members are tactically involved in the collaborative context and continuously reflect on the emerging issues and structure. The extent of openness and exchange, and the experiential nature allows for new propositions to come to the surface. However, this type of research is also relatively vulnerable to context-specific conclusions and interpretations. As much as we have attempted to cover global issues and circumstances, this action-research team is largely situated in the Western context, the tryouts have taken place in Europe, and therefore the assumptions and outcomes are presumably not applicable to all contexts. We hope that with the extensive geographical spread and the input from local initiatives around the globe, that the criteria and lessons learned do somehow find application in a broader set of the circumstances. Despite the context-specific limitation, *The City at Eye Level* is a international open-source learning platform which is designed to be receptive and evolving in its content and approach. Through future collaborations and application of the framework, we are positive about the expansion for enlarging its usefulness and relevance.

INSIGHTS OF EXPERTS

Rosa Danenberg

An important aspect of the action-research approach behind this book is the expert review to validate the value and contribution of our outcomes. We held an interactive discussion among a group of experts based on the book's concept and content. Their outstanding knowledge, experience, and close involvement in the current discourse were deeply valuable to provide a reflection on our joint book with a critical assessment.

MEETING THE EXPERTS

The meeting took place virtually on July 19th 2018.
The experts are:
– Lia Karsten - associate professor in Urban Geographies at University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
– Tim Gill - independent scholar, advocate and consultant on childhood at Rethinking Childhood, London, UK
– Mark Ojal - urban designer and placemaking expert at UN-Habitat, Nairobi, Kenya
– José Chong - architect and urban planner focusing on Sustainable Urban Development at UN-Habitat, Nairobi, Kenya
– Ardan Kockelkoren - Urban95 coordinator at Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague, The Netherlands
– Darell Hammond - Senior advisor Urban95 program at Bernard van Leer Foundation Tirana, Albania.

The editing team for The City at Eye Level for Kids led the discussion:

– Rosa Danenberg - Stockholm, Sweden
– Vivian Doumpa - Thessaloniki, Greece
– Hans Karssenberg - Amsterdam, The Netherlands
– Ying-Tzu Lin - Taipei, Taiwan and Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

The results of the discussion are structured by the following topics and issues:
1. General impression of the content of the project
2. Key takeaways and valuable contributions to the project
3. Underdeveloped aspects, recommendations for further steps after this book
4. Practical implications and value for the field.

1. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONTENT OF THE PROJECT

The value of the book lays in demonstrating the many initiatives that are making efforts towards child-friendly cities; which happen in large varieties, in different contexts, in many places in the world, and by interdisciplinary teams. Coalescing these approaches has resulted in an international bundle of interesting, wide ranging, and inspiring projects that are presented as so-called 'best practices' highlighting the relation between children and cities. The experts particularly appreciated the sensitivity to gender aspects and child health, as well as, the inclusion of the different ages of children and parents. Furthermore, the book offers a wide spectrum of approaches, practical tools, and, importantly, a rich collection of ideas for implementation that are useful for local governments and civil society. Moreover, it is helpful to trace the strongest pieces for each method summarized in the Lessons Learned section.

2. KEY TAKEAWAYS AND VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROJECT

The substantial variety of themes and geographical variance in this book has led the experts to conclude a number of key insights that are particularly relevant for the public sector regarding the child-friendly city discourse.

Firstly, in relation to the global level:
– The current global city agenda formed around the concept of sustainable cities presents itself as an interesting and relevant discourse that appears close to the child-friendly cities agenda. According to the experts, how a sustainable city and a child-friendly city look like might overlap on many aspects: compact, green, walkable and cycle-friendly, proximity to amenities at hand, not too much traffic around.
– The variance between geographies has profound consequences for sensitivity that is necessary for children's basic needs and physical urban conditions. For instance, children in the Global South are faced with more basic issues around health and safety, whereas in the West, the issues

Reykjavik: Adding color and surprise increases the positive experience of children in public space

Alkmaar: Active colorful hybrid zones with objects on various heights that stimulate multiple senses can be a world full of wonders for young children

Verona: The historic Italian square evidences a perfect spot for youth to socialize and hang out both during the day and night

tend to revolve more around obesity, equality, giving the street back to kids.

– The lack of public spaces is a more prevalent issue in the Global South, however, the need for creating more open spaces is often not answered sufficiently, as open spaces are not necessarily public spaces.

– The temporal nature of many of the featured projects exemplifies that an intervention does not have to be permanent and expensive. This is especially important in situations where resources are limited.

– Moving beyond single projects and starting to think about cities as a system is incredibly supportive. Placemaking projects tend to be disjointed and fragmented, whereas we should approach placemaking as an integrated strategy and network of stakeholders in order to build better cities for children with a long-lasting impact.

Secondly, in relation to children and professionals:

– The role of children and professionals in the design of play spaces should be reformulated. Traditionally, professionals are tasked with designing these places, based on a specific -most of the times- protocol. However the recent discourse underlines that children and their caregivers know what they want, and professionals need to take a step back.

– The gamification approach to public participation is an innovation that turns away from nice aesthetics and turns the rules upside down. Using fun and play also contributes to the start of different conversations.

– Children are very observant. Using the "lens" of children in open-space observations will help adults to understand the relation between spaces and buildings.

– Thinking in scale (micro place – neighbourhood – main city places – citywide) has been brought forward as gamechanger. Greater understanding of what scale means for the child-friendly (and sustainable) city has contributed to the position to say more about its implications.

3. UNDERDEVELOPED ASPECTS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STEPS AFTER THIS BOOK

With the recent surge of interest in the child-friendly cities topic, a number of research reports and practical guidelines for implementation have been published in the last couple of years by a range of local and global actors. The experts commented that for this book to be distinguishable among the other recent publications particular attention should be drawn to the question: what is the valuable and significant contribution of this book?

The aim of this book is to build bridges between theory and practice; translating academic knowledge and lessons from practitioners into day-to-day applications in the urban context. The experts indicated that by building on a theoretical grounding first - based on, for instance, the body of knowledge, the theory, the literature on child-friendly cities and engaging children - the evaluation of the best practices would have better outcomes. This supports a theoretical framework for determining the actual successes, obstacles, and failures of the projects, and to understand which cases are

useful under certain circumstances (age groups, short term or long term impact, themes). Of course, we cannot reconstruct a theoretical framework, but we will add scorings on a set of criteria in the web version of the book found on the www.thecityateyelevel.com website.

Suggestions for improvement born within the capacities of the team have been integrated into the book after the expert meeting took place in order to improve the final outcome.

4. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR THE FIELD

Ultimately, larger ambitions for the book were brought up that go beyond the scope of this project, and offer next steps after this book. These point towards the translation into citywide strategic policies and local practical implication:
– To develop a set of standards that can be applied on rating a place not only measuring the level of 'child-friendliness', but also ensuring that a place is not labelled 'child-friendly' unless it performs according to these criteria. These can easily be handed over the politicians with the message: "this is what you need to do tomorrow".
– To aim for integrating the outcomes of this project in the global public space agenda with benchmarks and targets highlighting children and their caregivers.
– To utilize and reinforce the power of the quantity and quality of child-oriented projects. The problem is that most of them are only temporary as structural organization forces are often lacking. This book is a chance to give more attention to the structural impact.
– To contribute to what the New Urban Agenda tries to aim for.
– To develop and translate *The City at Eye Level for Kids* toolkit that was used in the tryouts into a hands-on guide that gives clear instructions on how to organize, execute, and reflect on a workshop with young children and their caregivers- especially before designing. We will incorporate this into our ongoing work to develop an open source global placemaking toolbox.

The next step is to act on the rising urge to move the conversation beyond a collection of nice ideas towards integrating the child-friendly cities agenda from a placemaking perspective. The experts agree that the outcomes of this project should be exchanged with experts, practitioners, policy-makers, and politicians out there. The challenge is to reach beyond the usual suspects, and beyond the limited platforms of design, city design, placemaking, architects, conferences etc. to avoid reproduction of the same knowledge, visions, and message. Hence, a dissemination plan for the content of the book, that also reaches mayors and municipalities, is of vital importance, but may need further operation and a shift towards a hands-on mentality.

Stockholm: A child-friendly city offers a variety of formal and informal public spaces with unexpected and exciting play spaces

Vancouver, Canada: Temporary use of public space adds an element of spontaneity and gives opportunity to play, learn, be seen and be heard

CHILD-FRIENDLY CITIES FROM AN URBAN PLANNER'S PERSPECTIVE

Ying-Tzu Lin (Eyes on Place & University of Amsterdam)

Creating healthy and livable built environment is one of main tasks in urban planning profession. The basic assumption of the planning goal supposes to be if the built environment is healthy and livable for all, it also applies to children. However, on the long way to pursue for healthy and livable built environment for all, the right of city for vulnerable groups like children are very often underestimated and under-prioritized, causing negative consequences of them. This article argues that vulnerable groups like children should not be the minor beneficial receivers once planners achieve our grand vision. By placing children's right at the main planning stage, an urban environment that is healthy and livable to children would also be healthy and livable for all. To do so, in this article, we propose several planners' insights for planners to think along their practice.

THE ABSENCE OF CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE IN CONVENTIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE

In conventional planning practice, from large-scale master plan to small-scale neighborhood redevelopment plan, there is often little space to take care for individual users' group among the rigid physical and social infrastructural concern. Design and planning implications for children is often limited to the location and size of school in land use plan. In a smaller scale, playground could be a part in the park and urban open space. Concerns regarding the use

of space are dominated by safety measures. The rising protective attitude of parents toward children increasingly influences the design and regulation. Also in cultural perspective, the underestimate of the value of play in Eastern context, or to raise children in suburban in Western context, both indirectly cause children become the lost piece of the picture of urban development. Moreover, the increasing privatization and securitization of public space sets limits to the accessibility and public-ness of space.

Nevertheless, when we try to take children and their right of city into account in the vision of healthy and livable urban environment, we surprisingly find the topic of child-friendly city can unify important urban issues on building our desirable urban future. According to the report ' Cities alive—designing for urban childhood' published by ARUP, it points out a child-friendly city would also benefits the **health and well being, local economy, safety, stronger communities, nature and sustainability, resilience and become a catalyst for improving cities** (ARUP, 2017). In the fastest urbanizing era of human history with threatening environmental degradation and high-density urban development ever, to plan for our future generation could not be neglected anymore.

PLANNING FOR URBAN CHILDHOOD

Every adult used to be a child, but what should the city look like for livable urban childhood? Is it possible for children to enjoy the city in a safe condition? In particular, from the city at eye level perspective, what are key issues for child-friendly urban public spaces that planners can address our attention? Based on the play campaign experiences in Taiwan, observations from urban planning approach could shed light on several aspects.

First, urban planning culture matters. It is important to work toward child-friendly city with the support of public institutions. As in post war period in the Netherlands, the architect Aldo van Eyck was only possible to built more than 700 playgrounds in the city Amsterdam with the support of Jacoba Mulder and Cornelis van Eesteren from the governmental organizations (Lefaivre, 2007). In Taiwanese experiences, there were little space for planners and designers contribute their profession in child-friendly public spaces until the play campaign group 'Parks and Playgrounds For Children by Children (PFC) did effective lobby works to policy makers. That is also to say; to engage with social groups outside of planning profession is a good strategy to open up more experimental working possibilities within conservative and conventional planning culture (Lin et al., 2018).

In the case of play campaign on public playgrounds in Taiwan, the major problem is civil servants intend to lower the risk as much as possible in playground. It leads to the consequence that most play equipment in playgrounds is only for lower age children that bored bigger age children. The example indicates that indeed it is a critical issue for planners to consider the balance between risk assessment and safely regulation. Yet what adults

Design and planning with children is an interdisciplinary emerging profession to develop and work with

Observe and play with children is more effective than verbal communication in design process

often forget is among 0-12 years old children, different age groups have completely different needs in physical and psychological development, which also reflect on their demands of play types, spaces and challenges. For planners and designers, it is important to aware besides safety regulations as design and planning instructions, to have delicate understanding of needs and development stages among children's age group is another critical issue for creating playful urban environment.

Urban childhood environment is not only about schools and playgrounds. In a larger scale approach, what are safe and playful paths for children's daily mobility? To what extend, urban environmental quality would make impact on health and wellbeing issues of children? Among multi-users in public spaces, children are easy to be targeting as noise and chaos-maker. As planners, how we can improve in reduce tensions among families, children and other users in public space through a more thoughtful socio-spatial arrangement? And most important of all, where and what are voices of children themselves? How to take children's opinion as part of the work input? There are more issues as planners we can take care of to create a friendly urban childhood environment.

PLANNING WITH CHILDREN

In a smaller scale, it is possible to plan and design with children. Project Tong-an St. 87-1 in Taipei city is an experimental project initiate by PFC and 'Eyes on Place' (EoP)—a web-based platform formed by a group of urban designers and planners care about public space. In this project, a community play space is carried out with planners, designers, children and community residents from planning, design to construction phase.

During the workshop, by working with children closely enough, we realize the first thing to plan with children is to learn from children. Event planning-wise, from programs like storytelling, neighborhood environmental observation games, we create a collective atmosphere for warm up. In the design and planning phase, first we tried to ask children questions like 'what do you want to play on this site'? Yet very quickly we realize answers have low reference value. Either they answered with an imaginary scenario (I want to play in a space station!) or very fragmented due to language development capacity (I want to play water here). The most troublesome is the wanting oriented questions are easy link to expectations, which make it harder to promise unrealistic dreams to our young participants.

Instead of asking directly, we develop certain method that by offering simple unstructured and random materials, by playing with children and observe how they organize the play activities? What particular physical and social actions they prefer and specify in age groups? (For example, challenge the height, crease secret corner to hide etc.,) How children manage risk in a rather challenge physical environment? (Climbing trees and walking on street without pedestrian) Certain observation outcomes have potential to be

translated into planning guidelines and design languages.

Through the experiment project, we also learn that as urban planners and designers, there are many skills we need to learn and cooperate from other disciplines. For example, methods of observe and document the play behavior, communicate with children without promising implications, decrypt children's language from imagination scenario to actual planning content. Also we realize roles like play experts who know how to facilitate collective play with young participants, play instructors who know how to translate children's demand from their language into professional language, are necessary in the process of planning with children.

The practice experiences of planning with children are just a start. The more we involve, the more we realize what are more we need to learn and develop the emerging scenarios that take children more seriously in the planning blueprint. With pointing out several knowledge and practice gaps, we hope to shed light on these aspects that urban planners and designers can work further to explore more nuance in the production of children friendly public space. All in all, key insights for planners contribute to the implementation and integration of child-friendly cities paradigm into the planning profession.

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CHILD, CITY, PLAY: THE SPIELRAUM

Garyfallia Katsavounidou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

As a researcher originating from spatial studies, early on in my attempt to investigate the multi-layered and complex relationship between children and the space of the city, I was overwhelmed with a multitude of questions that intersect this relationship: What is the most adequate method for doing spatial research with children? In what ways can urban environment operate as a means of education and personal development for the children? How have the needs of the child been dealt with in urban design practice? And, perhaps most importantly, given the powerful narratives of childhood in the city to be found in literature and the cinema, why this relationship has been so far overlooked in urban studies?

If we accept that such questions 'belong' epistemologically to different combinations of distinct scientific fields (such as psychology, pedagogy, cultural theory, urban studies), the approach that I propose is the following: to examine the permutations of connections among 'child', 'play', and 'city' knowingly subverting or ignoring already established categorisations. It is a shift from 'perception-of' towards 'involvement-with', a situation in which the topic, operating much like a gravitational center, can claim to its orbit the participating discourses (Carl 2012). Setting the 'topic' itself at the center of our research, we are allowed to narrate this subject's history, tradition, and – why not – *biography*.

Starting from the three concepts of the title, we can draw crossing lines that lead the research to two wide areas of research: on one hand, the disciplines

that deal with the child and with the concept of play (in a sense, already connected to each other since play is defined as the activity of children, or the imitation of such an activity), and, on the other, physical space itself, that is, projects and realisations of spaces for the child in the city. The 'common ground' of these two areas is represented in a diagram, in which the timeline of events and influences is charted onto these two parallel fields or *topoi*.
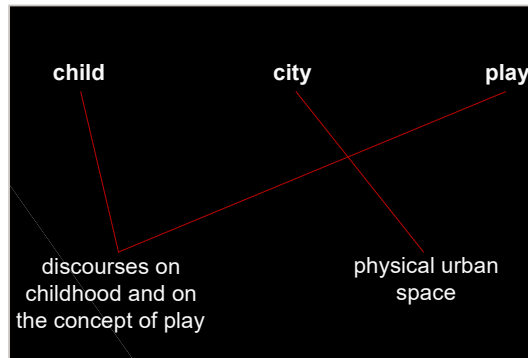
At the first *topos*, we can detect a historical succession of different categories of discourses proposing thoughts and theories about childhood and about play. The first in order of appearance is the *philosophical* one: the case of Heraclitus is most characteristic in this respect. Among his witty, playful sayings, a plethora of references to children and to play can be found; among them, the famous saying "time is a child playing dice; the kingly power is the child's." It is important to stress out that, from the antiquity up to the 19th century, thinking about the child was not separate but was included in the philosophical contemplation on the nature of human existence. In fact, the study of the child per se first appears with the advent of modernity; in its initial form, it takes the character of a *biological* discourse, with writers like Herbert Spencer, in the context of Darwin's positivism. It continues, in the dawn of the twentieth century, as *pedagogical* discourse of which Maria Montessori (1967) is the founding figure, which is followed chronologically by the *psychological* discourse, initiated in the interwar period by Jean Piaget (Piaget & Inhelder 1967). Much later on, in the 1980's, the *sociological* discourse on childhood takes over, expressed either in the field of 'children's geographies' (Holloway & Valentine 2000, Aitken 2001) or that of 'new sociology of children' (Corsaro 2005). It is noteworthy, nonetheless, that the sociological approach to childhood was based on a historical treatise: *Centuries of Childhood* by Philippe Ariès (1962). It was Ariès, then, a historian, who was the first to propose what by now is considered commonly accepted: that childhood is not at all 'primitive', 'natural' and 'timeless', but a 'social construction'.

In parallel to these theoretical discourses, at the second *topos*, that of physical space, our search for realised or proposed projects regarding children's play produces far less continuous findings – in essence, they are so few that are isolated events, *exceptions* to the established canon of design practice, which for the most part ignores the issue of children completely. The first appearance of a material object/construction that defines a 'special' area in space for children occurs in Germany, around 1840; pedagogue Friedrich Froebel establishes the first kindergarten and somewhere in its yard creates the first *sandbox*. By late 19th century, the 'founding event' of design
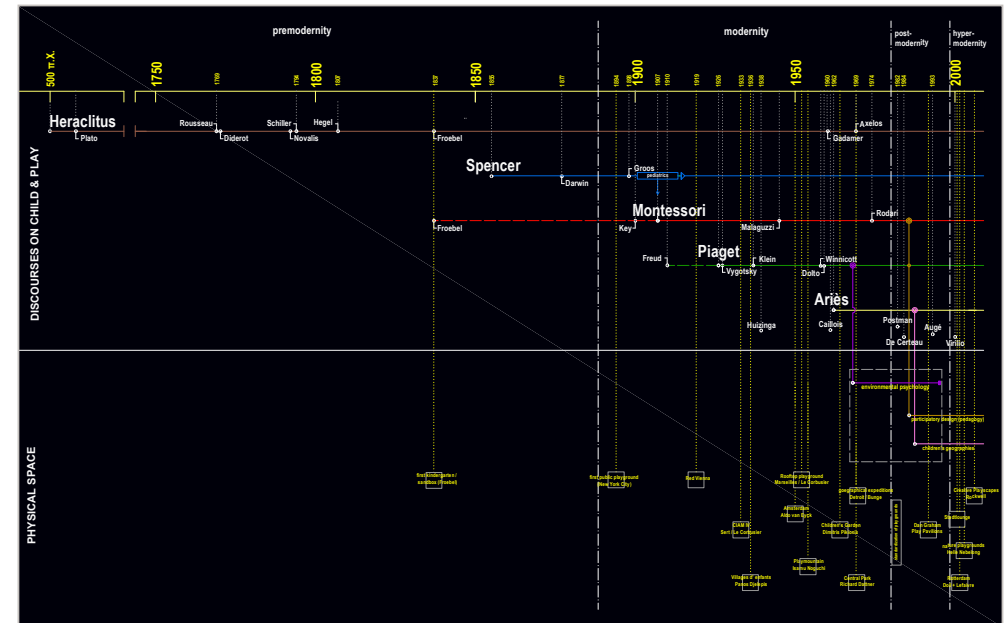

for children in public space takes place: the first *playgrounds* begin to operate in the quintessential metropolis, New York. Playgrounds are in fact fenced open spaces, where children are gathered often by force, and 'play' under supervision by special police agents. The rationale for the establishment of playgrounds was not at all pedagogical or play-centered, but a response to the urban blight of street children, which were presented as 'public danger', since they were caught in fights and petty crimes, as well as victims of traffic accidents (Gaster 1992).

Since then, and throughout the twentieth century, despite the ever growing percentage of children living in urban centers, realised or proposed projects are really too few, thus showing the degree in which children as a users' group have been ignored by urban design and planning. Despite the fact, for example, that a major personality of architecture such as Aldo van Eyck dedicated most of his work for the benefit of children and practically changed the course of life for generations of children growing up in postwar Amsterdam (Lefaivre & de Roode 2002), he failed to convince his contemporaries or influence the general canon.

Outside these two large areas, there is a sub-area that encompasses what we would call the various 'interdisciplinary approaches', occupying a space in-between the discourses on childhood and spatial sciences. Three distinct trends are located there: *environmental psychology* (Tuan 1974, Hart 1979), *participatory design*, which has more of pedagogical viewpoint and methodology (Dudek 2005), and the field of *children's geographies*, interrelated with the trend of new sociology of children, both of which currently are considered the most contemporary approaches. Most prominent,

however, in the children's geographies is the work of rebel geographer 'Wild' Bill Bunge (2011), who was the first to introduce the concept of 'geographical expedition' for doing research on the everyday spaces of children. Bunge's revolutionary work in downtown Detroit in the late 1960's was based on field observation leading to 'spatial statistics' that revealed the patterns of the un-wellness of society. For Bunge, children are like "canaries in a coalmine" – they reflect the pressures of the environment with greater sensitivity, due exactly to their vulnerability.

"It's here that we play all sorts of games, like football, hide-and-seek, etc. But some gentlemen scorn us for damaging their cars, though in reality we don't do anything."

In the case of my field research, a 'geographical expedition' of the city of Veria, a middle-sized town in northern Greece, was performed by the children themselves, using photography as a vehicle. 81 children aged 10 to 12 years took photographs, more than 1,200 in total, of urban spaces where they walk, observe and play. Of these photographs, which are also accompanied by written comments, the most interesting ones are those that present children's spatial practices in urban space. Such practices fall into the category of 'tactics' as opposed to 'strategies' (De Certeau 1984); "tactic is an art of the weak," writes De Certeau (1984: 37). Children's uses of urban space are based on instant, impulsive responses to opportunities created in the 'crevices' of a system of adult strategies. Such strategies include official planning – for example the distribution of 'uses' in various segments of urban space –, but also socially accepted practices of adults – for example, the practice of using pilotis for parking. Opposite these strategies, children are responding with tactical movements; wherever or whenever a margin of free space ['Spielraum', in German] is allowed, their actions are "procedures of everyday creativity" (De Certeau 1984: xiv).

Therefore, and to return to the beginning, to the search for a new 'subject' to express the triptych of "child, play, city", the research takes the shape of six chapters that can be read independently ('Introduction", "Method', 'Play', 'The everyday', 'City' and 'Practice), that together make up a polyphonic biography of the *Spielraum* influenced by fifty nine 'characters'. The Spielraum bears four variations of interpretation. In the first one, it means 'space of freedom', or the advantage of philosophical contemplation. Peter Bruegel's painting *Children's Games* (1560) is a visual allegory of this interpretation. In its second sense, the Spielraum signifies the power of childhood to perceive or mentally transform the world as a great 'playing field' of desires – the movie *Red Balloon* (1956) by Alfred Lamorisse is a most evocative example of this signification. In its third sense, the Spielraum signifies design responses to the need of children as users to have accessible, creative space, of
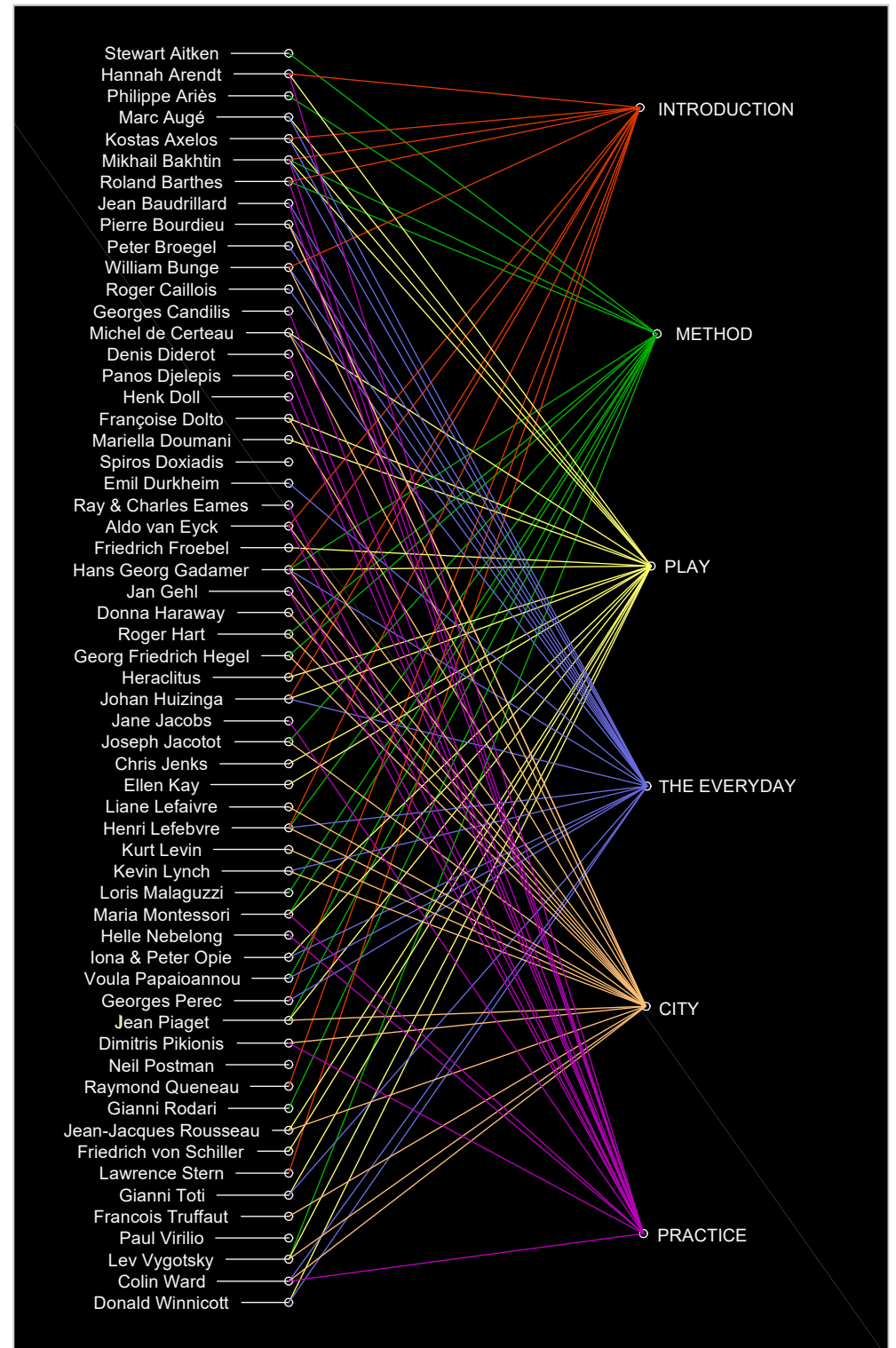
high quality, for play in urban space – the kind of response that Aldo Van Eyck provided in postwar Amsterdam. And finally, as a fourth variation, the Spielraum is the 'crevice' in the system. The scene from Akira Kurosawa's film *Ikiru* (1952) is a token of representation of this signification: the public servant dies while at the swing of the playground he fought all the way through the movie to see it realised.

Transcending epistemological boundaries, the Spielraum is first and foremost a new paradigm for civic praxis. It is the diagrammatic description of an 'other' world, a world in which the spirit of play, of freedom, of creativity, now marginalised by the technocratic production of city space, will guide design; where the city will be taking care of children, because otherwise it would be unworthy of being called a city, to use Aldo van Eyck's (2008) words; and where design will work together with pedagogy to promote new principles and new values, confirming Henri Lefebvre (1991) that there can be no different society without a different space.

PLAYING OUT

Stephen Broadbent (Bradford City Council)

I grew up in a northern mill town in 1980s England. I remember playing out all the time as a kid. Sometimes my friends and I would have a kick-about in the street. Other times we'd wander over to the school fields to see who else was playing out. Or maybe we'd go up to the 'Old Hossy' – a spooky, overgrown woodland on the ruins of the former isolation hospital. We'd climb trees, make dens and find creepy crawlies there. Nowadays kids don't seem to do these things as much. In the UK today only 21% of children play out whilst for their parents the figure was 71%. Parents' three favourite places to play as a kid were the street, the fields and the woods whereas today these places are the least popular, children are much more likely to say 'in my home'. But why is this? Most kids say they would actually prefer to play out. The comic strip looks at what might be going wrong. It follows the ordeals of one of today's kids, James, as he journeys through the urban environment searching for the opportunities to play out which I took for granted just a generation ago.

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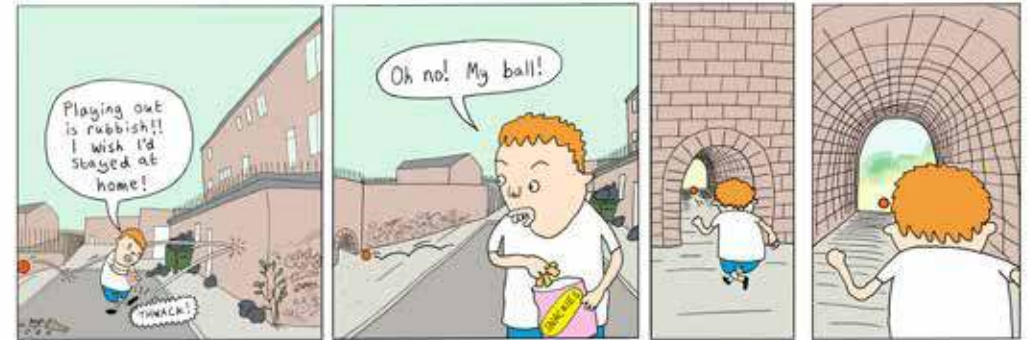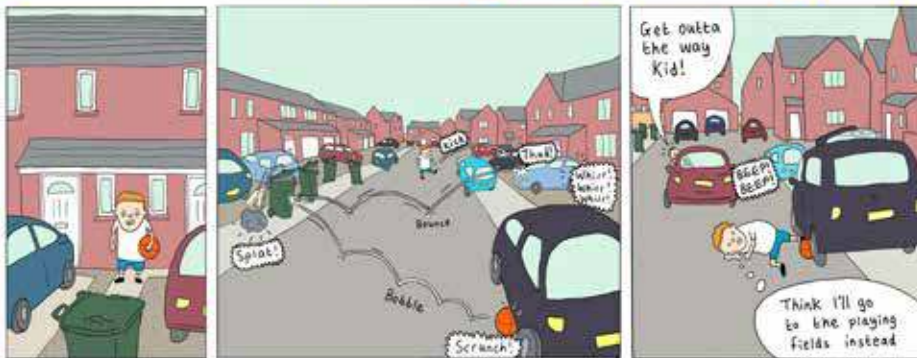
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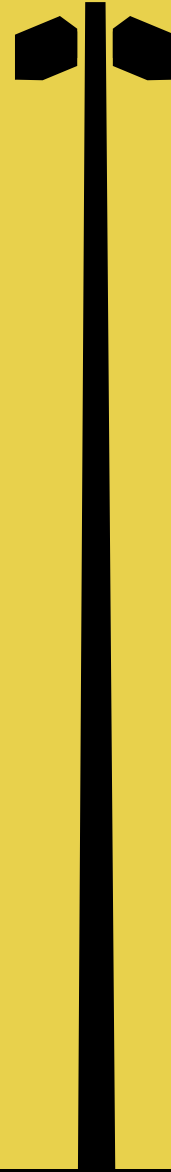
PLAY, URBAN SPACES AND CHILDREN'S CAPABILITIES

Greg Labrosse (Technological University of Bolivar)

THE CHANGING URBAN LANDSCAPE AND CHILDREN'S CAPABILITIES

The experience of childhood is largely defined by the interactions that take place between children and their environments. The word childhood tends to evoke a time of curiosity and exploration, and for the most part, that exploration takes place in the environments where children live and play. For many children in the urban developing world, a number of economic and sociocultural factors impact negatively on the physical and social environment where they grow up. Looking closely at the way children cope with the changing urban landscape can stimulate new ways of understanding the relationship between the built environment and human development.

THE CASE OF LA CANDELARIA

In order to address this issue, we decided to conduct a pilot study with 86 children aged between 8 and 13 years in La Candelaria (Cartagena, Colombia), a low-income neighbourhood with less than 3% of public space dedicated to recreation. Many of these recreation spaces were built for the Central American and Caribbean Games which were held in Cartagena in 2006. The local government decided to improve access to the city's main stadium by building a roadway along the Ciénaga de la Virgen – a body of water which

Aerial view of La Candelaria

receives a large portion of Cartagena's domestic waste. La Candelaria was established in the 1950s as an informal settlement and currently has approximately 13,000 residents.

Our study was centred on the following questions related to the children's play:
– What play affordances does the urban environment offer children?
– In what ways do children use and appropriate the spaces where they play?
– What perceptions do they have of these spaces?

These questions refer to the physical, cultural and psychological factors that affect the quality of children's play. The term affordances refers to the functional possibilities that children perceive in the environment as they interact with it.

Our interviews with the children and our direct observations in the neighbourhood revealed a number of significant findings. Boys and girls showed different preferences, both in terms of types of activities and location of play. For boys, the most frequent place for group activities and sports is the streets of the neighbourhood. They tend to prefer non-formal, open spaces, which allow them to play in larger groups and engage in activities that involve more freedom of movement. Their preferred activities are football and social games that involve running (e.g., hide and seek, tag). Girls, for their part, tend to occupy more intimate spaces (especially the space right in front of their homes), and they play in smaller groups, preferring games related to social activities,

such as rhythmic hand clapping, singing and dancing. Both boys and girls enjoy playing with animals and plants in the patio of their homes where most families of the neighborhood keep pets and livestock.

In our conversations with the children, we were able to appreciate the extent to which their play activities are shaped by the cultural practices and traditions of the community. Fishing in the Ciénaga de la Virgen, for instance, is an activity that many boys do with their fathers during the holidays. Likewise, every August, for example, taking advantage of the beginning of the windy season, children celebrate kite month by flying handmade kites.

Children walking in the neighbourhood street

Children playing in front of their home

THE NEED FOR IMPROVED PLANNING AND PUBLIC POLICY

As much as the traditions present in La Candelaria contribute to the quantity and quality of play affordances, the physical conditions of the children's playscapes are not adequate for healthy development. In particular, the poorly maintained spaces next to the Ciénaga de la Virgen discourage children's exploration of their surroundings, thus limiting the range of play opportunities. In an attempt to create their own opportunities, some children began re-appropriating the space along the water's edge.

Older boys built a makeshift football field next to a recently constructed school, whose building provided them some shade in the afternoon, but the school's administration swiftly dismantled the improvised goals, effectively discouraging and installed a two-meter high fence around the area. As such, children's efforts to create new play opportunities for themselves in the neighbourhood have been discouraged.

Neighbourhoods such as La Candelaria thrive on resourcefulness: the ability of people to respond to their needs with whatever resources they have available. This scarcity of resources fosters a high level of adaptation and produces highly social, creative thinking. However, the neighbourhood and the city must work together to increase the percentage of public space dedicated to recreation, and strengthen the physical, social and cultural services offered to the community's children.

The makeshift football field next to the recently constructed school with subsequent fence

Following pressure from universities and NGOs, Cartagena's local government has established three priorities to promote recreation and play: construction of play centres for early childhood, increase of children's participation in cultural programs and sporting events, and improvement of sports facilities. However, the priorities are solely focused on organised sports, recreational facilities and cultural programs, with no provisions for evaluating the quality of neighbourhood play spaces.

LESSONS LEARNED

Children living in low-income neighbourhoods are confronted by many factors in their social and physical environment that hinder the quality of their play. Yet, there are many lessons to be learned from the way children interact with the built environment. First and foremost, we should carefully observe what happens spontaneously in communities like La Candelaria, in terms of the strategies children adopt to create play opportunities for themselves, and then strengthen these initiatives through planned interventions. We should also pay closer attention to the cultural practices that frame children's play in order to safeguard the practices that foster their development. By doing so, children can participate in the planning process and gain both a valued role within the local community and an increased sense of connectedness with the places where they live and grow.

HOP, SKIP AND MAKE: CREATING CHILD-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT IN DANDORA

Anna Têhlová (Public Space Network)

Dandora is a low-income estate in Nairobi, previously known as a dangerous and dirty no-go zone: unemployed youth often turned to crime and streets and open spaces used to be covered by litter. Moreover, presence of one of the largest unregulated landfills in the world has contributed to its bad reputation. In 2014, a group of residents, who could no longer watch their children play with garbage, decided to change this status quo. They started to transform open spaces surrounded by residential plots, known as courtyards, from dumping sites into clean playgrounds and gardens. A few months after the first spontaneous action by residents, a community-based organisation, mobilising youths around the courtyard system, was officially registered as Dandora Transformation League (DTL).

The work of DTL has led to the emergence of child-friendly environment from three perspectives: design (hardware), use of spaces (software) and organization of functions (orgware).

HARDWARE: HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN FOR CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES

From a design perspective, the community has been part of the design process at three different levels, which have resulted in the creation of child-friendly spaces in the neighbourhood.

Firstly, through the courtyard system, youths regenerate and maintain their courtyards. The system was scaled up to the entire neighbourhood through

Transformation of a dumping space into a playground: before (left) & after (right)

a gamification approach: Changing Faces Competition mobilises youth groups around who does the best public space transformation.[1] There are different categories of judging criteria: one of them is child-friendliness of spaces. The courtyard system has completely changed the face of Dandora: it has become safer, healthier, with many accessible places to play in. Safety has improved mostly due to engaging unemployed youth, many of whom used to be involved in crime, around meaningful activities providing them with income-generating opportunities and regaining the trust of the rest of the community. Youth groups also ensure security of courtyards at night. Furthermore, schools have observed reduction of illnesses among pupils as result of playing in a cleaner and greener environment.

Secondly, Model Street project in partnership between DTL, UN-Habitat and organizations-experts in placemaking and human-centred design, engaged the community in designing their ideal street using Minecraft. During the workshop, children designed gateways representing a welcoming entry to the neighbourhood. The idea was eventually implemented as an innovative public space project.

Thirdly, to better understand how children perceive open spaces, DTL in collaboration with East-Africa Institute (Aga Khan University) has run a series of exercises enabling children to express their feelings about the surrounding spaces. Through drawing, card-sorting and photography, children show elements they like and dislike in their space. The biggest concern brought up by children were dark corners and desire to have more street lightening in the area. They also mentioned abandoned cars take up play space and would like to improve the neighbourhood by painting streets, planting flowers and introducing more dust bins. The results are used to inform design of spaces to create a genuine child-enabling environment in the neighbourhood.

Proposal for Gateways in Dandora designed by Cave architects. The idea was introduced by children during Minecraft design workshops. The gateways are also called "Floating Zebra" and apart from beautifying the community, the innovative design also promotes road safety.

SOFTWARE: EMERGENCE OF SAFE AND VIBRANT STREETS

Participatory design process and regeneration of public spaces have changed usage of the spaces: drop of criminality and cleanliness of spaces have increased social interactions, even in evening hours. Few years ago, nobody would walk in streets after sunset. Nowadays, parents allow children to play outside until 8pm or later.

The regenerated model street has become a vibrant pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly public space that even serves as a playground for children. The street resembles to a pedestrian zone: due to a relatively low car ownership in the neighbourhood and speed bumps, cars are limited and drive slowly.

ORGWARE: MULTIFUNCTIONALITY OF PLACES

Both courtyards and streets are multifunctional spaces. Model Street is the best example: it is a place where people interact around economic and social activities; mobility is only one of many functions. People shop in kiosks skirting the street or at street vendors' walking and sitting around; women make bead bracelets sitting on the street and talking with their peers; children run, cycle and even roller-skate: one resident has opened a small business to hire roller-skates and give lessons.

In addition to these everyday activities, DTL has been programming events to activate the street: movie screenings or Building Parties, during which community cleans the street, plants the trees and paints the facades. Children are the most

Children want to have more nicely designed rubbish bins to keep the street clean

Children clean, cycle and play during the Building Party

Children paint game patterns on the Model Street

active during these events and music with bouncing castle fills the street up with children. Currently, DTL is painting game patterns such as hop, skip and jump on the street and discussing with public authorities the closure of the street for motorised vehicles every Saturday for children to play in completely safe conditions.

Inside courtyards, functions of spaces can vary throughout the day: during the day, the space is a playground for children (some schools pay the youths maintaining the courtyard to use the space as a school playground) and at night, it becomes a parking. A right organization of functions maximises benefits of spaces for the whole community and the productive function of spaces ensures their sustainability.

CONCLUSIONS

Our case demonstrates that community-led transformations of public spaces have a great potential to create child-friendly environment. Through placemaking activities, DTL implements a comprehensive approach to public space regeneration, addressing design, use and organization of functions of spaces. All three perspectives are complementary and crucial to create places that respond to the needs of users – and children in particular.

DTL has not only transformed the neighbourhood, it has transformed mindsets. Unemployed youths were shown they can also become changemakers and improve their environment. Children need to be perceived as the key changemakers and provided with space to share their perceptions and suggest ideas. Children are often the best innovators and it is easier to change mindsets of children than adults. By engaging children in public space regeneration, we can create child-enabling environment and grow a next generation of responsible citizens.

NOTES

1. Dandora Transformation League received Dubai International Award for Best Practices 2017 in the category Best Practice Transfer Award in Local Implementation – Urban redevelopment and redesign of urban spaces for its courtyard system for management of public spaces.

THE POWER OF PLAY: CHILD-LED PLACEMAKING IN PARKS

Heidi Campbell & Amal Musa (Evergreen)

Places that allow children to shape their everyday environments and connect to the natural world are critically absent in Ontario's urban areas. Community greening projects can create the opportunity for children to actively participate in changing the urban landscape.

Children have a strong desire to interact with and shape their environments. In an effort to have their voices heard in the making of great public places, Evergreen invited children to become city builders and participate in an initiative called Neighbourhood Nature Play. This initiative is significantly changing the landscape of play in the City of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. The following case study provides a glimpse into some of the key factors and conditions that allow for a child-centered approach to neighbourhood placemaking.

PARTNERSHIPS

Prior to the launch of Neighbourhood Nature Play, Evergreen had established trusted relationships with the following key stakeholders - the City of Kitchener, the Waterloo Region District School Board, and the Lyle. S. Hallman Family Foundation (an esteemed local philanthropic organisation). Over a 4-year period we worked with communities to steward parklands and transform barren school grounds into vibrant places for play and learning.

In 2016 Evergreen, along with the aforementioned partners, launched the

Neighbourhood Nature Play Initiative - a two-year program that is transforming two underserved parks – Gzowski Park and Kingsdale Park – into flourishing community hubs and nature-rich play environments for children. The goals of the project are aligned with the City's new Neigbourhood Strategy "Love My Hood". This strategy implements the overarching themes *of great places, connected people and working together.* The success of the project is built on strategic partnerships in the community and alignment with existing City initiatives. In recognition of this approach to collaborative city building, the project just recently received 150K from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, a large provincial funder whose support will help to expand the Neighbourhood Nature Play model and build capacity for programming in additional park sites in the City of Kitchener.

CO-DESIGN: SPACES TO PLACES

Children as Experts
Evergreen uses animation and co-design methods to plan, program, design, implement, and steward child-centered nature-play environments. A significant component to the Neighbourhood Nature Play Initiative centered on engaging the community through interventions in the parks. These interventions included family events, festivals, and regularly scheduled nature programs. During such interventions, Evergreen worked closely with community center staff, youth groups, and neighbourhood associations to ensure that the children's voices were amplified and their ideas included in the park planning and transformation process. A key strategy to engage children in the ideation of the park spaces was to provide regular programming in the parks hosted by Evergreen Play Animators. This opportunity for 'free play' in a safe place in the community provided the necessary contact with children to ignite the co-design process.

Evergreen Play Animators are specialists in child-directed outdoor play. Animators provide year-round nature play programming to the general public through part-time, weekend and after-school programs, as well as to schools and childcare centres through weekday programming. As a result, Gzowski Park and Kingsdale Park are being transformed through staged interventions into both the physical landscape of the park and the programming that animates it.

Park design events – programs, festivals and BBQs to gather input

THE BIRTH OF THE 'DEAD FOREST'

At Gzowski Park, children have been leading the co-design of a small mini-forest they call the 'dead forest'. The neglected and sparsely forested landscape became an opportunity for the children to re-imagine the forest as their own – a place they could manipulate, change, and steward to meet their needs. The children worked with wooden planks, re-purposed textiles, logs, stumps, tree limbs, and ropes to re-imagine the space. This free play and 'loose parts' approach transformed the place from forgotten to memorable. Children built forts and gathering areas, co-created mini-villages and began a narrative about their new forest home.

The dead forest and loose parts fort building
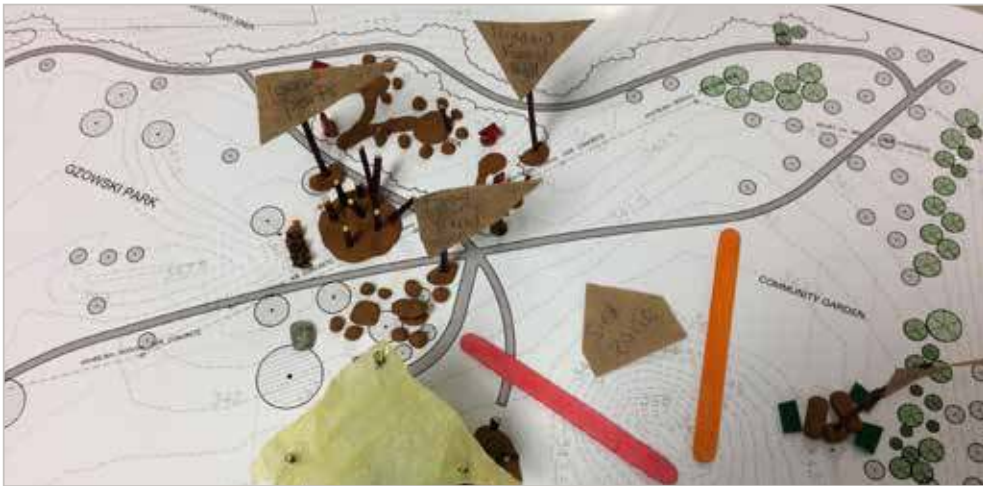
ENGAGING SCHOOLS

Nearby schools were engaged in placemaking activations in the parks and participated in a class-by-class visual preference exercise and a 'dot-mocracy' process. Students were encouraged to select their more desired features and discuss their preferences in class. Children reported that they'd never been asked for their input on what happens in their city and witnessed their ideas incorporated into the park concept designs. Over a thousand children participated in this ideation exercise.

RECOGNISING THE COMMUNITY AS THE EXPERTS

Placemaking events geared towards children and their families were planned in the parks to collect the information required to advance the design planning. Feasts, nature-themed games, and outdoor design workshops were held where adults and children were invited to co-create their desired park space. Clay and natural materials were used to build models on the park maps. At each event more than 150 participants were engaged. One participant shared that they'd never participated in a family event in the park that involved so many different age groups and that was geared toward park improvements.

"I love it here! When I grow up I'm going to make a spot just like this. I'm going to be a nature guy and make a place just for kids; I'll call it Nature Zone!" - child

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Through a strategic locally-based partnership model, the Neighbourhood Nature Play program has made a significant impact in the lives of the children of Gzowski and Kingsdale parks. As a result, the City of Kitchener is altering their approach to park planning, development, and programming in favour of a more child-centered placemaking approach. The response from the communities has been overwhelmingly positive, leading the city to commit to systems improvements and program augmentations.

By working with the city of Kitchener to co-create better public spaces for children and their families, Evergreen hopes to improve children's access to the planning, design, and development of public parks across the Kitchener Waterloo Region. Evergreen's long-term goal is to invite cities across Canada to engage in this approach to child-friendly placemaking.

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LESSONS LEARNED

1. **Connect –** Engage children where they are – parks, community centers, schools, and listen deeply to what they are saying about their public spaces and reflect these perspectives in the programming and design of their city. Respect children as citizens, honour their right to participate and honestly engage them in every stage of the process. Empathise with a broad range of park users and build on the communities' strengths, needs, hopes and dreams. Find ways to align with a city's vision, strategic direction, and emerging public space policies.

2. **Communicate –** Build trust with city staff through consistent and meaningful contact. Engage diverse groups of people and provide information in a variety of languages. Be present in the community and cognizant of the ways in which children, their families, and caregivers connect to the community and receive information.

3. **Iterate –** Define co-design and develop trust through wise use of resources and prototyping of ideas to achieve quick wins. Create space for testing children's ideas – be flexible, let the making of the place emerge out of community programming. Host festivals, BBQs, movie nights, and public meetings in the parks and provide food and childcare to help families participate in co-design exercises. Be sure to celebrate your successes by engaging with local newspapers, radio and social media.

SHAPING SPACES FOR GENERATION Z

Gregor H. Mews & Aline Peres dos Santos (Urban Synergies Group)

Urban living in the early part of the 21st century has not been good for children and young people. A recent global study on obesity confirmed that the rising trends in children's and adolescent's Body Mass Index (BMI)[1] "have finally plateaued in many high-income countries, although at high levels, but have accelerated in low and mid-level income countries, especially in parts of Asia" (Abarca-Gómez et al., 2017). In consequence, serious cardio-metabolic disorders and mental health issues such as depression have been on the rise in adolescence and in early adulthood (Herrington & Brussoni, 2015; Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000; Salmon, Owen, Crawford, Bauman, & Sallis, 2003; Tremblay et al., 2015).

Urban systems are often described as 'overcrowded, unsafe and polluted environments which provide little room for learning, play and recreation' (Malone, 2001, p. 9). Traffic congestion is on the rise, public open spaces are increasingly contested, and perceived shift in safety prevents children from exploring the city on their terms (Tranter, 2006, 2014; Wyver et al., 2010). Studies confirm that living in high rise buildings is linked to increased level of physical inactivity, behavioural disorders as well as respiratory illnesses in children (Evans, Wells, Chan, & Saltzman, 2000; Jackson, 2003; Lowe, Boulange, & Giles-Corti, 2014; Wells, 2000).

When joining the dots, it becomes apparent that we are starting to collectively pay a high price - socially and public health wise. In order to overcome some of these challenges, our neighbourhoods must go through a series of transformational changes that can lead to improved environments for and with children (Hart, 2013; Mews, 2014). A collective paradigm shift is required in order to create opportunities for children to safely access

natural open space systems and public spaces, and to promote independent active mobility and free play.

Our case study presents a holistic method that includes a broad range of key actors while focusing on promoting children's rights, including meaningful engagement in shaping healthy spaces for our common future.

In close collaboration with UN-Habitat World Urban Campaign and the Health Research Institute from the University of Canberra, we (Urban Synergies Group) hosted an Urban Thinkers Campus in 2017. The following summarises our findings and agreed actions.

Participants from 39 organisations identified three key themes:
1. Children and the built environment
2. Design around children's health
3. Play.

CHILDREN AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The relationship between children and their environment is well understood, and concerted actions on local level are needed to enable better outcomes for children (Freeman & Tranter, 2011; Moore, 1986). Identified actions include: awareness raising programs on child-friendly spaces and places can lead to socially inclusive cities. Well-designed safe routes around schools achieved by speed reduction and educated lifestyles allowing children's play to be prioritised. This also includes imaginative and pleasant transit stops with facilities and infrastructure provision that is child/family friendly.

DESIGNS AROUND CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Design only works when it addresses the practical and true needs of the end user. Co-design processes that translate into meaningful engagement when children hold the power of making a decision (Hart, 1979; Shier, 2001; United Nation, 1989). Effective change requires a shift of social norm, which can only be achieved through awareness and education (Tranter, 2006; Tranter & Sharpe, 2007).

Identified actions include: playspaces and equipment for all ages, co-designed best practice learning from overseas. This can be accomplished by the introduction of weekend pop-up road closures, e.g. Reclaiming the streets initiative – introducing temporary play spaces for all. Co-designed opportunities in government processes and community-based initiatives can empower children. Creative "Kids at Play" signage, designed by the communities can be used on local streets to promote speed reduction, fostering unique community characteristics to emerge.

PLAY

Through play, children make sense of the world in which they live. Sufficient evidence suggests that play has self-therapeutic potentials and positive impact on health and well-being not just for children (van Leeuwen & Westwood, 2008).

Identified actions include: the school as the heart of the neighbourhood needs to be invigorated (Perry, 1998) with safe and connected routes to and from school where play is possible. Within school environments opportunities for movement supported by loose play material and equipment (Bundy et al., 2011). Raising awareness amongst adults on the importance of play in its own right, coordinated efforts help the delivery through a coordinated effort by the local government.

HOLISTIC APPROACH TO CHILD-FRIENDLY CITIES

In order to deliver tangible actions to stop unhealthy trends, the roles of key actor groups were brainstormed and defined, and these roles can be accessed in the outcome report "Shaping Spaces for Gen Z – International Forum Report" (Mews G., Cochrane T., & Davey R,. 2017). In conclusion, we discovered that by focusing on tangible actions that benefit the most vulnerable users of our cities we could have a better chance of creating safe and healthy cities for all.

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A BLANK CANVAS FOR THE KIDS OF KALOBEYEI

Catherine Witt (registered architect)

The settlement in Kalobeyei, Kenya presents unique conditions for child-friendly urban space since it was established in 2016. While economics, demographics, and humanitarian management present formidable hurdles to implementation, the spatial masterplan assures accessibility of such spaces throughout the site. Due to the nascent physical state of site development, formal hardware solutions have yet to be defined, thus it is useful to highlight the informal uses of space thus far that can be formally incorporated in the future. Given that 67% of the population is below the age of 18, children and teenagers can play a powerful role in this process.

SPATIAL MASTER PLAN

The impetus for Kalobeyei Settlement is the continuous stream of first-time asylum seekers from South Sudan, as well as decongestion of two other refugee camps in Kenya. Kalobeyei's 1500 hectare spatial master plan is intended to house 60,000 residents. The project has a distinctive goal to economically, physically, and socially integrate refugees from seven African nations with the local, long-marginalized Turkana tribe. A self-sustaining town is to be maintained through partnership of Turkana County ministries, the Kenyan Refugee Affairs Secretariat, and the residents themselves - who are often an under-tapped resource.

KALOBEYEI SETTLEMENT POPULATION BY AGE

AGE	POPULATION	% OF TOTAL
Years 0-4	7,366	19%
Years 5-11	11,284	30%
Years 12-17	6,922	18%
Years 18+	12,460	33%

The Urban Planning and Design Branch of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) developed the plan following global principles of city design, in alignment with Kenyan Physical Planning Guidelines and UNHCR Emergency Handbook Guidance. Land use designation includes 25 early childhood development (ECD) centers, 13 primary schools, three secondary schools, 36 recreation zones, eight child-friendly spaces (CFS), eight feeding centers, and 16 plots for community or worship centres. The facilities are adjacent to public spaces and 200-300 meters from major circulation arteries. Fortunately for pedestrian safety, automobile traffic will remain extremely low through these areas for the foreseeable future, as refugees are not permitted to own motorized vehicles. To provide additional space for sport, leisure and agriculture, all primary schools are situated adjacent to the green corridors.

CHALLENGES

Until self-sufficiency amongst residents is reached, operations will be substantially supported by 30+ national and international aid organizations, requiring large coordination. The first facilities of each kind serve the entire population of residents, therefore use and breakage is high. For example, the first three swing-sets in the settlement were shared amongst the entire child population of 25,500, and are in constant use every hour of the day. It is important to educate residents on the benefits for childrens' ownership of the space. Children are the most likely culprits of vandalism, and the repeated destruction of notices on community noticeboards pushed NGOs to abandon this method of information distribution. Thus, one agency created school environmental clubs to educate children on the values of tree planning and regularly cleaning rubbish from public spaces.

Stakeholder syntax offers a window into humanitarian and local mindset. A subtlety was discovered while engaging residents on shared spaces. "Public" implies unguarded and exposed land, whereas "community" zones are protected and defined by physical barriers. In one project, partners found they received greater enthusiasm from the local people by referring to the plot of

KALOBEYEI EDUCATION AND RECREATION PLAN
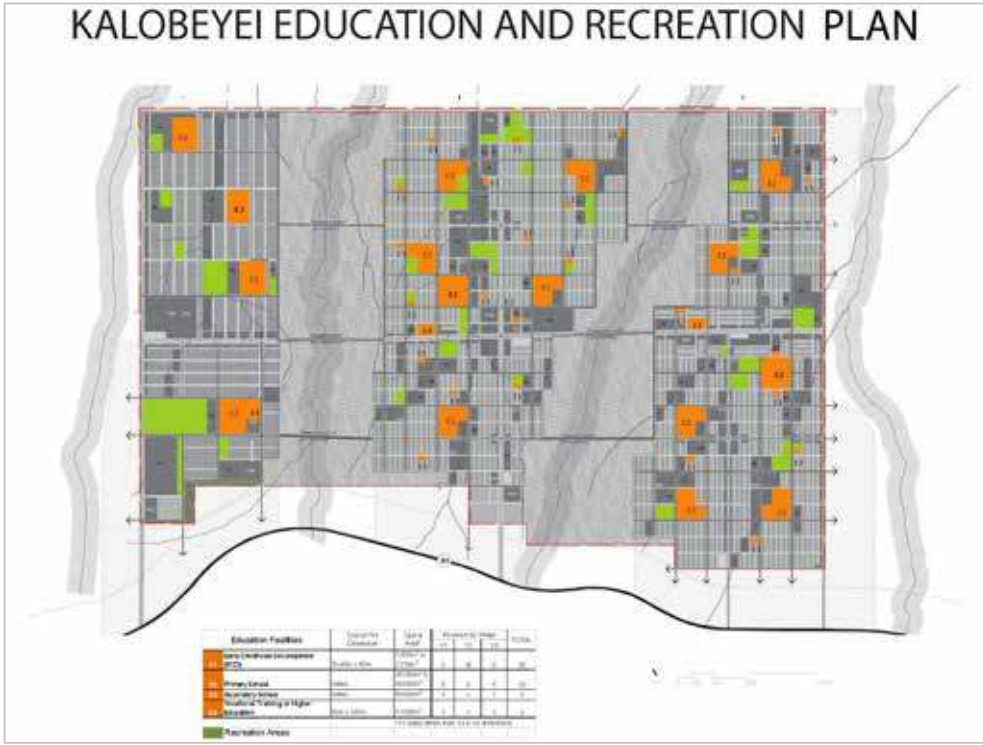
Handmade toys, made from trash and construction refuse.

Tree as structure and roof for a shared leisure space.

land as communal rather than public. Given this perception of safety and vast unbounded spaces of the settlement, children are most often found playing very close to their homes, and usually with mothers nearby. Street lighting infrastructure has focused on commercial and mixed-use areas, meaning that outdoor play essentially stops at sun-set.

CHILDREN-DRIVEN DESIGN

Thus far, only a third of the schools have been completed with permanent construction, and most of the CFS and ECD spaces have yet to be built. Despite a disparity of investment in CFS, children's eyes see many opportunities for fun in the landscape. As children are regular observers on the numerous construction sites, this is an inspiration for them to create their own handicrafts. Trash and construction refuse are often harvested by boys and girls for handmade toys. Informal play space includes the pile of sand on one construction site, the water-filled concrete troughs at the community water points, and a steep hillside path in Kalobeyei Town, down which Turkana children slide on pieces of cardboard.

Many residents do not hesitate to customize unclaimed elements of the landscape for their own. Children have improvised their own swings on the branches of neighborhood trees. The ubiquitous Mathenge tree offers shaded play space just to the scale of children. In a wide open field, a tree becomes the structure and roof for a shared leisure space with repurposed packaging materials create walls for privacy and protection from dust.

In 2017, the UN-Habitat began design of the first transportation station in the Settlement. UN-Habitat held a five-day workshop on Minecraft, a computer game that allows users to create and arrange one-meter cubes into three-dimensional massing. The student teams each presented their projects, and a final design was delivered. These designs were compiled to create a final

site scheme for construction. Youth then participated in painting playground equipment, weaving rope to create a shading device, and gathering stones for curb construction.

Designers must simultaneously please donors who expect colorful, playful spaces for children, as well as provide for commonplace elements that the site lacks and which residents long for. The design charette underscored the hurdles to human comfort in the severe climate, remote location and physical expanse of Kalobeyei. Bathrooms, paved walkways, and trash cans may not dazzle donors who are accustomed to visiting sites with such existing infrastructures, yet these features were requested consistently by teenage youth. Design professionals can take this as a provocation to make toilets or tarmac a feature rather than accessory to the site.

MINECRAFT DESIGNS' TOP FEATURES

1. Seating
2. Street Lights
3. Public Toilets
4. Paved footpaths
5. Playground
6. Shrubbery
7. Trees
8. Grass
9. Flowers
10. Garbage Bins

TAKING ACTION FOR CHILD FRIENDLY PLACES

Jonna Monaghan & Sonia Langasco (Belfast Healthy Cities)

Taking Action for Child Friendly Places is an inter-sectoral action plan based on extensive engagement with children across Belfast and is the first time such a focus has been put on children and the built environment in Belfast. A key driver for the Child Friendly Places Programme was the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which establishes a right for children to both have access to a supportive environment, and be heard in decisions that affect them. A review of Northern Ireland policy also identified limited mechanisms for engaging children in decision making, especially for children aged under 13. About 7000 children and families were directly engaged with using innovative methods to identify priorities to create the action plan which sets out partners' responsibilities under the following areas: Engaging and Empowering Children; Creating Healthier Places and Supportive Environments; and, Tools for Child Centred Spatial Planning and Design.

INTRODUCING CHILD FRIENDLY ENGAGEMENT MODELS

The first engagement model developed under the Plan, between 2011 and 2014, was Shaping Healthier Neighbourhoods for Children, a project which engaged 400 children through schools to explore their experience of their local environment. The model included class-based sessions exploring healthy environments, a walk in the local neighbourhood, where children photographed what they liked and did

not like, and a final imagining session to share ideas, prioritise and visualise an agreed proposal. The Photovoice method was used to encourage and enable children of all abilities to participate, and the process resulted in presentations highlighting children's ideas of how their local neighbourhood could become more child friendly. Events were organised to give children the opportunity to present their ideas directly to senior policy and local government decision makers. This was and remains a fundamental element of the Belfast approach to child friendly places, which aims not only to increase understanding of children's needs among planners, but above all strengthen opportunities for children to directly influence decision making. On this project, collaboration with the local Education Authority was critical in building relationships with schools and aligning the model with the National Curriculum.

In 2015, in response to feedback this model was developed into a dynamic Primary School teaching resource, in partnership again with the Education Authority, the Public Health Agency and Northern Ireland Housing Executive. This Healthy Places, Healthy Children resource has been piloted with over 20 schools and has resulted in numerous proposals, developed by children

KidsSpace event at Belfast City Hall

and presented to decision makers, being brought to life. As this engagement tool embraces the principles of co-creation children have ownership of their outcomes.

Creatively introducing child friendly environments is also a key element of the Child Friendly Places programme. The KidsSpace model is a pop up child friendly space, which explores how existing public space can become more child friendly, and how this benefits regeneration, particularly in the city centre. KidsSpace has engaged with over 7,000 children and adults through 20 events since 2011, and has demonstrated the potential impact of small scale changes. Each free, accessible and staffed event allows for engagement with children and families, through props, art and informal conversation, around their priorities and ideas for child friendly space in the City. Engagement particularly garnered children's insights into improving open and green spaces, the city's streets including empty spaces and, what a child friendly city should feel like, as well as look like. Evaluation showed that a dedicated space is not required to make children feel like Belfast is their City too, simply more creative and interactive uses of the existing environment.

The KidsSpace model has influenced thinking in Belfast on programming space and impacts on the City at Eye Level criteria for Great Streets and Plinths around Programme Variety allowing for both temporary activity and physical and play opportunities for families.

Children using the Healthy Places, Healthy Children resource to explore their local neighbourhood

PROGRESSING THE MODELS

Work is now focusing on integrating engagement with children in policy and decision making processes. This will ensure children can continue to express their views and influence decisions about their environment particularly in relation to the City at Eye level approaches to Street and Place i.e. user comfort, programme variety, visual quality, and walkability through designing and progressing projects to be active, interact and play, enjoy green space, visually enhance spaces, improve street safety and cleanliness and participate in a rich community life.

Belfast Healthy Cities and the Education Authority are now developing Healthy Places, Healthy Children into an online resource to enable schools across Northern Ireland to use this teaching and engagement tool. Belfast City Council are considering child friendly elements in the regeneration of the city centre, and parks and areas of 'meanwhile use' i.e. temporarily empty spaces that can be used to maintain a city's vibrancy across Belfast now run Family Fun days which incorporate elements of KidsSpace.

CONCLUSION

The Child Friendly Places programme has developed two practical engagement models that have helped put children higher on the agenda of the built environment sector and provided a structured platform for dialogue between children and decision makers.

As the methodology for developing and delivering both models has been validated through comprehensive evaluation these tools could be practically implemented across other cities. In consideration of learning, those adopting the Healthy Places, Healthy Children model should ensure: the teaching resource is adapted and introduced in partnership with relevant education authorities to secure full commitment from schools; appropriate relationships are in place to give children a voice to present proposals to the most relevant decision makers; and, mechanisms are established to fully support children to progress their proposals and drive change in their own neighbourhoods.

EVERYDAY PLAYFULNESS AS DEVELOPMENT FOR URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Leticia Lozano (Playful City) & Brenda Vértiz (Peatoniños)

Laboratorio para la Ciudad is Mexico City's government experimental and creative office, whose "Playful City"[1] action research strategy focuses on understanding how play and playfulness can reconfigure urban imaginaries and provoke citizens to take an active role in the city-making processes. In particular by designing and implementing different projects and tools to establish children's perspective as a central factor in urban planning and public policy design. Playful City aims to prove that play can have an impact reactivating underused spaces, instigating alternative forms of resilience, enhancing everyday learning and ways of inhabiting the city, and ultimately regenerating the urban fabric.

Mexico City is home to 2 million 363 thousand 748 children[2], more than the entire population of central Paris. They represent 26.7% of the city proper population, growing up to almost 5 million children in the metropolitan area. Despite the evident relevance of this population, advocating for planning cities for urban childhoods and from a playful perspective can be a challenge as adults are generally unaware of their adult-centric way of thinking. In Mexico, children are regarded as part of the so-called vulnerable population and not as rights holders, consequently influencing the way decision makers think about them within the public sphere, affecting the hardware

and orgware of their urban experience. The general belief is that safe places for children are either inner or fenced and designed specifically to fulfil a largely stereotyped representation of what play should look like.

Aware of this situation Playful City developed a thorough revision[3] of Mexico City's laws and manuals regarding urban development and its relation to spaces traditionally "built for children". The research's key findings showed how the direct relation between adults' misconception of play, the environment's hostility present around the city and its car–oriented model, is threatening children's cognitive and physical development.[4] On an urban scale this can be reflected on the uneven distribution, poor quality and socially-imposed restrictions of public and play spaces. The following strategies presented below (amongst other projects) spotlight the situation in a bottom-up approach and aim to reclaim cities for children and play.

PEATONIÑOS I PEATONIÑAS

Peatoniños is a wordplay in Spanish that combines the terms pedestrian and boy or girl and it stands for the children that walk. Using "Liberating the streets for children and play" as its main motto, Peatoniños' is a project responding to the lack of open play spaces and green areas in marginalised areas that have a high population of children. The project consists on planning, designing and implementing playstreets developed under community centered design methodologies, urban analysis through GIS tools and pedagogical approaches to the right to play and the city. These playstreets aim at producing physical manifestations of alternative street uses, demonstrating the social fabric and interactions beyond the spatial paradigms of the city's car-oriented model. By approaching each playstreet as a design iteration, proving different hypothesis to serve as a baseline for the next one, Peatoniños builds a set of local knowledge and social relations that can, ultimately help develop the tools and networks to direct the project in two directions. The first one, a community driven and self-organised set of playstreets; and second, an ongoing public program adopted by Mexico City's government.

JUGUETES URBANOS (URBAN TOYS)

Urban Toys[5] can be described as a public competition to design temporary playful interventions, focusing on reactivating underused public spaces located in proximity of high population of children, and promote by exemplifying, the importance of children's participation in the design of their surrounding urban environments.
The competition's guidelines were previously co-designed —through a series of workshops—, with children who live nearby three chosen

sites, to identify areas of improvement on the spaces, and design their ideal play scape. The participants of the competition had the challenge to design an urban toy following children's ideas, addressing site-specific problems, and embracing the spirit of an urban toy being an open exploration of new urban shapes and playful possibilities that defy the conventional plastic jungle gyms. Parallel to the interventions[6], an impact assessment analysis is being carried out to understand if the dynamics of public life change, and the effect play and playfulness have on improving social cohesion and the communal perception, ultimately leading to the appropriation of the spaces. Urban Toys seeks to be a replicable methodology that can be used in other cities to advocate for the importance of play in urban communities.

LESSONS FROM PLAYING IN MEXICO CITY

Peatoniños and Juguetes Urbanos have allowed, both adults and children, to re-discover the street and the city as a playful experience and re-engage in a playful mindset. So far, the most successful strategy to achieve this, has been to design bottom-up mechanisms by collaborating with key actors from the community and acknowledging that every context is different, even within the same city. However, to generate a city-wide change, the prototypes need to balance action-research, knowledge and data-driven measurements to demonstrate the impact of play in order to be translated into evidence-based policy. For the Playful City strategy the streets and the urban environment are places where play, initially guided by children, can break with the established order and help to re-create the city with the resources at hand.

NOTES

1. Lab for the City is home to five research areas: Open City, Creative City, Pedestrian City, Playful City and Proposed City, see more at: http://labcd.mx/
2. REDIM 2015, La infancia cuenta en México 2015, México: 2015. More at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3sUkR6njKcVNV83ZVdiZHhrazQ/view
3. Play the City: Reimagining urban play spaces for Mexico City's childhood is a publication developed in collaboration with PhD Tuline Gülgönen as the 2016/2017's project for the Center for Mexican and Central American Studies (CEMCA). The research identified the challenges play spaces face, mapped out the government areas involved in their creation,

drafted a series of public policy recommendations and developed an evaluation tool to be used by children.
4. CONAPRA 2013. Cervantes T., A., Rosas O., S.R., González G., D.A. (2013). Tercer informe sobre la situación de la seguridad vial, México 2013. Primera edición. p. 46. Consultado en: http://conapra.salud.gob.mx/Interior/Documentos/Observatorio/3erInforme_Ver_ImpresionWeb.pdf
5. Urban Toys was developed in collaboration with the Historic Center Authority.
6. Out of 86 entries, three interventions were selected, by a panel of experts, to be constructed (one on each site). The winner interventions were featured in Archdaily.

# BUILDING A CHILD-DEVELOPING PLAY SPACE IN CAIRO THROUGH LISTENING TO CHILDREN

Aliaa Maged Kamal (German University in Cairo)

INTRODUCTION AND USED CONCEPTS

This chapter discusses outdoor play areas in Cairo, Egypt, from children's point of view. The aim of the study was to improve the play-area design in Cairo, by reconsidering the design approach and making suitable changes based on listening to children and their proposals. Overall, the focal point would be understanding that children don't necessarily use objects as they have been originally designed, as they have their own perspective and can see play potential in objects that adults do not.

It has been noticed that outdoor play is disappearing from our world today. Nowadays, play is commonly in seats behind screens and virtual spaces, which has physical and psychological effects and does not compensate benefits of outdoor play. (Tovey, 2007).

The design of play areas is the number one cause for this, whether it is unattractive, dangerous, wrongly located, or not maintained. But a greater problem is that it usually is NOT what children really want. (Beunderman et al., 2007). Traditional playgrounds make children segregated in a place with non-moveable play equipment with no opportunity for discovery and experimentation. These spaces don't offer children opportunities to be creative in their play. (Ball, 2011).
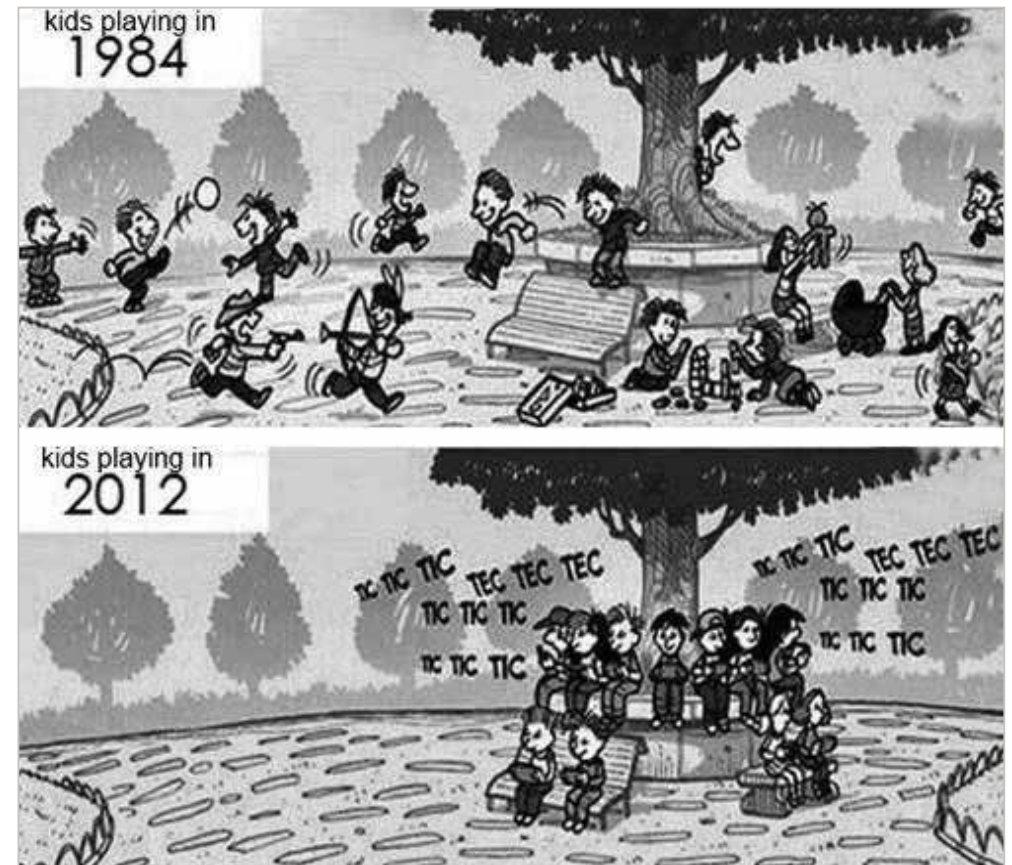
Children Playing in The Past and Nowadays

THE EGYPTIAN CASE

A quick look at any Egyptian city's urban fabric will clearly show the lack of public parks and gardens in residential neighbourhoods. Numbers refer that open areas range between 1.2% and 4.6 % of the total city area. Due to this 40-50% of Egyptian children don't find an interesting area to play and tend to stay at home and watch television or rather play on streets, facing all types of physical, social and behavioural dangers, (Thoraya, 2010).

This is due to the limited options provided, especially for those who are unable to pay much for their children to play, as the majority of play opportunities require relatively expensive admission fees. This availability problem is related to the fact that most areas grow gradually according to growth in population and not upon previous planning. However, it is not only a quantity problem but additionally the design of these areas requires a specialised team of architects, landscapers and child playscape designers. This is rarely an option. (Thoraya, 2010). Consequently, the results are mostly traditional boring sandpits with metal structures.

INVOLVING CHILDREN

Another noticeable problem is that adults generally take decisions on behalf of children and believe that children are not good enough to decide for themselves. (CABE Space and CABE Education, 2004). Unfortunately planners see that participation gets in the way of making rational decisions. Yet, in reality, it is a rational decision to involve children as they are the client and user of space. Considering the fact that children differ physically, cognitively, and emotionally, this equally means that their perspective is also different from adults. They learn through senses and experiences. Children should have the opportunity to create their own activities and adults should present a supportive role.

CASE DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The current design method starts with play providers leafing through equipment catalogues with a 'let's have one of those' attitude. (Tovey, 2007). This only leads to stimulating gross motor skills, if any, while a quality play area involves developing other skills. When we start designing a play space we need to ask ourselves:
– What do we want this place to look and feel like?
– What makes a good place for children and why?

Hereby, listening to children is the way to reveal what children think, what they like, dislike, and how they see urban spaces. Their participation in design decisions and forming their own physical world has to be revealed through methods other than adult observations. Additionally, it is not only about spoken words, aside to traditional interviews and questionnaires, but also art-based activities like photography, map drawing, task-based methods (worksheets, diagrams, photographs, drawings, etc.) are more interesting to children and reduces pressure of an uncomfortable interview on them. A group of 20 children aged between 6 and 8 years participated in workshops in three traditional play areas in Cairo as sites, listening to the children and watching them play, as shown in the sketch below.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM CHILDREN

Watching the children play supported theories that natural elements, elevated places and loose play parts encourage activities that have physical, social and cognitive benefits.

Listening to the children clarified that playing outdoors is more fun for them than playing indoors as they can perform a wider range of activities. They considered natural elements essential in the play area, not as a play potential but rather a background to play structures that they believed to have more purposes than their original designated and designed purpose. This was also reiterated in their drawings.
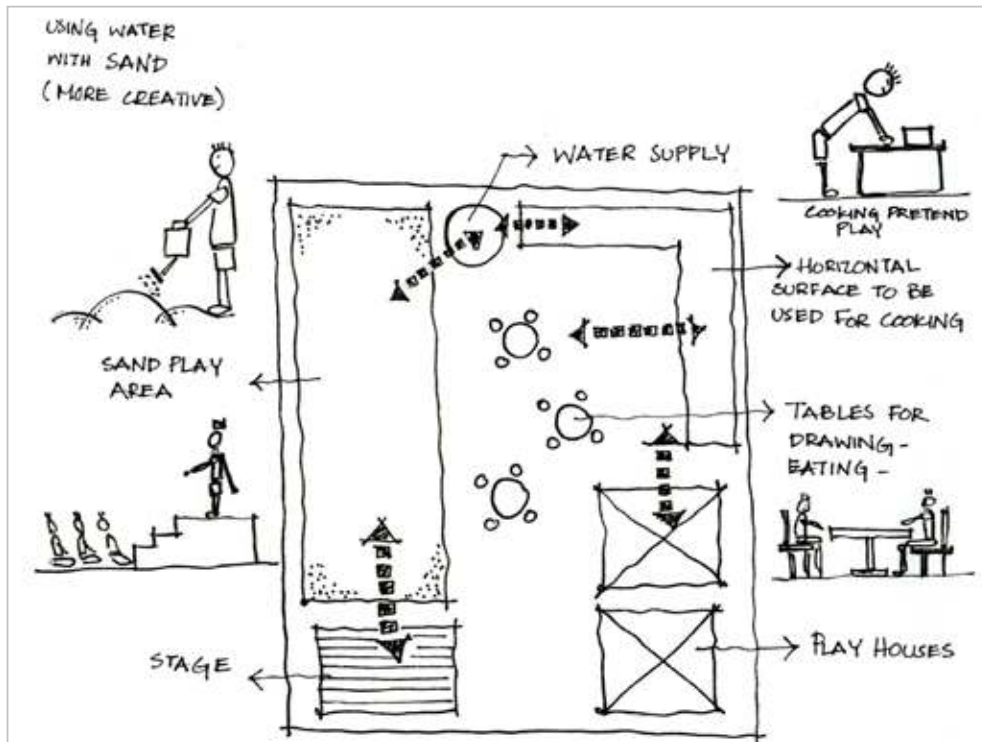
When it came to dislikes, some mentioned safety issues, falling from trees or playing on sand that contains small rocks and gets in their shoes, or exposed

Play Site

Children Drawing

Zoning Children's Suggestions

nails and non-maintained objects. Others discussed the quality of play on objects they found to be too boring, which mainly were swings and seesaws, not challenging enough, made for younger children or were too scary. A child mentioned wishing for a place to play freely and set up his own rules.

The case where children use objects in a way other than it was originally designed-for was noticed several times. They could use the seesaw as a balance beam and walk on it, or even play in areas not designed for play. A group of children were found to play with the cleaning equipment as they found this more interesting to do than play on the designed structures. Another boy was using the fence ropes to climb and swing on them, essentially neglecting all of the playing equipment.

As a final mission of the study, children were given the opportunity to openly suggest new ideas and features they crave, as their involvement produces innovative play areas and builds a sense of ownership to the place and increases self-confidence. Amongst their suggestions were natural elements; water, trees and animals as well as requesting the presence of mud and dirt to play with, adding water features to swim in, allowing play on grass and green areas and including animals in the play area that they can interact with. Tree houses were also a very common suggestion, as well as creative ideas like setting up a place for cooking and similar pretend games. A child mentioned a

maze and tunnel to play adventurous games.
The following sketch resembles a play area zoning that could be generated from the children's preferred ideas.

Parents however were concerned about two main issues: safety and hygiene in different forms. A clean fenced space with no smoke, loud noises or risks was an optimal solution for parent satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

To sum up, we can say that a play area designed to enhance children's play experience should have a wide range of possibilities for play. It should be flexible enough to accommodate different types of play - physical, social, and cognitive - as well as having rich varieties for playing in natural elements, elevated places and customised play parts. Playing in such a rich outdoor play environment is more beneficial to children's development than playing in a traditional playground with limited opportunities.

It is only then that we can get a closer model to play spaces at the eye level for kids.

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PLINTHS FOR CHILDREN

Rosa Danenberg (KTH Centre for Future of Places)

Plinths are a vital part of the public realm in a city. The connection between the building and the street, the zone between private space and public space, is what is so-called a plinth. The plinth characterises and influences, for a large part, the experience of the street (Karssenberg et al., 2016). Anything that can be seen at 'eye level' including the façades and the activity of the ground floor belong to the plinth. Furthermore, the functions and uses of buildings support and promote a socially attractive climate on the street (Mehta, 2011). How do children experience the public realm including the plinth? Considering that the children's eye level is disproportionately lower and that the physical body is more limited than of adults', what is there to see or experience from a plinth? And what more can it offer children in terms of engagement, fun and safety?

STREETS AND CHILDREN

Streets are prominent public spaces in contemporary cities. Streets qualify as important places where we live and where children grow up, while recognising the decreasing measures as a safe, engaging and livable environment (Appleyard, 1980). The use and meaning of streets have significantly been influenced by the shifted role from a social place to a channel of movement due to the arrival of the

automobile (Mehta, 2011). Consequently, streets are often not considered as primary places for children. Well-functioning pedestrian systems facilitate the shortest distances between natural destinations for adults as well as for children (Gehl, 2011).

The design and planning for liveable, attractive and functional streets that appeal to children is about more than only safety. On a daily basis, families and children are bound to streets in need of crossing and passing through. The threat of traffic for the wellbeing of children is a widely discussed issue and as a result has become of high concern for parents and city planners. Safe streets are indeed important, as "Young children should be able to walk or cycle safely through neighborhood streets to reach local schools, school bus stops, and the shops, playgrounds, and parks they like to visit" (p.107), while for dense urban environments streets are also places where children play and learn (Appleyard, 1980). Thus, if children are able to roam safely, the street as a place can offer much more. Introduced in the 60s and 70s, the Dutch concept The Woonerf legally alters traffic behaviour resulting in safer residential streets for children to play (see Ben-Joseph, 1995). More recently, the Belgium Leefstraten 'Living Streets' are experiments including temporary redesign and co-creative participation for more liveable and green residential streets (see www.leefstraat.be).

PLINTHS AND CHILDREN

Besides residential streets, how do children experience commercial or mixed-use streets and what is the potential of plinths for children? The quality and relevance of the street is a result of the combination of the design and use of ground floors (Gehl, 2004). Although neighbourhood shopping streets have become car-dominated spaces, nevertheless the street today still functions as a destination and social place (Mehta, 2011). By adding character and atmosphere, outdoor extensions are the personalised plinths that play a key role in the public realm experience (Karssenberg et al., 2016). The tendency of small businesses to extend inside activities out on the sidewalk are found to be creating a socially attractive climate on the street (Mehta, 2011). As a result, twice as many social encounters happen outside a small shop. For children, those are the places where the sidewalk conversations between parents happen, the safe zone where children pet a dog, or where they get fascinated by something they see and stop (Lennard and Lennard, 1992). Moreover, the atmosphere of a mixture of people and the presence of small business shop-keepers who are the "eyes on the street" create safe places where children learn to be around adults and get exposed to a variety of activities that happen in streets (Jacobs, 1961). The built environment of our cities needs constantly to improve the quality of life, not just the standard of living, and that means that our cities need child-friendly accessibility, and a welcoming human scale built environment (Lennard and Lennard, 2000).

THE DESIGN AND TYPE OF PLINTHS FOR CHILDREN

In February and April, 2018, the project The City at Eye Level for Kids

Stockholm, Sweden

Thessaloniki, Greece

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

conducted two workshop in Thessaloniki and Stockholm. The workshop was designed for children from the age 0-5 years old, and their companions, around the topic of public space for children and child-friendly cities. The rich engagement within the workshops, as well as numerous (in)formal conversations with professionals and parents, has provided me with the following insights about engaging, fun and safe plinths for children:

– The value of small businesses for providing social streets, as well as the importance of larger chain stores for leaving lifetime impressions that trigger recognition, leads to learning experiences in streets for children and families;

– The plinths with higher degrees of interaction, playfulness, and colour result in more fun and engaging plinths for children; consider the difference between a bank or property seller and a toy store, pet store or florist;

– The design of the façade determines the level of interaction; the height and permeability of the shop window invites or blocks the child to look inside;

– The outdoor extension can also be at children's height to stimulate senses and can teach a child about the transition from public to private space;

– A balance between the width of the pavement and the outdoor extension, such as a terrace, for the comfort of children and families with strollers in a street;

– The materials used for the plinth might be fun for children meanwhile disregarded by adults, such as glass façades that

offer a mirror function to children but restrict seeing inside. This list is by far not complete, however it can be considered as an attempt to draw attention to the importance and opportunity for designing and planning engaging, fun and safe plinths for the benefit of children and families. In fact, we still need more fundamental knowledge and examples of best practices of child-friendly streets and plinths. Therefore, the selection of ground floor uses and its design capable of creating relevant plinths for children needs further investigation in different cultural contexts, street patterns and density development in cities. The gap of research on this topic leaves us with our collective memory of the type of stores and services that we remember as fun from being young. Similarly, the design of comfortable and engaging plinths for children and families is a given that parents can blindly point out but one which has not been sufficiently researched.

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A CITY FOR CHILDREN AFTER THE DISASTER

Karima Wanuz & Fernando Távara (Pontific Catholic University of Peru)

HOW TO START TO BUILD A CITY WHERE EVERY CHILD COUNTS

Nuevo San Pedro, Ciudad de Dios and Nuevo Buenos Aires are three neighbourhoods with youthful populations, located at Km 975 to the Pan American highway, north-coast of Perú. Altogether, they house around 1700 people in approximately 55 hectares. These communities have been owners of these lands since 1988, after the rural community (territory owners) granted them with lots in this zone. Although in these lands they would have been safer from floods than in their original villages, back then few families moved due to lack of resources. In March 2017, great floods devastated their original villages and farms. Unlike previous floods, this time the devastation was considerably stronger and forced communities to seek refuge in the lands of Km 975, where a shelter was installed for them. After the emergency, most of them decided to stay there permanently, and a new city was born.

The project "Recovering children's lives: Urban space and emergency", with support of BvL Foundation, was designed to transform shelters like "Km 975" into a healthy, safe and stimulating urban space for families with children from 0 to 3, pregnant and nursing women. Thus, in a period of 2 years, the project aimed to help in the design of a shelter management model focused in children needs, perform an urban-participatory intervention and strength

the local capacities in shelter management and early childhood caring. Nevertheless, in this new scenario in which a shelter becomes a city, it was necessary to re-think the project and its interventions in conjunction with the communities and, especially, with the children.

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY: STARTING WITH THE LOCAL LEADERSHIPS

We first needed to gather the new concerns that have emerged in the populated centers one year after the disaster, especially those related to the children's needs for mobility, use of public space, security, sanitation and opportunities for recreation and learning. Therefore, we first contacted the leaders of the populated centers and explained to them the purpose of the project and our desire to know their current situation, so we could build together an intervention that would really help them.

As a project that works with families affected by a natural disaster, we needed to consider the socioeconomic and socioemotional status of the inhabitants. Hence, the project started from two approaches: community development and resilience. Thus, workshops and surveys were carried out to understand the situation of the families and children in the community. Knowing the main concerns of adults after the disaster allowed us to know their high motivation to resurface as a community, but also their tough economic situation. This has driven them to be well organised: each populated center has distributed responsibilities in committees, including one in charge of children care. A well-structured organisation has allowed them to easily coordinate with the civil society and international cooperation, and to develop initiatives to grow as a community.

On the other hand, while exploring the urban space needs of children, we were able to notice how conscious they are about what surrounds them. They were able to express not only their main space concerns, but also those of their parents. And despite of the hard situation the have been experimenting, they still show the vibrant energy characteristic of their age.

WORKING FOR THE CHILDREN: THEIR URBAN SPACE NEEDS

When you arrive to the populated centers, the first thing you notice is the harsh weather conditions which limit people mobility. The dwellings are located in the rural zone of the Cura Mori district, where the temperature can reach up to 35° during the day. The lack of trees and tall structures makes it hard to find shade when the sun burns.

Except for some streets with affirmed land, no road infrastructure has been made. In these conditions, families use carts as means of transport. Built from old car wheels and pulled by donkeys or horses, these carts represent an ancestral tradition among families. Otherwise,

the only public transport available is the "moto-taxi" (known as tuk-tuks in other countries). As there are no sidewalks and none of the tracks are asphalted, pedestrians, motor vehicles and animal vehicles transit in the same road. This, combined with the lack of street lighting, makes the streets a dangerous zone at nights.

As insecure as the spaces are, children are forced to transit them by their daily routines. Schools are far away from the populated centers, and most children must walk to get there. Also, the few child-dedicated spaces (e.g. playground with shadow) are sometimes far away from their homes. There are lots of open spaces, but they are mainly sandy zones without green areas anywhere. In this context, it is not a surprise that workshops with the community have revealed that one of their major concerns is the security of children in terms of skin damage, road accidents and kidnappings.

The lack of security in the public realm is accompanied by the lack of vibrant spaces for children. Although some "playgrounds" are available, most of the time they are basically a small zone with shadow that do not necessarily represent a healthy and stimulating space for them.

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN ACADEMICS, GOVERNMENT AND POPULATION AFFECTED BY THE DISASTER

Although providing safe and stimulating urban spaces for children is a strong component of the project, we are conscious that strengthening capacities of local population in early childhood caring and development is likewise important. Hence, in this initial phase we worked together with "community promoters", women from Cura Mori's populated centers hired by the municipality and regional government during the emergency phase of the disaster. They make a great link with the communities as they are very familiarised with the area and know many families and their children.

In return, we have trained them in the assessment of early childhood development and in the application of poverty indicators questionnaires.

In the same way, the National University of Piura has been a key partner in the diagnosis phase by providing academic advice and volunteer students from different backgrounds (architecture, psychology, educators) that are highly familiarised with the reality of the region.

Finally, it will be crucial for us to reinforce the relationship between the government and the communities, and to strengthen the capacities of government officials to be sensitive of early childhood development and urban space needs. Also, we have been able to identify state tools like the municipal register that would ease the identification and location of children after an emergency, and thus the articulation of services for their attention.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

– We faced a space that it is neither in an emergency situation nor has a temporary projection. The populated centers of Km 975 are just starting to consolidate as a permanent urban space and, thus, it is a crucial moment to shape the space where the early childhood develops and will develop in the years to come.
– The populated centers feature plenty public spaces. Thus, it is important to consider possible arrangements to ensure healthy, secure and vibrant spaces for children. In the context described, shade represents a central characteristic from which the public space must be conceived and a possible focus of the project's intervention. Shade trees that already exist in the area could be a valuable addition to the place, providing both shade from the scorching sun and bringing an opportunity to raise awareness about how valuable trees are to combat global warming.
– Build upon the existing social capital. The strong organisation of the communities and their good relationship with the civil society are important strengths that could counteract the existing deficiency in the urban spaces.
– Every child counts. To keep the municipal register updated will be crucial in future emergencies to assist local early childhood. In a region prone to disasters, this must be a priority task to pursuit in the near future.
– Children have shown us that disaster does not take away the opportunity to give up your dreams of living better, that building a new city is possible, and that working in a community is still the best way to live. They have taught us that walking with them is important, that they know where and how they can play and live better, and that living better means being with the people you love, who take care of you and your pets.

THE AFTERSCHOOL LIMBO: TEENS, PRE-TEENS & THE NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLYARD

Gina Maskell & Rachel Pham

In New York City, public schools operate on weekdays between roughly 8am and 3pm. During those hours, the adjacent schoolyard is a private "school space," not open to the public. However, in 2007 as a result of PLANYC initiatives to improve NYC's livability, the schoolyard remains open and accessible to the general public after school has ended and on the weekends. As most NYC apartments and homes lack immediately adjacent, outdoor play spaces, the schoolyard plays an important role as a common, outdoor public space for young students and young adults who come together to engage in the space. The schoolyard creates a familiar space where kids can chat, play, run, hide and seek, dance, or even plug in their headphones.

Access to such a central space becomes especially important to young students as they enter middle and high school, where commuting to schools in other neighbourhoods and having friends who live in different boroughs are the norm.

TEENS AND PRE-TEENS IN THE AFTERSCHOOL SPACE

Budding teenage, middle schoolers living in New York City have just reached the age where they are often mature enough to take public transportation home independently, and to decide how to spend their time after school lets out, yet before they are expected home. This time in between school obligations

Middle school students jumping and playing in a Brooklyn schoolyard

and home obligations is often spent in the schoolyard, on the sidewalks and bus stops near school, or in the neighbourhood bodega. How they use and behave in these spaces is shaped not only by the mandatory restrictions on their time but also social expectations from parents, teachers, other members of the community, and especially their friends.

Teens are in the developmental stage where building friendships and social footing are crucial. The afterschool space allows them to share headphones and music taste, pick basketball teams and friends, and to talk and explore together outside of the structure of the school day. They can waver between the carefree, playful and inquisitive dispositions of a young child, and the independent nature of a young adult seeking autonomy.

It is not only unsupervised middle schoolers who enjoy the schoolyard space, but also afterschool program groups, including those supported by NYC Department of Youth and Community Development's "School's Out NYC" (SONYC) initiative. Afterschool programs have the unique opportunity to engage students in urban spaces, including green and outdoor spaces like the schoolyard. Afterschool programs use a model that mixes established curricula and unstructured activities inside the classroom, in the schoolyard, and while out on urban expeditions throughout the city.

Throughout the school year, the schoolyard is a much-needed outlet for students participating in afterschool programming to get out of the physical and mental academic space. In the schoolyard they can move freely, shout, run, or check their phones, all things that they are restricted from doing in school, on the subway, and in most spaces.

Kids playing on the snowy jungle gym

Middle schoolers swinging with the chain-linked schoolyard fences in the background

STORMY WEATHER AND EXCLUSIVE DESIGN- WHY DO TEENS STILL LOVE THE SCHOOLYARD?

No matter the weather conditions, afterschool students take advantage of any opportunity to play in the schoolyard. Whether the warm summer sun shines down on the dark pavement, or the hard-packed icy snow gives only glimpses of the blacktop, the students still pile up on the slides, play tag while dodging icy patches, or huddle over someone's Ipod in the shade of the school building.

If inclement weather doesn't deter teens from playing in the schoolyard, then poor design will not deter students from making use of the space in good weather. Features such as towering, chained fence boundaries and endless blacktop can make the playground feel unwelcoming. Intrusive layout, like sharp corners, and segmentation of space by railings and cement walls limit movement around the playground. Poorly designed schoolyard spaces are commonplace.

But regardless of these unwelcoming and restrictive features, the afterschool and weekend schoolyard consistently attracts company, particularly from teens and pre-teens, rain or shine. The schoolyard is a familiar and open space for students of all ages, and it allows for the freedom to play, shout, and generally be in a way counter to the social constraints of many other public spaces. Additionally, the flow of students from home to school (with or without an afterschool waypoint) makes the schoolyard a convenient place to gather and consequently to develop a community of users, despite poor design of space and amenities. Afterschool programming enriches this community of users, which includes students, teachers, parents, and siblings, by formalizing non-school engagement with the schoolyard space.

DESIGN FOR URBAN PLAYSCAPE

an interview with Saša Radenovic (Architectuurstudio Radenovic) by Ying Tzu Lin

Design with reuse materials

Can you briefly talk about the background and motivation to initiate the project 'Urban Playscape'* in Sarajevo?

I started my own studio during the time of last economical crisis. It was a point for me to reconsider what I wanted to do, which themes are relevant in our praxis. After the war time I often came to Sarajevo with my children. One of the things that were (and are) remarkable is the absence of place for kids to play in the city. In recent 10 - 15 years, the situation was not getting better. I discovered that the Dutch architect Aldo van Eyck started his career in the similar situation. In his case that was after second world war in Amsterdam. In that post-war period, he designed almost 700 playgrounds in the city of Amsterdam. Most of them were temporary, very precisely integrated in the context, now, unfortunately only seventeen of these playgrounds are left in the city. His method of putting temporary playgrounds considering a context I find very interesting. I used this method in my research.

For me as an architect, it was interesting to work in a different area. The position and role of architect are changing: we become increasingly involved in social design processes in different stages.

Workshop in Sarajevo

Team NL UrbanPlayscapes

Since it's an international project, how you adapt and develop methodology that connects professions in two countries together?
I brought different architects, designers and architecture historians together from the Netherlands. In Sarajevo, workshops were organized by Dutch designers, Bosnian designers and design school students to work together. In between the workshops, we've also organized meetings, discussions, lectures, etc. This is still an ongoing process.

The ideal plan was to analyze from macro scale playscape then zoom-in to micro scale intervention of play space. We first maps out areas have different characters in the city can potentially develop into playscape. At meso-level, we looked at the connections in between areas, like riverfront as open spaces. At micro-level we were planned to work on design intervention in specific locations.

However, later we found that in reality it is difficult. Because current political agenda is highly prioritize real estate development upon public spaces. The government in Bosnia switched from the socialist system - where everything was collective and good organized - to a very hard, individual capitalistic system now. The market developed so fast and there is a lot of pressure, it's a tough time.

How do you work to cope with the reality challenge?
Places that have potential to develop into playscapes are also interesting for developers. One of the results for the workshops was to try to put this on the agenda and get in touch with these developers. The problem is transparency. As many developers and investors are from countries outside of Bosnia, it is difficult it's hard to find information about these developers so it's hard to reach them. However, in the process of working, we see how young designers are inspired. They are the hope. A lot of young people are really involved

and really want to change something. We should be finding a way to involve developers (private clients) in our project. The reality should become part of our project. That is to become part of the next step in the process.

What are main problems of public play spaces in Sarajevo?
What we have discovered, is that there is no lack of space, but they are not used as such. There are a lot of potential places in Sarajevo where you could do such kind of interventions, but it's really hard to carry out if the government doesn't give support.

Opposite are countries like The Netherlands: here we have a strong government. They will put playgrounds and playscapes on the agenda. But in countries with a weak government it's a challenge. Taking Aldo van Eyck as example, in the post-war period, Jacoba Mulder, the chief government at that time, and Cornelis van Eesteren, they realized that they had to improve the quality of the city. So they gave Aldo van Eyck, as a designer, a proposal to build playgrounds to improve the quality of public space.

As urban planners we look at different scales. How do you see connection from the macro scale to micro-scale?
It is very important to make connectivity between those scales of the typography of the city and urban plans of the neighborhood. Because of the presence of a lot of places in between - like natural borders - there is a lot of space to find which you can develop. We are looking for those spaces. We want to connect them, bring continuity in them, also on a social level, to give it more value.

In terms of City At Eye Level for kids, what have you find in this project?
First, I hope the city will be given back to the pedestrians. Copenhagen is a really good example for this development in a city. I think it's the future solution. In this project, we have a lot of discussions about giving space for children in the streets. For example: to make the routes for pedestrians in the city, for children as well. Especially in Sarajevo, there is a lot of space for optimization.

Nowadays playgrounds are really homogeneous. In terms of playgrounds and playscape, diversity is important. Such as diversity ages of citizens (even for adult), multifunctional and multi-player oriented. Together with different environmental context, the playscape is a diversity topic to discover and to experience from body.

The city interior is getting more and more important as well, especially the notion of the street. The street has a pivotal role of urban network. 'Play' in urban environment should also be regarded as ability to discover the city on street. The childhood doesn't stop when you are 10 or 15 years old or in playground, we adult need it as well. For children it is more obvious, more influential.

As you say, the city for children is indeed more than playground. For children, it is also important to have diversity elements and stimulations on the street. Of course security and risk is an issue.
That's the important role for the designer: have a better understanding of the context of a place. It has to be part of the city landscape. Playground should be sheen as a part of the whole environment. This is the concept of Playscape.

To conclude our conversation, I think we've already point out several remarks: the city should offer diversify but safe environment that stimulates children to explore; it's important balance designated play spaces and leave empty spaces to develop free play.
Playscape and playground is a broad theme. We also have to go out of that idea of 'aging of us', like in categories of adults, children etc. Public spaces are for everyone. Instead of limited in age groups, try to explore how public spaces could mingle the use of different groups in different time of a day, different functions in different part. We are in a aging society, we don't have to exclude elderlies from the playground.

JUMP INTO NATURE

Annemarie Lammers (Sustainability Centre Weizigt)

More and more children are growing up in cities, and for many of them, playing in nature is such a rare activity. This has several causes: sometimes green spaces just aren't available close to home, but quite often, even though a nice green park is situated within 500 meters, children still don't use it. It seems they have lost the knowledge of how to play outside and many parents also keep their children inside because of safety reasons. And yet time spent in nature has so many important benefits.[1] Especially in the current hectic times, it only becomes more important to reconnect children with nature. That's why in 2014 we started a project in Dordrecht called Jump into nature. The main goal is to give children aged 4 - 12 and their parents, who may never visit nature, a great experience in one of the nearby nature areas.
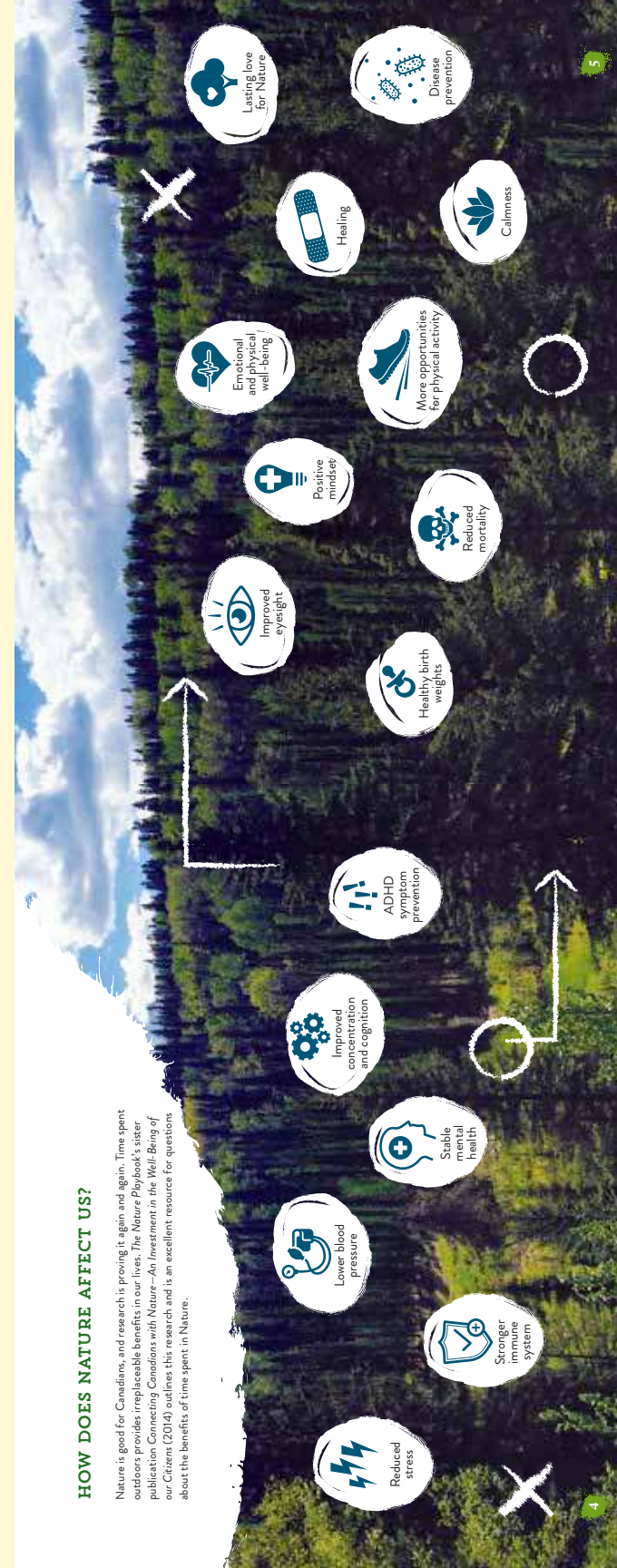
A unique group of nature education, sports, recreation and health-partners offers the participants alternating activities in nature. With this cross-sectoral group - the orgware - we use the green available hardware - the city parks and the nearby National Park De Biesbosch - and add the software: activity days organised around three main categories: movement, experience and food. In

this way the children and their parents experience nature close to home and they learn how nice it is to spend time outdoors. We learned that this cross-sectoral approach is very inspiring, both for the participants and the partners. In the next years we will extend our work to even more green areas: besides the city parks and De Biesbosch, such as green school grounds and urban farming spots. This stimulates the children and their parents to explore their environment step by step: from very close to home and school to the bigger nature areas surrounding the city.

NOTES

1. On page 4 and 5 in "The Nature's Playbook of Canadian Parks Council" (2016) you can find an inspiring overview of the benefits of nature. See the pictures on the following page.

HOW DOES NATURE AFFECT US?

Nature is good for Canadians, and research is proving it again and again. Time spent outdoors provides irreplaceable benefits in our lives. The Nature Playbook's sister publication Connecting Canadians with Nature – An Investment in the Well-Being of our Citizens (2014) outlines this research and is an excellent resource for questions about the benefits of time spent in Nature.

- Lasting love for Nature
- Disease prevention
- Healing
- Calmness
- Emotional and physical well-being
- More opportunities for physical activity
- Positive mindset
- Reduced mortality
- Improved eyesight
- Healthy birth weights
- ADHD symptom prevention
- Improved concentration and cognition
- Stable mental health
- Lower blood pressure
- Stronger immune system
- Reduced stress

STREET AS PLAYGROUND

WHAT WE LEARNED ON 78TH STREET: MAKING PUBLIC SPACES WORK FOR ALL AGES

Donovan Finn (Stony Brook University)

Jackson Heights is a dense urban neighborhood in the New York City borough of Queens and is famous for being one of the most racially and ethnically diverse places in the world. In 2007, I helped create a non-profit group, the Jackson Heights Green Alliance, to advocate for creating more public space in the neighborhood. In 2010, we contracted with the city to manage a new public plaza, created by eliminating traffic from a 130-meter section of 78th Street along the east side of the neighborhood's only public space: a small playground called Travers Park.

While the playground caters mostly to the narrow needs of small children and people wishing to play active sports like volleyball, tennis or cricket, we envisioned the new plaza as a place where people could enjoy passive activities like eating lunch on a pleasant day or reading the Sunday newspaper. Working with the city and raising our own private funds, we installed colorful plants, multiple types of seating, and other basic amenities creating a car-free public space just off a major automobile thoroughfare.

To our surprise, in addition to adults seeking a quiet respite, the plaza has also become a favourite destination for teenagers and pre-teens who have few spaces in the neighbourhood or the adjacent park designed for their needs. The plaza has become a crossroads where people of all ages feel welcome. It is one of the only places in the neighbourhood where you will regularly find young children, teenagers, childless adults and elderly residents co-existing naturally. Based on years of observation and conversations with people who use the plaza, a few insights have emerged that we think can be useful when designing public spaces that facilitate interaction among various age groups. In the City at Eye Level approach, these lessons relate to how the space is used (the software), how it is designed (the hardware) and how it is managed (the orgware).

The software of the space includes the rules that govern what is allowed. As a small community group, we had a very limited budget. Unlike other public plazas in the city that are managed by private property owners or Business Improvement Districts with highly corporatized aesthetics, heavy-handed security, and strict rules, our plaza is a decidedly do-it-yourself project. The space is clean, colourful and well-maintained, but relatively utilitarian. There is no security or monitoring, and no posted rules. As a result, the space feels welcoming for people of all ages, perhaps particularly for teenagers, who are often assumed guilty until proven innocent but often just want a place to sit and talk (albeit loudly!). But this is also true for other users. For instance, an ominous metal sign in the adjacent playground states that no adults are allowed unless accompanied by a child. But everyone is welcome to use the plaza and, as a result, the interaction of various age groups is easily facilitated.

The hardware, or physical design is also important. While playgrounds are typically designed to accommodate sports and active play, the plaza is a blank slate that can be adapted for age-appropriate uses. Teenagers may use one of the large picnic tables for raucous debates, while the adjacent table hosts a toddler's birthday party. Skateboarders and parkour enthusiasts utilise the utilitarian design features in their own creative ways. Younger children imagine the large stone blocks scattered around the plaza as pirate ships, dinosaurs and racecars. The café tables are regularly repurposed as lemonade stands or to play with games or toys brought from home.

Finally, the orgware. The fact that the space is managed and operated by community members and not a government or corporate entity is, we believe, central to its success. We strive to involve neighborhood residents in decision-making about the space and we have held dozens of free public events including concerts, art workshops, bicycle repair clinics and Halloween parties. Because of this, people feel a sense of pride and ownership of the plaza. Despite the occasional act of vandalism, most users treat the plaza as something that belongs to "us" and not to "the city." When we are sweeping up or fixing a broken piece of equipment, someone always volunteers to lend a hand and very often that person is a young child or a teenage skateboarder.

Our experiences on 78th Street illustrate how public space can be designed to better accommodate users of all age groups and strengthen social ties among residents. Specifically, finding ways to "un-design" public space can facilitate multiple and creative uses instead of narrow or proscribed activities and expand the appeal to multiple constituencies. At the same time, our experience suggests that it is also important to engage people of all ages in the creation, design, and management of public space, providing a sense of ownership, agency and community pride.

TURNING SPACES INTO PLAYCES

Amy Levner (KaBOOM!)

CARING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR KIDS IN CITIES

At KaBOOM!, we know that our cities' futures are inextricably tied to the success of our kids. Unfortunately, we are in danger of unintentionally designing kids and families out of that future. Though cities have made great strides to increase livability factors, as budgets tighten, kid-focused amenities are usually cut first. When this happens, it has a disproportionate impact on kids growing up in under-resourced communities.

Cities are at risk of becoming unaffordable to families and inaccessible in terms of offering great schools and places to play. But we can change that, one community at a time. By working with partners across the U.S., KaBOOM! has sought to increase the number of playgrounds, enhance equitable access and make play part of everyday life. When we design with kids in mind, everyone benefits.

GETTING CREATIVE: PUTTING PLAY IN THE EVERYDAY

Ensuring that kids get the daily active play they need requires tackling both structural and behavioural barriers to play. To date, much of the work has addressed structural barriers – increasing the numbers of playgrounds, and providing equitable access,

especially for kids living in poverty.
Playgrounds are absolutely essential, as they create joyful oases throughout cities and neighbourhoods. Given the many structural barriers, particularly for kids growing up in under-resourced communities, it is also critical to find innovative ways to transform cities' infrastructure to address behavioural and environmental barriers and make play an easier choice, in unexpected places, every day.

That's the approach of "Play Everywhere" – incorporating play where people already are or have to be. Because family life is full of hassle factors, particularly for families living in under-resourced communities, there's never enough time in the day for play – let alone a safe, convenient place nearby. This problem requires a creative solution: integrating play into daily routines and reimagining everyday spaces such as streets and sidewalks, bus stops, business plazas, parking lots and civic spaces as mini play destinations, or "PLAYces."

Play Everywhere projects bolster the "plinth" of a city by incorporating kid-friendly design and structures into ground floor elements, inviting kids to play along the way to destinations. Kids experience the city in a completely different way than adults, so incorporating PLAYces into the plinth ensures that kids are not forgotten when planning for cities at eye level.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

Through an evaluation in partnership with Gehl, we discovered key findings about the elements of success in Play Everywhere projects. First, installations should be located near existing kid hubs, or existing hardware and software dedicated to kids and families. It is important to meet users where they already spend time, and along commonly-used walking paths. Visibility and safe access are also critical.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The murals brighten up the way!

2. Eye-catching designs excite the imagination of kids.

3. The design reflects imagery selected by and relevant to the local community.

4. Small neighborhood improvements have a very positive impact on people's perception of the space.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Clear games or play elements along the stairs could create a challenge for kids to solve or a game to compete against.

2. Removing litter could position the space as more of a safe place for kids to play.

3. Including the adjacent walls in the mural could further enliven the space and prevent graffiti.

Second, assess your city's orgware and its ability to bring kids into the creative process early. Allowing kids to be a part of the idea formation results in installations that respond to demand, prompt buy-in and develop pride of place. Relatedly, this engages the community and creates incentives for prolonged use and care.

Third, emphasise flexibility and interaction by encouraging kids to try something new. Keeping designs open-ended sparks imagination. Modularity, challenges and games preserve excitement and adaptability while inspiring wonder.

Finally, be sure to communicate that it's okay to play! Eye-catching and intuitive design paired with clear signage encourages play and facilitates behaviour change. Bold designs show rather than tell and provide a welcome contrast to the everyday environment.

CONCLUSIONS AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

There's no specific formula for a great Play Everywhere space, but a number of unique factors contributes to the success of each project. Elements related to "life" – kids' actions and behaviours; "space" – the location and context; and "installation" – the quality and design of the project – dictate what works. We discovered nine key themes based on a thorough evaluation conducted of nine different installations in cities ranging from Richmond, California to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

– **Well-maintained**, defined as durable materials, design quality, cleanliness and maintenance that is accounted for.
– **Kid-focused**, defined as designed for kids, inspiring, creates a sensory experience and invites people to stop.
– **Flexible**, defined as able to change and transform and usable for multiple age groups.
– **Programmed**, defined as presence of programming and community events.
– **Comfort**, defined as protection from weather elements, provides a sense of safety, availability of seating and activities for adults.
– **Kids nearby**, defined as universal access, connections to transport, proximity to kids and amenities, visible and eye-catching.
– **Community connection**, defined as visitor diversity, unifying, community interaction and sense of identity.
– **Engagement**, defined as community engagement, involvement of kids and responds to local needs.
– **Play**, defined as brings more play to kids, interactive, opportunities for wonder and provides challenges.

BRINGING THE PLAY-GROUND TO THE STREET

Helen Rowe & Elissa McMillan (CoDesign Studio)

HOW PLAY STREETS AUSTRALIA IS CREATING MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES AND SAFE ACTIVE PLAY SPACES, STARTING WITH A MELBOURNE-BASED TRIAL.

INTRODUCTION

Outdoor play is vital for a child's physical, social and personal development. Yet in many communities around Melbourne, and other Australian towns and cities, safe and accessible outdoor play space is not always available in close proximity to home. This contributes to four out of five young people aged 5-17 years not getting the physical activity they need to stay healthy.[1] As Australia's population grows and cities become denser, there is an increasing need for places for children to play and neighbours to meet.

The Play Streets Australia project was developed to provide better access to outdoor play spaces by temporarily transforming residential streets into playgrounds for the young and the young at heart. Using the globally-recognised, low-cost model for pop-up play in the street, Play Streets was adapted for the Australian context to help residents make use of their own streets to create safe places for children to be physically active.

CoDesign Studio, an Australian design and placemaking social enterprise, worked with local communities and government authorities to develop Play Streets Australia, with funding support from VicHealth. Play Streets have since

been delivered in five suburbs across Melbourne and an open source toolkit developed, providing a free resource available to communities across Australia. This article explains the process, outcomes and practical implications of this project to date.

PLAY STREETS TRIAL AND TOOLKIT DEVELOPMENT

The first Play Streets trial was delivered in partnership with City of Melbourne, an inner city Local Government area, in the suburb of Kensington in 2016. CoDesign Studio supported a group of residents to plan and deliver the first community led Play Street, with 44 children and 43 adults attending on the day. There was a positive response to the event, with feedback that the day was fun, children enjoyed playing in the street, and people liked catching up with their neighbours. However those involved in organising the event felt that the process was difficult, particularly the cost and time required to navigate Council processes for traffic management, permits and insurance. This feedback, as well as a debrief with the project team, informed a simple step by step guide to make it easier for the next Play Street. Existing Play Streets guides from around the world also provided inspiration, including the Playing Out Manual.[2]

To test the draft toolkit and continue to promote Play Streets, CoDesign Studio sought out new partners for a second trial. Instead of selecting a suburb and a street for delivery, CoDesign partnered with Itiki Sporting Club, who were interested in hosting a number of community led Play Streets with their members across various local government areas. This second phase of Play Streets saw delivery of four Play Streets in two socially and culturally diverse suburbs, Carlton and Glenroy, and engaged over 500 people in a variety of ways from planning through to delivery. This trial provided invaluable user testing of the Toolkit, highlighting areas for improvement and testing the approach with a broader range of community members.

The evaluation of trials has helped to not only set out the process through hands on 'user testing' but also evolve the Play Streets approach: a people led rather than place led approach, going where there is community energy to run Play Streets. The toolkit aims to make it easier for both communities and councils across Australia to deliver Play Streets and is available to download at www.playstreetsaustralia.com

OUTCOMES AND LESSONS LEARNT

The Play Streets process has achieved outcomes for all three areas central to The City at Eye Level, providing hardware through utilising and repurposing the street as well as software by temporarily transforming it into a place of play through community led approaches, and finally generating orgware via the Toolkit. By making every day exercise through play easy and fun, the trials fostered opportunities for neighbours to meet each other, inspiring more empowered and connected communities, and a renewed focus on improved health outcomes for children through play.

Play Streets Australia plans to scale this program, to have impact in many communities across the country. In summary, some of the lessons learnt to date include:

– A people rather than place led approach: The most successful trials were with community leaders and organisations who have the enthusiasm to deliver the project, rather than selecting a place and finding people to participate.

– Reducing process barriers: Council support is important for addressing the barriers that make implementation difficult. The toolkit aims to make permit and approvals processes easier for both communities and Councils.

– Financial support: While running the actual Play Street can be very low cost, setting up a Play Street relies on a financial contribution for permit processes, insurance and traffic management. CoDesign Studio is continuing to work with Councils on reducing these barriers through 'The Neighbourhood Project' – a broader initiative enabling community projects in neighbourhoods across Melbourne.

– Inclusive streets: Play Streets can provide an opportunity for neighbours to come together, whether they have children or not. Ensure promotion and activities that make it more inclusive for everyone in the street to be involved.

Creating places to play is an important challenge in Australian cities and towns. Efforts of CoDesign Studio, in collaboration with communities and partners in Melbourne, have demonstrated the possibilities and made critical first steps in making the process to deliver Play Streets simpler. We look forward to seeing Play Streets delivered in more neighbourhoods, drawing on and tailoring the Toolkit, to improve play spaces across Australia.

NOTES

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) Australian Health Survey: physical activity 2011-12, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
2. Playing Out (2014), How to organise playing out sessions on your street - a step-by-step manual, http://playingout.net/useful-stuff/

IF STREETS ARE THE YARDSTICK OF SUCCESS, CHILDREN SHOULD DO THE MEASURING

Marcela Guerrero Casas (Open Streets Cape Town)

Striving for a different future, in which people – and especially children – can discover the joy of streets without cars is the motivation behind our Open Streets programme. This initiative is originally inspired by Bogota's Ciclovia, where more than a hundred kilometers of the city's streets become car free on a weekly basis for families to run, cycle, walk, and explore together. Open Streets has gained traction throughout different neighbourhoods in Cape Town as shutting down streets, even on a temporary basis, has proven to be a powerful experience for children and adults alike. It was this passing comment, among many others, that strengthened our resolve to continue our work to inspire the different future:

I was talking to a young girl of 13 or 14 after the first Open Streets Day in Observatory in 2013. She said, "On a normal day, in the street, you'd probably be killed." I will never forget that remark.

CHILDREN AS STREET USERS

More poignantly, however, that young girl's remark carries the weight of all pedestrians, and especially children pedestrians, who use our streets. It supports the chilling statistics documented in a report released in August by ChildSafe South Africa: around 1,300 child pedestrians were killed on South African streets in 2017.

Tim Gill, author of *Rethinking Childhood* (2017) and advocate for child-friendly cities, writes: "I remain convinced that a city can only truly say it is succeeding if children – all children – are active, visible, and engaged users of its parks, playgrounds, streets and civic spaces."

If the mark of a city's success is the presence of children on its streets and in its public spaces, what would be the indicators specific to South African cities? How would we measure the success of our cities, and, by extension, the success of our streets? Perhaps we should be asking children directly.

Streets are the arteries of our cities. They should be public spaces that connect people. But the reality is that cities, and streets, in South Africa are hostile places designed almost exclusively for motorised vehicles. What do we need to do to ensure that our streets are not only safe, but are also conducive for people, especially children, to thrive?

We know that kids want to play freely and move through the streets without fear of danger or, worse, death. Could this be the golden thread that influences the design of child-friendly streets?

Safety on the street is one critical aspect, but there are many other elements that contribute to streets that enable children to play, walk, gather and learn. It is imperative for streets to offer inclusive spaces that people of all ages, not only children, can enjoy. Moreover, it is necessary that streets allow children to move freely by any means, whether on bicycles, on foot or on public transport, and to guarantee that children can access the services and help they may need in their daily lives.

The UN reports that 70% of the world's population will be living in cities by 2050. This has significant implications for how we design our urban environments in terms of mobility, access to hygienic infrastructure, decent housing, and economic prosperity. Adding to this, a 2017 report released by

Arup reflected by 2030 approximately 60% of people living in urban areas will be under the age of 18. Considering this, the imperative to create healthy, sustainable, and free urban areas for young people becomes even more heightened.

CHILDREN AT THE CENTER

The solution is to start, literally, from the ground up: by designing streets and cities from a child's eye view. What do they see? How do they experience traffic, street furniture, or way-finding aids? Can they use street infrastructure easily and independently at every stage of their development?

With this kind of freedom and access, a city designed for children is also a city designed for the elderly, the infirm, and the differently-abled.

But one critical component in designing for children, is also placing children at the centre of our collective thinking around street design. We will be doing that at the upcoming Street Indaba *Open Streets* event on 19 September 2018, where designers, planners, advocates, and others will explore how we can place children at the centre of building an inclusive and sustainable city, using local and international examples as case studies.

MEASURING BY CHILDREN

Working with children and youth enables design practitioners and urban planners to understand more about what young people want from the streets they use. Most likely, this will be far removed from their reality. In one example, research by ChildSafe South Africa in 2018 revealed that 70% of children walk to school. Of those, 4% spend more than an hour getting to and from school each day. Are those routes safe? Can we shorten the on-foot journey? How can we design public transport to improve their experience?

Getting to school and back is just one aspect of a child's experience on the street. Other elements, which raise similarly pointed questions, include safety and security, sports and recreational spaces, education about streets, and exposure and interaction with arts and culture. It is possible, but this requires commitment to position children at the centre. Further, to achieve this, it is essential to listen to their opinions and to implement design policies and decisions that accommodate what they need — and not what we as adults assume they require.

These are the metrics, the indicators by which we can judge the success of South African cities. When children play, experience culture, commute and gather on our streets, move freely, and interact without fear in public spaces, then we will be able to join a growing global list of cities that are prioritising children in the design approach. And when a 13-year old child celebrates life on the street daily, rather than fears death, we know that we have succeeded in our mission.

THE CITY AS PLAYGROUND, MUSEUM, CINEMA & CLASSROOM

Dr. Anna Zdiara (Technische Universität Darmstadt)

How do streetscapes appear from the very low perspective of small children's eyes? The relevance and use of infrastructural or aesthetic elements of plinths in walking itineraries is not the same as for adults. Observations made during repetitive walks with children under three years in an urban area suggest that some elements are especially well suited for orientation, inspiration for play and development of new skills. The research was triggered by the fascinating observation, how a simple city walk sparks numerous conversations, inspires play and phantasy, teaches social rules and becomes an activity itself - a destination instead of just a journey. Summarised results below derive from experiences collected during walks with children from one to three year old[1] and from conversations with kindergarden teachers.

Darmstadt-Bessungen(Germany) is a city quarter with many childcare institutions and afternoon activities, it is frequented by many families on different means of transport. In the city quarter with rural origins dating back more than 1000 years, the plinths are rather patchwork than a coherent planning result and as diverse as its building structure.

Three waves of urban regeneration have, however, set the course for pedestrian-friendliness on the main axes. In the 1970s, a lack of identification of the inhabitants with their surroundings was diagnosed and reacted upon with prioritising pedestrians over cars

in the center of the quarter. Parking was restricted and pedestrian paths broadened in the area, creating a pedestrian network around public institutions and small shops and businesses. A second program initiated in the late 1980s improved historic buildings, some of which were rehabilitated for cultural uses. A strong focus on heritage and the overall townscape generated improved public space with its sidewalk and squares. In the past few years, changing priorities in traffic planning have brought more bicycle racks. Trams stops have been upgraded in terms of comfort and accessibility. However, not only actual planning initiatives have shaped the attractiveness of the plinths. It is rather the interplay of the "hardware" with decades of private built or artistic initiatives that result in a pleasant and diverting walking experience.

Some elements in the plinths seem to be important to structuring the itinerary and creating a stimulating environment:

– **Improvements for pedestrians and cyclists** such as bicycle racks and improved amenities around tram stops do not only make life easier for users of non-motorised transport. They also structure the pedestrian area with elements that children appreciate and use for playing, balancing and passing though. Not all playful uses are intended, but they provide welcome distractions on the way to school, kindergarden or activities.
– **Special structures** such as fountains or sculptures function as landmarks to all ages. Like the "lighthouse" in Bessungen, they invite children to climb or sit on them, jump from them or integrate them into their playing. Such landmarks then become perceived by children as playful objects.
– **Private and citizen engagement** makes the area more interesting for anyone passing by, strengthens social ties in the area and creates a kaleidoscope of situations to observe. Privately built upgrades of the pedestrian area include a fence replaced by a seating bank in front of the yard of an ice cream shop, creating a meeting area towards the sidewalk. A shop owners' initiative has placed rabbit-shaped lamps in shop windows, as a historic symbol for the quarter's inhabitants the animal reappears all over the public space. Children and adults alike profit from a citizen initiative which has brought a bookshelf into the public space where passers-by can serve themselves or bring their own books. A flea-market is taking over the streets in the quarter's center once a year, closing it down for traffic and creating one of the city's most popular annual events. Here, many children make their

An der Carl-Schurz-Schule, heutiger Zustand

geplant (Blickrichtung Osten)

"Stadtteilplan Bessungen: Städtebauliche Konzepte für die Bauleitplanung im Bereich des Bessunger Ortskerns", Courtesy of Darmstadt's planning office

Improvements for pedestrians and cyclists

Public art and ornaments

Special structures

first business experience by selling old toys to their younger peers.

– **Public art and ornaments** are found on roofs, facades and walls all around the city quarter. For small children, these attributes are interesting to look at and (learn to) speak about. They decorate several historic houses, and public institutions are adorned by works as a result of regulations channeling a small amount of building costs into public art. Private initiatives have brought a variety of murals with animal motives by a local artist into the area. Murals on buildings indicate cultural uses inside but also turn walks more diverse and form landmarks.

– **Open areas or small squares** interrupting the relatively disciplined pace on a continuous sidewalk give children undefined and secure space for play. Besides, they tend to make the itinerary less linear and give walks with children an opportunity for rest, spontaneous conversation or closer observation of the environment, such as the trees changing with the seasons. Equipped with intentional or unintentional seating small squares turn into observation points for the moving images of traffic and city life.

These elements evoke a miniature version of Kevin Lynch's attributes of the image of the city, with its *paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks*.[2] The observations suggest that city walks, especially as everyday itineraries, give small children the environment to develop a first sense of orientation outside of their home. Some of these elements also facilitate motoric and imaginative uses and create important learning experiences. What helps small children to appropriate "their" surrounding – comprehend situations and name them, adapt it to their play and fantasy – are recognisable landmarks and curiosities they can relate to. Maybe this is the right framework to be open to the spontaneous elements: running into acquaintances, find things lying on the floor, observing the change of the seasons. The mixture of the expected and the unexpected motivates the first words and later entire conversations. A well-functioning public space provide children with first ideas how living together in cities can work, in many dimensions such as security, consideration and small conversations.

NOTES

1. The two age groups in German childcare are under three and above three years old, hence the choice of this age group.
2. Lynch, Kevin (1960): The Image of the City, MIT Press

CORNERS FOR KIDS: QUALITY SPACES IN SMALL SCALE

Danielle Maranhão de Castro (University of Fortaleza)

ANALYSING THE CORNERS POTENTIALITIES

Seeing corners as a potential morphological element for tactical interventions provides another look at the public spaces, such as acknowledging corners as a quality space for children. Proposing guidelines for developing projects for attractive, safe and accessible corners can help in the interaction development between children and the community which they are part of.

The potentialities of corners can be explored through of affective relationships with the city (Lynch, 2011) and the generation of safe spaces by the presence of people (Jacobs, 2014). There are three important points to consider:

– Corners are nodal points and indicate connections between paths that facilitate the concentration of people (Lynch, 2011).

– Corners offer a greater angle of view, which is a significant point for quality spaces development (Gehl, 2015), and the creation of a sense of defensible space (Newman, 1972).

– We can develop small-scale projects. Even a small group can give the feeling of a used space (Alexander, et al. 2013).

Jane Jacobs (2014) and Gehl (2015) argue that spaces with people are potentially safer, or, at least, provide a sense of security. Thus, corners have the following potentialities regarding children:

– They are highly used and concentrate people circulation. It becomes easier for parents to let their children play around the corner.
– They are also more visible places, hence with "eyes on the street" allowing not only the parents, but also the neighbours to be attentive.
– Most of the streets have corners, which gives children easy access to nearby play spaces.

STRATEGIES FOR CHILD-FRIENDLY CORNER PROJECTS

The corners project for children proposes the transformation of the corners into places of permanence and that serve as learning spaces, contributing to the development of the neighbourhood and the city as well. Security and experiencing the city are basic conditions while aspects of environmental psychology, such as textures, colours, sounds and smells are integrated. The following analysis steps are taken into consideration:

– Analysis of neighborhood children's profile (the number of children that inhabit the space, their age, what they like to do, how they are related to the city, how they usually walk through the neighbourhood);
– Spatial analysis of the neighborhood (sectorisation, size of the blocks, land use and occupation);
– Setting the number of projected corners in one area

The project proposal aims to consider developing strategies to improve façades, roads and sidewalks that consider corners as part of the broader public realm:

Example of roads (before), São Paulo, Brazil

Example of roads (after), São Paulo, Brazil

Example of roads, Maragogí, Brazil

Corner example

ROADS	
DESIGN ELEMENTS	**BENEFITS**
– Decrease of the carriageway; – Creation of obstacles (deviations, irregular beds); – Corner expansion; – Floor painting; – Pedestrian crossing (raised, illuminated, colored, three-dimensional paintings).	– Decrease of the influence of the car; – Increase pedestrian zones; – Create facilitated crossings.

FACADES

DESIGN ELEMENTS	BENEFITS
– Easy transition between internal and external space; – Colors; – Materials of low thermal condition and reflection; – Games on the wall or areas for coloring; – May contain vegetation; – Differentiated lighting (luminotherapy); – Volume and shape games; – Attractiveness points with music or movies; – Learning games of numbers and words embedded in the facade.	– Interaction with edifications; – Greater visibility between indoor and outdoor environments (defensible spaces); – Creation of permanence zones for children.

PROMENADES

DESIGN ELEMENTS	BENEFITS
– Division into levels (furniture with different heights for children to rise); – Multipurpose furniture (used for sitting, lying down, touching and playing); – Free area (for running and playing with their own toys); – Safe-hit posts for delimitation of the corner space (illuminated, colored, with different formats and suitable for sitting); – Sound emitter elements; – Coloful furniture and panels with creative geometric shapes; – Relaxed seating areas (beach chairs, cushions, mats, decks); – Bookshelves for book exchanges (next to sitting areas to create reading places); – Sculptures that turn into playgrounds; – Low thermal transmission materials.	– Creation of more attractive and cozy spaces; – Different possibilities of permanence; – Creation of pleasant sensations and perceptions for the child; – Possibility of encouraging teaching and learning; – Interaction of children with the urban environments; – Meeting the neighborhood's leisure needs.

VEGETATIONS

DESIGN ELEMENTS	BENEFITS
– Colors; – Size of treetops; – Fruit or non-fruit trees; – Urban vegetable garden.	– Game of shadow and light; – Creation of specific smells that can stimulate affective memories; – Development of a sense of community care; – Vegetation can provide food; – Planting education; – Teaching about seasons; – Vegetation can work as a refuge from the sun (mainly in Latin American cities); – Encourage learning by textures; – Delimit areas; – Creation of seating areas.

1. Pallets to sit or climb to reach the drawing board
2. Panel to draw
3. Bookshelf for local reading or book exchanges
4. Climbing area
5. Geomatric shapes panel to draw in
6. Lifted area with ramp
7. Differentiated pedestrian light
8. Colorful and lit safe-hit posts to sit
9. Small, medium and large sized trees
10. Fluorescent and colored crosswalk
11. Lifted crosswalk
12. Colorful floor paint + hopscotch
13. Permeable shop facades.

Corners for kids

POSSIBLE IMPACTS

Through these social interaction projects and the insertion of children in everyday public spaces, corners can contribute to facilitating the relationship between children and the city as well as their interaction with other people in the community, creating stronger social bonds since childhood. They can also encourage children to discover the world around them, reducing their fear about the streets, as it can help in the sense of location (creating memorable points that will help children to find their way), and provide safer connections between the streets, with smaller and easier crossings.

Good corner projects with good analysis and creative proposals for possible applications can transform our cities into more pleasant environments with corners that include and teach children through the urban environment. In this way, the corner is a morphological element of great potentiality for tactical interventions for children, a strong point to help in the resumption of public spaces for leisure.

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THE PLINTH — A PORTAL TO PLAY

Cristina Canciovici (Universitatea de Arhitectura si Urbanism "Ion Mincu", Bucuresti)

Playing Children, Taksim

The child is the user every city 'wants' to be used by. Designing and planning the city using the children as scale units leads to safe, accessible and attractive public spaces that become livable shared places for all its inhabitants, regardless the age. We should bear in mind, as planners, decision makers, professionals or simply adults, that childhood is not just a stage preceding the adulthood, but it is an adventurous journey along which our perception of everything around us is shaped. The values of life are learned, best friends are made and the experiences we live put eternal stamps on our future lives. *It is the time when we act as pure and natural as a human being can be able to … it is the time when we play and live through play.*

Play is a child's innate way of communicating and learning, and it intermediates the process of the child's adaption to the elements of the world surrounding them and the world's adaption to the child's needs and demands. The outdoor public space, especially the one in the residential neighbourhoods, is one of these elements, and for a healthy physical, emotional, cognitive and social development of children, it has to offer its best and be sensory. Stimulating, provocative, flexible in use, transformable, diverse, resourceful and 'communicative'. Therefore, how it is designed, planned, managed and maintained is a subject of utmost interest for today's society, in the context of the alarming

decreasing levels of the children's outdoor activities, mostly caused by the lack of space friendliness towards the human being. Therefore, the public space must first become child friendly in order to become human friendly. The children know and experiment with the space gradually, on the horizontal plan through movement, sensors, use and mental perception, from the inside private home space to the outdoor public realm, and on the vertical plan, mostly through sensory receptors, from the ground, to the upper levels of the city's structure.

The most relevant level for the children's scale is, of course, the ground level, the eye level, the intersection between the two plans, revealing that public space still close to the secure indoor home space, but also connected to the outdoor public realm. It is the hybrid zone consisting of the building plinth and the sidewalk. If perceived from the children's point of view, the hybrid zone acts (or should act, if properly designed and planned) as an extension of the home, as a safe playable environment protected by the closeness to home, and, at the same time, as a hidden though open place, from where the child gets a sneak peak into the neighbourhood's urban life.

The access to child -friendly hybrid zones becomes a matter of great interest. While the one from the public realm should have a limited permeability, the one from the indoor private area, the home door, matters for the child the

most because it functions like a portal between the familiar home space and the adventurous outer world, linking the two sides naturally and making them both extremely easy accessible.

Making the ground level child friendly implies that the home door, the plinth and the sidewalk should be treated as one single urban element with specific characteristics and regulations. Creating a network of child friendly home doors and sidewalks would not only please the children and their parents but would also help activate the neighbourhood's residential streets and make them suitable for socialising, walking, playing ... for 'living' them.

In order to become a suitable place for children's play the hybrid zone has to be safe, accessible, attractive, assumed and 'felt' by the community and designed to offer the children enough opportunities for all sorts of activities.

Of course, though functioning as a playground right next door, it could not be fully designed as one. And yet, a few simple design elements, already there or possible to be attached, can be used to transform the hybrid zone into a playable place:
– few steps, side niches are always welcome because they offer places to sit or hide;
– pergolas or awnings act as great sun and wind shelters;
– green fences offer protection from curious outside eyes and a boundary that comforts the parents;
– wide (or possible to be widened) and car free sidewalks offer enough space for, although limited, satisfactory movement;
– an unrestricted view from and towards the windows that could hinder the children's surveillance (e.g. high bushes);
– funny or playable pavements (e.g. hopscoth)

Making the plinths and hybrid zones in residential neighborhoods child friendly is a multiplayer, dynamic and continuously playable game involving designers, urban planners, strategic thinkers, adults, children, authorities etc. It is a fun game to play and it only has winners.

Children sitting in the doorway

Neighborhood

TRANSFORMING A FINANCIAL DISTRICT INTO A HUGE PLAYGROUND

Clara Muzzio (Ministry of Environment and Public Space, Buenos Aires City Government)

CONTEXT

Throughout the last five years, the financial district (a.k.a. 'Microcentro') of Buenos Aires has undergone a major process of urban transformation with a 'Human Scale' approach. With the aim of improving the overall walkability, accessibility and quality of public space, profound urban renewal works were initiated: sidewalks were renovated, roads were leveled, heritage buildings were restored and illuminated and mass transport routes were relocated through BRT 'Metrobus' at 9 de Julio Avenue. Overall, it completely transformed the urban landscape of the busiest spot of Argentina. Around 1.5 million people adults arrive at this area of the city every workday morning to work (but note that during the weekends, in return, the area becomes almost deserted). By car, subway or bus, adults move in a frantic pace, creating an unfriendly environment to children and consequently leaving no place for game, fantasy and joy.

To reverse this situation, disruptive activities for children were designed and carried out, aiming to create an environment where they would feel more comfortable and become the main protagonists. This intervention could have been done on the edge of the city or at any open location, such as parks or stadiums, but this would have prevented us from shifting a 'Place for Adults' into a 'Place for Kids'. We seek to transform an environment commonly associated with white-collars into an exclusive space for our children to play. As the initiative was completely aligned with the Buenos Aires City Government's commitments on Human Scale and Enjoyment, the idea was put into action.

APPROACH

We sought to recover the space with a strong playful imprint. On each 'Minicentro' edition, 'Diagonal Norte' road (alongside the Obelisco) was closed to transit and a wide range of activities and games for kids flourished. An area of more than 6,000 square-meters was transformed into a huge urban playground, where horns and traffic were replaced by songs, bustle and laughter. Roads were closed to traffic very early and inflatable games arrived to set everything up and be ready by 10am, soon enough for the early arrivers. Besides the games, the area was garnished with a circus-themed ornamentation, as well as with huge corporeal 2-meter tall letters forming the word 'Music', which invited the kids to climb and play with them, through sounds, shapes and textures. Food and drinks were supplied by food-trucks, including one managed by disabled youngsters, promoting diversity and inclusiveness.

At 'Minicentro', activities ranged from artistic workshops and crafts, theater plays, musical and acrobatics shows, to inflatable games, fairy tale and sports. For instance, at 'The Big Classroom' workshop children could play in an exploratory way, with gadgets and removable pieces that combined art, design, technology and construction, always with a playful emphasis. There was also an educational approach, since there were activities of waste management and recycling. Also transit-related activities were developed, such us traffic lightings, signaling and norms, as well as urban planning, electronics and design-through-light games for kids. At the end of such activities kids, would take their own creations home. The whole idea was to

foster the children's imagination through didactical and participative games. Theatre plays were improvised by actors that impersonated characters made up by the kids, such us kings, princesses and dragons. Our 8-year olds kids became script writers on the spot.

Logistics and overall coordination was managed by the Undersecretary of Use of Public Space (Ministry of Environment and Public Space) that, among many other goals, seeks to elaborate and promote public policies in order to enhance the overall quality of the public space.

LESSONS AND OUTCOMES

'Minicentro' was born as an activity that pursued to promote public space enjoyment for our youngest urban dwellers. It was a free activity, to guarantee access for everyone, regardless their income. It was open to locals and to inhabitants from the greater area of Buenos Aires alike. And we observed families from every income level who were local as well as metropolitan.

The project was originally thought for the 2016 winter holidays' weekends, but due to the enormous affluence of visitors, the activity was extended for two more months. The chosen location had very easy access by bike, subway, bus or BRT. We found this was a key driver. Another lesson learned was to include the kids in the design process. In the first two editions we

surveyed the kids, asking them what kind of games they have enjoyed the most and the least, in order to do changes to improve the kids experience.

Each Saturday, up to 10,000 people showed up, and children from ages 0 to adolescents became protagonists in a public space completely designed for them. This suggests that any public space can be potentially intervened and, even temporarily, repurposed. As the initiative was proven successful, it was replicated in 2017 and for 2018 we are planning to continue it for the next winter holidays but with a public-private partnership and with sponsors, in order to reduce the amount of funds spent by the local government.
We believe that a truly accessible city, must be designed for the most disadvantaged groups, being the elderly, disabled and kids. The space becomes public when it is made available, accessible and enjoyable to all the citizens of a city, including children, our youngest inhabitants.

# KIDS PERSPECTIVES ON ATHENIAN NEIGHBORHOODS

Dr. Aimilia Fakou (Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, culture and sports, Athens) , Klairi Tzoufla (Hellenic American Educational Foundation) & Stefania Vouvousira (University of Athens)

The educational program "Let's take a walk in the city!" was implemented at the Onassis Cultural Center in Athens, Greece, during the year 2016-7 and involved 5-8 year old children as participants, along with their parents. The aim of the workshop was to bring out children's perspectives on the city in which they live, and encourage them to approach the city through their own eyes. Two workshops were held for two Athenian neighborhoods (Koukaki, Acropolis), and each workshop involved two two-hour long meetings. In this way they interacted with public urban space, and approached it as a life experience.

The purpose of the second meeting was to elaborate on the material that the children had collected during the walks, and to reflect on it. With our encouragement children depicted the routes they had followed, creating visual group compositions for each route (mental maps, maquettes).

We believe that through this experience children had the opportunity to observe and experience city space differently than in their everyday lives. They took pictures of building details (patterns, colors, textures), played games with city streets and made up stories about them, recorded city sounds and collected plants characteristic of each area. In addition,

they had the opportunity to experience places in the city as playgrounds, even if their daily use was different. Through this process children recorded their own relationship with public spaces, as well as relations among spaces.

In sum, we realised through this intervention that activities such as these bring out children's creative expression in relation to public space, while they confront adults with the open-ended question of how to utilise such multimedia tools and practices in order to give prominence to children's voices regarding public space.
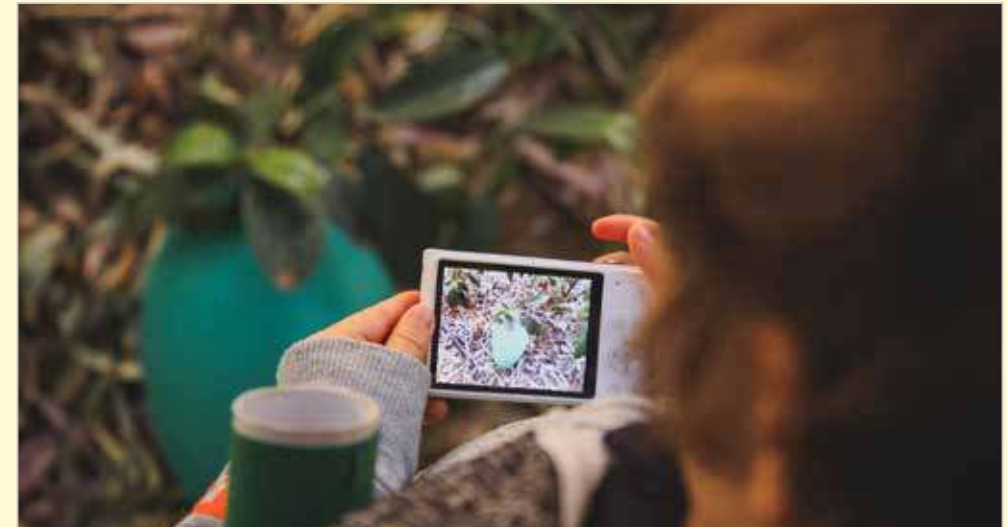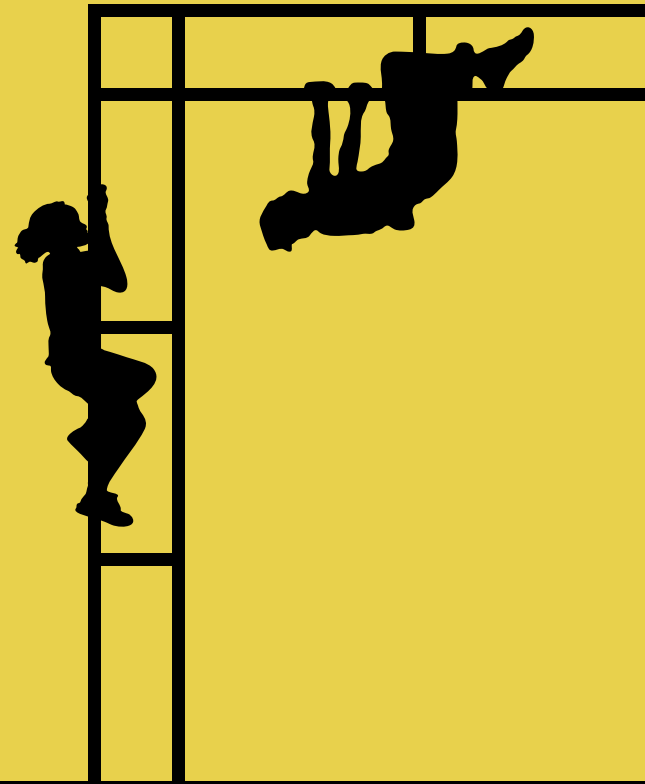

Let's us take a walk in the city!

Snapshot of the mental map

TAKING OWNERSHIP

PLAYABLE STREETS TO RECLAIM INDEPENDENT PLAY FOR ALL CHILDREN

Renet Korthals Altes (Make Space 4 Play)

Socio-economic differences already start at an early age: in the opportunities to play. Especially in the quickly expanding (mega)cities where public space has become scarce, safe spaces to play free of charge hardly exist. Due to densification, privatisation, prioritising cars, or due to fear of 'unwanted/ illegal' use of public space, local governments are reticent in giving back (public) space. There are millions of children who cannot afford to go to the shopping malls or hotels, to pay for the man with the swing on the road, to pay the entrance fee of a (public!?) park. *Playing freely is not free, children have to pay to play.*

This socio-spatial inequality at children's level can be changed by reclaiming free space to play. Many successful community-driven initiatives have set contagious examples how to reclaim public spaces to play&meet. But the most simple solution can be found in giving back the street to children.

CHILDREN PLAY LESS INDEPENDENTLY

Giving back the street to children would not only fight the socio-economic inequalities at child's level, most importantly it stimulates to regain the normality of playing independently. Why do children get less opportunities to play independently? Firstly, there is simply less public space to play free of charge. The available free play spaces are too "far", either in absolute distance, or because of physical or social borders, or because they lack safe routing towards them.

No space to play children playing with a kite from window

Children looking for play anywhere

Smart design: lightpole swing from Thorwald Ter Kulve

Thirdly, parents and (therefore their) children feel it is unsafe to play alone. This subjective perception of traffic and social unsafety, is not only influenced by facts such as traffic accidents or crime rates. Improving the subjective perception of safety mainly lays in a safe routing and visibility. On the playable space itself and the routing towards it, there should be a high visibility from adjacent roads and houses: sufficient lighting, many passers-by and neighbouring windows. And last reason for the decrease of independent play is that children take or are given less time to play outdoors; screens, (home) work or hobbies do not leave enough time to go to these playareas.

How can we stimulate children to play more independently, if there is little accessible space, little time, or no feeling of safety? All children who have little time ('half an hour before dinner'), who do not have access to free public spaces to play, or who are not allowed to go further than the street in front of the house …?

Minor changes in streets will regain the normality of playing independently

STREETS TO PASS BY & PLAY.

Unfortunately, even in young lives, time seems limited. We see caretakers rushing over the streets with their children, to do shopping, bringing and picking up their kids, parents etc. For this type of street-use, we can create more child friendly streets as well. Streets which make children enjoy the ride. How?
1. Softening the plinths at (child's) eye level alongside adjacent houses. By giving ownership of a strip (60 cm / 2 tiles) of the pavement to the residents, for greenery or benches, the street changes into a more mixed-use street. The minimum width of the pavement is less important than the presence of a 'soft' pavement strip with greenery and benches, these form the key to child friendly pavements.
2. Secondly (physical) barriers between the pavement and the street (think of bike parks, concrete blocks/ seats, benches, or greenery) provide children from running directly onto the street
3. Children have an intrinsic drive to play, children are always looking for elements which give them new input, perspective, sound, ability or a new feeling. Making use of children's internal drive to experience whatever attracts them by differentiating materials, heights, shapes or, structures.
4. Necessary street-furniture form great playing opportunities for children. Some designers combined necessity with playability, creating playable street furniture.

Benches and greenery on the street

STREETS TO STAY & PLAY

We can go a step further creating pavements which invite children to stay and play longer. Therefore the pavements ask even more than the minimum requirements as above. To reach the minimum width of 4 meter allowing children to play while passengers can still pass, there are several solutions: combining parking spaces at a parking lot around the corner; dividing the parking spaces in groups of four parking spaces on both sides of the street to create zigzag streets – also forcing cars to lower their speed ; changing parking spaces into bike-parkings. Broader sidewalks should be a focus for policy makers and urban designers in an early stage, aligning other policies like inhabitants' health or inclusive cities.

Extra important for sidewalks to stay&play are the 'social eyes': open plinths (pavements are visible and accessible by adjacent houses).
We can stimulate longer independent play by making use of more elements differentiating from their surroundings attracting children to experience the different tactile, visual, physical or auditive appearance. Ready made play elements are not necessary. We should think out of the box, think in each direction (pavement, plinths, and elements along the road) from a child's perspective (95-140 cm).

And one last important secret lays in attracting the parents, with seats providing weather shelter (or sun, depending on the climate) looking out over the children. Benches turn sidewalks into places to stay, either linked to the adjacent houses or forming the important barriers between the road and the broad pavement.

Streets as playgrounds fight socio-spatial injustice at child's level and stimulate independent play.

YOUTH PRACTISES TRANSFORMING THE MEANING OF FORMAL PUBLIC SPACE IN HANOI

Stephanie Geertman (Hanoi Youth Public Space)

The use and meaning of Hanoi's public spaces have undergone a profound change over the last three decades as Vietnam opened its doors to the market economy, and experienced major socio-economic reforms (Söderström & Geertman, 2013). Rapid urbanisation and densification has favoured a new use of public space and allowed for the flourishing of spontaneous urban youth practices. With the rapid growth of the city the number of new constructed public gardens and parks increased as well. At the same time, the city witnessed a dramatic decrease in the number of lakes and ponds and inner city public spaces. Between 2000 and 2010, the city's total park area declined from an already limited 2.09m2 per capita to just 1.48m2. (Boudreau et al. 2015, 2) Additionally, the vast majority of the new public spaces (and parks in particular) have a limited accessibility as many of them are located too far out in the periphery, and have fences and entrance fees. As a result, the limited formal public spaces that remain in the inner city have become overcrowded.

In our study[1], we learned that there are generally four main reasons why the formal public spaces in inner city Hanoi were preferred by Hanoi youth over the new recreational parks developed (Boudreau

Lenin Square : a small group of teenagers started to use the base of the Lenin statue for skateboarding in 2000, the year marks the beginning of a process that turned the square by 2010 into the center for youth lifestyle sports (e.g. skateboarding, hip-hop dancing, inline skating) (Geertman et al. 2016). Source : Stephanie Geertman, 2015

et al. 2015). First, the accessibility of the inner city formal parks, they don't have the entrance fees, fences and gates and they are located near the street. Second, the diverse physical setting of the inner city parks, this includes a flat, open, and hard surface which support their unstructured lifestyle sport activities. Third, due to the central location of these parks the youth feel they are part of society, they can interact with other people in society, this prevents loneliness (in particular for migrant youth) and they can assert their youthful lifestyles to an audience, so they can assert their youthful identities. Many youth told us they prefer a diverse mix of people, rather than developing youth-only parks (as developed elsewhere in the city). Fourth, youth prefer density, they like to be in a crowd, because it provides a more attractive atmosphere, they want to see others and be seen, interact and meet, as well they feel more safe.

Claiming Hanoi's inner city formal public space for the practice of new urban activities has become a multifaceted challenge for youth. The spaces are formal, first because Hanoi's urban administrative management defines this type of public spaces as công viên van hoá (cultural parks). This means they are public spaces not meant for recreational activities of citizens. These spaces are largely small pocket parks (called gardens) that have statues with a symbolic meaning that represent communist state authority. The flat hard surfaces in front of the statues are meant for political parades only. However, since 2000, and with an intensification since 2010, the youth have started to play an essential role in turning the inner-city formal pocket parks (meant to represent communist state authority), into centers that represent their everyday lives (Geertman et al. 2016).

In our study[2] we learned that the success of the Hanoi youth in creating space for themselves in these formal urban spaces has been by relying on tactful negotiation strategies with the authorities in charge (police or guards): avoiding conflict as much as they could and by developing a broad awareness of others' needs in terms of space (Geertman et al. 2016). In addition to securing space for play, they simultaneously did so to express their interests and identities to a larger society. Young people in Hanoi repeatedly speak of "cuộc sống là nghê thuât" (living your life as art). It refers to a more free-flowing, less hierarchical, and more unpredictable life than what Vietnamese sociocultural values would typically allow for (Geertman and Boudreau, 2018). This means the space appropriation tactics by young people in Hanoi cannot just be analysed as survival practices. These youth space appropriation tactics are conscious acts of being present at the public spaces in ways that significantly has contributed in changing the socio-political meaning and use of these public spaces. As such they can read as politics of the street, that elsewhere I have called everyday urban youth politics (Geertman et al. 2016). Whereas the authorities had not considered this as a serious threat, it did became one by 2015 when within a few

days youth swiped the city away by becoming involved in street protests. The city government had started cutting trees in inner city Hanoi, but had not foreseen the consequences that could rise from this act. These trees were an essential part of these young people's daily habitat, the formal public spaces that they earlier had appropriated for their practices for play (Geertman and Boudreau, 2018). Although a wide range of people from different generations became involved, it has been the youth who had an essential role in starting the mobilisation process. Youthful play had evolved directly into emotional environmental politics.

Although young people in Hanoi changed the meaning and use of public space in Hanoi, and prevented many trees to be cut down in the city, dissatisfaction by youth in Hanoi remains. As in New York, London or Tokyo young people in Hanoi are still largely perceived as a threat to the social order. It remains to be seen if the state will continue to tolerate young people's activities at these public spaces in Hanoi. This means that the youth in Hanoi will need to reinvent their negotiation strategies with the authorities continuously to safeguard the public spaces for their play each single day, now and in the future.

NOTES

1. This research was conducted as part of the research project Youth-Friendly Public Spaces in a Context of Rapid Urbanization, funded for the period 2013–2015 by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for a collaborative project between the Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique (INRS, Canada), the Institute of Sociology of the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences (IoS-VASS, Vietnam), and HealthBridge (Vietnam and Canada)
2. The results presented here are based on the results of ethnic observations, 60 interviews and 11 group interviews with Vietnamese youth at three formal public spaces in the city Hanoi conducted between 2013-2015 (Boudreau et al. 2015).

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STREET FUN IN CARACAS

Teresa García Alcaraz

Latin American cities are constantly in search of generating new ideas aimed at improving social dialogues and opportunities among citizens. And, most of the time, the incorporation of simple actions in urban spaces is precisely what cities need to empower local communities to revive and transform their surroundings.

Street Fun is a project ideated by *Liga de la Partida Urbana*[1], pursuing to increase children's outside play in vulnerable areas of Caracas, where open space is limited. They use the idea of traditional street games to activate local communities through 'participation', understanding this term as a pedagogic tool that helps residents take decisions collectively for positive change.

The parish of Macarao, located in the southwest of Caracas, was the chosen scenario to implement the project. Severe problems are visible in the area, including violence, poverty and inadequate healthcare and infrastructures. Housing is vulnerable to natural disasters and despite the fact open space is scarce, it is immensely valued for social life to unfold. The population of children and teenagers is particularly high and unclaimed spaces such as narrow streets, alleyways and stairways become nodes of uncertainty, where unexpected encounters evolve.

The local plaza Bolivar, located in the historical part of Macarao, was the selected setting to implement the project as it was an open space where kids usually play and spend time.

Children of Macarao playing on the plaza

Before any intervention, it is vital to observe relationships, identify places and talk to children. Then, if kids are enthusiastic about the idea of 'Street fun', the project is discussed with the community leaders of the local communal councils; and if there are no inconveniences, a day to intervene is agreed. It is from that moment, when a relationship of trust[2] between the collective and locals is made.

The day of the intervention, a group of kids between ages 6 and 10 collectively decided to spatialise the traditional Venezuelan game, fusilao, in one side of the square. LPU provided cans of paint, tape and brushes to children so they could draw geometric shapes and lines on the ground, turning the selected space into an impromptu game board. Children set up their own rules, deciding where to draw, how big the panel would have to be, and which colours would be used.

By pigmenting the surface of the plaza, a precious area was created, becoming the spot where children's rules allowed for socialising outside the parameters which are socially imposed; kids spatialised their own game and became the real placemakers, deciding not only the rules but also the representation of the game.

After the intervention, the square became a valued urban space both by kids and grown-ups, who showed their appreciation by keeping the area clean even when there were no kids playing.

In Street Fun, both the player and the observer are converted into urban actors,

Children spatialise their game and once the paint is dry, start playing 'el fusilao'.

Street fun project implemented in La Pastora, drawing a 'field' to play a traditional street game called 'Chapita'

Intervention in La Ceiba, a neighbourhood of San Agustín, with a colourful painted hopscotch in one of the alleys.

being not only the action of playing the relevant part but the appropriation of the space and the socialisation among children and adults.

Besides, these temporal interventions allow to create and recover neglected spaces using inexpensive solutions that are usually denied in conventional spaces, going beyond the rules imposed by city authorities.

As a result, these actions become a genuine driver of social change, create collective identities and promote a sense of belonging at the street level. Whereas the game becomes the key to engage with others, exchange ideas and create unconventional group dynamics, paint adds colour and imagination to everyday spaces. The combination of both elements becomes a means of rediscovering the space through creative social interaction working towards the well-being of the neighbourhood.

Lack of maintenance –normally caused by tropical rains- and community budget are the main constraints of Street Fun. The project relies on enabling community members to implement self-initiated actions collectively without outside help, thus the majority of developed interventions tend to fall into neglect.

Nowadays, street games are at long-term risk because children are denied the right to play at certain spaces and some adults prefer to keep kids in protected areas. Street Fun allows children to participate collectively in decision making, even become city changers, and contributing to making their city a better place to live in.

NOTES

1. LPU is a multidisciplinary collective set up in Caracas in 2010 by Rafael Machado (VEN), Pasquale Passanante (ITA), María de los Ángeles Mendoza (VEN) and Teresa García Alcaraz (ESP). All of them happened to meet in Caracas. Their backgrounds are related to Architecture, Sociology and Audio-visual communication, reason why the collective is always in search of generating hands-on projects with a positive impact not only seen spatially but socially, facilitating tools to local residents to become active change makers.

2. A relationship of trust was already established, as I was personally working as an architect in Macarao. This meant that it was easy both the access to the area and the relationship with community members of *Consejo Comunal Los Altos La Cruz, Los Angelinos, El Volcán and Consejo Comunal Casco Histórico*.

GIRLS, MAKE ROOM FOR THEM

Nadine Roos & Nikki Daniëls (HUNK Design)

Who doesn't recognise the following? A couple of girls are playing outside. They are chatting happily and laugh about each other's jokes. A bunch of boys arrives. They are about the same age. Enthusiastically they fool around, trying to tackle each other. The boys ignore the girls completely. The girls are not interested in the boys. Nevertheless, you see the girls move a bit to the side. The boys are acting wild; what if they bump into them? Unconsciously, the boys claim their space. Eventually, the girls move away altogether. There hasn't been any fight, nothing really happened. Still, the girls stay at a distance from the boys.

SPACE FOR GIRLS

The dynamics between girls and boys differ and that's why girls don't have an equal space. Playing outside is important for every child, but girls lack playgrounds that meet their needs. In this article, we discuss the cause of this problem, how playgrounds can be improved and if girls need their own space. We understand that not all the boys are the same, and of course, girls differ as well from each other. Nevertheless, we consciously make use of stereotypes. Simply, from a practical perspective, we need them to rely on averages and because they match our observations. We see that girls and boys play differently and that girls are missing chances. We feel that playgrounds should anticipate on this.

SMALL AND BIG

Young children play in a different manner than older kids. The little ones balance bravely on a small ridge and hold the hand of dad or mum. The older children easily jump over it and make a run for the climbing frame. We see them go through a physical development, but also through a social one. Toddlers primarily play on their own. Often close to each other, they each make their own stack of cubes. Further, in their development, their play becomes more associative. They'll play together, but don't tell each other what to do. Later on, when the children learn to play co-operatively, they'll organise themselves and give each other roles to play. One child will play the burglar and the other the police officer. All children go through these phases, but girls and boys each have their own pace.

DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

Toddler girls are quicker to play socially and in a more structured manner. Boys stay solitary for longer. Between the age of four and five something interesting happens. The boys overtake the girls in their associative play. At the same time, the girls are ahead in their co-operative play. In the age-group five to six year old, the boys again overtake the girls. Now in the co-operative play. But the girls stay ahead with their social interaction. When they grow older, the girls keep staying ahead of the boys in the area of social development.
This difference in development is clearly visible at playgrounds. It also shows why boys and girls don't find each other while playing outside; they are busy with completely different things.

INEQUALITY

Throughout the city, you can find soccer fields, basketball courts, and skate parks. Typical 'places for boys', where you won't find any girls. Nowhere do the girls get the same amount of attention. While designing playgrounds, the age differences are often taken into account. But the different needs of boys and girls are completely forgotten. The reason? Boys are more buoyant in their play and can cause a nuisance when they are bored. On average, the quieter girls tend to be overlooked. Besides, most urban designers are men and they design from their own perspective. It's not surprising that they let themselves be inspired by what they would have liked as a young boy. They have a blind spot for the girls' wishes. And so the girls stay away.

A PLACE OF THEIR OWN

Playing outside is important for all children. Learning through playing is crucial in their development and having fun is a right for each child. That's why it's important that girls can have the same amount of joy outside as boys. They need their own places. Places where they can be together with their friends and where the boys won't scare them away. A place to chat and also to do physical challenges. Girls are sensitive to the atmosphere of a place. It needs to look bright, with cheerful colours and good lighting.
We must stop overlooking girls.

RESEARCH

At the moment, only little study has been done on this subject. The problem has been identified, but hardly any tests have been done with places specially designed for girls. This is a whole untapped area to explore. We propose that the first move should be to make temporary interventions at playgrounds. We call this place-testing. You can spot immediately if the atmosphere works for the girls. If they are not pushed aside by the boys anymore. Has the intervention the intended effect then it can be deployed permanently. Do the girls still stay away? then the research has to be continued with other elements. Just until the right place arises.

GIRLS'-PLAY

Girls follow their own pattern of development. While researching good playgrounds, it is important to keep this in mind. For example girls like places where they can play in pairs. Boys on the other hand like to play in groups. So both need a different layout. Girls are more sensitive to the atmosphere of a place. An advantage of this is the following; the cosier the place the less interesting it is for boys. Girls like chatting, but just like boys they also like being active. Here lies a challenge and that is to design play equipment that will be loved by the girls and ignored by the boys. And finally, girls love to play imaginary stories. A place that is designed in such a way that, in their imagination, can one day be a castle and the other day a rocket on its way to intergalactic adventures, is perfect for girls.
And of course, it is important to engage the girls from the neighbourhood when you are place-testing. Ask them what their wishes are, involve them in the design process and during the place-testing phase ask them for their opinions and experiences.

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BLOCK BY BLOCK IN ACCRA DESIGNING PLAY SPACES WITH URBAN YOUTH

Amowi Phillips & Namata Serumaga-Musisi
(Mmofra Foundation)

Mmofra Foundation, a Ghanaian NGO advocate for children's public space, has been engaged in community projects throughout 2017/18 sponsored by UN-Habitat's Block by Block charity through the Liveable Cities programme of Healthbridge Canada. This chapter describes how the Block by Block methodology, with clearly prescribed steps using the Minecraft game, has been applied in both a park and a market, possessing dynamics and outcomes unique to each.

Three 10-year-olds in Accra, Ghana stand on a derelict park site, noting in their newly issued project notebooks the scrap heaps, weedy mounds, and activity on the open space next to their school in the Teshie-Nungua Estate neighbourhood. A few months later, they will see their concepts become reality as the park slowly begins to take form. Barely able to wait until the construction is finished, they — now accomplished designers — and their peers from Precious Jewels Primary School will eagerly test the features in a playground of their own making.

Elsewhere in the city, a large group of teens and twenty-somethings gather under an event shed in the Mallam Atta Market where their female relatives are vendors. This time, the goal of the participatory design is to use the Minecraft tool to generate ideas for making pockets within the market safer and more playful for the children who accompany their market-vendor-mothers to work.

Children doing site analysis, Teshie-Nungua Park (Accra, 2017)

Youth presenting ideas for Market at Soronko Academy (Accra, 2018)

Children in a market stall before design interventions. (Nima Market, Accra, 2018)

PLAY SPACES VS PLAYABLE SPACES

Spatially and conceptually, the park is presented quite differently from the market. An open space clearly bound by named streets and formally identifiable in urban plans, the park was relatively simple to model. The much more intimate and informal scale of the market project required more sensitivity in observing use of the market (from routines to navigation) in order to plug into the existing ecosystem without disrupting its function. This posed a challenge to communicate concepts that were not centralised around any single point, but designed to enhance the existing overall experience.

Where a park would already be associated with notions of relaxation, play, and children, the West African Market as a deliberately playable and child-friendly environment is a new idea which many are sceptical — understandably, given the scarcity of successful models. Communication was crucial.

FROM GAMING TO PLAYMAKING

For the Minecraft training workshop itself, the Teshie-Nungua Park project luckily accessed the use of a well-equipped computer lab offered for use by SAPS, another neighbourhood school which also facilitated the active participation of its current and former students. With a multi-generational age spread from 10 to 60 in the workshop, we anticipated some culturally-induced hesitation on the part of the younger participants to express themselves freely in the midst of much older people — unnecessarily as it turned out, because their relative familiarity with the technology was a balancing advantage. The extensive site visit followed by a trip to Mmofra Place, a functioning park under Mmofra Foundation's stewardship, granted participants to feel comfortable in talking to each other, thus, making it easier for people to exchange and develop ideas.

Minecraft for the market was slightly more difficult, the first concern being that closing up shop to attend a game training for three full days would not be an option for most vendors. However they might be persuaded — and were indeed — to send their children and family members during their break from school to learn something potentially useful. Raised in and around the market themselves, these young people were experts in their own right on current conditions in that space, on which they shared passionate views.

In the end, the logistics of setting up rented laptops in open-air conditions with potentially unstable power sources led us to an alternative option, which proved highly successful. Soronko Solutions, a local NGO with an excellent record of IT training for girls from under-resourced communities, stepped in to offer not only a lab, but also a cadre of nine young women already familiar with computers who could, with site and technical orientation in advance, be assigned leadership roles during the workshop. In this way we achieved a gender balance with women in IT leadership roles usually occupied by men.

PLAYABLE FUTURES

Bused daily from Mallam Atta Market to the Soronko Lab, the market youth very quickly got the hang of the game and into the rhythm of discussing issues that would inform their design ideas. Here, we noted that validating participants' concept of "public space" (in their experience, inclusive of walled spaces for example) was an important initial step towards drawing them into thinking about multi-functional space that can be manipulated in order to extract maximum value for children. With the many urgent needs of the market foremost in the minds of participants, it was challenging to shift towards thinking about the project primarily at child scale as the Minecraft workshops tend to promote participants to explore independent initiatives. Mmofra felt it was important for participants to orient themselves during the first day on generic design improvements for a space with many needs including details for walkways and lighting. This allowed the participants to focus on child-oriented designs during the second day.

While the generic solutions reached certainly could be seen as beneficial to all market users including children, many of the final models missed the child-focused enhanced play experience central to the design brief. That said, each of the solutions offered could be explored at child scale, and so the Mmofra design team were able to leave with some guidance as to what main concerns were in the market, and how, in designing these play spaces, one could incorporate solutions to the overall issues. The solutions designed, are conscientious and replicable in markets (across Accra - like in neighbouring Nima Market - and West Africa), and make use of easily sourced and affordable materials.

As the team goes into construction it will be interesting to see how the spaces play out — not just physically, but socially — how market residents, particularly the children, interact with them. Mmofra looks forward to sharing the outcomes of the construction.
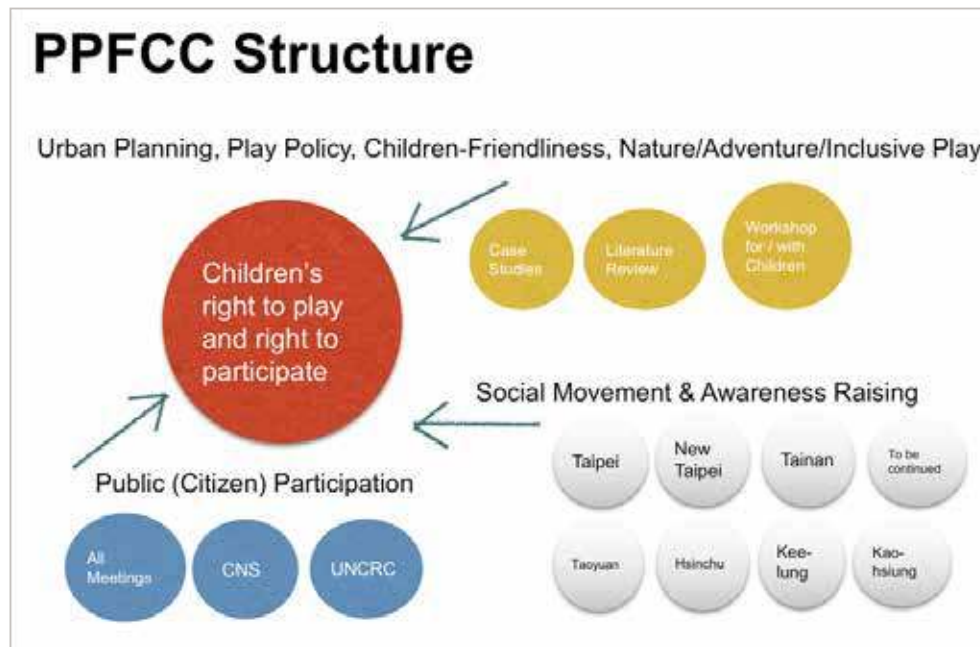
RETRIEVAL OF PUBLIC PLAY SPACE FOR CHILDREN IN TAIWAN

Christine Yuihwa Lee (Parks and Playgrounds for Children by Children)

The PPFCC model works as members volunteering different functions in a huge virtual team.
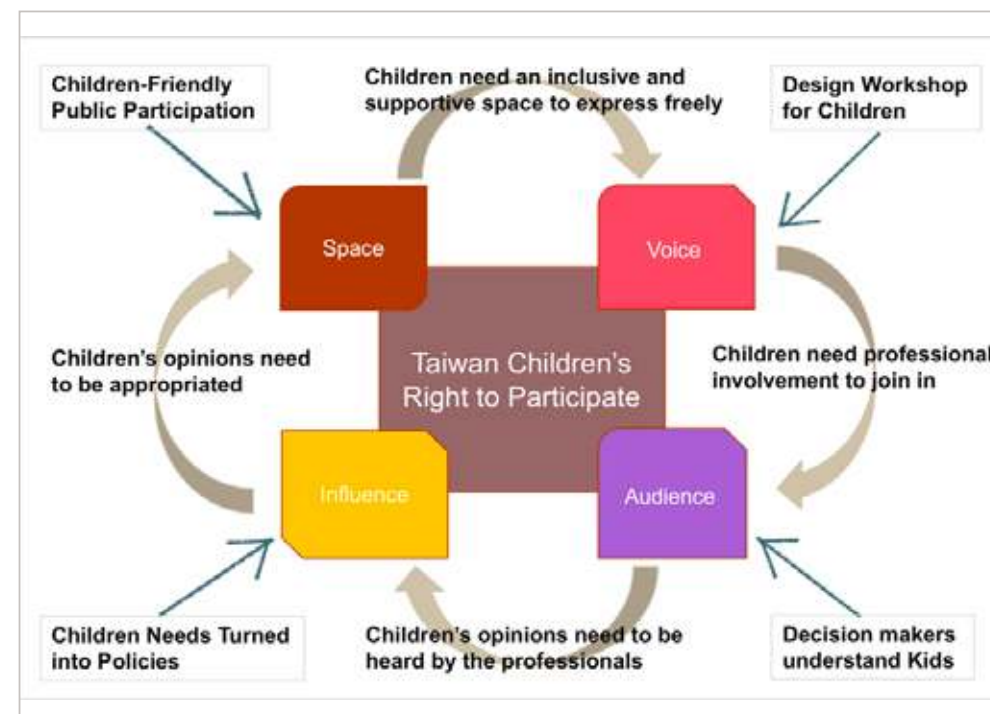
PPFCC AS A CATALYST IN A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

The function role of NPOs for the government has long been observed as either supplementing, replacing, bypassing and substituting to gradually overcome what the government stagnates, or too ideal and too flattering to not be easily assessed its accountability and performance (Wu, 2012: 25-43). In this article, the PPFCC model in the retrieval of public play space for children in Taiwan is discussed to display the role of a group of advocacy activists can be, however, as having diverse functions instead of mere dual roles, as a catalyst in a collaborative partnership among children (i.e. 0-18 years old, space user, country citizen), private sector (e.g. designer, play equipment provider, builder), academia and the government.

As the first ever attempt as a catalyst of a collaborative partnership among children, private sector, academia and government in Taiwan, the PPFCC model has been proven to practically and efficiently promote the occurrence of infrastructures and social services to fulfil children's right to play and right to participation (SFAA Ministry of Health & Welfare, 2014). And for public benefits, for instance, providing opportunities for designers to create innovation and for play equipment providers and builders to fulfil larger domestic demands. Yet, most importantly, in easing heavy parenting loads for a wide range of families with different socio-economic background in nowadays society in Taiwan.

Lundy's Model of Children Participation for PPFCC's Implementation

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS FOR CHILDREN BY CHILDREN (PPFCC)

Originated by a group of full-time mothers in the greater Taipei area, PPFCC started as daily park/playground goers, who observed a phenomenon of 'canned-food playground'. Soon after, in mid-2015, they gathered in a Facebook group together with a Line group to discuss issues relevant to children-friendly public play space. Its initial approach was a press conference protesting against the removal of Pebble-Washed-in-Concrete slide and German playsets in Youth Park (and other PWC slides in two other parks) without any notifications to primary users - children and their carers. PPFCC full-time mothers (as the local media has named them) and their children brought with them 'No More Canned-Food Playgrounds' in front of the Taipei City Government Hall, and three advocacy initiatives proposed to be the fundamental requests to make a change. After two and half years, the PPFCC model has drawn the attention of more than 30,000 interested citizens from its social platforms (Facebook fanpage, local community FB/Line group, parenting groups and playgroups) to together work as a huge virtual team.

THREE ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

The PPFCC model runs with the core value, echoing UNCRC, of 'children as citizens have their right to play because play is their soul in the growing-up process; and children must exercise their right to have their voice in the decision-making process in public space wherever they go'. However, in Taiwan, often children were encouraged to only be children in playgrounds, where limited budget and risk-averse planning took place. PPFCC raised awareness of changes made for children's rights by requesting that:

1. Children's playgrounds use no more Canned-Food playsets (i.e. KFC - Kid, Fence, Carpet, or McDonald's model; poor quality of PE/PU/PVC material, lack of design, and with play functions merely for kids aged under 4-5 years old).
2. Children deserve to be given back various types of parks and playgrounds designed with natural materials, local features/characteristics, community needs, diversity of play functions; these fundamental elements are to be designed according to needs or opinions of children themselves.
3. Cities in Taiwan should become as children-friendly and playful as a comprehensive children's playground because 'play' is life core for children; hence, 'play' shouldn't be restricted to merely playgrounds in parks, due to children's right to play in UNCRC.

THE CATALYST: THE PPFCC MODEL ITSELF

PPFCC was invited by the City Governments, and have participated on all scales of playground design meetings. They have changed the SOP and mechanism of playground design/build projects, turned playground

signs by using a children-friendly and positive tone rather than authoritative demands with restrictions. They have helped design signs and layouts of new playground restrooms into all gender/family-children-friendly ones, held playground design workshops with children, led talks and lectures for government officials and citizens to know more about children's rights to play and participation, translated articles of design cases from around the world, and written advocacy articles related to all advocacy issues.

Children in Taiwan are faced with Canned-Food Playgrounds, where they all look the same.

PPFCC full-time mothers, who had their expertise on areas such as Law, Politics, Accounting, Journalism, IT, Children Psychology, Early Education, Children's Health & Development, Occupational therapy, PR, Marketing, Language & Culture, Translation & Interpreting, Urban Planning, Landscape Design and Architecture, have autonomously self-taught themselves to be able to interpret children's voices, integrate academic resources, assist the private sector, and ally government officials to design-think and think 'out of the

Photos of all scales of meetings, talks regarding good cause, and design workshops with children.

box' of CNS (Chinese National Standards). The play policy has then gradually swung away from a risk-averse one, and swung into a more 'children-centred' one with children's best interests of well-being since 2015.

Furthermore, PPFCC full-time mothers use their powerful skills of networking to involve the old media (TV, Newspaper, Magazine, Bookshop, Publisher, Radio and Conference) and new media (Facebook, FB Live Shows, Line, Online Forum, Blogs, Plurk, Epaper, and Digital Coworking App) to gain the attentions from audience from parents to professionals. In the end, the advocacy has gone beyond issues for children and their carers only, instead, in has caught eyes as well as dedication from people of various fields.

CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO PLAY AND RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION

In the PPFCC model, the change had to start and occur in playgrounds first, so primary users - children - can satisfy their needs at a certain level before they further their citizen rights to have their voice heard in the decision-making process. Once the model's been exercised to the best possible extent, the

practices and experiences from the model can be implemented to public play space like parks, to community shared space, to city squares, to streets/roads to be returned to kids to play, and to the entire city (i.e. as one of PPFCC's advocacy claim - the city is children's playground), and eventually to be implemented in other public infrastructures for children and their carers. UNCRC Professor Lundy's children participation model then can implemented in the PPFCC way to extend to the whole island of Taiwan as a bottom-up mechanism.

AN ORGANIC AND EXTENSIVE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

By March 2018, the PPFCC model has been successfully amended, optimised, redesigned and rebuilt nearly a hundred playgrounds in the northern Taiwan area, children-friendly facilities in parks have been refurbished upon requests and surrounding infrastructure has been renewed under the children-friendly principle.

A new PPFCC advocacy proposal of a city policy has been announced and evaluated to (1) have school playgrounds to be open for more public play space, (2) hold play events like No-Car Days or Play Street/Road, (3) increase more budgets on public play space, (4) top up public play space like 'adventurous, risky and challenging' playgrounds to gain diversity, and (5) to establish 'Satellite Playground Grid', which several small surrounding parks each contain certain play functions to compensate each other for local community users. It's a gradual but long-term retrieval of children's public play space, however, it certainly is an initial phase toward a city at the eye level for children.

TAIWAN HAS LEARNT FROM PPFCC…

In the nearly 3 years of PPFCC's advocacy, Taiwan society has learnt that it doesn't even need formal Non-Profit Organisation to make social changes to happen in the traditional approach of supplementing, replacing, bypassing and substituting a government; in contrast with the previous, the PPFCC model has proven an innovative and organic approach to bring social changes by the collaboration among children (primary user), private sector (realiser), academia (supporter) and the government (financer) with the help of the catalytic advocacy group of PPFCC.

The following perspectives have been observed, and in the near future, can be closely pursued and further studied:

1. The PPFCC model has worked out very well in certain cities in Taiwan, however, other cities in Taiwan haven't caught up with the progressive trend of exercising children's right to play and participation using the proven approach.
2. The women/mother power has always been the major dynamics in the advocacy group of PPFCC and the members seem to support each other and juggle their roles in a practically balanced way.
3. The tipping point hasn't shown up yet for the PPFCC members' intrinsic motivation to decrease to continue their catalyst role for the collaborative partnership, even the constitution it has turned even complex.
4. PPFCC members still believe in their working model and will proceed on regardless of obstacles such as power plays from political parties or NGOs of relevant issues.

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MICRO URBAN RENEWAL-COMMUNITY GARDENS IN SHANGHAI

Jing Jing (KTH Centre for Future of Places)

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid urbanization of Chinese cities, improving urban living quality is a shared priority of Chinese citizens and their government. For cities like Shanghai, its green area in the high-density central city area has seen near zero growth during the past years.(Liu,Yin, et al 2017). Innovations across different sectors and professions are needed to build more sustainable and livable urban environments.. The two case studies following provide us a peak of how community garden used as a catalyst for public participation and community empowerment that benefit its local residents, including children, directly in the Chinese context. The analysis will take the perspective of orgware to illustrate the procedures and outcomes of building community garden. Although Chinese community gardens are fairly young, its implementation procedures and enforcement mechanisms differ from the western community garden developed earlier (Liu 2016). Child's participation and the child-friendliness are highlighted in the practice of community garden.

CASE STUDY AND ANALYSIS

KIC Garden, claimed as Shanghai's first community garden (Liu, 2016), was built in 2014 with a floor area of 2,200 m2. It is located in a relatively newly built High-tech industry cluster

Families planting seeds in the garden

featuring information technology. The area is a mixture of residence, offices, commercials and universities with a modern urban structure, developed by the renowned Hongkong developer Shui On Properties.[1] As the local government's ambition of building a demo open neighborhoods (in comparison to the previous prevailing gated communities), plus the site of KIC Garden located right on the "green axis" of the district master plan, it has received great attention to be regenerated as a convivial public space. The developer has financed the upgrading of the design and implementation. A Chinese NGO - CNS (Clover Nature School), specialized in environmental education and experience with focus on children and youth, was chosen to implement the project. A permaculture design approach is noticeable across different parts of the KIC Garden. The garden provides indoor and outdoor services such as café/tea house, library, playgrounds, edible garden, and community farm which invite residents to participate, share and exchange experiences, plants and vegetation. The architecture hosting indoor activities reuses the shipping containers, furnished with flexible furniture which can be organized respectively for different needs of the activities. Both professional agencies and local residents' work co-exist in the garden. The case has been appreciated mostly from the local children and families. It builds up a model of a child-friendly community through public participation as well as community empowerment. Due to the scale of the garden, its management and maintenance still rely on the developer at the daily base. Social organizations work closely with the local residents and set up events, activities and public education programs during weekends and holidays. All stakeholders continuously invest in the community garden with the vision to help it develop into a self-organizing and self-sufficient community garden.

Herb Garden is built upon the green field of a relatively older community from the 60s, with an area of 200 m2. Most of the residents have been living here

for decades. The neighborhood has a stable population structure, strong housing association and notable gardening social organizations. The local authority – "Siping Jiedao"[2] has collaborated with the landscape department of Tongji University: the previous provided the core funding, and the latter has been committed to design and implement the project. The garden is designed with children's and local residents' participation as the design team who have helped to set up communication platform in between the local residents, the authority and the designers from the very beginning. Quantitative and qualitative interviews have been applied in the field study, design and decision making processes. Children and residents' voice have been heard by the designers and decision makers. Up to date, the Herb Garden's daily operation and maintenance are run by the local residents' social organizations. It becomes more mature at all levels and starts to invite other communities to visit and share learning.

In both case studies, children's participation is used as a common approach. Although the two cases are both in Yangpu district of Shanghai city, different enforcement mechanism applied respectively. The KIC Garden was mainly financed by a private developer while the local authority provided core funding to the Herb Garden. Sophisticated and well-trained design teams led the approaches used for urban regeneration. Public participation and processes are emphasized throughout the building of community garden.

CONCLUSIONS

The Shanghai community gardens began only a couple of years ago as initiatives by the collaborations among governmental agencies, private enterprises, socials organizations and residents. Opening neighborhoods and focusing on public space can be a new wave of Chinese urban planning and fundamentally influence quality of life in cities in the country. This goes hand in hand with opening doors for all professions to improve urban built environment through innovative thinking and approaches at different scales. In the practice of building community garden, motivating public participation and mobilize the knowledge are the keys to success. Accounting for the residents including children's voice is highly appreciated and impactful at large. To both build and maintain the community garden, empowering the local residents to become the leaders is crucial.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Multi-collaboration among government, professional agencies and social organizations is a win-win strategy for urban renewal projects.
2. Community garden is a way to empower and bring communities together to improve urban living environment.
3. Children are one of the most interested groups to participate to build the community garden, while elderlies have the most time to participate among all interested groups.
4. Three key elements for realizing community gardens are: clarification

Location of KIC Garden

of land ownership; confirmation of budget; allocation of professional agencies.

5. For successful implementation: public participation is the core, technology the means, policy the guidance, education the foundation.
6. The best community garden design is that designers position themselves behind the residents whom participate in the process of building the community garden.
7. Application of social media, for instance building up online gardening community, setting chatting groups, blogging, etc. make communications easier and effective for all stakeholders.
8. Programing physical social activities, such as salon, farmers market, plants exchange, outdoor theater, etc, strengthened the connection of the citizens.
9. Empowering the local residents to become the leaders of the community garden sustains the development of the community garden and benefits all.
10. Community garden build social bonds and reconnect children and elderlies and families.

NOTES

1. Shui On Properties, Hongkong has successfully developed Xintiandi project in several Chinese cities with the awareness of the balance in between commercial, residence and public space.
2. Jiedao is the direct management and administration authority body at the local level in Chinese cities.

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A SQUARE ENTERS A SCHOOL, A SCHOOL BECOMES A SQUARE

Valentina Mandalari & Marco Terranova (MAGIONE WE)

THE SCHOOL AND THE SQUARE

Magione WE sneaks between the alleys of Kalsa, an historical district affected by gentrification processes with a complex socio-cultural stratification. Wealthy enclaves coexist with highly marginal areas. Public space plays a fundamental mediation role. The square and the school are democratic places left open to the different communities to meet and interact.

MAGIONE WE

Since 2013 the square has been interested by re-appropriation actions led by associations and informal groups. Nevertheless, the school main outdoor spaces - the garden and the courtyard - remained amorphous and inhospitable.
Magione WE consists of a community building project to create safe spaces for free playing and convivial activities promoted by families and residents.

A team of self-builders has been involved in developing the idea of rafts, i.e. floating wooden playgrounds for these outdoor spaces. The whole intervention has been co-designed with the school staff. The construction phase has been an open-site, with children "testing" the installations during the realisation stage (already climbing on them while being set up!)

WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL OF 1M3?

Francesco Rossini (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

FLOATING RAFTS

The circles in the garden. Once kids step on them they will find themselves on wooden islands, safe from an uneven and mysterious ground. They can lay, sit, listen, get lost in the overhead branches, hug the tree trunk. They can also sit around the big circle on petal shaped wooden seats.

The platform in the courtyard. It recalls a micro settlement emerging heterogeneous from a dull concrete surface. It hosts two kid-sized houses with a piece of wheeled fertile soil. Despite a resolute red personality, it merges gently with the surrounding historical building.

OPENING

At the end of the participated building process the floating rafts have been delivered to the community, during an opening-party with a gathering of local artists.

Some kids climbed and sat on top of the huts like sailors on a ship's deck. In the garden, dozens of them sat under the crown of the big tree rapt and charmed by the artists songs and stories.

It has often been observed, that due to its high-density environment, Hong Kong suffers from a lack of open spaces and comfortable places that facilitate the city's walkability (Lai, 2017; Govada et al.,2016; Xue and Manuel, 2001). The open spaces in Hong Kong are not satisfactory in terms of both their quantity and quality and the generic and standard design approach of most of these spaces does not facilitate social interaction and community activities (Siu, 2009).

Seating for Socializing (SOS) was designed with the objective to engage citizens in social activities reactivating underused public spaces in different district of Hong Kong. The project was based on three characteristics: flexibility; sociability; and compactness and consists of 27 low-density polyethylene seating cubes contained in a metal box with overall dimensions of one cubic meter. During the intervention, the people have to interact with SOS by taking the cubes out of the box or by moving the cubes already distributed in the space by other users.

Perhaps the most unexpected finding of this urban experiment was the role played by the children, they were naturally attracted to the cubes, and without any constraint
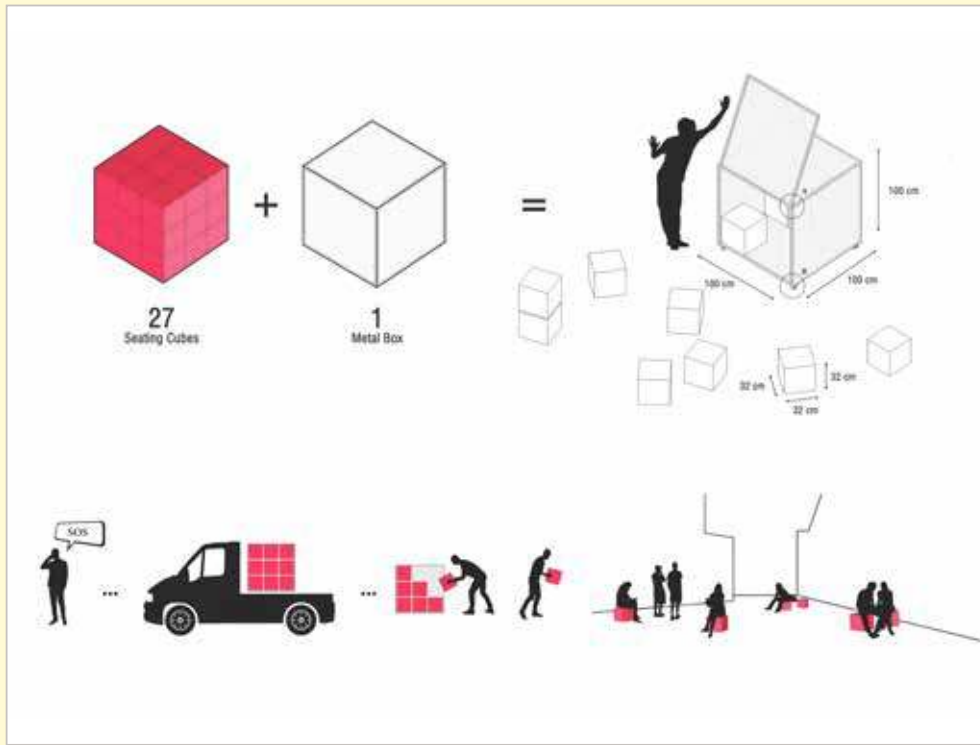
or preconception, started to play and interact within the space. We observed that these actions were the trigger to start a more articulated participation process; most of the time the children did not use the cubes as seats but they found more creative ways of interacting with them, such as stacking, assembling and creating their own spaces with different configurations. The kids easily engaged other kids, their parents were also involved in playing with them, taking pictures, and socialising and talking with other people. Finally, this project demonstrated how the positive contribution of the children could be a strategic tool to stimulate the curiosity of other passers and to promote new social relations in public spaces.

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CITY AS A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

BIKING THE STREETS TO INDEPENDENCE

Angela van der Kloof (Mobycon and Radboud University)

The fresh air in my face and the feeling of independence! There are no words that can describe how I felt when I biked with my baby boy for the first time. After several months of transporting myself and Rikke by foot, public transport, or car, I was happy to mount my bike again. Had I ever felt so happy on my bike? In the child seat in front me, Rikke would point and talk about things along the way. We saw neighbours, beautiful flowers, trees, dogs and, oh, Rikke also liked to point out the biggest cars. In this first period, in the front seat, he had a great view of what was going on in the streets. He helped me to push the button for cyclists at the traffic light and learned that a red light means stop. He absorbed it all!

We're talking the Netherlands in the 1990's, before the boom of cargo-bikes and balance-bikes.[1]

As with most Dutch children, Rikke received his first bike as soon as he could walk. It was a colorful wooden velocipede on four little wheels with a shelf as a seat. Our boy crisscrossed through the house and garden, and quickly needed something more adventurous. This 'something' was a purple-white trike. He would ride in the garden, on the sidewalk in front of the house and would join to the nearby park. It had a box on the back, ideal for toting sand, stones, branches and other treasures that young ones encounter in the neighbourhood.

Holiday touring with Rikke and Sofian on the bicycle

When my second child, Sofian, could sit properly, the three of us mounted my trusty bicycle; now with Rikke on the rear child's seat. Even though Rikke could see less, he continued engaging in conversation about the surroundings and other important toddler topics. The neighbourhood streets were calm, which facilitated our relaxed riding style, and arterial streets had protected cycle lanes. Even though I lowered my seat for more security, I felt on top of the world when riding my upright bike, sandwiched between my children.

Then, before I knew it, it was time for my oldest to start riding a conventional bicycle with training wheels.[2] Rikke rode the sidewalks while my husband or I pushed the stroller – sometimes several meters ahead, or somewhat behind; depending on the mood.

Before age four, Rikke was ready to have the training wheels removed and practiced balancing, steering, and stopping on the sidewalk of quiet streets and parks. Once he handled the bicycle a bit better – especially making a complete stop – we regularly took Sunday ventures, riding side-by-side on quiet streets.

By the time Rikke turned six, we continued riding side-by-side for the 3km trek to school. We took a longer route through neighbourhood streets because there was less traffic, it had lower speeds and the one dangerous intersection to cross was signalised. This daily trip along the same route allowed our

son to develop his cycling skills, his knowledge and understanding of traffic, and, gradually, his literal and figurative space from us. He was allowed to go further ahead and learn to deal with situations while we were still close by to intervene whenever needed. We also cycled the streets together to after-school activities, the supermarket, and to friends. When with friends, the children played outside, cycling and scootering on the sidewalks along low traffic streets and in the park. Nothing special, just roaming around and cops-and-robbers style role playing, yet without our constant supervision. I am not saying that giving your child this trust is easy. It is essential for your child and yourself to build it step-by-step, so that trust can be given and gained. Seeing how this gained trust and raised level of independence makes your child grow and prosper is a fabulous reward.

By the age of ten, Rikke was allowed to cycle to school on his own. I would leave the house a few minutes later with Sofian riding next to me. Sofian, by the way, as an independent bicycle rider was a totally different case from his brother. Finding his balance on the two-wheeled bike was difficult, so we took him on a trailer-bike for our daily travels until he felt comfortable enough to ride on his own.

At this age, Rikke was also allowed to bike home from neighborhood friends' houses. Their parents would phone us, "Rikke is on his way home", so that we could estimate when to expect him. Allowing him to gradually grow his world – from close-by environments, to more challenging circumstances – empowered him to eventually cycle independently to and from secondary school by the age of 12. Benefits? The freedom of reduced chauffeuring responsibilities, and a confident, active child who grew up to be the student that he is today, continuing his daily bicycling habit.

NOTES

1. A training bicycle without pedals or chain which helps young children learn to balance and steer.
2. Had the balance bike existed, we could have skipped the training wheels!

GREEK MYTHOLOGY AS A TOOL TO CREATE CHILD FRIENDLY MAPPINGS

Anastasia Noukaki & Natalia Bazaiou (National Technical Universit Athens)

Our projects aim to familiarise children with urban space and to engage them in actively participating in the life of the city. Mythological Sections is a project addressed to children in the first grades of elementary school. It was realised in the context of elementary-level Environmental Studies.
The project invites children to look into the world of mythological symbols for a set of codes which will help them to develop their associative thinking, draw connections between different notions, grasp abstractions and transform the symbols into spatial concepts. Through play children produce subjective readings of a number of myths. The use of myths has a liberating effect, at the same time as offering a set of friendly tools by which to process all that makes up their experience of the city.
Conversely, the project is a starting point for observing the city and taking it in in its completeness. It helps transcend the sense of fragmentation imposed upon experience by the kind of rampant urban sprawl that is taking over the Attica Basin without so much as a single child-friendly network in place.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project focuses on the historic centre of the city of Athens and its environs, a place that is particularly inhospitable to children, yet at the same time being rich in historical references and meanings. Greek mythology provides an organising framework, a tool by which to understand concepts and draw connections between them. Ancient Greek myth, whose openness to diverse interpretations and variations can be traced back to its origins, takes on a different significance in the city's here and now.

THE PROJECT IN STEPS

A1. The Gods: Children familiarise themselves with abstract concepts through games of symbolism: the Gods become associated with everyday objects, urban living, architectural materials and spatial relations.

A2. The terrain and its map: Children are invited to 'read' the map of Athens using Greek mythology as a 'tool'. The Gods find their place on that map based on their particular qualities and the elements/ principles that they represent.

B1. The field trip: The climb up to Mount Lycabettus is a climactic point in the process, as children experience the vertiginous feeling that accompanies a bird's-eye view of the city's terrain. With the city stretching out beneath, the children make observations. They analyse and comment on the vista opening up before them.

This is how the particular area of intervention is marked up: this year's edition of the project focused on Isavron Street in the area of Neapolis, Exarcheia, a road on the axis connecting Mount Lycabettus with a smaller hill, Strefi (approximately a 450m distance). Having identified the axis in question from their vantage point on Mount Lycabettus, the children then climbed back down to the level of the city and walked along Isavron St. until the boundary of the non-pedestrianised section interrupted their course. So, how can the hill on the other side be reached?

B2. Spatial representation on the urban scale: The issue to be resolved, as identified by the group of participants (children and architects/educators), is how to design and establish a child-friendly route connecting the two hills. What elements are we to use in developing this proposal?

1. Plinths: How would the ancient Gods go about transforming these, based on their own distinctive qualities? Mythology becomes a lens through which children are inspired to picture new uses

The field trip: The climb up to Mount Lycabettus at the climactic point.

The climb back down to the level of the city along Isavron St.

One of the childrens collages, a tool wherein the notion of error is inconsequential and as such grant their users absolute freedom of self-expression.

for abandoned buildings, while coming up with ideas on how to remedy the dysfunctionality of contemporary facades. Plinths transform into pastry and bakery shops, dinosaur museums, vertical playgrounds or sheltered gardens as extensions of the new overflown by nature route. Children transcend the boundaries between inside and outside, private and public. Plinths and the street merge into a place were everyday life interaction takes place.

2. Children get to work trying to figure out how to connect the two hills. They do so by taking abstract concepts and turning them into spatial elements with the help of the different qualities associated with each of the gods or goddesses. For example, a bridge would correspond to the goddess Athena, the use of urban tree planting to Demeter, the element of water to Poseidon, animals to Artemis, cableways to Hermes and so on.

Children then work out these ideas in the form of collages and scale models. These are tools wherein the notion of error is inconsequential and as such grant their users absolute freedom of self-expression.

A GAME OF INTERPRETATIONS

Children observe their city from above, from different heights and angles, in a game of scale shifts which allows them to form a holistic and abstracted view of it. They can now perceive the Athenian terrain, the continuities and discontinuities of the landscape and its natural features (rivers and streams that have been forced underground and now appear as discontinuous routes of green, hills, etc); they can identify its landmarks (monuments and churches, old building complexes, etc), form an idea of the city's relationship to the mountains and sea, and learn to orientate themselves on the basis of this information.

Walking down to the level of the city to experience it first hand, one realises that children's eyes are used to viewing the inhospitable character of the urban landscape as something of a normality. In the course of the project, though, there is a gradual shift in their perspective. In their hands, Isavron St ceases to be a road taken over entirely by cars and becomes an axis along which people, animals and water move freely, and where green space also seems to enjoy some sort of fluidity, as boundaries between nature and the built environment are blurred and uses tend to favor play and interaction. By directly experiencing and thinking about urban space, children become aware of their right to a sustainable and friendly city. At the same time, they are awakened to their responsibility as citizens to critically pursue changes to their environment and everyday life.

SEASONAL ADAPTIVE PUBLIC SPACE FOR CHILDREN

Renée Miles Rooijmans (STIPO)

In the search for more sustainable living circumstances in cities, I would like to argue that we need to work on our perception of nature in the city's public spaces. When we are young, we have a unique perspective on the changes of public space throughout the seasons and how we can play with the elements. For example, puddles are great! If we would learn from the ability children have to appreciate the way nature transforms the city into a playful environment, instead of fighting against seasonal changes, urban citizens would benefit from a more flexible design approach to public space through seasonal affective design that leaves room for the user to co-create. As Lynch (1981) suggests, direct involvement of people in the shaping of their environment also results in a better 'fit' between people and places. Interestingly, children already know how to turn seasonal 'problems' into possibilities, by feeling free to use what is around them.

CHILDREN, SEASONS AND PUBLIC SPACE

With the effects climate change has on our urban environment and our interaction with it in mind, we should emphasise the lessons urban planning can learn from further investigation of seasonal effective planning and design. City planning, management, programming and use of public space seem to focus too much on the circumstances in good weather and therefore ignores the potential of public space throughout the seasons. In general, summer is all about celebration and pleasure,

whereas winter is perceived as something we need to survive in order to enjoy summer again (Gehl, 1990:28). Now let's look at this from a child's perspective. Imagine a child picking up a branch that fell from a tree onto the sidewalk during winter. For the child this object embodies play with natural elements in the city, to a grown-up this would be the moment to say: 'That's dirty'. In case this stick would have been picked up during a walk in the woods, the reaction of a grown-up would have been more positive. What can we learn from the curiosity-driven interaction children seek with their environment and how can we include more room for play with the seasons into the design of public space?

SEASONS IN THE CITY - WHAT IS NEEDED, WISHED, DESIRED

Children, just like birds who use whatever material is available to built nests and wash themselves in puddles, instinctively know what to do with the often perceived as uncomfortable situations that come with seasonal changes. Children play with piles of leaves in fall, build little huts from fallen branches in a park in winter, and jump in puddles on the sidewalk in spring. Interestingly, if we take a look at the average urban playground, there is little to no connection with seasonality, and if there is it is in a negative way. Often playgrounds are under-utilised throughout the colder and mostly wet months of the year, and let's be honest, who likes to go down a wet slide? Public space in general and playgrounds in specific would benefit from a more flexible design wherein seasonal changes can be seen as useful and enjoyable instead of fought against and frowned upon.

As changes in the seasons are rapidly increasing with the effects of climate change all over the world, it is crucial to find ways to apply what we learn about our interaction and relation with nature within the built environment. Children are known to be most comfortable when they are able to find and design their own space to play in (Kylin, 2003), which is in stark contrast with the design-approach of public playgrounds. This disconnect between planner and user of a space should be taken seriously, and best improved by passing on a part of the design of public spaces to the people that actively use them.

CASE STUDY

An experiment I initiated in Berlin at the Zentrum fur Kunst und Urbanistik, involved 'releasing' a typical street bench in a park to see how it would be used. A group of kids that uses the park as their gathering space, cleverly took the bench to a covered area to provide themselves with a sheltered seating area during the winter months. As soon as the sun started coming out, the bench was moved by people of all ages to places where the weather could be

enjoyed, sometimes covered from the wind or moving with the sun during the day. The main lesson we can take from this experiment is that leaving room for play and by incorporating flexibility in design, users of public space are able to prove that they know best about what works within the given context.

LESSONS LEARNED / PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

If we go back to the story about the branch, I would like to elaborate on the aspect of (re)use of material and circumstances that the seasons bring us. Children already know how to turn seasonal problems into possibilities, by feeling free to use what is there. We could learn from this curiosity-based approach in the design of public space. As the story of the bench told us, it is fairly easy to invite users of public space to be part of processes of creation by providing flexible public furniture by providing a structure that can be played with. The challenge is to provide flexible public spaces that are fun to use throughout the seasons, and for kids puddles and leaves are already the best ingredients for play. In the best case each park, playground and public space will have its own seasonal arrangements.

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CHILDREN AS TACTICAL URBANISTS

Valentina Talu (Tamalacà Srl)

THE ACTION-RESEARCH EXPERIENCE OF TAMALACÀ

In the extraordinary book "The child in the city", published by The Architectural Press in 1978, Colin Ward defines the city as an «attenuated environment». It is a definition more meaningful than ever: the contemporary city is a diminished environment, accessible and usable almost exclusively through controlled and predefined ways and times. This hardly allows inhabitants to act as agents of change, that is to "interfere" with the established organisation of spaces and times of their city and thus to drive unexpected transformations.

City spaces are more and more specialised, separated - marked off by physical elements, such as fences that surround parks and public gardens or schools - and usually dedicated to a single category of users.

The fact that the city is organised with a division into compartments dedicated to different functions (and therefore for different users) is clearly visible at the urban scale, but it also tends to recur even at the neighbourhood scale. This particularly affects the most disadvantaged groups – children, women, elderly, and people with different disabilities – who should instead find real opportunities to improve their quality of urban life in their everyday city.

Among them, children - "imprisoned" in dedicated, hyper-designed, and hyper-equipped spaces with the implicit intent of monitoring and homologating their activities - are the group that suffers the most, and with most serious limitations in terms of actual opportunities of using nearby public spaces and streets of their neighbourhood.

In view of this, it is essential to ask what can be done in order to promote the quality of urban life for children. In other words, what needs to be done to ensure that the city works for children (and not only for them) as an "educational environment", as suggested by Colin Ward. That is, as an opportunity by which they can learn, not only how to use public spaces and streets, but above all how to contribute to changing them.

Tactical Urbanism (Lydon & Garcia, 2015) can be considered as a real and practical answer to this challenging question.[1]

Micro Bodies in Micro Urban Space: We are listening

Il Giardino che Non C'è(ra): children & elderly

Urbanism becomes tactical when aside from "planning" through large-scale and long-term urban policies, plans and projects, it is able to guarantee and promote the actual possibility for all to "remake" the city by way of micro-transforming, co-managing, and taking care of public spaces and streets of their neighborhoods. And, at the same time, to interfere with the sanctioned system of planning and government of the city (whether in a collaborative or antagonistic manner depends on the case and the context).

The research-action of Tamalacà – an all-female team of urban planners, spin-off of the Department of Architecture, Design, and Planning of the University of Sassari (Sardinia, Italy) – is based on these considerations. In fact, the aim of extra-small actions and projects led by Tamalacà is to improve the quality and the "playability" of the forgotten public spaces and the walkability of the streets of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, through the real involvement of the primary schools (children, teachers, parents, and so on) in the design and realisation of tactical actions and transformations, conceived as a means to support children in constructively reclaiming their denied urban rights. Although different, all these actions and transformations have in common two main distinctive features.

The first one, is recognising the value of the relation between conflict, participation and empowerment processes. Participatory design is commonly considered as a tool aimed at facilitating the resolution of explicit or latent conflict. The result is an interpretation of the conflict exclusively as a problem and not as a "resource" of participation.

Tactical Urbanism, on the contrary, makes use of conflict as a resource and even a result of bottom-up tactical processes. This allows children involved in tactical actions to act not only to see recognised here and now urban rights that are denied, but also to contribute to a long-term process aimed at achieving an ever widening spread of spatial justice. In doing so, children could learn how to promote themselves as citizens capable of driving the change, in case - when it is needed and useful - also through constructive conflictual actions.

The second one, is the focus on the transformation of residual spaces in everyday public spaces through DIY urban design, with the intent of providing the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods with places accessible and usable by everyone. The DIY urban design serves two purposes: on one hand, it allows children to "participate by doing", feeling really involved in the process, and on the other hand allows urban planners and designers to "design by doing", adjusting the project according to the actual needs and desires of children, without sacrificing the formal quality.

Tactical Urbanism can be considered, therefore, a tool and a process

Parklet San Donato: before

Parklet San Donato: after

that children can effectively use as a practice to take the city back, to image and realise the possible transformations, and to be able to claim it.

Among all the projects led by Tamalacà, the playful urban performance Micro Bodies in Micro Urban Spaces (inspired by Bodies in Urban Spaces of Willi Dorner) is particularly interesting, since it relates very tightly to the City at Eye Level for Kids approach.

The main goal of Micro Bodies in Micro Urban Spaces was to denounce the growing "hostility" of the city towards all those people whose bodies don't match the body of the ideal citizen type - adult, male, healthy, wealthy, educated, and car-owner - on the basis on which the cities and their public spaces and streets are designed, organised, and regulated.

Working from this assumption, children of the primary school of San Donato (a disadvantaged neighbourhood of the old city of Sassari) have been engaged in the co-creation of a performance in and with the urban space.

By "cramming" their bodies into some denied spaces, children were able to express dissent towards the lack of playfulness in public places in a very effective manner.

The urban performance contributed to bring public awareness about the problem of the lack of spaces for children to play, and led the way to the realisation of the Parklet of San Donato: the "liberation" and micro-transformation of a small part of the square in front of the primary school, occupied by parked cars, in a extra-small playable public space.

NOTES

1. We can define as "tactics" all the low-cost and low-tech actions and transformations, originated from bottom-up processes, which can be quickly and easily replicated and scaled up, and are intentionally designed and developed to instigate a long-term change.

TRANSFORMING, FEELING AND SEEING URBAN LANDSCAPES

Alexandra Epeshina & Alice Markova (Young Architects Society & Arch Dacha)

We will describe three different educational programs that encourage children to reflect on public spaces: to tell stories, to share feelings, and to design spaces. The crucial role of educators and architects is to create a safe environment that motivates children to think, experiment and design.

All programs were developed at Young Architects Society, architecture and design school based in Saint-Petersburg, Russia.

TRANSFORMING URBAN LANDSCAPES

A three-month educational architecture studio focused on the development of new concepts of urban spaces. The idea was to introduce children 12-16 y/o to the basics of architecture and urban design.

The first step was to analyse users and to program spaces. Young architects identified the most significant functions in the city from their perspective - education, creativity, technology, and animals. As we moved to the design process, the group discovered four principles to follow - interconnectivity, eco-friendliness, technologization, separation from cars and noise.

Teenagers talk about interconnectivity from different perspectives. They propose to foster communication between users, community, and government, to design public spaces for effective social interaction and to create an interconnected multilevel network of pedestrians', vehicles,'
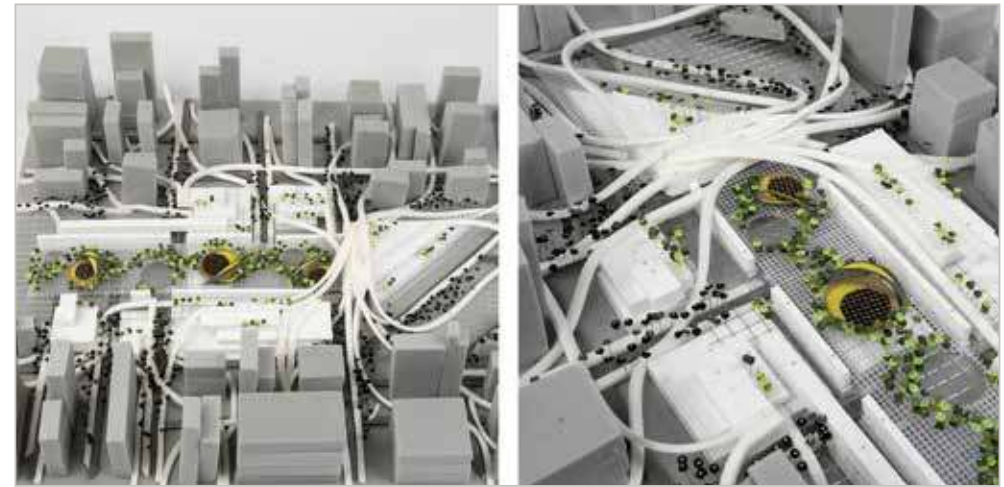
Creative District and Art Academy / Sonya, 16 years old
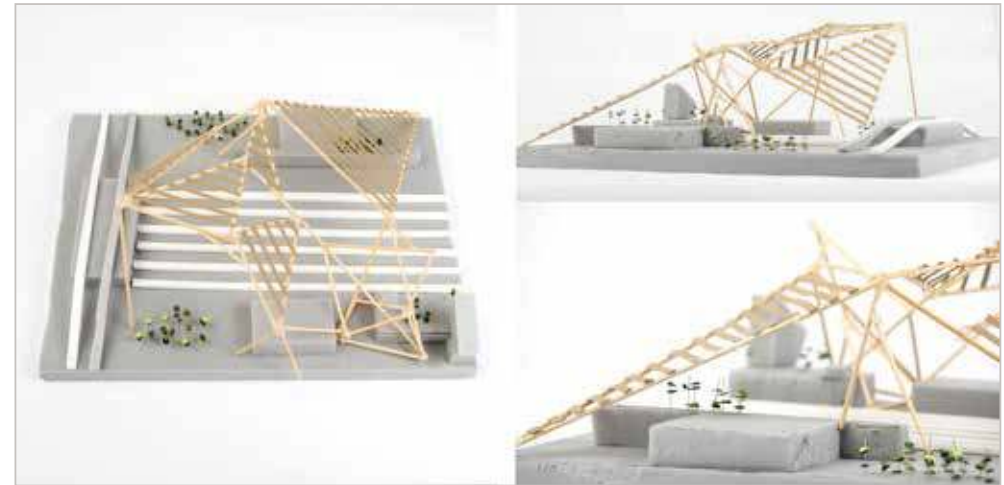
Railway station / Grisha, 12 years old
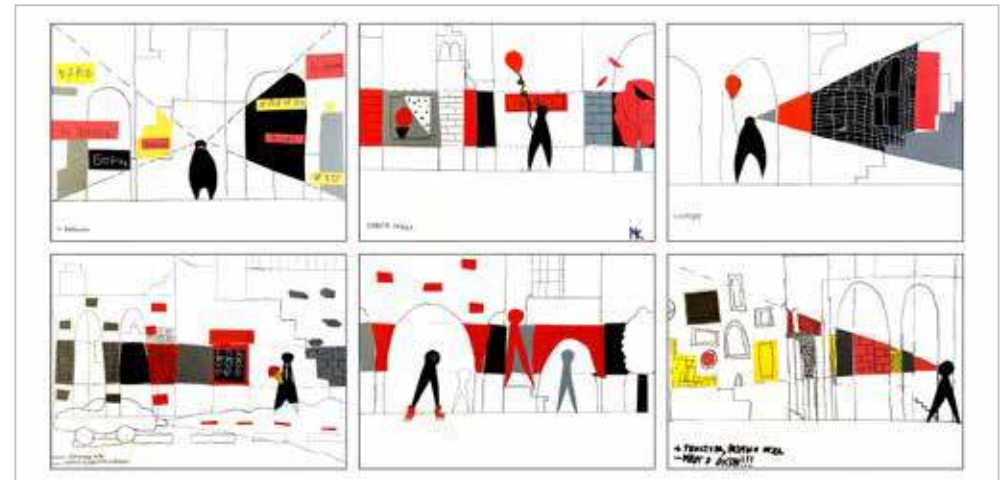
Six different flashes of the eye level by six young architects / 4-hour architecture workshop for children 8-10 y/o. Upper row, left to right: Polina, 9/ Mila, 9/ Matvei, 9. Bottom row, left to right: Alena, 10/ Sonia, 10/ Misha, 10

bicycles' and skaters' routes. "Communication is a basic need for everyone. Connecting with people of same interests is essential. Communities in most cases are small and separated from each other."- says Sonya Labzovskaya, 16, the author of the project "Creative District and Art Academy".

While virtual network and technological innovation are already redefining our urban experiences, children are interested in re-thinking it as a positive force. "Let's build glass cubes on the streets for socialising with Wi-Fi and climate control, that will be warm in winter and cool in summer"- proposes Vasya, 13.

Living in a "jungle" is a dream of kids who grow up in a busy city with movement and fuss. Young architects plant trees on the roofs and along the highways, create tree barriers for traffic pollution and noise, separate pedestrians from cars while waiting for electrical vehicles. Traffic, as we know it today, is indeed an obstacle in the city at the eye level for kids.

FEELING URBAN LANDSCAPE

Together as a group of kids 8-10 y/o and architects we created a phantom vision of a perfect urban experience.

The 4-hour workshop was held to help children understand their feelings of the city and to create a new sensorial scenario.

Primarily, we determined that in an ideal city children wish to be close to nature, safe, physically comfortable (neither too cold nor too hot, neither too tired of walking nor too hungry or thirsty) and visually engaged.

The ultimate goal of the workshop was to name, visualise and scale particular factors and elements that evoke these feelings. Most common are:
– The presence of nature, a lot of trees and tree canopies along the streets, fruit trees;
– Clear visual guidance, distinctly visible car lanes, separate lanes for pedestrians, bikes and clear visual boundaries for play;
– Variation and the scale of the surroundings, narrow streets and cozy houses: "Long facades are boring, and it takes a long time to walk around."
– Interactive functions and restaurants on the plinth level, pleasant smells;
– amiliarity and connection between people, a sense of community: "I prefer living in a place where neighbours know each other; I feel safe to play alone outside."
– An absence of fuss and noise; "Being surrounded by thousands of people in a busy street in a rush hour feels insecure and overwhelming."

– Inclusion in and visibility of the street or city activities, such as festivals, markets, fireworks;
– Sufficient light, especially in a northern city with a short daylight period in winter;
– Moderate climate; or places to hide in uncomfortable weather;
– Response to stories and fears: "City should have a full WI-FI coverage, in case there's a robbery I can contact the police." "Houses should not be very high because in case of fire people won't be able to run outside fast."
– Music in the streets;

Models and drawings show the abstract image of the feeling evoked and the significance of the sensation or a factor for a child.

SEEING URBAN LANDSCAPE

The idea of the workshop is to visualize a flash of the city at the eye level on three different scales – the context, the street, and the building.

A curious discovery is the way children perceive space at the eye level. It is a subjective matter: one kid is just noticing particular details that are of his interest, while another is paying attention to the whole plinth level and paving textures.

Colour indicates a subjective perception of space at the eye level, while insignificant surroundings are blank.

ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION FROM THE EARLY AGE

Remember, that kids' perception of urban space is strongly affected by their experience as well as by the social, economic, cultural and climatic context they grow up in. Therefore, it is beneficial for each municipality to introduce workshops and participatory design processes that include children locally in schools, architecture studios, and planning committees. A collaboration of participants of all ages and backgrounds strengthens community ties and relationships, allows design professionals to expand their practice through the exchange of ideas and empowers children to participate in shaping their environment.

Moreover, regular architecture activities teach a child to think critically and creatively, inspire an open-minded and a multifaceted perception of reality. Hands-on experience, confidence, and knowledge gained through early architecture education may encourage one to actively shape the surrounding space through any professional field in the future.

Including children in a real-life design process is an equally powerful tool to create child-friendly urban landscapes and to foster a higher level of consciousness from the early age.

DIALOGUES BETWEEN BODY AND SPACES

Benedetta Rodeghiero & Marco Terranova (LEMUR)

A PRACTICE-ORIENTED APPROACH

Over the years we have observed and registered the behaviour of kids between 0 - 7 years old within domestic, public and school environments.

We have filtered our look by active education, Seitai activity and "awareness through the body" study and practice.

After these first experiences as "passive" observers, we started to test space interaction and exploration guided processes. We have been working with 3 - 12 years old kids, playing within enclosed spaces and also open air spaces. We have registered a wide range of body expressions and gestures related to the structure and the qualities of the explored space.

Through guided activities we tried to understand the relationship between these different qualities and structures and how the body responds to, for example, playing in a park, or in a congested street rather than in a noisy square.

The following considerations come from the gathered experiences, know-hows and all the accumulated information:
– Since the womb, a human being evolves interacting with the

Early interaction with the surrounding environment

Feeling embraced

Projecting forward or backward

surrounding environment by means of movement and sense stimulation.

– Our physical, mental and emotional well-being is influenced by the quality of this interaction.
– Every place with its dimensional, material and sensorial qualities is therefore crucial for our well-being.
– Through our body, we are able to identify the feelings and the small physical, mental and emotional changes that a specific environment produces in ourselves.

FOUR ESSENTIAL IMPULSES

We have identified four essential impulses that reflect a child's interaction with a place: feeling embraced, watching carefully, projecting forward or backward, being permeable. We arranged these four impulses together with senses, movements and spatiality, showcasing a matrix that allows us to investigate and to transform every place by means of our body. The following table shows a summary of the matrix:

IMPULSE	QUALITY	ELEMENT	FEELING	MOVEMENT	ARCHITYPE
Feeling embraced	Fluidity	Water	Relax	Rotation/Spiral	Cave/Nest
Watching carefully	Firmness	Earth	Upright tension	Vertical	Watching tower
Projecting FW or BW	Dynamism	Fire	Oriented tension	Frontal	Boat
Being permeable	Permeability	Air	Tension/Loosening	Centripetal/Centrifugal	Threshold

TOWARDS HETEROGENEOUS URBAN SPACES

If we look at our cities through a child's eyes, we realise that urban spaces activate mostly the sympathetic nervous system ("fight or flight" response, physical and mental activity) to the detriment of the parasympathetic nervous system ("rest and digest" function, recovery, contemplation).

The main reason is a redundancy of vertical lines and corners, a redundancy of noise, density, hard materials and a hopeless lack of green areas. There is a general deficiency of complexity that affects kid's health (hyperactivity, sleep disorders, stress). The best thing would be to have diversified urban spaces to satisfy the four impulses with respect for everyone's peculiarities and transitory needs also. We can take advantage of our matrix to activate a participative process within public urban spaces craving heterogeneity and multiplicity.

KID-DRIVEN DESIGN

Children are the key players of this investigation and transformation process. It's a five steps process. Adults support kids as observers and facilitators. All the five steps are open to contributors and advices:

1. **Analysis.** The process starts with awareness through the body exercises to activate kids sensorial perception. They can experience spaces through play, allowing peculiarities, criticalities and potentialities to emerge.
2. **Mapping.** Gathering the information coming from kids' observations, the adults make a map that shows tension spots, opening areas and place vocations according to the different impulses.
3. **Vision.** Helping themselves with drawings, collages and temporary set-ups, kids build visions and images. They offer a way to transform the spaces, to adapt the place to their needs and wishes.
4. **Design and construction.** A team of designers-craftsmen manages and supervises the vision conversion into physical interventions to be built inside the place. It will be a design-by-doing flowing process to ease the involvement of the different players. It is also a tailor-made design and building process. The final shape is driven by body needs, wishes and imagination.
5. **Test.** Finally, kids put to test what has been built through free play.

Watching carefully

A CITY FOR ALL

An inclusive design and building process helps to strengthen reciprocal bondings, sense of community and sense of place.

From a kid's point of view, the activation of the awareness through the body lets them realise their usually underestimated or ignored capabilities. They can evaluate their well-being within a place or a specific circumstance, they become key players in transformation processes. A kid, like an adult, is capable of criticizing, visioning, designing, building.

A child-sized city is a city for everyone.

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PLAYING GAMES INSPIRED BY LOCAL MYTHS: THE PROJECT "AN ANT IN AUGUST…"

Lamprini Chartofylaka, Ermina Kallinikou & Elli Sarrou
(Playful Dust)

Responding positively to the *"call for local projects…"* released in 2014 by the team of Athens Plaython[1], a splendid festival that encourages outdoor playing inside the cities, the team Playful Dust decided to run a series of recreational-pedagogical activities in the town of Aegina. They were inspired by the local mythology of the island. The pedagogical project called "An ant in August.." incorporated the role of mythology, an important part of Aegina's cultural identity, into playing activities for children. In addition, it took place in a high point of Aegina's cultural heritage, the Markelos Tower.

The pedagogical aim of this initiative was the creation of a physical, *"living mythology"* experience for children (aged 7 to 12 years old) who live on the island of Aegina and they are keen on exploring their city and its surroundings through games. For this project, our team designed a series of cultural contextualised learning games by mingling known play activities (role play games, treasure hunt game, quizzes) wrapped in a story about the mythological king of the island of Aegina, Aeacus.[2]

Projects set in a local scenery and related to traditional stories of cultural heritage place a high value on empowering and connecting children of different ages and diverse social and financial

Treasure hunt in places of local heritage significance

backgrounds. Children engaged in playful and collaborative explorations show greater evidence of problem solving abilities and creativity. Besides, initiatives that set play scenes in hometowns underpin children's vision on deeming public spaces as playgrounds and persuade them into becoming active participants of their neighborhood placemaking. Eventually, all these activities inspired by the local context can spur interest among children to start thinking as architects of their own lives, change their attitudes in order to improve their direct environment, the place where they live, and recognise the value of resolving local needs in an ever-changing world.

Mythodolical twister

NOTES

1. https://www.athensplaython.org/
2. Aeacus, in Greek mythology, was the son of Zeus and Aegina. He lived alone on the island and when he prayed for companionship, the ants were converted to humans, the Myrmidones, who were actually the first inhabitants of Aegina [Ch.Coulter; P.Turner (4 July 2013). Encyclopedia of Ancient Deities. Routledge. pp. 18.]

CHILDREN AND FAMILY
WELLBEING

HOW NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGN CAN REDUCE CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Lisa ten Brug (ObeCity)

For the past thirty years obesity rates have been rising around the world. In 2010 lifestyle related diseases replaced clinically contagious diseases such as TBC and Cholera, as the biggest cause of death globally. Financial losses caused by obesity are estimated to be, globally, billions of dollars for costs of direct treatment and indirect effects such as loss of productivity and sickness absence (Smith & Cummins, 2009). New approaches should be found in order to stop this epidemic from spreading. Urban design has played a significant role in reducing contagious diseases in cities, for instance by implementing quarantine areas, sewage systems and public parks. The way urban design can address modern diseases now, is different from historic methods; urban design should shift towards a more integrated and dynamic approach of public health in order to reduce diseases like obesity in cities.

SOCIAL CONTAMINATION

Obesity is a contagious disease, not clinically, but socially. Unhealthy behaviour and social norms are passed through the social ties of a community (Christakis & Fowler, 2007). Particularly primary school children are vulnerable to this social contamination because they are still developing norms and values and use their social context to determine priorities. Within their social context children select role models. These persons set an example and spread behaviour through a community. Children choose role models such as parents or family members but also

involving children in the design of their neighbourhood, school project ObeCity 2016

teachers, friends, social workers, celebrities or (social media) influencers. Same sex role models have a bigger chance to pass on behaviour than role models of the other sex. If the behaviour of a role model is unhealthy, the children will show unhealthy behaviour as well (Blok et al., 2013).

Neighbourhood design - both the process and the outcomes - help children change unhealthy routines. Involving children in the design of their neighbourhood stimulates a positive attitude towards playing outside and being physically active (Jackson, 2003). Within the design process emphasis should be on building self-confidence, positivity and changing the psychologically harmful stigma that is now surrounding obesity (Smith & Cummins, 2009). By designing their own neighbourhood children become owners, develop pride for their neighbourhood and take better care of it. They grow self-esteem and are more likely to use their neighbourhood to play and be physically active. This process helps the child to make their own healthy choices in the future and become a positive role model to others.

OBECITY DESIGN

Children designs are not ready to be directly implemented in a neighbourhood, but function as a starting point or inspiration for final urban designs. Before implementation the urban designer should consider the strategic placement of elements in a neighbourhood and relate ideas to the bigger scale of the city. In the ObeCity design process we work with the ObeCity model, containing 40 design interventions, proven scientifically and in practice, for healthier neighbourhoods. Depending on the context a number of interventions of the model are adjusted to the child ideas and applied in a neighbourhood. In this chapter we highlight a couple of ground rules.

First, create active transportation opportunities: cycle lanes and pedestrian routes. These are implemented on the routes that most children walk from
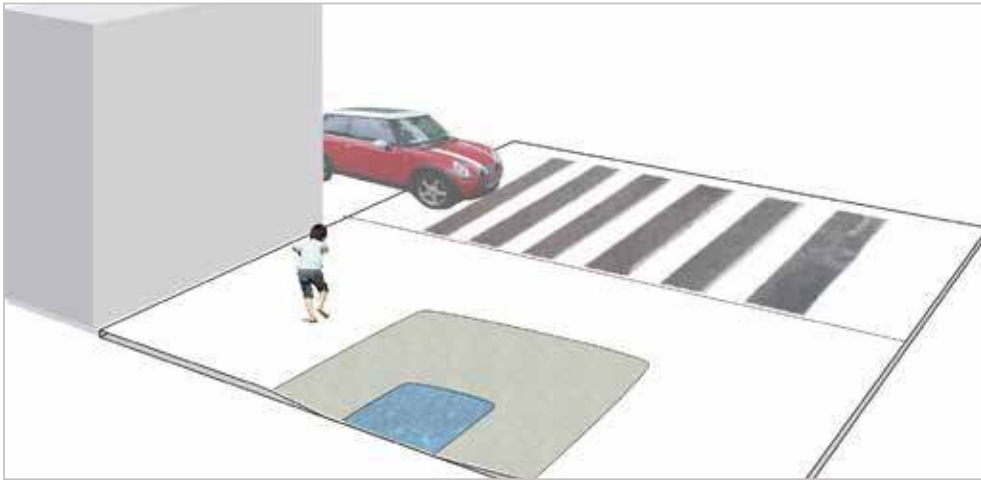
Impression of car-crosswalk
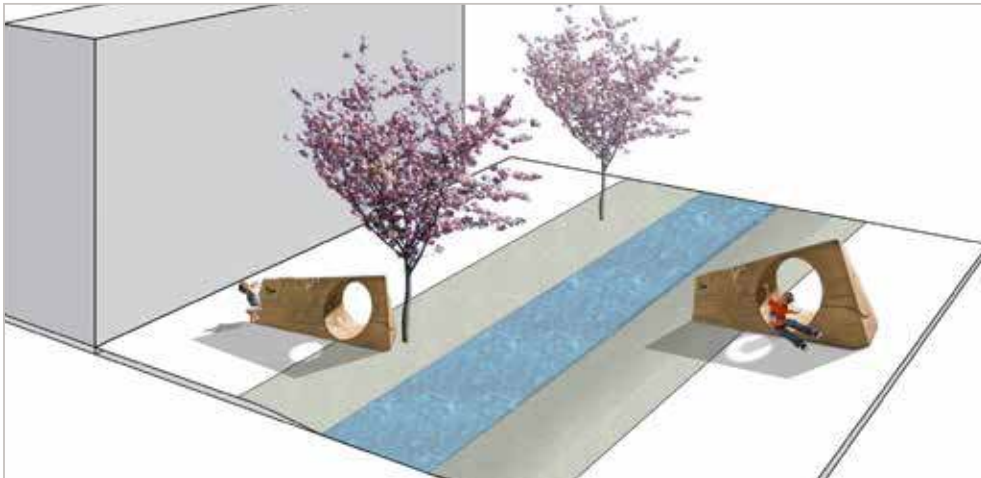
Placement of climbing walls

Multipurpose stones

Colourfull play street. Design outcome neighbourhood design based on ideas of local children, project ObeCity 2017

home to school. On these routes motorised traffic should be limited or excluded. Cars can cross the road on a 'crosswalk' especially for cars – this way cars are clearly secondary users of these routes.

Using child ideas in urban design is a starting point for unusual and playful designs. This is very important in designing for modern health; it activates a community. Freud was the first to say that funny things contain potential to re-inventing the rules. It allows people to express behaviour that otherwise would have remained hidden and could potentially change unhealthy routines (Lefaivre, 2007). So, surprising temporary elements, like art by children, are openings in the conventionalism that normally dominates cities. Place these polycentrically in a neighbourhood so that they could function as different destinations.

Along the route from home to school children should be triggered to explore and play in public space. By varying in open and more enclosed spaces the route can facilitate different types of games for different age groups. The placement of jumping stones should consider children of different age groups by varying in jumping distance. Walls with holes of different sizes trigger children to climb approximately through or on the wall. Stones or walls of 1.00 m high are high enough for a four year old to hide behind, and for a 12 year old to climb on. These walls and stones on the route are multipurpose and create variety and play opportunity.

Creating variety by, for instance, colour and texture in streets helps children to orientate and create a place where they can meet. Indications like "lets meet in the blue street after school" are often used by children. For parents this helps to make safety rules and eases their minds when children go out by sayings like "go no further than the orange hill". The elements in the street create the opportunity for children to invent their own games and stimulate creativity.

These are examples of interventions possible to increase health among children in neighbourhoods. In the end, playing children are catalysts for public life and will stimulate other neighbours to go outside and be active as well (Karsten & Kroese, 2004).

JUST START

There's not a vaccination for obesity, because there is not one cause and therefore not one cure. It is an ongoing search for solutions for specific communities in a specific timeframe and everywhere it could be different. So, in order to succeed, collaboration between different institutions is essential; from urban designers to teachers, parents, neighbours, politicians, community workers and everyone that is somehow connected to an obese neighbourhood. They all play a part in addressing the complexity of obesity and stop it from spreading. So just start! Choose a neighbourhood, start with a school and community program to uplift the spirit, design the neighbourhood together with vulnerable groups, implement design ideas while changing both the physical and social context. Find the best solutions per neighbourhood and start over when a new impulse is needed. This is how you make sure the environment does not become obesogenic but offers health and positivity from within.

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10 WAYS TO BUILD A CITY FOR CHILDREN

Jillian Glover (This City Life)

As cities around the world have focused on becoming more liveable and less industrial, families are increasingly embracing urban life. They trade in car ownership and a sprawling suburban home for compact condos and townhomes with the ability to walk and bike to a plethora of amenities.

Over the years, I have interviewed several families to understand why they choose city life and have discovered their reasons include the chance to provide their children with an active lifestyle, access to great amenities, reduced energy and goods consumption, exposure to diversity, and better family connections. How do we create a city that meets their needs?

Here are ten ways that we can build a more child-friendly city:

1. Density – The benefits of city life for families, such as walkability, more free time and access to public transit and services, would not be possible without living in compact homes. This does not just mean high-rise towers. It means providing a whole range of compact forms like townhomes, laneway homes, duplexes, low-rise apartments and more.
2. Family–oriented Housing – We can't just have density, we need homes designed to meet the needs of families, particularly homes with three bedrooms that are in family-friendly neighbourhoods with parks and amenities nearby. The City of Vancouver recently announced that it will develop a city-wide rezoning policy to allow for more high-density multi-family units in single-family neighbourhoods.
3. Access to Schools and Childcare - This is key. Parents cannot raise a

Vancouver's former Director of City Planning taking his newborn home on the bus

child in the city without having nearby access - ideally walking distance - to good quality childcare, elementary and high schools.

4. Access to Public Transit – It has been said that families need their cars to tote kids around from place to place, but many families are proving this is not true. Even Vancouver's former Director of Planning Brent Toderian, who once said that "kids are the indicator species of a great neighborhood", took his newborn son home from the hospital on public transit. Access to public transit is much easier when you live in a more compact, walkable community. If you do need a car, many cities now have car-sharing, allowing families to access one when necessary.

5. Walkability – This is not just a matter of being able to walk where you need to go. Walkability means crosswalks, paved sidewalks and nice things like tree-lined streets. You'd be surprised at how many cities don't provide sidewalks – even when amenities are within walking distance.

6. Bikeability – The greatest joy for a child is riding a bike. It teaches them independence and it's just plain fun. For many urban families, it is a primary main mode of transport. Cities need to do their part to make it safe and plentiful.

7. Access to Nature – The irony of living in the suburbs is that many people live there to get closer to nature, yet they end of destroying it in the process. Children and even their parents, need access to nature. We know the benefits it has on physical and mental health. Every family should be able to access a park within 5 -10 minutes walking distance. There are many other ways to improve access to nature in the cities, such as planting community gardens and adding trees to the urban forest.

8. Access to Amenities – Parents in cities say that one of the greatest benefits of city life is easier access to amenities like community centres, libraries, public pools, movie theatres, and playgrounds. The best way for cities to attract families is by providing an abundance and diversity of amenities that appeal to children and don't require car transport.

9. Public Safety – When I think back to my childhood, it is hard to believe how much more sheltered children are today. Maybe it is because there are less eyes on the street and weaker community connections, but many parents are afraid of letting their kids be unsupervised in their neighbourhood. Simple measures like traffic calming and even bringing back programs like Block Parents can help parents be more confident in letting their kids roam freely.

10. Fun and Whimsy – Children can find magic in almost any everyday object. To aid their curious minds, cities can add features to inspire the inner child in all of us, like water parks, swings, rainbow crosswalks, street art, parklets, sidewalk swings and public pianos.

MERGING MOBILITY WITH SAFETY (AND EDUCATION!)

Anna Louise Bradley (STIPO)

Cities throughout the world differ vastly in scale, density, and climate, yet the interests and needs of inhabitants, specifically safety surrounding children, are parallel. Keeping those most vulnerable in mind, how can we create safer environments globally regardless of existing infrastructure, scale, and characteristics?

BIG IDEA, SMALL INTERVENTIONS

Intersperse small-scale transit mediations paired with educational and playful material at frequently traversed points within downtown transit networks to improve utilization and safety for children.

These mediations include murals, posters and signs mounted at approximately 95 cm height, as well as child-scale seating and colourful paint to symbolize waiting areas throughout transit hot spots. Notably, this project can be taken on at varying budget levels. Higher budgets could include

Man and baby cross the walkway in downtown Phoenix

An excellent precedent to create playful engaging transit spaces for children; The M1 line in Copenhagen contains a pseudo driver's station for children with buttons labeled to command the metro-car.

technology touch screens with engaging steps and light displays while more temporary or tight budgets use cheaper more durable materials. These changes will ease caretaking, engage children with their environment, help keep children safely away from moving traffic, and ultimately fortify community wellbeing.

PLACES TO INTERVENE

Signs, posters and murals placed at inherently effective positions for children with bright and elementary suitable designs, even including dexterous play built into the sign or bench hardware.

THE SIDEWALK	– sign mounted at approx. 95 cm – 1-2 meters from crosswalk – facing oncoming pedestrian traffic on route towards intersection
BUS STOPS	– poster on existing bus shelter façade – smaller scale benches adjacent to regular benches – dexterous play designed into bench (moving shapes along bar, tic-tac-toe game)
METRO PLATFORMS	– mural on back platform wall or center between two platforms depending on the design of metro
WITHIN CARRIAGES	– 3-4 seats per carriage – bright colour – labeled for kids – exhibit local children's art on bus/subway wall

HOW TO CHOOSE CONTENT?

The content should be relevant to children's cognition and motor skills. According to Piaget, children age 0-2 are within Sensorimotor Stage.[1] This contains coordination, language for commands, and the beginning of object permanence. Potential sign content could include a "mirror" using break resistant material in unison with basic actions written for caretakers to read out loud to the children; ("wave hello", "where's your nose?", etc.) Within this same model, children age 2-7

are generally within the Preoperational Stage. This stage includes acquiring conservation and symbolic thinking. Content that would be relevant for children in this range is a simple diagram explaining physical matter or diagrams with labels for how systems in the human body work.

Playing "Eye Spy" with children can be a fun and easy way to keep them occupied during pauses while also guiding them to take notice of specific sensory information in the surrounding area. To apply this game to this proposal, the signs throughout the city can highlight particular historical landmarks or existing transit details for children to lookout for. Adding this game to the project can expand youth's symbolic representation from the Preoperational Stage forward and is on par with the proposal's ideology to coalesce education with environmental and transit system engagement while prioritising safety.

With any sign addition, it is advantageous that the content includes relevant knowledge for children's cognitive levels, is beneficial to residents' daily experiences, and also aids caretakers in how to further access that type of learning. For example, understanding the importance and effects of green characteristics in urban environments, the content with this program could include plant information and more specifically, reference foliage from the region while outlining park locations throughout the city.[2] This allows children the opportunity to learn about green systems and gives more information for how to access the content, while also inserting a small therapeutic green moment in residents' daily routines. Studies show that even viewing artwork depicting nature acts therapeutically to return to baseline and elicits positive and calm emotions.[3]

This equation to combine youth-oriented education with city specific access information and therapeutic features has infinite possibilities.

HOW CAN THIS HELP WITH WELLBEING?

Clearly, intuitive design can pull pedestrians in a given direction and will alter safety, hopefully for the better if designed smartly. Based on human's horizontally oriented sight, cities with skyscrapers can be uncomfortable and anxiety-inducing to adults and certainly more so to smaller individuals, particularly children.[4] This overwhelming sensory experience for youth, and especially for those without full awareness for what is going on around them, can be remedied with designs that induce feelings of belonging, safety, and playfulness.

Mobility networks possessing safe places, mentally and physically, for young children to occupy will allow kids the ability to understand the transit system better and thus bolster individual sense of

Istegade contains many child-friendly mobility aspects: bright public transport vehicles, wide sidewalks relative to the street, and colourful murals.

competence. Fredrickson's Broaden and Build Theory states that competence is an essential attribute to attain positive emotions.[5] Children's comprehension of transit networks' software and relative spatial location could help them identify personal belonging within their neighbourhood and ultimately boost more respect for the home around them. Also, as children grow older, this intentional early transit exposure will aid them in the future when traveling independently.

Furthermore, creating a more streamlined daily routine can facilitate constructive interactions between children and caregivers. Not only would families and children be positively impacted, many vulnerable residents, such as seniors or those with special needs, will reap the benefits too. This robust accessibility creates a city for all.

UPKEEP

Creating a comprehensive stakeholder list is vital to increase the longevity and benefits behind any project. Allowing residents a space to voice opinions and discuss new content not only encourages a rich collection of ideas, but also offers the community agency towards change in their environment and the ability for representation.

"Merging mobility with safety (and education!)" could partner with

local schools to submit children's artwork or content ideas. Schools announcing open submission for the metro content can use this as a platform to teach public transit behavioural dos and don'ts for students.

TIPS & LESSONS LEARNED

1. It is important to ensure stop announcements are loud, clear, and visible.
2. Create a backup plan! Appropriately aged children should know where to go and who (what uniform to look for) to speak to in the off-chance of separation.
3. Use each neighbourhood's unique landmarks and quirks to create common sense wayfinding [6] embedded within proposal integrations throughout the city.

Although cities worldwide do not mimic Copenhagen's exact favorable transit culture and conditions, we can certainly design modest changes to alleviate the challenges and encourage safety when commuting with children.

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THE STROLLER TEST
WHAT MAKES A CITY LIVEABLE FOR THE YOUNGEST CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS?

Darell Hammond & Ardan Kockelkoren (Bernard van Leer Foundation)

For a couple of decades, the "popsicle test" – can your kid go out for a popsicle and get back safely before it melts – has been proposed as a test of how liveable a city neighbourhood is for kids.[1] This makes sense, for kids old enough to go out on their own to get a popsicle. You might be happy for them to do that if they are, say, 8 years old. But not if they're 18 months.

What equally simple test could tell us about a city's liveability for younger kids – young enough to have to go everywhere with a caregiver, whether toddling or being carried or pushed in a stroller? Think of the places you might go with a stroller-age child: to parks, preschools or healthcare. How long does it take, how easy is it, and what quality of experience do you and your child have along the way? We could call these questions the "stroller test".

Musing on the stroller as a proxy for liveability a few years ago, Mark Funkhouser – ex-mayor of Kansas City – observed: "A city that's a good place to raise children is generally just a good place, period. Parents want to raise their children in places that are safe, clean and attractive, that enjoy a sense of charm and place, and that have lots of fun and interesting stuff going on. Who doesn't want that? It sounds like the very definition of liveability."[2]

Stroller friendliness increases young children's exposure to the outdoors and decreases parental stress

Amenities such as benches on the route shorten relative distances

A stroller test would measure, firstly, how far parents have to travel to get to everyday services. Pregnant women, babies and toddlers need, for example, to visit doctors and nurses more often than most people, whether for routine check-ups or accidents and illnesses. As any parent knows, young children have a short range of mobility – travelling anywhere takes longer – so, ideally, essential services should be located near to where people live.

Next: How difficult is the journey? Are the sidewalks wide, level and shaded from the sun? Are they cluttered with rubbish and parked vehicles? Are there dropped kerbs? If your route crosses busy roads, how convenient and safe are the crossings? If your destination is far away, how stroller-friendly are your public transport options? Does provision for bikes on the city streets allow you to feel confident that you can cycle safely with your infant on board?

The ease of the journey links to the quality of the experience. Is all your attention absorbed by identifying potential dangers and wrestling your stroller around obstacles and over rough terrain? Aspects of the built environment that facilitate stroller use will also tend to work for the elderly and disabled, whether in wheelchairs or using walking aids. Does your route have public bathrooms, or places to sit and rest, perhaps with a cup of coffee?

For young children, issues of safety and physical health matter, especially as their bodies and brains are more vulnerable to pollution. How easy is it, for example, to wait at a bus stop without your child breathing in exhaust fumes from idling vehicles?
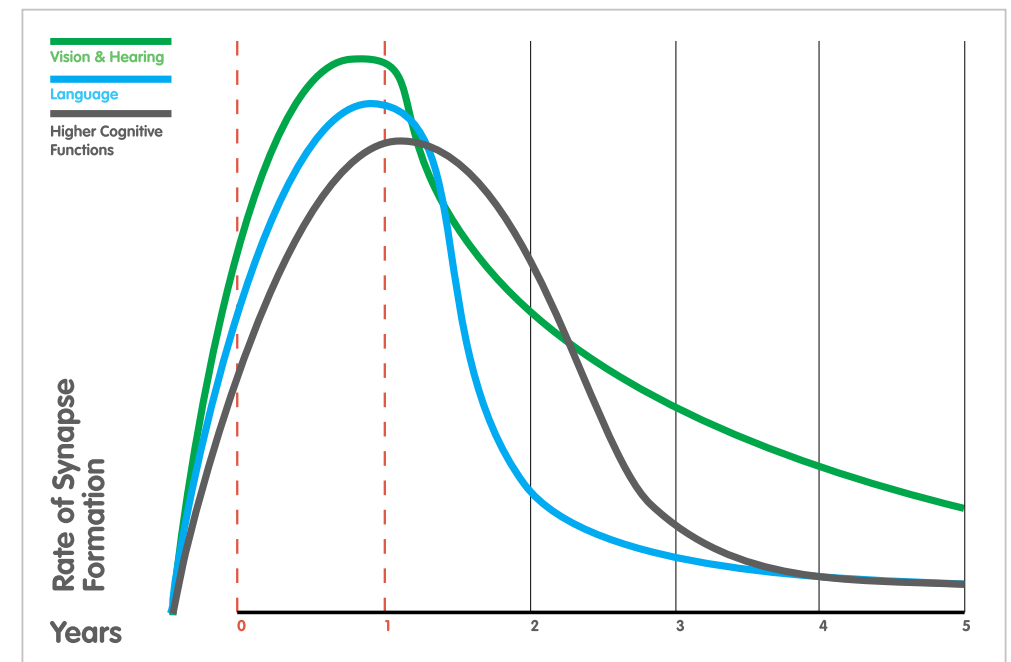
Environmental factors influence brain development at an early age

Beyond this, young children experience public space differently – things look, sound and feel very different to babies and toddlers than they do to adults and older children. Every experience is a potential learning experience. Are there interesting things for a young child to see, touch and listen to? Do everyday journeys contain any exposure to nature, even if only a grassy verge in the shade of a tree, or a small patch of mud in which to poke a stick around?

These may seem like trivial considerations. They are not. Neuroscientists tell us that the brain develops at its most rapid pace in life's earliest years, with lasting impacts on physical and mental health and the capacity for learning. The way in which caregivers interact with babies and toddlers in everyday life is critical: when parents talk, sing, and play with their babies, they help to build a healthy brain that is well wired to learn and to interact with others.

The built environment in a neighbourhood can have major impacts on caregiver-child interactions. When moving around with your young child, are you stressed by the hassles involved with getting where you need to go? Or are you relaxed and chatting, pointing things out to them, encouraging their curiosity and answering their questions? Does your neighbourhood have places that invite you to spend time outside, interacting with other caregivers while children explore?

For young children, especially, the child-friendliness of a city is about local neighbourhoods much more than the central business district. Urban planners and political leaders could learn a lot about liveability by going into neighbourhoods and walking around with a stroller.

NOTES

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FEAR OF CRIME IN URBAN SETTINGS AND CHILD DETACHMENT FROM THE CITY

Dyah Fatma

In Jakarta, traffic jams are a common sight outside almost every private school in the morning and in the late afternoon. Lines of cars waiting for the children to come out of the school. While the older ones walk by themselves to the cars, the younger ones, more often than not, are accompanied by their designated escort - be it family members or nannies - who pick them up in front of the school door. For the younger children of these private schools, their life jumps from the school to their home, while the space between them is the car that brings them through the city. In a city like Jakarta, which ranks low in the Safe City Index (2017), parents are intent on protecting their children from crime. However, the intention detaches the children from their own city.

IMPEDIMENT TO CHILDREN INDEPENDENT MOBILITY

Safety and security concern impedes Children Independent Mobility (CIM) in many countries. However, there has not yet been any in-depth research on how safety and security reduce CIM in Jakarta. Yet, looking at the specific area, where children have the chance to experience the city and the direct space around their school, we can gain a sense that children from poorer families seem to have higher mobility independence, albeit this might not be voluntary. More expensive schools are more enclosed compared to the less expensive ones.

PERCEPTION OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

Concerns such as kidnapping are voiced in schools, although they are not limited to kidnapping by strangers, but rather due to the dispute between divorced parents.

Peddlers selling food near a school

Parents also worry about the peddlers that might sell drugs or other inappropriate goods to the children right in front of the school gate, as media blew up the issue following findings by the police of drug-containing candies. Topics on sexual harassment on children that has gone through the roof, both through the media as well as through parents and family chat groups increasing the perception that Jakarta is unsafe. Data from Indonesian Children Protection Commission shows, however, that crime towards children is often by people close to the children instead of strangers.

CONDITIONS AND SURROUNDINGS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Private schools in Jakarta, especially those that cater to higher social status, often have introverted design. They are fenced, often not allowing visual access to increase privacy, at times as part of their selling points to the parents. The gates are closed, except before and after school hours with security guards on standby. The front of these closely guarded schools are sterile from peddlers, unlike the less introverted school, where food and toy peddlers can easily be found around school gates especially nearing the end of school hours.

ACCESS TO MOBILITY BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

The direct surrounding of the school varies depending on the area. However, like most areas in Jakarta, they have low walkability. The sidewalk is often not available along the street in front of the school or in bad condition. The pedestrian area is often badly implemented with different levels, often more than 20 cm level difference from the road, making the sidewalk uncomfortable for walking, especially for children, as they have different measurements than adults. It is common to see an unmaintained walkway with loose pavings or cracked surfaces. In addition, public transportation is still deemed insufficient in Jakarta. Furthermore, there is a perception from the past that public transportation is unsafe, not only from crime but also from

Walkway condition in front of a school along an arterial road

A school within a high-end residential area

fights between schools. Public school buses are available, albeit limited. With private motorized vehicle still the preferred mode of transport among the residents, the number of motorised vehicles increases, resulting in more busy traffic. The conditions discourage parents to let their children walk a longer distance from school or take public transportation. At the most, they let their children take online-based transportation when they cannot pick the children up, or their chauffeur is not available, as they can still control where their children are.

INCREASING WALKABILITY TO RECONNECT CHILDREN AND THEIR CITY

Although the condition seems bleak at the moment, an improvement in public transportation and pedestrian area is progressing at the moment. With better pedestrian and city condition on the ground level, people are expected to feel safer when they are walking. This called our attention to creating children-friendly school zones in Indonesia, which can lessen parents' worries. Starting from providing universal design, pedestrian areas where adults and children can comfortably walk, to increasing security by trusted eyes on the street such as providing safe-house, hopefully parents can give the children more freedom to roam and become more connected to their city.

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A FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING CHILD-FRIENDLY SOCIAL HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Giselle Sebag

The Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region is the most urban region on the planet. Children in the LAC region face unique challenges in their urban settings due to climate change disaster risks, unsustainable development patterns, large numbers of unplanned informal settlements, and violent crime concerns, among others. Polluted air causes respiratory diseases; unclean water and lacking sanitation causes diarrhea; poorly managed water bodies cause vector diseases such as malaria; poorly designed streets, cities and buildings cause injuries—and these are just a few examples. In fact, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), altogether more than 80% of all major diseases and injuries are impacted by changeable factors in our environment.

In any community, the city at eye level perspective—or the experience that a pedestrian has moving throughout the space—is the most critical aspect of quality of life, health and wellness outcomes. Urban environments can be designed to facilitate social interaction, physical activity, civic engagement, improve mental health and promote child protection, safety and injury

prevention, among other outcomes. Throughout the LAC, the building of social housing developments, connecting infrastructure and the subsequent building of new neighbourhoods often falls to private developers, construction companies and real estate investors. This case study of Condominium Pablo Mella in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic included an extensive review of the highest quality peer-reviewed research around how to design, use and organise healthy communities to create effective and practical guidelines and policy recommendations that private developers, practitioners and policymakers can use to plan, design, and develop social housing projects that prioritise children, their rights, health and happiness throughout LAC. The LAC region has few context specific tools to utilize when private companies develop large numbers of social housing projects, and the impact of these developments on children and their families are frequently inadequate and undermine their rights.

The 90 recommendations for children ages 0-3, pregnant women and their caregivers are divided into the following categories and include guidance, objectives and indicators on the following subjects, among others:

1. **General Child Health -** Provide basic healthcare services such as vaccinations, lactation coaches prenatal and primary care at an easily **accessible location onsite**

2. **Health Care Access -** Provide HIV testing for pregnant women and access to antiretroviral treatment onsite

3. **Physical Activity -** Provide public transit access within 800 meters of most residences, orient building entrances towards pedestrian traffic, provide safe outdoor playgrounds and exercise equipment, provide dedicated bicycle paths and safe pedestrian connections between residential buildings and amenities

4. **Nutrition -** offer onsite weekly produce sales or community gardens for young children, caregivers and pregnant women, provide kitchen facilities in common spaces

5. **Mental Health -** Provide walking trails, access to greenspace and alternatives to driving motor vehicles

6. **Social Interaction -** Provide safe play spaces with ample seating, playgrounds and a human scale

7. **Environmental Health -** Implement a tobacco-free policy throughout the community, offer clean potable water at an affordable rate to all community residents

8. **Child Protection, Safety and Injury Prevention -** Provide ample and safe lighting throughout the community, offer car alternatives such as dedicated bicycle pathways and shared or subsidised bicycles, implement a weapon and violence-free policy for the neighbourhood

9. **Participation and Citizenship -** Develop child participation mechanisms to solicit children's opinions and input into developing the community. Examples might include electing a child mayor or using existing bodies or school councils to focus on children

10. **Education -** Provide onsite subsidised child care and preschools, offer parent and caregiver coaching or setup a government mechanism that

Children in Chiapas, Mexico

Children's urban planning workshop in DR2
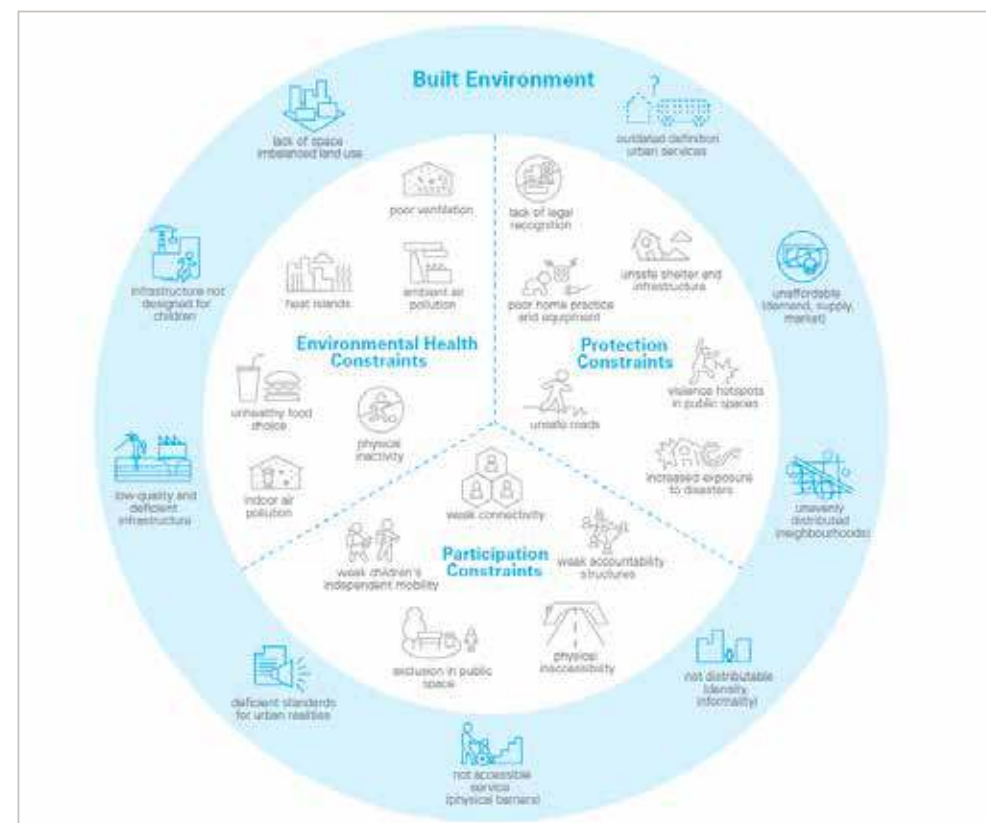
Taxonomy of children's vulnerabilities related to the built environment

regularly solicits opinions and ideas about community life and potential improvements from children, their caregivers and pregnant women

11. **Legal Frameworks and Policies -** Establish internal community frameworks and mechanisms that prioritise, promote and protect the rights or children. Examples include establishing a community children's advocacy body to work with the private and public sector stakeholders on developing new programs in the community that prioritises children.

These recommendations can be adapted for specific communities and regions based on a simple health risk assessment that evaluates the leading causes of death, disease and disability in children aged 0-3, caregivers and pregnant women, and tailors recommendations to address those concerns first.

The recommendations include guidelines that can be applied at the building, street and community level. Ideally, case studies following this methodology would include components that address all three of these scales. In-situ data gathering was also incorporated here in order to take an integrated approach and involve the community stakeholders at every step, ensuring integration from the bottom-up and from the top-down in recommending pragmatic urban design and planning guidelines as well as policy recommendations that have been shown through evidence to support children and families. This knowledge can then be applied to the creation of a broadly applicable set of clear and concrete guidelines for the any regional context. Together with thorough monitoring and evaluation, these tools can coalesce to form and articulate child-friendly social housing, neighbourhood and community frameworks with which to engage governments, developers, community stakeholders, and ultimately children, throughout the world.

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BARRIERS FOR WARSAW'S YOUNGEST CITIZENS ON THEIR WAY TO SCHOOL

Beata Patuszyñska

CITY-WALK CONVERSATIONS WITH AN 8 - YEAR OLD

For Jana, my 8½-year old daughter, the city is part of her identity: the streets she walks, the places she visits, the associations with events from her past. Learning as she goes, she experiences the space with all her senses. As well as what she sees, she has a map of smells and sounds. Sometimes they are pleasant. Other times, when it comes to the sewer stink or malodorous smog, or the adrenaline-rush of wailing sirens passing by, they are not. The city for her tells a story – the shop where Krysia the hairdresser works, the street we walked at night after Hania's birthday, or the stop where Zosia boards the morning tram.

At Jana's age, the law permits her to travel the streets on her own. And yet, of her 25 classmates, only a handful (excluding her) make the school trip alone. When I ask what problems she perceives in moving around the city, she claims none. Am I to assume the city is simpler than we think, or maybe that we shield her so well from difficulties? How much, I wonder, does my grown-up perception of the city differ from a child's?

FROM A TO B

Home is the centre of Warsaw; school is 2 km away, and usually we take the tram, sometimes we walk or cycle. Jana enjoys the boards displaying information about the approaching trams. She can prepare herself, and

knows if her tram will be a low-floor version. It matters, as she dislikes the older trams and their difficult access – with steep steps and rear doors at an angle to the platform. On bikes, the cycle path network is well developed in the centre, meaning we can reach school without riding on the road, and with limited need to use pavements.

As a parent, I am alert to potential threats. Outside home the cycle path ends abruptly, cyclists continuing their trips along the pavement, not adapting their behaviour to the new conditions. Warsaw traffic lights similarly present many challenges to the younger citizen. Inevitably, they give priority to traffic over pedestrians – Jana often complains of the long wait to cross. Sometimes she has two waits, the second on a traffic island because the green is too short to cross in one go. On other crossings, at complex junctions, the greens for each stage appear at different moments on different stretches. The danger is the natural assumption that one green will be followed by another, manifested in Jana's belief that she can safely cross all stretches without checking the colour of all the signals.

THE CODE OF THE STREET

Although Warsaw's infrastructure may not be 100% intuitive to a child, it can be learned. My starkest observation is that a child faces unequal opportunities and rights, not because the city itself is too difficult, but because those who are stronger, who we might expect to support children, actually compete with them for space. When a grown-up is in competition with a child, the standard rules of behaviour (keeping to the right when walking, waiting for others to leave public transport before entering) are disregarded. The only observed rule is "might is right". At rush hour, a child faces the problem of getting off the tram before the grown-ups' inward rush. When a child crosses the rush hour street, they face a wall of oncoming humanity, stretching across the width of the crossing. Adult cyclists pay little heed to their younger counterparts, asserting their priority, cutting in, riding towards them when receiving the green signal. Drivers ignore children at zebra crossings; school run parents park on zebras in front of the building, or reverse across them without looking.

WHY NOT ON HER OWN?

Jana is responsible and independent, and I trust her. Yet, I still take her to school every day. Why? When it comes down to the key question – whether she can go to school on her own - she replies 'yes', because I have taught her everything she needs to know. But, she says she won't do it, for who will kiss her goodbye in the locker room. For now, we leave it at that, keeping the ability to make the journey for days when nobody can take her. For the time being, I will be there, because it is a time for discussing the important topics of the day that we have no time for in the morning melee, or when our tired paths cross at the day's end.

The article is based on a research done for postgraduate urban studies course at the Institute for Public Space Research (Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts)

GRANDPARENTS' ACTIVISM

Interview with Helene Friman (BUMS network) by Rosa Danenberg & Vivian Doumpa

Helena Friman reflects on playing and upbringing between different generations: herself, her children and her grandchildren.

Helena grew up in the countryside and used to play in the forest, which offers terrain, trees, rocks and other natural elements that stimulate children's senses and fantasy. It enables a space wherein children can create their own worlds; live their stories and use their bodies to build and replicate their experiences. To grow up in a city is quite different. It offers all sorts of interaction, experience and manmade constructions, however it lacks the unpredictability of nature. All children like and actually need to play but, in contrast to nature, the artificial playgrounds in our cities offer very little inspiration and ways to develop. Helena often asks herself why we can't have both. Why the cities grow without these elements side by side, is a question she knows the answer to: money and exploitation.

In retrospect, Helena isn't aware of applying specific methods to the upbringing of her children; mostly she remembered and re-enacted her own childhood while she often talked to her mom and friends. Helena's children, who now have children of their own, live in another era, where many young parents instead learn by reading or talking to their friends. The collectivistic spirit that Helena

developed as part of the activist movements from 1968s is today replaced by individuality. The individual feeling is central in today's parents' life. On an abstract level today's parents engage in discussions regarding the food chain, climate change and animal well-being in relation to raising their children.

The schools and the preschool teachers are - or at least could be - agents of change, she believes. Nowadays, the schools are rather segregated; educating mostly children from the same socioeconomic class while schoolyards are designed to meet the parents and schools wish to reduce risk. Helena argues, firstly, that variety in cultures, classes and backgrounds can contribute to more tolerance and less sense of fear among parents. Secondly, schools should hold a stronger autonomy for keeping the schoolyard a place for children to play. Instead of diminishing the space or cut the bushes so that teachers and parents can keep an eye on the children at all times, schools should work for the possibility for children to use their fantasy, move, explore, and find secret places when playing. It must be possible to reduce risk and still encourage play in more inventive ways then what we see today.

PLAYBOX FOR ALL

Eva De Baerdemaeker (Cultureghem)

KETMET, BRUSSELS LARGEST COVERED PUBLIC PLAYGROUND

Cultureghem is a social profit organisation that initiated the KETMET project. It transforms a privately owned, cultural heritage site, Abattoir in Brussels. Every week a team of volunteers and animators roll huge wooden boxes filled with toys, PLAYBOXes, in the large covered public playground. Each PLAYBOX is designed in short dialogue with the kids and families around the site, who use the space as their concrete backyard. In three years time, KETMET evolved from a painted circuit on the 10.000 m2 covered concrete floor, that aimed to inspire players, to a bustling playground filled with unconventional toys, reinvented ball games, kitchens and so much more.

Our pop-up playground was lacking a spot for the youngest kids. Babies, toddlers and infants mostly spend the afternoon sitting on a parent's lap while big brothers and sisters jolting to discover new things on a weekly basis. We had to invent a PLAYBOX for all under 95 cm. PLEUTERBOX was born.

PLAYBOX U95

We invited all the actors in the area who were linked to early childhood education and care for a giant brainstorm: a local day care centre, a centre that accompanies young parents through the first stage of parenthood, the local government department of youth and education, a kindergarten, teachers and parents.

"It does take a village to raise a child, our tool helps to create this kind of pop-up village"

We collected and presented the little ones with all the material, toys, interventions we could think of and watched them play. We repeated this

process on several occasions before deciding what would become part of the new PLAYBOX.

The result: mostly games that stimulate the senses, stimulate and improve motoric skills, reflections and lights. We decided the box should be not one but more boxes. Different modules according to the age and needs of the kids and their mentors, that can be taken out of the box and become boxes themselves. The PLAYBOX itself becomes a place to hide yourself from the outside bustle, a place to just be.

ON THE MOVE

As we want our partners to be able to use the material themselves in their workplace, playgrounds, meeting space, as we aim to share the new tool as much as we can, thus we decided to rethink the way PLAYBOX is moved from one side of the city to the other. We wanted the materials to be transported more easily and independently, hence the new PLAYBOX modules will be driven around the city by electrical bike.
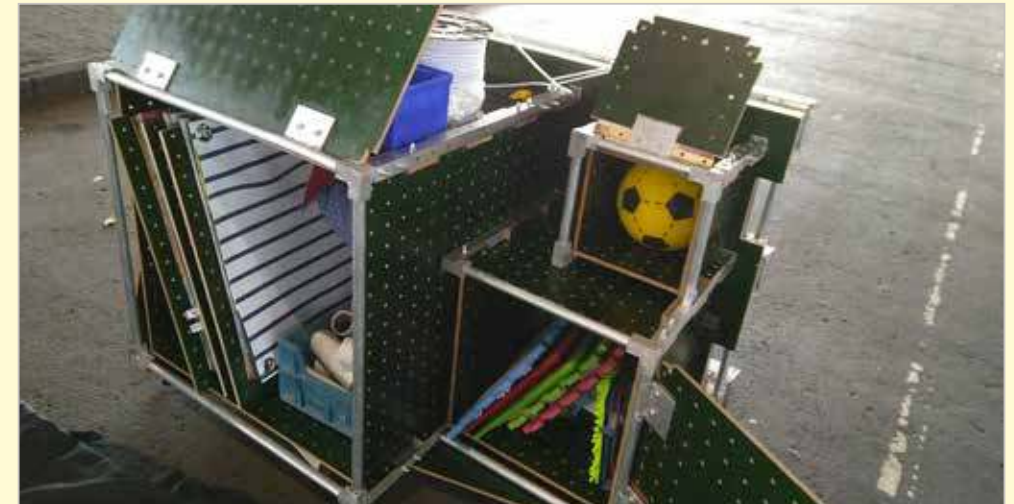
PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

CREATIVE LEARNING AND EXPLORATION OF STREET OBJECT AND FURNITURE

Noor Fajrina Farah Istiani

Our participatory workshop programme comprised of a series of creative interior workshops which were conducted in a primary school in Depok, West Java, Indonesia. Through these workshops we intended to encourage the children to think creatively beyond the existing environment that they had. On the other hand, we encouraged children to participate and engage in designing their everyday space. The existing condition of school classroom and school furniture in Indonesia generally is not very conducive to creative learning needs. The typical classroom setting in primary schools usually consists of rows of chairs and desks, which tend to be heavy and thus difficult to rearrange and reorganise for dynamic learning activities. The students are forced to sit with this array of chairs and desks throughout the school day. Storage spaces and shelves tend to have ergonomically inappropriate dimensions for primary school children. Besides, there is a lack of medium for children's expression and interaction that is necessary to enhance the development of creativity in the classroom. Hence, we intended to involve the primary school children in generating ideas for an innovative school classroom and school furniture participation workshop.
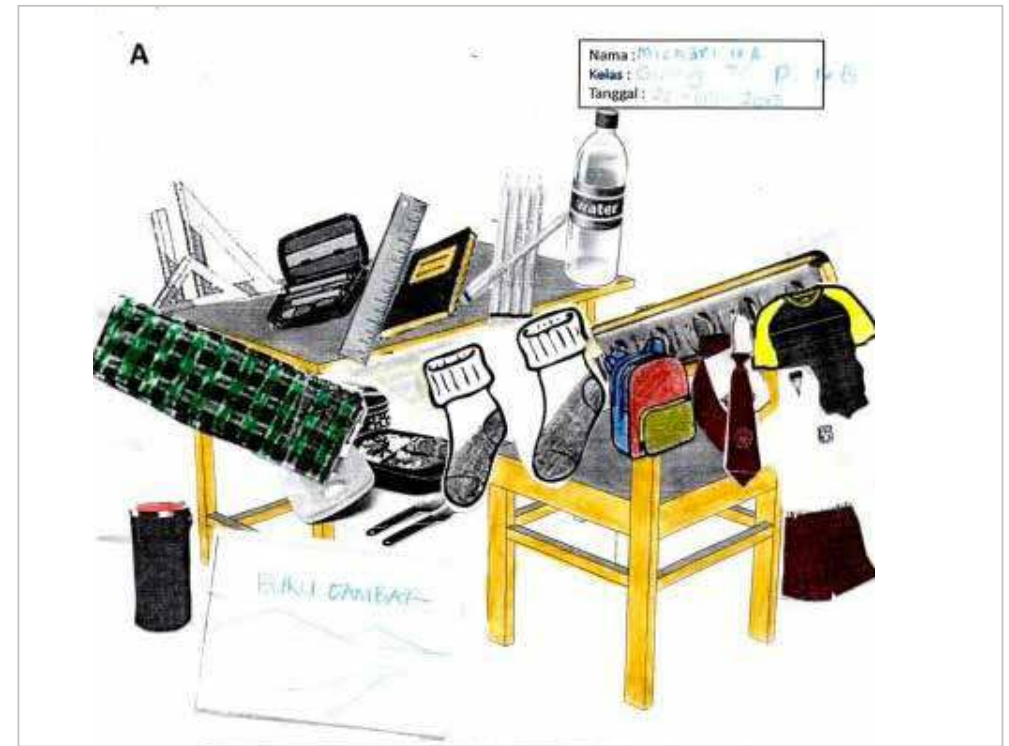
Participatory workshops on classroom interiors and classroom furniture become opportunities for creative learning process that incorporate three important aspects: creativity, everydayness and communication/collaboration. The children learn to be creative by imagining ideas, making and composing elements to generate their creative ideas.

The workshop also enhances the children's understanding of their everydayness by learning to identify their own needs in daily activities in school, by organising and arranging objects and spaces to respond to their needs. The children used their creative imagination to respond to the needs and issues that they experience in their daily life in school (Claxton et al, 2006) and they used their own ways of seeing the environment and the possibilities in it (Burke and Grosvenor, 2003).

The creative collage below indicated that children generated the ideas about how they put their personal belongings in relation to their chair and desk. The children offered various creative ideas, such as: putting the drawer under the desk to store their lunch box and personal stationary,

The participatory workshops also become a medium for learning how to communicate and collaborate, which are also essential parts of creative process (Fasko, 2001). During the workshops, the children were required to explain their ideas and their works (both the collages and models) through various media: telling stories to their peers in group, presenting in front of the classroom, and writing. The workshops encouraged children to exercise their communication skills, through describing and explaining their own creative ideas. It became an exercise for their development of language skills, especially in telling stories and writing descriptive texts. In this way, the workshops could become a medium to integrate knowledge and skills in different subjects, especially arts and language.

The participatory workshop also focused on the introduction of interior architecture knowledge and skills in the context of classroom spaces and furniture. It might be possible to extend the approach into other contexts of children's everyday settings, such as home, library, healthcare centre or public space setting like an area of a neighbourhood. Each of the settings might involve different spatial needs and issues and thus require different approaches to responds to those needs and issues.

From the previous workshop on classroom furniture and classroom interior experience, we could learn that the children were asked to identify their needs for various activities. In the neighbourhood park, children could be encouraged to recognise their body position and their particular active movement when they are playing. Even, they could imagine the ideas about adding other activities which is usually performed inside, for example reading and doing a science experiment. Those creative ideas from the children could add various unimaginable features in the street furniture and object in our neighbourhood area.

On the neighbourhood scale, children are the main actors that engage with everyday experience in using the public object and public furniture in the neighbourhood area. However, the dimension and the function of the public furniture are commonly not suitable for the children's utility and ergonomic. Public furniture should become creative learning tools that could support creative learning through playing process and allow the children to express their creativity within the neighbourhood area. Therefore, we attempt to involve children to generate the ideas of innovative street furniture and urban interior object of a neighbourhood park that express their ingenious and imaginative ideas through a creative approach.

SELF-MADE PLAYGROUND: THE HOUSE OF THE LOST CHILDREN

Manuel Polanco Perez-Llantada and Mitiku Woldesenbet
(UN-Habitat)

Kibebe Tsehay Orphanage[1], one of the governmental orphanage centres in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is a home for children who have lost their parents. The centre is involved in the rehabilitation of playgrounds for its children with a collaboration between the Spanish Embassy in Addis Ababa[2], Spanish design group Basurama Collective, the University of Addis Ababa, Spanish aid workers, and students from the Cervantes Institute.

Over 40% of the population in Africa are children under 15 years old, and half the population is under the age 18.[3] Unfortunately, numbers are high for children in African cities who have lost one or both parents due to war, invasion, natural disasters, conflict, chronic poverty, or terminal illnesses such as AIDS. These children are the most vulnerable individuals faced with the negative repercussions of crisis and conflicts. Moreover, African cities are the leading areas in the world [4] for orphans in 2017, with nearly 52 million in Africa[5] compared to 140 million orphan children worldwide. Orphanage centres are homes and learning institutes for these children in many cases.

In many cases, however, worldwide orphanages centres are not well occupied with necessary infrastructures, amenities, playgrounds, and facilities. Additionally, outdoor play is often the most forgotten element for children in these settings due to lack of funds or

1. Structure made with metal tube
2. Old bed bases founded in the orphanage
3. Broken slide founded in the orphanage
4. Palets from the flea market
5. Advertisement canvas transformed in a canopy
6. Blackboard
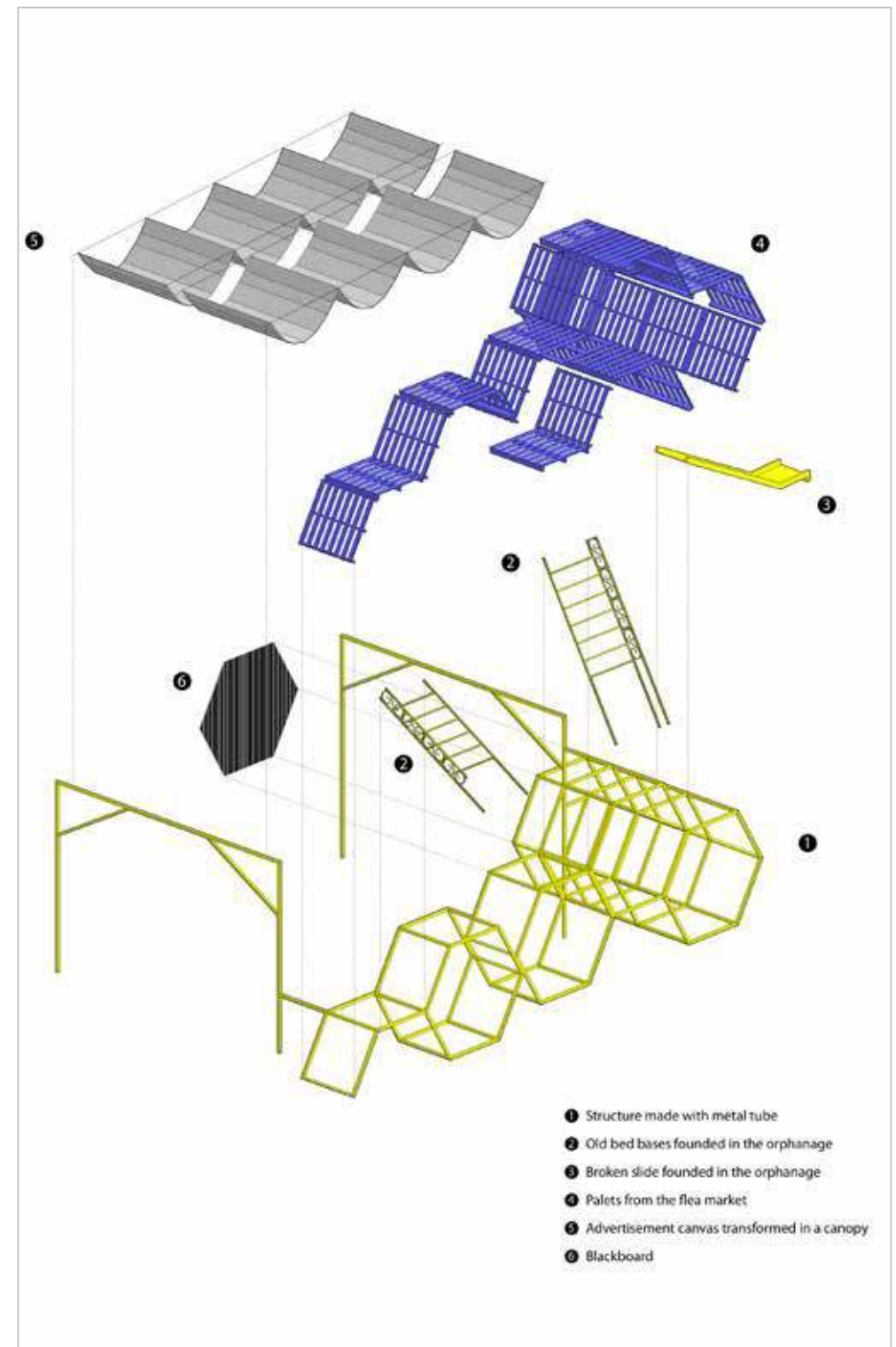
other encroaching priorities. In situations where playgrounds are available, most are not functional due to absence of regular maintenance and are characterized by poor design, environmental contamination, and unappealing damage in the spaces. In this process, children's natural play in public space is diminished and influences their lives, and also importantly impacts their physical and mental growth.

Improving orphan centre playgrounds will positively contribute to children's lives for the better and create resilient environments parallel to improving the images of cities and neighbourhoods. Rehabilitation and continuous maintenance are needed in these institutes to address the most essential part of childhood-play.

CONTEXT

In December 2012, the Spanish Embassy in Addis Ababa invited Basurama Collective[6] to make a children's playground project in the governmental orphanage centre of Kibebe Tsehay, in Addis Ababa. This orphanage centre is a home and a place of education for children from birth to 8 years old. Here, the children study, sleep, eat, tidy up, and play together with limited space in the centre. The mission for Basurama Collective in this project was to increase enjoyable moments, improve learning skills, and overall happiness in the children's life using play and play spaces as the main tool and strategy. The project was initiated with a clear understanding of the need for safe, inclusive functioning, and vibrant play areas for the kids living in *the house of the Lost Children*. Physically, the place had a large outdoor space with no trees and contained secondhand play-furniture that was often unusable, broken, and damaged. Piled in a corner of the institution were old cribs and beds, and even some parts of rusty swings.

METHODOLOGY

The core working methodology of the project focuses on three axes of reflections and actions: public space, community co-creation, and the reuse of materials with emphasis given to proper solutions, to fit the local context and cultural settings of the city.

Throughout the process, the children and youth were deeply involved in making use of the provided digital cameras to capture the spaces, friends' activities, and favourite corners. The pictures taken by children were collected and analyzed in depth to understand their daily habits, outdoor engagements, types of activities, and their favourite spots. The finding influenced the final design of the playground. To add an interesting layer in the project, different artists, members from NGOs, professionals, producers, and community leader were involved. During the rehabilitation process, idle materials and solid waste were recycled and reused for different elements in the playground.

ENHANCING PLAY

This amazing project was completed in only ten days, from material research and selection, to design, production and execution of the work onsite. After an exhaustive materials search of possible local resources, some simple wooden pallets, scrap metal of the old swings, and the beds and cribs that were stored in the orphanage were collected and used to rehabilitate the yard. All these elements were implemented within a metal frame and using a metal tube; this decision guaranteed maximum durability of the intervention in a place that rarely receives funding to improve its space.

The intervention was completed with the installation of a deck, built with advertising canvas donated by a local company, that was designed to adjust according to the needs of each moment and activity. Left behind items were painted in red and placed in the space for their memory and for random play for the kids.

The use of these low-cost materials combined with the synchronization of all the human and material resources that were received in the first days of the process allowed us to finish the intervention and demonstrate that, with good coordination, it is possible to carry out a quality project with minimal resources.

The project culminated with the official opening and a lecture at the School of Architecture in Addis Ababa to underline the importance of such projects ability to change children's lives. Some volunteers discussed and identified the harsh realities often linked to places like this orphanage, and decided to continue their own endeavours that support the project's mission in their free time.

LESSONS LEARNED

– Because of the simplicity and efficiency of the methodology used to improve the playground in the orphanage centre in Addis Ababa, further projects in different cities including in cities like Maputo, Malabo and Taipei were also able to be influenced.
– Working in culturally different contexts, especially where international language is sometimes not spoken is challenging. Preparedness to address this issue is essential before the start of implementing public space projects.
– The importance of reused materials has multiple benefits; creates awareness for people to transform their urban environments with the unused materials that surround them, and also develops a strong culture on reusing material and reducing costs.
– Child-friendly public space is an inspiring concept and subject- specifically, working with university students, youth and volunteers to help scale up projects by the youth themselves.
– No matter the living situations of children and the relative geographical locations, play is vital in many aspects including physical and mental growth and development.

NOTES

1. http://www.projectwaterfall.org/kibebe-tsehay-orphanage/
2. Main sponsor of the project, and through their Cultural Department they identified the specific site for improvement and upgrading, Involved in creating a good network with the Kibebe Tsehay Orphanage Center for better implementation of the project.
3. https://www.statista.com/statistics/265759/world-population-by-age-and-region/
4. Report on World Orphans (https://reliefweb.int/sites/ reliefweb.int/files/resources/REPORT%20ON%20 WORLD%27S%20ORPHANS.pdf)
5. https://www.unicef.org/media/media_45279.html
6. Basurama Collectives is an artist collective dedicated to research, cultural and environmental creation and production whose practice revolves around the reflection of trash, waste and reuse in all its formats and possible meanings. It was born in the Madrid School of Architecture (ETSAM) in the year 2001 and, since then, it has evolved and acquired new shapes.

USING MINECRAFT FOR CHILDREN PARTICIPATORY PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN

José Luis Chong (UN-Habitat)

Access to well-designed and pleasant public spaces is essential for cities to prosper (UN-Habitat, 2016). This is particularly true for those citizens – including, for example, the elderly, youth and children or whose individual living circumstances, such as the home and its immediate surroundings, are lacking in quality and comfort, or who are in special need of decent streets and communal spaces for health, recreation and socialisation. Improving access to good public spaces, particularly for less favoured and more vulnerable urban residents is a powerful tool to improve equity in the city and combat discrimination. Participation is key to engage city dwellers to improve urban conditions in human settlements.

GLOBAL PUBLIC SPACE PROGRAMME AND BLOCK BY BLOCK

In 2011, UN-Habitat was mandated by member states to work on public space, including developing public space policy, knowledge dissemination and directly assisting cities to improve public space globally. The Global Public Space Programme and Block by Block are supporting cities to achieve these objectives. The UN-Habitat's Global Public Space Programme[1] is organized around three main areas: partnership & networking, city-wide strategies & pilot/demonstration projects and Knowledge management, advocacy & tools (UN-Habitat, 2016). Block by Block[2] is an innovative partnership between UN-Habitat and Block by Block Foundation[3], in which Minecraft is used as a community participation tool in the design of public spaces.

MINECRAFT FOR PARTICIPATORY PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN

The video game Minecraft has been used to engage children and youth in city planning. The creative and building aspects of Minecraft allow players to build structures out of textured cubes in a three-dimensional computer generated world. UN-Habitat's experience using Minecraft as a community participation tool for public space design shows that providing children with ICT tools can promote improved civic engagement.

Minecraft has been shown to be a useful tool in engaging young people in the design of public space projects. As part of the public space implementation process, participatory planning workshops are held with local children and youth where they can provide input into the design and eventual implementation and management of the spaces. By using Minecraft in this way, young people are given the confidence to make urban professionals and policy makers listen to their ideas for improving the city.

To date, community participation workshops with Minecraft have been held in 20 different countries among them, Haiti, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Somalia, Peru, Philippines, China and Bangladesh. The projects implemented so far show that using Minecraft adds value to community participation processes. Power relationships are changed, communities are engaged in new ways and the process presents great opportunities to engage hard-to-reach groups, particularly young people.

Children building Minecraft Model in Aldea Digital

CASE STUDIES

MAKING CITIES TOGETHER, DANDORA, NAIROBI

Dandora is a "site and services"[4] low-income planned neighbourhood in Eastern Nairobi established in 1977. Due to the proximity to a dump-site and lack of proper basic services, the environmental degradation is high. UN-Habitat and "Making cities together"[5] partnered to improve Dandora's public spaces with placemaking approach. Participatory design workshops using Minecraft were held with the participation of children and youth (around 40% of participants). Despite the fact that, it was the first time for many participants to use a computer, they managed to proposed their ideas to improve public space design and management. Thereafter, the technical design was developed based on the workshop ideas. During the implementation, building parties with the engagement of the community, particularly children and youth groups, improved the street conditions, through walls painting, tree planting and sewage cleaning.

Building Party event in Dandora

ALDEA DIGITAL, MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Aldea Digital[6] is a technological fair promoted by Telmex-Carlos Slim foundation which aims to reduce the digital gap in Mexico. The general public has access to free workshops, conferences and trainings. Between 2014 to 2016, around 16,000 children and teenagers, provided ideas to improve public space design in Mexico. In 2014, participants were asked to redesign Plaza Tlaxcoaque in Mexico City in order to improve safety & security, playfulness and sociability. In 2015, the challenge was to provide ideas to improve a park in Iztapalpa, which has the highest rates of rape, violence against women, and domestic violence in Mexico City. In 2016, the Minecraft workshop was recognized by the Guinness World Record for the "Largest building tournament on a sandbox videogame" with children and teenagers designing a public space. The children and youth provided ideas to redesign a park in the border city of Mexicali, Baja California.

Children building Minecraft Model in Aldea Digital

1st place Kids Category
David Pérez Rodriguez age 12

Minecraft Model produced by David Perez (12 years old)

PEOPLE-ORIENTED PUBLIC SPACES, WUHAN, CHINA

Wuhan is the provincial capital of the Hubei province in China. The city has many lakes and parks, however rapid population growth and economic development pressures, have brought social and environmental problems. Two Minecraft workshops were held in partnership with Wuhan Land Use and Urban Spatial Planning Research Center (WLSP). Local residents provided their ideas to improve public space surrounding East lake and Eryao road. For the first time, local residents, particularly the elderly and children were able to provide their views to revitalise public spaces in their neighbourhoods allowing dialogue between local government and the community. For instance, both groups suggested improved environmental conditions through more vegetation. As a result, government officials realised the importance to engage children and elders on Public Space Design to improve interventions and ensure sustainability of the project.

LESSONS LEARNED

Public participation methodologies are key for successful child-friendly spaces. Observations from Minecraft workshops indicate that using technology as a tool for participatory urban design can be a powerful tool to include non-traditional stakeholders (UN-Habitat, 2015), particularly children. Some of the benefits of participatory design using Minecraft are: improvement in dialogue between children and technicians, it is easier to understand three-dimensional Minecraft models than two-dimensional plans, produce visible results immediately and children are motivated to participate in the design workshop. Minecraft proves to be a good tool to engage children on public spaces design and increase the awareness of children about their urban environments.

NOTES

1. More information: https://unhabitat.org/urban-initiatives/initiatives-programmes/global-public-space-programme
2. More information: https://blockbyblock.org/
3. Block by Block Foundation is a new foundation set up by Mojang and Microsoft to ensure sustainable funding for global public space implementation and advocacy. The Foundation supports the UN-Habitat's Global Public Space Programme.
4. Sites and services projects are government-sponsored packages of shelter related services, which range from a minimal level of "surveyed plot" to an intermediate level of "serviced sites" to an upper level of "core housing" complete with utilities and access to community-based services. (Mayo & Gross)
5. Led by Placemakers in collaboration with Dandora

Transformation League and Kuwa.
6. More information: http://aldeadigitalmx.com

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THE URBANIST KIDS OF SAN FRANCISQUITO

Ximena Ocampo, Chucho Ocampo, Francisco Paillie & Hannah Yu-Pearson (dérive LAB)

San Francisquito is an almost forgotten neighbourhood in the heart of Querétaro, Mexico; what was once one of the most iconic areas in historical downtown is now perceived as a dangerous hood for both insiders and outsiders. San Francisquito's inhabitants have been mostly unconnected to the city despite living in the centre of it. Today San Francisquito is in the scope of urban transformation and land speculation making this the time to empower the neighbourhood, and mostly the kids, to understand, propose and define the city. For transformation to happen, kids need the tools to help them decide what cities could and should be in the future. After all, kids in the "barrio" spend most of their time by themselves walking, playing and learning from the city: they are the experts!

In 2017 we ran a summer course in a small square of San Francisquito, which was focused on kids aged between 3 and 12, in the hope of teaching and empowering them to become urbanists in their own neighbourhood, although throughout the various activities we learnt more from the children than them from us. The summer course was mostly held in the public park utilising a small cart that was personalised by the kids and that contained all the materials needed for our activities. All of the participants arrived on foot, some of them accompanied by older siblings, parents and grandparents, and some who always came alone. In the first days we did not have much of an audience, but as the days passed the word spread and we had up to 20 children.

Central to our process was empowering the children with trust. We trusted that they knew their neighbourhood, and we paid attention to their voices. Hence, our first activity consisted of a walking tour of their streets, in which children showed us the most important buildings, places and assets of San Francisquito, bringing us to their level and understanding what they found relevant.

From this, we found that routine and organisation was core to building trust, both with us and between each other. They had their own conflicts to resolve, and often this was in the streets because they had very little room for it in the confines of their own homes. We also acknowledged that these children spent more time, than any other demographic, outside between the streets and the square. By extension, they knew their neighbourhood, the opening times of corner shops, and the characters of the neighbours. They hold so much knowledge of their lived environments that we rarely tap into.

We developed a working idea of the *public* with them; who is the public and how does the public occupy and use space? We carried out activities that allowed them to discuss the diversity of people and needs and to position themselves as the transformers of the space in which they live, as well as articulators of their own community. These activities ranged from putting "citizen fines" (to remind their neighbours to respect the maximum speed or not to park in forbidden places), to providing them with the knowledge and steps to request formal institutional change; in explaining the format of a letter to the local government, the children wrote out their requests, organised a petition, and went around knocking on their neighbours' doors collecting signatures. With the understanding of these processes, the kids organised themselves, defining who did the door knocking, the talking and the writing. What they petitioned for was public rubbish bins, yet in their letters they talked about the need for more friendship and street lighting, so that their streets were safer.

The autonomy and creativity that many children have in San Francisquito is something that we wanted to nurture; a lack of playground facilities does not equate to a lack of play, what is at the eye level for many children is its potential for it - a tree, a bench, a lamppost; and also the obstacles - cars, blank walls, and the exhausts of big buses and trucks. If we take

the stance that planning should take into consideration experience, behaviour and emotions, then these programmes are as much the kids teaching us what they know as it is us empowering them. For example, when the children designed their own ideal park, they included benches for their grandmothers and wifi for their parents and older siblings. When they planned their desired neighbourhood, they argued about the future of San Francisquito: the location of the many public pools needed, the revitalisation of the dangerous areas and whether a department store should be installed on their streets.

Most of what we did during the programme "Niñas y Niños Urbanistas de San Francisquito" was about giving the kids a language framework from where to talk about public spaces, architecture, place improvement, urban functionality and to discuss why they are important to them. The kids knew most of the ideas discussed intuitively, our goal was to articulate them in a way so that kids could take action.

The city reimagined from a child's perspective became increasingly clear to us, as something that exists both within their physical worlds as well as their imagined and emotional ones. For them, a city is both concrete and subjective, real and fantastic, harsh yet beautiful, local as well as global, and fuelled with emotion. Children experience the city at the eye level not just for what is seen, but in what the spaces promote and the culture they enable.

We are confident that cities must nurture kids' autonomy because ultimately the city belongs to them. This is because cities are as much what a child can touch as it is what they believe; public spaces are empowering and liberating places for kids; children explain concrete ideas with fantasies in which they portray the reality; when kids plan they consider all those in their community and not just themselves. Ultimately, we learnt that kids think positively when approaching any urban problem, as the city is a great place to live.

We hope to host our programme again this year and to continue to embrace the city at kids' eye level.

THE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS

Christine Saalfeld

INTRODUCTION

My experience with participatory art is based on art in public space and projects in socially deprived areas. The work ranges from temporary to permanent installations in public space (like play- and schoolyards), from Children's Art and Theatre Festivals to educative, residential and exhibition projects. During the work processes with children I learned a lot about their world of experience and their ideas about public space and space in general.

Even so I was invited to work in other cities, Rotterdam - as my place of residence – allows me to deepen relations, to connect with the surrounding and to build up trust. That means my approach towards developing public spaces is based on the idea, to see oneself as part of a society in order to find common ground and thus to be able to develop design concepts.
These are the preconditions for which I will further explain in section 2.

My own ambition within these kinds of projects is to develop narratives that are strong enough to keep a society together. This includes key concepts like inclusion, integration and sustainability. The approach is related to Édouard Glissant's concept of "Poétique de la Relation". The concept stands for a human identity that is defined by the diversity of relationships rather than a person's ethnic origin.

Key questions are:
– Which narratives are strong enough to emphasise the common?
– What holds a community together?

AS CASE THE NEIGHBOURHOOD IN ROTTERDAM BLOEMHOF

If I take the case of the neighbourhood Bloemhof, in Rotterdam, and we have a look at the population, we can see that almost 25% of the residents are under the age of 21. Young people are enlivening the atmosphere of the streets, with all advantages and disadvantages. At least in Bloemhof, the densely populated area is very restrictive to traffic. Community centres are being seen as an appropriate place to handle youths. The companies to deliver social work care changes every couple of years and not to mention the continuous change of social workers. This situation has an impact on the relationship of trust between children and the so-called professionals. From my experience I perceive "street children" in Rotterdam as very socially aware between each other and playing on the street seems to help to strengthen social competences – the soft skills – of the children.

However they are still young. Their parents say they are just allowed to play in the immediate surrounding, thus their scale of reference is still quite limited, and territorial thinking is very dominant.

These kinds of conditions are – at this specific place - my starting-point to find common ground in order to fulfil certain desires of the residents. One of these typical desires is simply to stand out from the surrounding.

From the beginning of 2012 I executed a number of long- and short-term projects in Rotterdam Bloemhof. The neighbourhood saw me as their spokesperson and mediator. I took note of their wishes and tried to give form to these wishes. I have to admit, in the beginning I used the trial-and-error method. For example, when the neighbourhood and a housing cooperation asked me to develop an idea for a facade of an old block of flats. By talking with children in the surrounding it turned out that they

actually just knew traditional play yards, funfairs or theme parks. Therefore I wanted to refer to these positive associations of such places and I chose an installation with distorting mirrors. However, I couldn't foresee how important the mirrors would become for the children. The distorting mirrors are placed close to a school and they became part of the morning ritual of children on their way to school. They laughed, talked and fought against their own distorted mirror images. The most astonishing fact was that the installation did not become a victim of vandalism.

Projects like the design of a schoolyard are much more complex and the process is based on the principles of co-creation between the school, pupils, residents, community, experts and artist.

In such a case the artist is designer, mediator and coordinator of the process to reach a satisfactory result.

Every step in the process is well documented and the ideas are well visualised with drawings and scale models in order to facilitate the communication.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion I would like to state, that the most crucial point is not the question how to engage youth, but how to involve oneself in a respectful way to a community. It is not about creating the right recipes, but about asking the right questions and being able to relate to the local conditions.
In my vision the design should add a narrative that is strong enough to emphasise the common goal and to keep a community together.

It is not about perceiving youth and children as something beyond us, because we all can remember how we played when we were young. We can all remember our own puerile visions for adventure, freedom, but also safety. The challenge is to understand the world as an entity and the world of children as part of it. Such an aim is impossible to realise without conflicts. For me personally, the biggest challenge was to deepen my social skills - soft-skills - in order to learn to deal with conflicts and see conflicts as a driving force for co-creation.

GROWING UP IN URBAN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Marianne Halblaub Miranda, Maria Ustinova, Thomas Tregel & Martin Knöll (Technische Universität Darmstadt)

CHILDREN AND SPATIAL PLANNING

In 1977 Kevin Lynch presented the results of his famous "Growing Up in Cities" study on children's use and perception of spatial environments in cities around globe.[1] The main aim was to inform planning policies with a better understanding on how the built environment impacts children's behaviour, which could lead to urban quality improvements from children's point of view. The authors emphasised that the value of children's participation should not be neglected and pointed towards the untapped potential in the way they observe the city from a different perspective.

Visualisation of the study set-up

After four decades, the project's research questions and findings of Lynch's work remain very relevant – both for architects and urban designers, as for the young users. This is specially the case for urban schools as important "settings" (fields of action), in which the children are spending an increasing amount of time. Already in the 1970s, Lynch stressed that children had less time for free activities and that their daily lives were fully programmed by school, and TV at

home. Nowadays, as the majority of school systems turn to the full-time model, the majority of children's time is spent with daily learning and extra-curricular activities, as well as using digital devices during leisure time.

A growing body of international research underlines how school design influences students' learning progress, social interaction, physical and cognitive development. However, less attention has been paid to the questions of a) how we can design more livability, physical activity, and mental well-being in to school environments, and b) how can children play a more vital role in the process.

To address these issues, the research team of TU Darmstadt developed a toolbox, which makes children the direct observers of their surrounding environment and are encouraged to express their opinions. It is inspired by Lynch's work and includes three main techniques from his research: individual/group interviews with the children, taking photographs and analysing them, and the collaborative creation of spatial mental maps. The toolbox, however, integrates a new generation of digitally-supported surveys, mapping, and co-design tools to further explore how students can be encouraged in co-creating their learning spaces and bringing forward their expectations and needs.

THE PILOT STUDY

The pilot study was conducted in an elementary school in the city of Darmstadt (Germany). The school has 8 classrooms (from the 1st to 4th grade), and provides extracurricular activities and teacher's support after the lessons, which means that the children spend a significant amount of time there. The school is situated in a dense inner-city residential neighbourhood, surrounded by both high and low traffic streets, and residential buildings. Thus, the outdoor school space is very limited and there are barriers for movement due to the road safety considerations.

Participants using the application in the outdoor area.

Screenshot of the mobile application. "How would you describe this place?"

During the study, students from all grades (aged 6-10 years, n=74) assessed their school's indoor and outdoor environment using a mobile game prototype based on the "I spy" game[2] principle. Each participant received a smartphone with the installed application. The children documented spots they considered to be suitable to become physically active, to relax, to learn, as well as their favorite spots or the ones they dislike, and described them along environmental and behavioral experiences using the stickers shown above – producing their own maps, photos and drawings to discuss the existing spatial environment. The collected data helped to identify a set of activity areas in the school, and the need for restorative niches and communal spaces of different sizes. In a further step they sketched proposals on paper, suggesting improvements in specific areas indoors and outdoors, such as qualifying an existing green space as leisure area, or a set of rules for the ideal classroom, which includes reading corners. The latter turned out to be popular spaces to relax and learn but only accessible to 2 of the 8 classes.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The mobile application and co-design tool box MoMe@school[3] may be of interest to planners and architects of learning environments seeking to engage children in the (re-)design process. The toolbox helps to understand how the children use, perceive, and feel about their school space. The child-led assessment captures three levels: school building level (indoor), street level (outdoor environment and the edges, connecting to the city's street network), and the environmental context in which children's daily city life is embedded in (set times to do different activities, allowed activities, outlets to become active or relax). Additionally, designers and school representatives have a clear statement about which elements play a role in encouraging certain behaviours (i.e. be physically active, learn or relax), thanks to the detailed description of each space.

During the follow-up interviews, students expressed they enjoyment of sharing their views and ideas about their school, and being able to "tell their side of the story". The experience with MoMe@school shows that a Lynch-inspired, digitally-supported tool box helps children to learn about their urban school environment, increases their spatial knowledge, enables them to identify areas with high potential and in need of improvement, and articulate informed opinions about it. We hope this helps forming more responsible citizens, which are familiar with co-creation from an early age; starting from the

The ideal classroom includes: a reading corner with comfortable seating, more light and greenery, storage space and more material to play and learn.
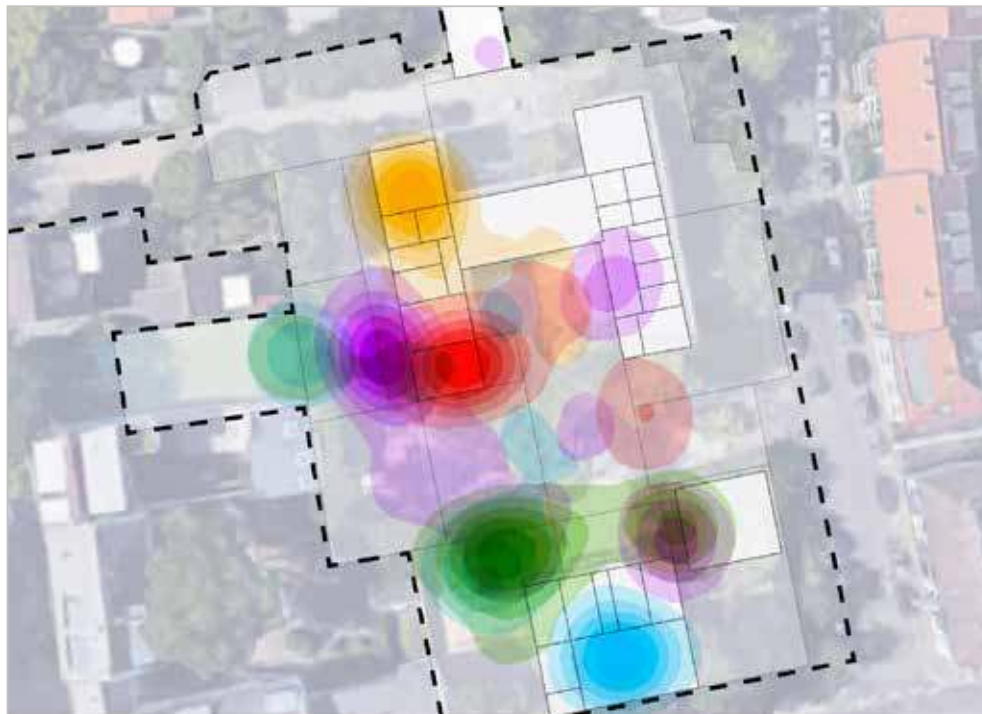
Ground floor map showing the location and density of the 5 different types of spaces within the school area.

first community space that they know: their school.

We suggest that this type of digital assessment is likely to stimulate children to engage more in participatory processes based on their statements during one-on-one interviews after playing: they stated enjoying using the app (all students completed the task) and some would have liked to use the app in other contexts, such as in their neighbourhood. The digital toolbox is, in theory, suitable for students to assess a wider area, as shown in previous studies using a similar app for adults to assess open spaces.[4] Possible applications would be assessing streetscape and open spaces of the school's neighborhood or children's journeys between home and school. Such an extension would require adaptations to the concept, i.e. to include staff to accompany the children, or to integrate MoMe@school to educational programs such as "Safe Road to Schools".

From this study we learnt the eagerness with which children take part in the first phase of a re-design process (assessing the current state and proposing designs). They are willing to share what they see in the built environment and enjoy coming up with suggestions to improve spaces. Let's get them more involved.

NOTES

analytical and participatory tool for active learning spaces design. Journal of Urban Design and Mental Health, 2017;3:10 (online)

1. Lynch, K. (1977). Growing Up in Cities. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
2. a guessing game where the spy, says "I spy with my little eye ...", describing the object they see and players have to guess the object the Spy saw.
3. Halblaub Miranda, M., Ustinova, M., Tregel, T. & Knöll, M. (2017). MoMe@school – A pilot study on an
4. Halblaub Miranda, M., Hardy, S., Knöll, M. (2015) MoMe: a context-sensitive mobile application to research spatial perception and behaviour, in: Human mobility, cognition and GISc. Conference proceedings, University of Copenhagen, pp. 29-30.

THE SPECKLE: A SCAN FOR STUDYING THE QUALITY OF PLAYABLE OPEN SPACES

Johan Oost (OBB) & Gerben Helleman (Urban Springtime)

UNILATERAL SPACES

"This playground is boring, it's for little babies". When we walk with children through their neighbourhood, this is a frequently heard comment. Why do children often experiences our cities as boring when municipalities annually spend a lot of money to maintain and design public spaces? This is because there is usually no integral vision on child-friendly cities at the municipal level. And if there is a vision or policy paper, most of the time it only describes some generalities or it stimulates a top-down approach converting playgrounds into homogeneous areas. The result is that public spaces are often formed by picking some elements from design catalogues of play equipment companies. We have to convert this institutional approach to a more situational approach (customisation). This means moving away from adult-led and formal strategy, and giving more space (both literally and figuratively) to the unique wishes of children at a specific location.

THINGS TO DO

In our vision it is important to encourage active free play and strive for a variety of playful, exciting and challenging spots ('speckles'). Simply by creating a diversity in playabilities in quantity, but also for different ages, types of character, skill levels, strengths and courage. We should avoid 'over-designing' and environments that reflect adults perception of
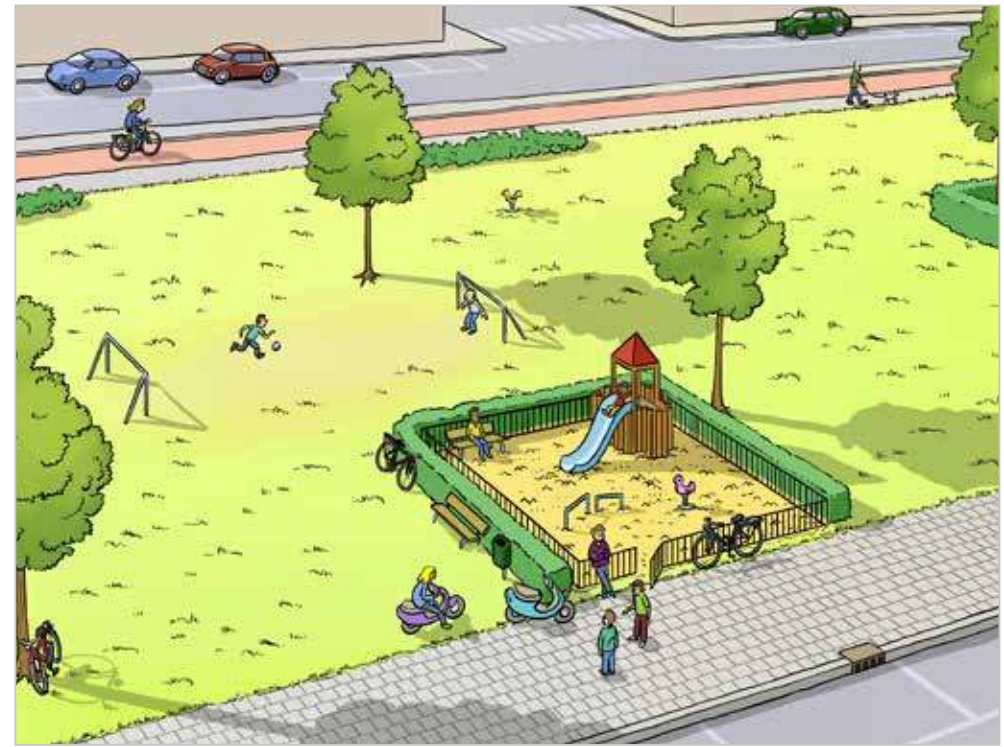
The Speckle - Before
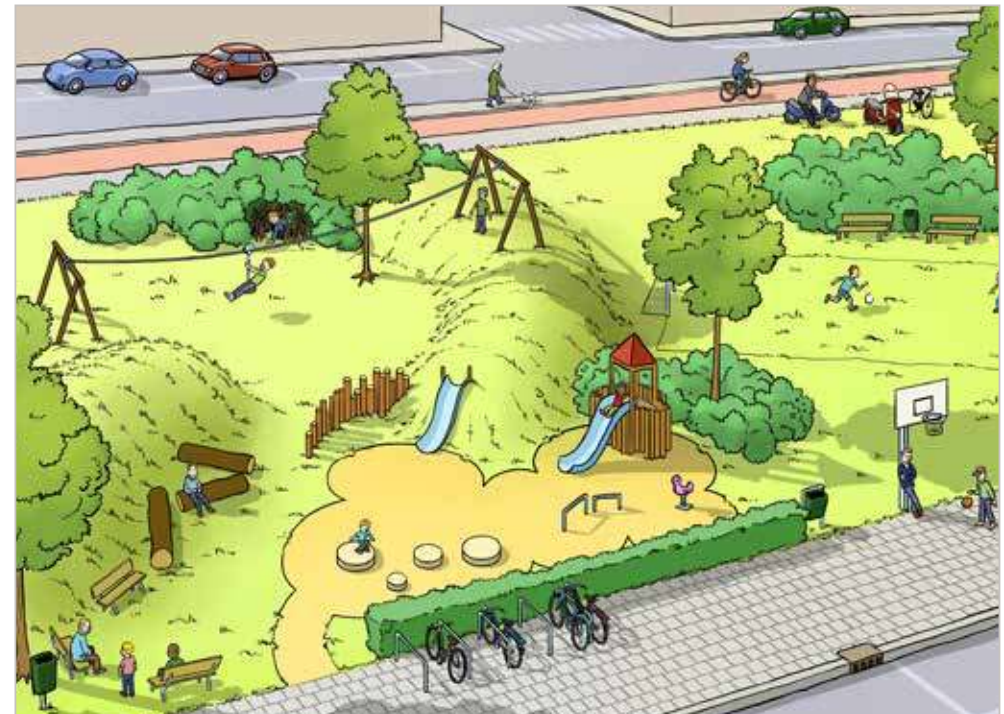
The Speckle - After

play. Ours and others' research shows that children prefer less structured play in which they can have adventure and make their own fantasy. In particular, spaces for children that are free to use and can be modified. Water for example only has an useful function when children can touch and adapt it in a safe and easy way. And children want to be challenged. They want to learn something, try and come back if they don't succeed. So, your goal is to realise a space that is stimulating enough to come back to. A space that will make their stomach tickle from excitement. When you have met these conditions, you have designed a successful playful space.

PRACTICAL QUICKSCAN

If we want to enrich existing public spaces with elements that encourage children to use it, it is important that we observe the interaction from children with public space and that we test a public space with child-friendly preconditions. A convenient way for scanning the success or shortcomings of a public space for children is the so-called 'Speckle'. It offers a practical quick scan for rating the playing opportunities, design and layout of a public space. The 'Speckle' is a short checklist with some basic questions with multiple choice answers, like:

– Is there space for multiple playtypes (roamer, pusher, builder, viewer)?
– Is interaction between children (with or without special needs) and between parents stimulated?
– Has the place and the surroundings have a varied design that gives multiple playing opportunities (green, pavement, water)?
– Are children of different age groups challenged?

Finally, one is asked - just like the 'Power of Ten'- philosophy of PPS - to count the number of playing activities of a public space. With the help of word clouds with more than 100 playing activities, users of the scan explore what kind of play possibilities are present and absent.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Professionals who use the 'Speckle' quickly see what's missing through the eyes of children of different age groups. On the basis of the simple questionnaire, they are challenged to observe the location, instead of making a design plan or maintenance plan from

behind their desk. At the same time they are inspired to add more playing value because the questions and word clouds give insight in critical success factors. It creates a different mind-set aimed at a mix of structured and adaptable play environments with fixed objects, portable equipment and natural elements.

COMMUNICATION TOOL

The tool is also used to organise collaboration and unite interests. With the results of the scan a professional can start the dialogue with the users of the public space. But most importantly the users of the public spaces can also fill in the questionnaire. It is a convenient way to make a short evaluation of the place, to pick up ideas and start a conversation with people of all ages.

Experience shows that this process often provides new insights for adults about the real wishes of children. They are thinking about where they played when they were children and conclude that the best memories of play were not on the structured playground. Professionals and parents learn that they must appreciate versatile play more. Feasible when we are more open-minded about the use of mouldable materials, a variety of surfaces (water, grass, sand, bark, rubber, dirt), height differences and coloured markings. Children often appreciate loose materials and exciting shrubbery of which they can build huts, roam and discover.

Parents in turn show in these sessions the need for some comfort. Asking for seating elements, public toilets, racks for bikes with child seats, clear sight lines (overview), and safe routes to the place of destination (accessibility). All of them agree that it is not about designing a safe playground following the local rules but about making space that stimulates children to go outside, make friends and come back.

TRACING PUBLIC SPACES - FROM TANGIBLE TO INTANGIBLE

Vanessa Catalano - in collaboration with Vivian Doumpa (STIPO)

Pre-columbine is the term used to refer to those existing cultures in the Americas before the colonial times. Caribbean, Amazon and Andes are some of the names used today to describe regions in the north of South America, whose origins are linked to the pre-columbine communities. Venezuela embraces these three regions. Once known for its Miss Universe titles and oil reserves, today the Venezuelan reality is reflected in its increasing hunger and poverty rates.

While Venezuela goes through this crisis, contemporary times require professionals to be agile. Western scholars research what the role of the architect could be in the future and conferences present topics such as autonomous cities and upcoming ways of living. Being a Venezuelan architect and urban researcher, it becomes clear to me that many of these innovative ideas cannot be applied to developing countries yet. However, there are other conversations in which the human scale and placemaking is a starting point and it is in these topics where other countries can learn from Venezuela.

Tracing Public Space (TPS) is a participatory method, initiated by the Venezuelan architect Ana Vargas. *"How does the community, specifically children between 10-15 years old, see the public space?"* was the initial research question that motivated Vargas during

her master studies. To understand the viewpoint of spaces from children's sight, she guided children through urban photographic excursions and taught them how to map spaces. Linking her studies to her current practice, Vargas explained me once: 'Observation was the starting point, but the children and I were both left wanting more. We discovered spaces with the potential to become public places. We could not stop there.' Today TPS answers to the previously posed question with tangible constructions.

TPS is an ongoing project to transform public spaces in informal settlements from the bottom-up. Vargas proposes a two-way learning process between the architect as an 'outsider' and children as 'insiders'. The project is framed as a workshop for children between 10 and 15 years old. The intention is to educate children to observe their community and to empower them to improve it. As active citizens with a mason's toolkit, children follow a 3-steps methodology:
1. Observe and illustrate
2. Imagine and design
3. Build and transform.

These projects are normally done in existing areas that were either not planned in advance, or they have been abandoned with time.

Most of the formal urban developments in Venezuela were carried out during the 1950. Inspired in the Swiss-French modernist Le Corbusier and his Athens Charter, modernism wiped out what the Spaniard colonies built over the Caribbean, Amazon and Andes communities. Ideal to be seen from the sky, Venezuela became an example of the well-known western modernity: the government built, and the people observed the miracle of urbanization. However, nowadays the Venezuelan urban fabric is not known for the monumental modernity, but for the many un-planned slums that cover the country's hills, and these are the areas where Tracing Public Space takes place.

In stage one TPS introduces concepts of public space and identity. During this stage mapping, photographing and measuring are used to observe the community and its spaces according to the children's perspective. They start with questions such as 'What do you like to play?' 'What can you find in your favourite parks?' Stage two is the beginning of the design practice. Participants, gathered in teams, are expected to present proposals using visualisation methods such as scale models, collages and patterns. The last stage of the project invites members of the community to vote, deciding which proposal will be built, and to collaborate in the construction. During all three stages children look for the connections with

the community, to ensure the social sustainability of their proposals. To guarantee the feasibility, in the last two stages of the project, a building professional will accompany the participants. The methodology divides the interventions into three categories: urban furniture, landscaping and art intervention. The elements of the public space are simplified into two types of entities: surfaces (decks, walls, floors) and elements (benches, mats, litter bins). All the workshops are subsidised by private investors, so combining a hands-on 'lighter quicker cheaper' approach is actually the only way to make them possible. The collaboration of the community members is also essential for the collection of materials and for the construction.

During a conversation with Ana Vargas last September, she mentioned one of the interventions that has surprised her the most. The children came up with a proposal for an artwork, featuring the same proportions, colours and design of the pattern of the traditional dress, worn in a local religious parade. In the town of Naiguatá in Venezuela the restoration of the façade of a community Sport Centrum brought to life the patterns used during a unique and vivid religious celebration: *Diablos de Naiguatá* is a cultural expression that results from the colonial times mixing the natives civilizations, catholic Corpus Christi and African traditions brought by the slaves. The essence and identity of the children is now represented, highlighting the local identity and developing the sense of belonging.

As teenagers do, Venezuela develops as it searches for its identity. While the country's politicians give speeches about national identity, its architects build spaces for the public realm to find their common bounds, and some architects even do it from the eye level of kids. TPS offers children the empowerment to create their spaces to play and feel safe. Plus, it also offers adults the opportunity to be the right role model who attends, votes and helps building their community.

Conversation with Ana Vargas 15th September 2017
http://www.anavargas.net/projects/tracing-public-space/

LET'S HACK OUR PLAY!

Mizah Rahman (Participate in Design), Dr. Jacqueline Chung & Eudora Tan (St. James' Church Kindergarten)

Kids sharing with their teachers what they like

STREET PERFORMANCE POLICIES

Current playgrounds are mostly bought off a catalogue, resulting in cookie-cutter and standardised play experiences. Given the importance of play in a child's development, we believe that there is a need to rethink how we design and build play spaces in Singapore. Particularly, we believe that children, educators, and parents should be included in the process of designing play spaces so that each play space can become a tailor-made experience that meets their own needs and learning objectives.

Boy planting for the new play space (cocreation workshop)

Hack Our Play (HOP) is Singapore's first participatory, community-built play space at St. James' Church Kindergarten (SJCK). It is an initiative that lets children, educators, and parents co-create their very own play space, from start to finish. Together, they will be able to conceive, create and curate a safe and unique play experience while also fostering stronger bonds, greater community investment and a sense of pride and excitement through the process. This new model of play space design demonstrates how a play space can be created and transformed by everyone who uses it. The use of non-standard structures,

Volunteers and parents at the cocreation workshop

recyclables, and everyday materials in its construction not only encourages non-linear thinking but also allows the HOP play space to be reconfigured and evolve over time.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STREET PERFORMANCE POLICIES

Dialogue and interaction between buskers and policy makers will work best if busking is approached as an asset to be encouraged rather than a problem to be solved. To get the best busking talent, cities must make the best buskers want to work there.

To achieve this, busking polices and guidelines should be developed in cooperation with the city's busking community. Properly implemented, a best practices guide for busking can be hugely rewarding for all concerned. Astute authorities will leverage their cities' reputation as busking hotspots in order to boost their cultural capital.

A common complaint is that failing city centres are moribund while commercially successful ones are becoming homogenised. A vivid street-performing scene can draw people into city centres and encourage them to spend time there. A lively scene can demonstrate the culture or character of that city and differentiate it from its competitors.

THE PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROCESS FOR HOP

We started with discovering and building relationships with people who are experts in the landscape of play, thorough literature review, case studies research and expert interviews. We interviewed play experts, educators, parents, and children to gather insights on play and its landscape in Singapore.

The typical process of creating a playground usually involves children in the last stage, as users. We wanted to begin with children and the community that surrounds them. To gain a deeper understanding of the needs, challenges and opportunities with users of play spaces, we held engagement activities such as Crayon Conversations, One-day Pop-Up Play and Field Observations of the current playgrounds in Singapore. Through a series of curated and facilitated workshops, children, parents, educators, and

BENEFITS OF HOP

The children's learning is enhanced in several ways. They
– Develop creative thinking and hands-on construction as they explore play possibilities with structures and materials not commonly found in regular playgrounds
– Learn to construct, deconstruct, reconstruct, solve problems, and take ownership of the play space
– Foster the skills of collaboration as they co-create with peers and subsequent users of the space
– Learn about the impermanence of life/situations/materials as the HOP space keeps changing and materials respond to wear and tear
– Gain skills to adapt to today's speed of change and disruption, as well as skills for the future

Educators and parents enhance their teaching and parenting skills as they help to extend the children's learning and development of ideas through play in the HOP space.

For example, they:
– Observe the children's responses to the "invitation" to create, and use these observations to enhance the children's learning
– Facilitate/support the children's learning by continually engaging them through play

volunteers helped to build components of the play space by painting tyres, placing burlap on barrels, painting pots and pans, and planting greenery.

WHAT DO CHILDREN WANT IN THEIR PLAY SPACE?

HOP asked children and parents from SJCK, as well as members of the public what they value most in a play space and play environment. The children preferred spaces that let them play comfortably in groups or alone. They loved colours and wanted to have the freedom to choose what to play and how to play. They also wished for spaces where they could indulge in their fantasies and imagination.

Parents wanted a balance of nature and man-made elements, as well as sensorial stimulation in play spaces that were safe yet challenging, where they could play with their children. They also appreciated areas for them to rest comfortably.

With this in mind, the HOP play space is designed to 'evolve' into what the children want it to be. It has loose elements for children to build upon, and its green wall integrates nature into the play area. The mix of fixed structures and loose elements provides a variety of play and rest spaces for children and accompanying adults.

The design also reflects input from experts, including architects, designers, playground suppliers and early childhood educators on technical and safety aspects and how to encourage different types of play behaviour.

Kids playing with the barrels

COMPARISON OF HOP PLAY SPACE AND REGULAR PLAYGROUND

REGULAR PLAYGROUND	REGULAR PLAYGROUND	HOP PLAY SPACE
Creation process	Designers and experts choose the outcome. Children, as main users, are <u>not</u> part of the design development. They are consumers of the end product.	Participatory design: Play space is co-developed/co-created with children/educators/parents from start to finish, making the process as important as the product. The benefits: – Children, educators and parents become collaborators, not just consumers – Recognition that every child has something positive to contribute to the process – Stronger bonds in the community, greater community investment – Children/educators have ownership over the space, as well as a sense of excitement and accomplishment
Materials	Built from scratch from new raw materials	Built from everyday recyclable/used materials: – Recycled - less waste/using what already exists instead of making something new. Children learn the importance of caring for the environment – Children are encouraged to be creative as they are given freedom to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct
Learning for children/educators/parents	Fixed structures and predictable materials offer fewer avenues for creativity and therefore can limit learning	Brings learning to broader and deeper levels for both children and educators/parents

Hack our Play is presented by Lien Foundation and Participate in Design and in collaboration with St. James' Church Kindergarten.

DESIGN-BUILDING WITH KIDS: BIDWILL CHILL SPACE

Kate Ferguson (RMIT University)

During my research, teenagers in the outer suburbs of Sydney told me they want to be involved in decisions about their neighbourhood in ways that are creative, practical, fun, and sociable. The Bidwill Chill Space program experimented with answering that call. I worked with young people from Mt Druitt Learning Ground to design and build a place to 'chill' with friends in Bidwill Reserve, a need which had been identified by Blacktown City Council through consultation at the adjacent school. A four-minute snapshot is at vimeo.com

Design-build placemaking is not only about producing a better design through the use of kids' knowledge, or the democratic ideal of giving kids a say in decisions that affect them.

It also has other social and educational outcomes:
– It's tangible and leads to an immediate sense of achievement and pride. This is great for everyone, but particularly for kids who have difficulties in school.
– It builds hard skills (like design and construction), soft skills (like communication, negotiation, and teamwork) and increases their knowledge about their neighbourhood.
– Teenagers are sometimes seen as troublemakers when they spend time in public space. When they are visible and making a positive contribution, it can help legitimise their presence and shift adults' perceptions. In our project a local craft group worked with the kids on

Preparing for spray painting

Plastering

a mosaic table, and collaborations like this build intergenerational connection.

– It involves a variety of tasks and skills, so kids can make a meaningful contribution to a significant project through something they enjoy. Some like designerly discussions while others prefer construction. Kids can also take initiative in defining their own contribution. In our group, one person took home materials to make a stencil artwork, someone brought their guitar to entertain us, and another stepped up to move materials too heavy for the younger kids. Taking initiative develops personal agency.

– There can be space for the unplanned. For example a sharing of Aboriginal and Maori traditions emerged from a stenciling activity.

Design-build placemaking does not ask suburb-wide planning questions or gather quantitative data to represent all young people's views, so it is not a substitute for other forms of participation such as consultation. However it could complement planning by building the capacity of kids to understand and contribute to planning, or by addressing issues that have been raised in planning processes.

METHODS AND THE ROLE OF THE PRACTITIONER

We used a number of common participatory design activities such as user group analysis, photography, participatory mapping, brainstorming, photo elicitation, and prototyping. Visual and creative methods help to facilitate sharing of knowledge and ideas with kids, who may be less able or willing to verbally articulate their thoughts. There are lots of resources available, such as those at designkit.org/methods

However, methods themselves do not make a project successful. Rather, it is a method facilitated by somebody that influences a result. Participation is a negotiation with people, a particular context, and the desired outcomes, and there is no correct way to do it. A lot relies on a practitioner's judgement in the moment, so the following attitudes and abilities of the practitioner are important:

– Valuing young people's knowledge and ideas. If you see your role as convincing kids rather than listening, it's not really participation. On the other hand, there may be aspects that are not negotiable, so don't give the impression they can make all the decisions if it's not true. If kids make unfeasible proposals, explain why it's not possible rather than just saying no. Further questions can uncover the desires behind the proposal and prompt new ideas.

– Reflexivity. Study yourself, because who you are will impact on how you relate with others and how you guide the project. What are your beliefs about children and childhood? What commonalities and differences do you have with the kids (such as gender, ethnicity, class, and economic background)? What assumptions do you carry, and what assumptions might they have about you?

The YAP group is finished

– Respect and friendliness. Power relations between adults and young people will always be present but practices such as learning names, avoiding patronising language, and being interested in them shows that you recognize and value them. This helps build rapport, confidence and a good working partnership.
– Noticing and being supportive. Kids have different skills and interests. Acknowledge their contributions, and remember things they said or did previously: perhaps someone with a special interest in photography might like to produce an animated slideshow to put online, adding value to the project and giving them a leadership role. If someone is hanging back, try to find out what extra support they need.
– Reflection and adaptability. Kids are diverse, and context also influences a project. What participation means, and why it matters, will be different on Friday evenings at a youth centre compared to Monday mornings in a school. Try to get a feel for the context beforehand, and be prepared to adapt activities, structure, and pace as you progress and reflect on the most important outcomes to achieve in that context.

ILLUSTRATED POSTCARDS OF GUIMARAES

Ricardo Nogueira Martins (Landscape Laboratory)

YOUTH VISIONS OF URBAN LANDSCAPE

Illustrated postcards of Guimarães is a pedagogical project in landscape studies and one of the actions of Guimarães' Landscape Plan operated by the Landscape Laboratory.

This action encourages child engagement in landscape and participation of the urban future of Guimarães, using postcards as a means of expression.

The project is encouraged by several international initiatives that improve youth participation in local development. As well, it aims towards fulfilling Article 6 of the European Landscape Convention, in terms of promoting actions related to the role of landscape in education.

In order to understand the landscape, youngsters are challenged to first understand the conceptual framework of the triad space-place-landscape. Secondly, they are challenged to discuss the urban geography by chronologically ordering the historical and contemporary postcards of the most iconic square, Toural Square.

Third, participants are challenged to experiment with copies of 6 current postcards of streets, squares and historical places, as a way of thinking about the urban future. Scribbling away with the postcards, the outcomes of this activity will be the expression of children's eyes in the urban landscape, by proposing new perspectives, uses and needs, creating new senses of place and ultimately, suggesting the city of tomorrow.

The project's focus group was constituted by children from Children's Activity Center, Study Centers and Schools, with an age range between 6-13 years old that produced almost 200 postcards. Participation in landscape can go beyond, and be fulfilled with effective and participatory tools as children are more innovative, because there are no limits to their imagination. This project also shows how cities can promote youth as a priority in urban matters in order to address sustainable solutions.

The collected visions about landscape provided evidence for active urban change, a practical tool for the creation of better cities and new social interactions.

IDEAS BOOK - URBAN PLAY SPACES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Selva Gürdoğan (Superpool)

Play is an important function of public space. However, most often urban play spaces are designed for children or young adults that have already developed their motor skills. In conversation with Bernard van Leer Foundation in Istanbul, Superpool* initiated an 'ideas book' addressing the play needs of younger children and their caregivers. The book is a collection of simple guidelines and design ideas for urban playgrounds.

For designers knowing the 'user group' is an important step in starting any design process. What is fascinating with designing for young children is that their body and skills are constantly changing - arguably no other user group is as ready for new challenges! But the seeming modesty of their challenges, such as learning to stand and keep balance or to take a step, should not cause us to underestimate the potential play value of these new skills. The guide tries to identify these skills and explores play ideas accommodating them.

Alongside the changes in babies' bodies, their games also keep evolving. At first, babies play alone or with the help of their caregivers. As they grow up, they start watching the children around them and playing independently next to them. Later, children start to socialise, they play games together with simple rules and, over
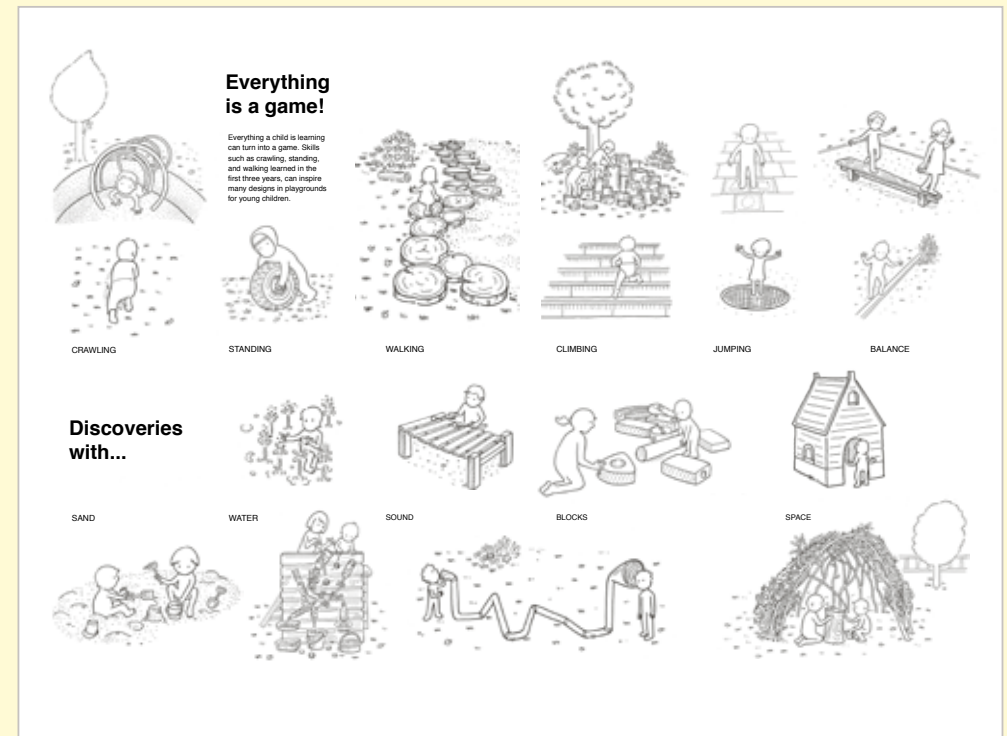
time, they move to games with more complex, sometimes self-invented, rules based on competition or co-operation.

What is needed then to accommodate younger children and their caregivers in urban play spaces? How can playground design support babies to learn by observation, to challenge their skills, have joyful interactions with their caregivers and even to start early friendships? When searching for answers, instead of giving definitive answers, the ideas book provides principles and suggestions that hopes to inspire a multitude of creative ideas.

Project Prepared within Istanbul95 initiative supported by Bernard van Leer Foundation.

TOWARDS CHILD-FRIENDLY CITIES

BUILDING BETTER CITIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Amanda O'Rourke, Zainab Abbasi, Rossana Tudo
& Ryan O'Connor (8 80 Cities)

INTRODUCTION

City builders – urban planners, architects, elected officials, community leaders – often talk about the future. We want to create cities that are resilient and progressive enough to withstand unpredictable changes in our environment and surroundings. But how can we plan the future of cities without first understanding the needs and interests of the youngest members of our communities?

8 80 Cities and the Bernard van Leer Foundation recently partnered on a research project in response to this urgent need for city building processes that include the voices of young children, their caregivers, and pregnant women. We set out to identify which cities are implementing inclusive civic engagement processes that focus on the needs of these groups. Next, we distilled these strategies into key principles for other city builders to embed in their own work. We collected 21 case studies from 16 countries that demonstrate the best, most pioneering approaches to developing urban solutions with and our youngest neighbours. These findings are recorded in a final report, Building Better Cities with Young Children and Families. This chapter summarises five lessons for engaging our youngest citizens and their families in the way we design, build, and plan the future of our cities.

PRINCIPLES

Given the barriers to reaching young children, their caregivers, and pregnant women, it is necessary to tailor an approach that accommodates their practical needs. This typically involves either a) "going to them" and meeting them where they are, or b) creating an environment that is comfortable and convenient enough for them to "come to you". The following principles address how to reach, recruit, and meaningfully engage young children, their caregivers, and pregnant women in city-building processes

Make engagement convenient

Families are a busy unit, with many competing priorities that make it hard to participate in civic life. Find opportunities to engage with families in spaces they already visit such as daycares or resource centers, or even in their own homes. This is especially important for caregivers with young children and pregnant women who may have limited mobility or little time to participate in engagement processes. This often requires partnering with local organisations that already work with the target groups. These organisations can vouch for your engagement initiative and introduce you to willing participants in the community.

Consider partnering with institutions such as schools or libraries that already provide resources to children and caregivers, and find creative ways to incorporate your engagement activities into their existing programming. This requires working with the administration to ensure that your engagement initiative aligns with the institution's educational objectives.

When approaching caregivers, it is essential to keep things simple and quick due to the daily demands of childrearing. Highly visual, oversized survey boards where people can indicate their responses using a sticker ('dotmocracy') is a simple way to gain

Make engagement reciprocal

Community engagement is not just about collecting data from people. The best engagement processes are mutually-beneficial, where participants feel that their time and efforts are worthwhile. Depending on the audience, participants may want to gain community connections, fun experiences, and/or decision-making power. For families, especially those with low incomes, organisers may need to offer incentives. Any form of compensation demonstrates the organiser's respect and appreciation for their time, while upholding the values of equity and fairness. Compensation is shaped by the local context and culture. In some cases, it is appropriate to provide groceries, transit passes, and/or childcare. If an engagement process is especially time consuming, consider paying families for their participation. Consult with local organisations who already work with your target group to see what type of exchange is most appropriate.
wonder and provides challenges.

Make engagement comfortable

Creating a truly child-centered engagement approach means first thinking of the environments that make young children most comfortable, creative, and expressive. Outside in a familiar setting, in a playful space, with freedom of movement and surrounded by trusted caregivers is a good start.

In addition to a comfortable physical setting, engagement facilitators need to be adequately trained to create a comfortable social setting. If the target group is also stigmatised or facing difficult life circumstances, it is vital to obtain special training and form partnerships with trusted community organisations with expertise in working with vulnerable populations.

Make engagement playful

Children learn by playing, and play can be used strategically to engage our youngest citizens and their families in the city building process. Storytelling, for example, allows children to develop emotions such as empathy or fear by relating to characters in a story. Children can imagine themselves attempting the same tasks as the story's characters, such as building a dream playground or park.

Board games or role-playing games require participants to compete or collaborate. In the context of city-building, design games around the local context or challenge and provide a logical set of prompts to stimulate idea generation and inspire the group to think creatively. Open-ended drawing or building exercises allow children to freely able to express their thoughts and the outcome of the activity.

Make engagement child-led

Children experience the world differently than adults. A child's viewpoint is unique, in part, because of their height, size, and ability. They may want

to explore places by using all of their senses and physical abilities like jumping, rolling, sliding, or crouching.. This unique perspective is crucial to shaping inclusive cities.

Adults can learn how children move through and experience the city simply by watching. For example, facilitators can observe how children and toddlers play in a park to gain insight into how and why they use the space. Observation is an important engagement method for babies and young children with limited verbal capacity. In these cases, caregivers (parents, nannies, babysitters, grandparents) can act as proxies by communicating a child's needs.

Mapping exercises are another technique where children create 2-D representations of how they interpret their physical environment. What they choose to emphasize or exclude speaks volumes about their perceptions and preferences. Similarly, children can use cameras to capture observations about their neighbourhood and highlighting areas they enjoy or dislike.

CONCLUSION

These key principles are a starting point. They represent simple and straightforward ideas that city leaders can implement immediately to ensure even the smallest voices are heard. While these best practices offer practical solutions, we should now turn our attention to identifying "next practices" - scaling up these established strategies while also pushing for new models where the insights and considerations of young children and their families are embedded into all levels and sectors of governance. Only then will cities be truly accountable to the needs of their most vulnerable citizens.

DESIGNING FRIENDLIER CITIES FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

Dr. Mirko Guaralda, Dr. Severine Mayere, Linda Carroli (Queensland University of Technology) & Dr. Jaz Choi (RMIT University Melbourne)

CONTEXT: A SHORT INTRODUCTION

Parks and playground are often planned and designed with a specific demographic in mind; for example, facilities for small children are never co-located with the ones for young adults. Further, the latter are often designed for structured activities such as for sports or learning, with limited considerations about how unstructured playful activities might be encouraged for and enjoyed by older children and others (Rawlinson & Guaralda, 2012). At a social level, children are not only segregated in specific facilities where they can be protected from potential dangers of the broader society, but as users of "youth-friendly spaces" they are also divided according to age groups, gender and vocation.

In Australia there is a strong risk averse culture, in part due to the widely acknowledged conservatism of the population (Nilan, Julian, & Germov, 2007). Different levels of governments implement top-down regulations so to sanitise specific aspects of everyday lives, in order to minimise chances of conflicts or accidents. Fencing, barriers and warning signage are common feature of Australian public spaces; as such, many Australian urban environments are highly regulated, zoned, and controlled (Shearer & Walters, 2015).

This chapter reports on four years of public consultation processes undertaken at different level of government and in different contexts within

South-East Queensland, one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. Our findings suggest that the 'playground' is seen as the realm of the children, who are then perceived as less entitled to comment on the broader urban fabric, because their experience is limited to dedicated "child-friendly" spaces that are not necessarily integrated with other urban uses. The chapter reflects on how South-East Queensland cities are designed in a regimented and perhaps fragmented way which tends to exclude or underrepresented certain categories of residents, especially children.

ENGAGING YOUTH IN SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND

Community consultations run from 2013 to 2018 in several locations within South-East Queensland to investigate different aspects of placemaking, place identity, safety and people's perception of their city. Locations included Brisbane city centre, Kelvin Grove Urban Village, peri-urban sites in Logan City Council, the regional centres of Pomona and Nambour on the Sunshine Coast. All citizens were able to freely share their stories and express their thoughts. Participants contributed in different ways; some attended workshops, other responded to surveys; some contributed drawings to illustrate their vision or wrote a letter to their own suburb. In some cases, participants generated maps pinning their preferred places or posting notes to highlights different urban conditions. Participants were left free to interpret the different questions asked as they preferred. Data collection was not influenced by any previous briefing to potential participants, who were simply asked to share what was important to them in their community. During this process, children were not specifically targeted, but several young

people, some as young as 5, participated.

Data gathered demonstrated how children living in different urban conditions share a similar view in terms of their built environment and their perceived role within it. When prompted to comment on their suburb, the majority of children focused on spaces traditionally designed for youth, nominally parks and playgrounds. When specifically asked to draft an ideal playground, the majority of the children provided images of quite ordinary spaces, with slides and swings. Few participants suggested more unusual equipment, for example flying foxes or water slides, but overall concept of the playground was the one of a delimited space with just one function to engage a specific demographic. Interestingly, adults addressing the same questions have provided images of fenced playgrounds, pointing at safety as their main concern.

When the meaning of the actual experience of living in the suburb was investigated, it became evident that children were stressing the importance of social relationships. A place was meaningful to them because a friend or a relative lived there; because they could meet with people to play and socialise. Even when children were stating a sense of attachment to their suburb, this was limited to their experience of green areas and playgrounds.

LESSONS LEARNED

Our findings show that children in South-East Queensland have a limited experience of urban environments and especially how they can live in it. Suburban areas are mainly structured around parks, streets and private

commercial malls; city centres follow the British pattern based on street grids, malls and parks, with limited number of other public spaces, such as squares. Children in other countries, have a more sophisticated experience of urban environments. They experience daily engagement with a number of different public spaces, which display more mixed uses and integrated activities than in their Australian counterparts. Youngsters in South-East Queensland do not display a deep sense of urbanity and they passively conform to patterns imposed by Euclidean planning and the notion of separate land uses. The attitude towards cities developed as youngsters, shaped by segregation and compartmentation, then may lead to the development of behavioural patterns that influence how Australian adults use and perceive urban environments – for example, teenagers and young adults aged 16-25 have often provided individualistic feedback of what means to them being an urban dweller. Some respondents have pointed with annoyance to the perceived control society has on them, or to the interferences their local community has on their lifestyle.

Considering how in many countries spaces for children and youth are integrated in the urban fabric, Australia has a comparatively segmented approach to the design of cities and public spaces overall, thereby limiting possibilities for intergenerational exchange. A strong agenda to promote inclusive, intergenerational and collaboratively designed public spaces in Australian cities is necessary to face a rapid urban growth, which are mostly still in line with obsolete design paradigms that may result in an even more fragmented social structure.
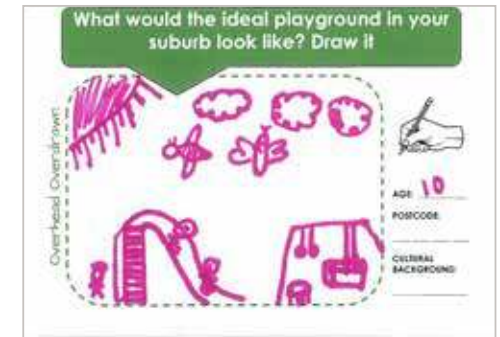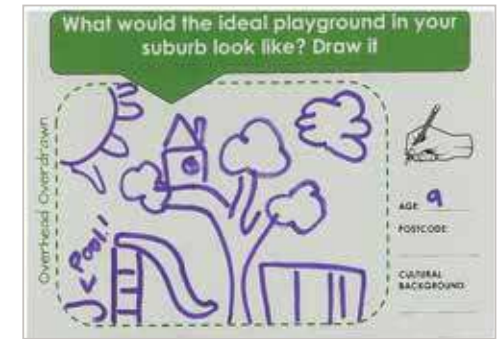
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INTEGRATED CHILD IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN STOCKHOLM

Lisa Klingwall & Elin Henriksson (City of Stockholm)

ICIA: A METHOD THAT PUTS THE RIGHT OF THE CHILD AT THE FOREFRONT OF STOCKHOLM CITY PLANNING

Sweden, and particularly Stockholm, is often referred to as one of the best places to bring up your family.[1] Swedes are proud to live in a country that ratified the UN convention on the rights of the child, UNCRC in 1990. Over the last few years Stockholm has been one of the fastest growing cities in Europe[2], its population set to increase by 11% until 2020. In city planning terms this means that the city planning administration of Stockholm City needs to plan for 120.000 new dwellings until 2035, but as we all know, building a city is more than building housing.

METHOD

In order to make sure that the city of Stockholm develops in a sustainable and child-friendly way, the city called together experts under the leadership of the planning administration. The development, culture, sports and education departments and the traffic office were all represented, alongside key stakeholders. The experts formed the working group, City at Eye Level, that has the sole purpose of ensuring that city planning lives up to the goals of UNCRC.

During the method development process, the children of the city were involved in a number of workshops. The method, "Integrated Child Impact Assessment" (ICIA), introduces the right of the child early on in city planning process, ensuring that the needs of coming generations are secured. ICIA is intertwined

with the planning process and manifests itself in the final plans, and thus eventually in the built city.

FOUR CORNERSTONES OF ICIA

1. **Participation and Mapping** – Catching both the child perspective and the perspective of the child.
2. **Developing and Analysing** – The proposal alongside the latest scientific research.
3. **Evaluation of the final proposal** – Positive and negative consequences of the proposal.
4. **Feedback** – The method also lifts the importance of continuous feedback for the participants.

In order to ensure that as many aspects of childrens' needs, relating to city planning, are covered, three main question categories were formed:
1. **Environment and Health:** Questions regarding environmental aspects such as noise, air and ground pollution as well as access to sun and shade.
2. **Housing and Everyday Life:** Questions regarding access to housing, public amenities, activities regardless of gender, age, socio-economic background, ethnicity and abilities.
3. **Safety and Accessibility:** Questions regarding public transport, traffic, walking and cycle paths.

Every project is unique and it is important that each project decides early on which specific questions are more important, through analysis, mapping and dialogue. These are questions that could form the overall goals, and highlight the needs of the children.

CASE STUDY- SKÄRHOLMSDALEN – A PART OF FOCUS SKÄRHOLMEN (FS)

Skärholmen was built in the 1960´s and is located on the outskirts of Stockholm. Skärholmsdalen includes 900 homes, a nursing home, business premises and pre-schools. Social sustainability is a focal point.

As a first step, the whole of FS was covered and dialogues where held with 256 children, aged between 6-15 years old. Additionally, teachers from 19 pre-schools were interviewed. The children identified places they liked, disliked, and those which ignored children's needs became clearly visible. Analysis was carried out on the present situation connected to scientific studies, for example, regarding traffic, safety and the need for green spaces.

Next, Skärholmsdalen analysed the results and identified specific pre-requisites to focus on. Skärholmsdalen created 5 goals regarding children's needs in the urban development. The goals focused mainly on the need for outdoor space connected to new homes, pre-schools

The Skärholmsday- see into the future of Skärholmen

and public green space but also to ensure that the streets will be designed to enable children to move freely with space for biking and eyes on the streets. When developing the urban plans architects, planners and developers were asked to let the goals lead the way, when balancing conflicting interests.

Before the plans were presented for public consultation an evaluation of the final proposal took place. To ensure that the project was reviewed with fresh eyes and objectivity, consultants were brought in to carry out the analysis and concluded that many of the goals had been meet.

During the process, feedback was given to participating schools and nurseries. This was to ensure that the mapping of needs were correct, but also to maintain efficient communication so that the participants know what the next steps are in the planning process.

LESSONS LEARNED

The project group felt that this great result was achievable due to the fact that the needs of children was addressed early on in the process, thus becoming a natural part of the design brief. By having child experts as part of the design team in stage 2, the rights of the child perspective was incorporated into the masterplan. The process has ensured that key decisions have been made early on, and will be carried through into the detail planning.

NOTES

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PLAN A CITY FOR GIRLS, AND IT WILL WORK FOR EVERYONE

Elin Andersdotter Fabre (Global Utmaning)

INTRODUCTION TO CASE AND USED CONCEPTS

How would our public spaces look like, function, be used and managed, if they were planned and built from a girl's perspective? This chapter will focus on guidelines and policy recommendations for girl centred public space planning and design. It will also show how such focus will be crucial to reach the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) by 2036.

#UrbanGirlsMovement is global initiative mapping good examples and lessons learned from multi-stakeholders all over the world. The purpose is to showcase global pro-poor urban development initiatives targeting girls and young women in low-income areas in rapidly urbanising cities, as well as to develop methods for local and urban development that can be applied globally. In the long run we hope to contribute to improving the living conditions for girls and young women through participatory design and public space planning promoting public health, sanitation, access to education, employment, and security.

DESCRIPTION OF CASE AND ANALYSIS

In order to develop adequate guidelines for practitioners and policy recommendations for decision-makers, it is essential to take into consideration both the use of public space, e.g. the software, the design of public space, e.g. the hardware and the organisation of the public realm,

e.g. the orgware. What do girls need in terms of the physical environment, for example to play on equal terms? How should the space be designed in order to respond to girls' needs? What are the main challenges when traditional norms of gender and age but also class and ethnicity, create a multi-discriminatory environment where girls are destined for the very edge of society?

Three quarters of the world's poorest live in lower middle-income countries, often without adequate living conditions or access to social security. Oppression and social exclusion particularly affects girls and young women. In our first global mapping of good examples, the main challenges raised by girls and young women in urban areas were the lack of safe places, gender-based violence, access to education, sex education, adult interactions and role models, and environmental risks.

The examples highlighted implements various SDGs at the local level, such as goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 17. In order to reach the SDGs, systematically searching for interlinkages will be crucial. We examine how integrating particularly SDG3 on health, SDG5 on gender and SDG11 on cities can provide an effective tool to tackle one of our major global challenges. Putting girls and public space at the centre of policy will definitely change the business as usual approach and guarantee meeting the needs of the larger population.

#UrbanGirlsMovement develops new methods for urban development, with focus on feminist urban planning, that can be applicable globally. In all projects young women are key stakeholders, hence we have gained unique insights into some of the specific challenges they face, and how inextricably linked girls' development are to a range of development issues.

Through participatory design and public space planning the target groups' needs are highlighted and priorities are established for the planning of physical spaces, social and economic programs. The activities empower girls and young women and demonstrate how participatory design and public space planning is crucial as stepping stones for youth to improve their chances of a fruitful life.

Many initiatives has noticed that girls and women in a greater extent than boys and men take advantage of the opportunities provided. They also tend to carefully safeguard the longevity of the project or infrastructure put in place.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

How should a city be planned in order to benefit the most vulnerable populations? A girl centred public space planning and design must take into account the three levels in the city scape: the level of the building, the street level and the wider city context:

1. Good footpaths and public mobility - the ability to push a baby stroller or run without watching your steps. It also provides connectivity to important sites in a city. The mobility issue is a direct issue sprung from norms. Girls do not own a car nor drive, but a majority of the public space is taken up by roads, where cars occupy the majority of the space. Instead sidewalks needs to be widened and roads turned into walkable streets.
2. Places for girls to loiter - benches faced towards each other make it possible to socialise and talk to one another. Experience from informal settlements says that if there is a lack of seating, for example benches, girls in skirts or dresses will not sit down, neither stay standing but just quickly pass through. But as squatting is common among guys, automatically the city will become more accessible to them.
3. Good lighting makes a place less threatening during the dark hours of the day, particularly for girls. A city where girls cannot move freely at all hours of the day, is not an equal city.
4. Visibility and presence of authorities - this contributes to the conception of girls' safety. The feeling that everyone can see all the activities carried out in a public place creates a feeling of safety. It also encourages positive activity and behaviour. A lively place often becomes a safer place.
5. Open access - semi-public or semi-private spaces such as parks with fees, museums or restaurant terraces. Places that are not open access for free, systematically exclude the poorest part of the population, e.g. girls.

6. Design - human scale, well-adapted design and good urban form. This will automatically become an attractive meeting place. A place that is beautiful and differs in design from the majority of the city is less likely to get vandalised or abandoned, and will help in strengthening the conception of safety for girls.

7. Flexibility - one element must meet several purposes and functions. It attracts different audiences, at different times of the day. A staircase is a good example. It can be a place to walk, to sit, a meeting place, a training venue, a playground, a stage for performances. The more flexible elements, the more sustainable place for girls also in adapting and using it for their purposes.

8. Accessible water and sanitation - girls are the most vulnerable when there is insufficient or lack of toilets and sanitation facilities. In informal settlements the community often share toilets which is a direct threat to their security. These, as well as public toilets in high-income areas, must be well lit, clean and secure.

CHILD FRIENDLINESS AS A DRIVER FOR URBAN RESILIENCE

Maria Sitzoglou (Resilient Thessaloniki)

WHAT IS A RESILIENT CITY?

In a nutshell, a Resilient City is an open, just and adaptable city prepared to respond to challenges that might occur while being capable to always enable its citizens to thrive. A resilient city demonstrates inclusive decision-making processes, integrated systems and resourceful plans.

RESILIENT THESSALONIKI – A STRATEGY FOR 2030

In 2014, Thessaloniki joined the 100 Resilient Cities Network pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation.[1] The Municipality used this opportunity to create a long term forward looking strategy that addresses the current and future challenges through a new participatory and robust approach.
The participatory aspect, has been of a great prominence during both the strategy development and the implementation phase, when different citizen groups were approached through various activities in order to be heard and involved. Thessaloniki acknowledges that currently children are an age group largely overlooked in the decision making and planning processes, and thus decided to distinctively integrate the Children's Rights[2] in the city's strategy. By elevating the position of the child in the city's agenda, Thessaloniki urges for an institutional shift through primarily raising awareness on the importance of the issue and ensuring acceptance of the child as an equal citizen.

CHILD FRIENDLY THESSALONIKI ACTION PLANS

In line with various indicators that define a Child Friendly City, Thessaloniki designed a range of Action Plans[3] aiming to embed the Children's Rights into the decision-making processes and urban planning approaches. Setting the public space as the starting point of this attempt, the city explored new approaches in programming, policy making and infrastructure design.

Open Schools Program – Software

Thessaloniki lacks high quality open public spaces due to the densely built urban fabric. On a neighbourhood scale, the number of parks and playgrounds does not correspond to the number of its residents. Parents have been raising this issue linking it to the increasing trend of families moving to adjacent municipalities and thus contributing to the city's chronic stress of an ageing population.

The goal of the Open Schools Program is two-fold. On the one hand, it enables access to the schoolyards during after-school hours, offering additional open space for play and socialising. On the other hand, it enriches the school's schedule with extracurricular activities that range from environmental education to active citizenship, promoting a model of non-formal and community-based education. The activities are coordinated mainly by citizen initiatives and the expectation is the transformation of underutilised schoolyards into community hubs where the child becomes the protagonist of the neighborhood's social life.

By investing in the schools' programs the municipality aims to increase the number of families that live in the city and eventually regenerate the vibrant public realm in residential neighbourhoods.

Co-creation of Public Spaces Policy – Orgware

Thessaloniki developed a public space co-creation policy aiming to enrich the city's public spaces and improve social cohesion through the co-production and delivery of programming in the city's public spaces. The policy emphasises the importance of reclaiming the neighbourhood's public space and promotes the concept of placemaking by encouraging citizens to take action, participate and reinforce the authentic identity of the place. Children as the regular users of parks and playgrounds have the opportunity to contribute together with their families and friends to the transformation of their neighborhood. Through placemaking, the municipality aims to strengthen the sense of place to children residents, as well as introduce principles of active citizenship such as the understanding of ownership and responsibility.

Thessaloniki Safe Routes to School Scheme (TSRTS) – Hardware

Taking into consideration the poor design and maintenance of street infrastructure as well as the traffic congestion, the municipality plans to develop a comprehensive TSRTS scheme in order to improve street safety and enable more children to walk and cycle to school.

The scheme will include a set of specific physical measures and policies for

Various key indicators of a Child Friendly City that apply in the context of Thessaloniki, based on the UNICEF CRCI Toolkit[4]

Thessaloniki Safe Routes to School, Pilot Participatory mapping activity with children.
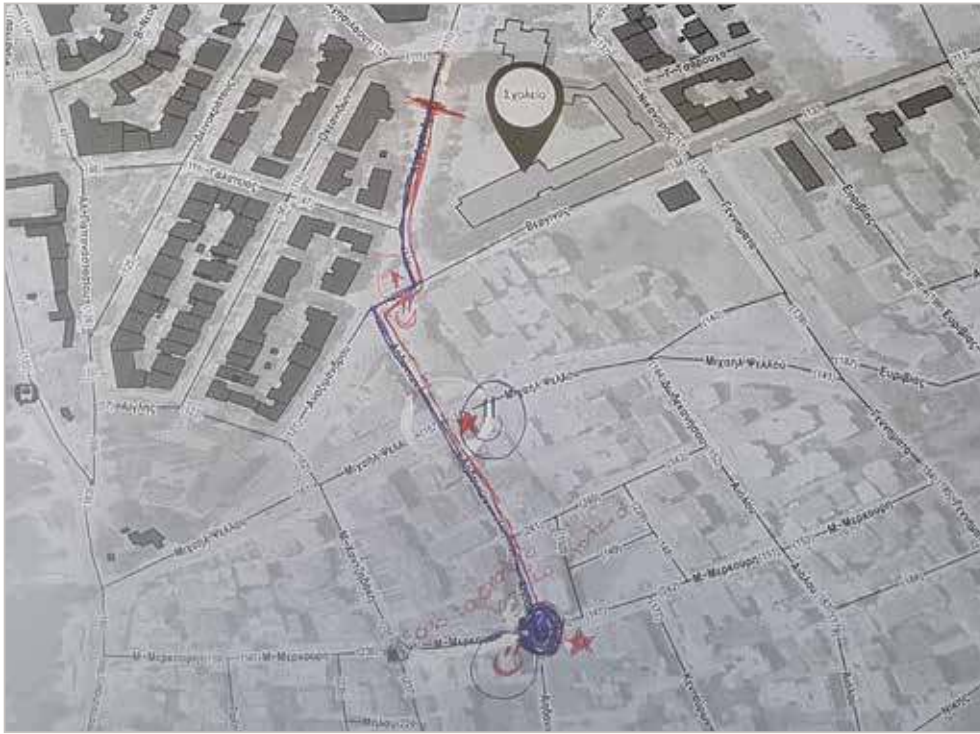
One of the Safe Routes to School maps.

improving the street conditions while also mitigating environmental and societal challenges, such as air pollution and child obesity. Additionally, a toolkit is also designed with a set of activities for public awareness on traffic safety and school community participation.

An integral component of the TSRTS scheme is the participatory mapping activity with the school community. During the first pilot activity in a K-12 school complex, the participants were asked to map the routes they follow every day on their way to and from school, their transportation mode and the locations they perceive as the most dangerous and most pleasant within the neighbourhood. The maps generated in those workshops distinctly showed the high-risk locations regarding traffic safety or natural hazards (e.g. flooding spots) but also the places of an attractive spatial quality.

The reliability of these results was initially questioned by engineers as the information marked on the maps was illustrated with stars and happy faces. This "communication gap" was bridged by converting the harvested information into GIS maps and thus translating the children's perceptions into the engineer's professional language. The TSRTS Scheme aims to equip each school in the Municipality with a map of the recommended routes according the preferred mode of transportation.

The input gained by involving the neighbourhood in participatory activities provided added value to resilience planning and neighborhood preparedness. Those maps will include the emergency routes for each school towards the appointed emergency gathering points of the neighbourhood.

LESSONS LEARNED

In conclusion, child friendliness can be a driver for urban resilience as it is a cross-cutting theme. Child Friendly Cities celebrate civic participation, call for community's social cohesion and multi-stakeholder engagement. Thinking through the child's perspective, provides resourceful solutions that tackle other seemingly unrelated challenges and deliver integrated policies and systems.

The lessons learned from Thessaloniki include the importance of:
– Gaining the "political will" to ensure awareness and secure funding
– Achieving cross sector engagement and multi-stakeholder partnerships
– Designing communication tools to translate the children's ideas into "adult language"
– Discovering where mutual interests between different stakeholders lie
– Recognising the time needed for institutional and cultural shifts

NOTES

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THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF INTEGRATING CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE

Amanda Larsson (Magiska Barnarkitekter) interviewed by Rosa Danenberg

Child-friendly cities is a growing policy approach supported by advocate groups, NGOs, foundations and increasingly also more formal actors within city development. Though, how can powerful formal actors such as municipalities, developers and real estate owners be convinced about integrating a child-friendly approach into their frameworks and budgets? Translating the social value into economic terms is of great importance and forms a true challenge to realise change. What is the economic value of integrating the child perspective?

STOCKHOLM CITY DEVELOPMENT

I am not an architect, I am an activist. It is important to share where I come from in order to understand my perspective. When I was younger, I used to spend time with my grandfather in the green suburbs of Stockholm. He is a bird-lover and together we designed, built and placed bird houses. Hanging the bird houses in the neighbourhood taught me lessons about nature and about the neighbourhood. A sudden shift in politics affected how neighbours altered their opinions about the bird houses. Bird houses attached to the buildings were no longer appreciated. My grandfather was an adventurous man with great passion for birds after my grandmother passed away. Instead, we built stationary bird houses that we attached to trees in the nature parks further away from the apartment buildings. Sadly, neighbours took them down. We started to place the bird houses during night time,

but it didn't matter as they were taken down as well. I had dreamed of bringing my children to the suburb to teach them about nature, and for them to learn from their grand-grandfather, but our family tradition died. As a grandchild, I observed my grandfather turning sad as an effect of the capitalistic city development, which made me and my grandfather become activists.

With a political shift some years ago, the right wing city government started the capitalisation of real estate. Stockholm is currently undergoing a major city expansion phase including large infrastructural projects. Where the apartments in my grandfather's suburb used to be municipal-owned, my grandfather and I witnessed the apartments being sold to private real estate owners. This radically affected the social climate in the suburbs. It caused a dramatic change for how neighbours perceived their apartments and how neighbours related to one another. Apartments became instruments for investment and neighbours became a threat to the economic value of one's apartment.

MAGISKA BARNARKITEKTER

Ironically, at the same time, my daytime job was to hold educational workshops for children to learn about the UN convention about the rights of the child. While, in fact, I realised that adults in suburbs would not consider the rights of children and that the workshops did not consider city development. Therefore, outside of my job, I started to initiate workshops with parents and children, in the suburbs targeted by city development, from a kids perspective. This is where my activist self arose. We engaged in building small houses, bird houses and greenhouses using ecological materials to accelerate the discussion about city development and its effects on the neighbourhood. The workshops were called Magiska Barnarkitekter (Magical Children Architects) and aimed to gain a broader understanding of the current large investments in city development and to what extent the city is available for children. The workshops became popular and attracted more architects and children from other parts in the city. This led to doing more activities that were less activistic and sometimes in collaboration with the municipality, such as evaluations of the city by children, adding playful elements to bus stops, tree house competitions, and creating proposals for the local municipality.

LESSONS LEARNED

Through Magiska Barnarkitekter's workshops I became a translator of the kids perspective, in making city development more playful. As well as the opposite, to make the kids perspective more real for the city officials. However, I observed a gap between the perception of formal actors and children regarding what is a playspace. Integrating children in city development proves to be highly effective as it shows immediately what works and what does not. During one workshop,

a park was the targeted space and wherein the municipal architect considered that as play space. Instead, the children ran up to the hills where they discovered the trees and considered that as the park.

Magiska Barnarkitekter became more than workshops. I started to give public lectures to raise awareness for issues such as how the availability of green space and the independency of children and parents to move around the city are restricted under the current city expansion. As well as the growing number of children in cities, and how parks and playgrounds tend to comfort one user group at a time. The next step is to go beyond the park to scale up to the city environment. However, for private actors to take responsibility for prioritising child-friendly environments, it is often in conflict with economic interests. Whereas, not planning and designing for children and families would result in increased costs for social cohesion and dysfunctional neighbourhoods and places. Participatory planning and design that gives children the possibility to express the need for places that change would further reduce costs for vandalism and increase the mental ownership.

For larger city development projects that will have a big impact on the city, it is rather strange that a budget is calculated without considering how it will affect children and in what way. If it is the city's responsibility to be inclusive to all populations groups, then the budget should be distributed accordingly. Integrating the child perspective could generate economic value only if the cost of listening to the children is included in the budget. Place evaluations and reservation of the budget to make adjustments for child-friendliness is needed, otherwise we are reproducing the same city. The economic value derives from the ability children have to bluntly point out how a space could work for all generations; what is missing, what is needed, and how places could become more diverse. The biggest challenge is to make developers "jump" from their commercial interest, and perceive economic value from a child perspective.

REDIRECTING DESIGNERS EDUCATION TOWARDS EQUALITY AND PROSPERITY

Rodrigo Mindlin Loeb (Instituto Brasiliana)

INTRO: WORLD AND BRAZIL SLUM CONTEXT

According to the report "SLUM ALMANAC 2015/2016", "Tracking Improvement in the lives of slum Dwellers" produced by UN-Habitat, one in eight people live in slums on our planet.

The challenge of slums is a critical factor in the persistence of world poverty, excluding people from access to the benefits of urban infrastructure and adequate urban environment. It is difficult to find opportunities of prosperity for individuals, collectiveness and personal development, and especially for children.

Regarding childhood and youth in Brazil, World Bank data presented a total population aged between 0 - 14 years at approximately 46 million in 2016, with a balanced distribution between boys and girls. The population from 0 - 14 years in Brazil living in slums and vulnerable territories is more than 20 million. Inequality and poverty are severe problems to face, as so many children live in urban environments subjected to constant toxic stress, no civil rights, no right to the city at any level. Architects and urbanists have failed to promote change and develop strategies capable of coping with the escalating factors of vulnerability and inequality.

ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM EDUCATION, NEW FRONTIERS

The traditional curriculum of Architecture and Urbanism education does not include, as a main framework of studies and practice, the problematic of precarious settlements, vulnerable areas, and do not relate to early childhood development, race, nor gender. This means that architects and urbanists face additional difficulties in acquiring qualifications to deal with the main challenges of urban areas after graduation.

We have a lot of accumulated knowledge in the field regarding the issue, which must be acknowledged and properly integrated in transdisciplinary agendas of formal Architecture and Urbanism education. To achieve this, we should investigate, research and write about the practice of the different possible models of Social Impact Design, focused on disadvantaged communities, gender, race and early childhood.

How to increase local capacity, regarding design "as an empowerment tool rather than as a thing that creates objects or buildings…How can we shift the way we are doing social impact design so that it is creating designers rather than design…" (Smith, Amy). Therefore reflecting on how to create social impact design education and work opportunities within the communities seeking to solve problems, engage small children, young students and community to promote programs as a bridge between education and career.

I have also realised in the past years as a graduate teacher, that most of our colleagues already consider it a big challenge to educate and train students to acquire the technical, historical and theoretical knowledge. This enables the students to sort out problems that demand the specific qualification in the field of building and construction. Students expect and deserve much more, especially as the world around us becomes more complex, poor, violent and unequal.

BUILDING UP EMPATHY TO TRANSFORM EDUCATION

In the most recent years, I have witnessed several urban and extremely harsh conditions, where no civil basic rights were secured, in the city of São Paulo. These conditions affect most of the informal settlements of the city, up to 60% of its territory. Children and all citizens are trapped, and yet human nature can stand out when people living under these conditions demonstrate leadership, power to promote change.

On the second semester of 2017, we had taken Architecture and Urbanism graduate and post-graduate students, as well as colleagues, teachers and researchers, to various highly vulnerable territories. These included: Jardim Lapenna, east side of São Paulo, Favela do Moinho, a downtown slum, Glicério, central and consolidated area and Jardim Nova America, Represa and Vargem Grande, at the extreme south of the city, around 70 km away from the city center.
Empathy and concern were immediately recognised in all members of the visiting groups, generating a sense of shared responsibility and will to engage. This triggered a search for qualification through research and practice. They have become advocates in a certain way, mobilising a growing interest in the community around them.

The urgency of effective transformations, through urban and spatial design, in areas of great urban and social vulnerability is highly important. This can be translated into the need to include, in both the training and qualification of architects and urban professionals, multi and transdisciplinary skills and abilities to work in vulnerable territories, as well as in-depth cultural knowledge. This should include matters such as gender and early childhood, combined with technical and theoretical training, in the specific field of the profession.

Despite there being available sets of data and reflections, technical and theoretical studies, mappings, statistics and indicators, it is not possible to advance in understanding the reality and the challenges imposed. Additional to this, there is difficulty developing a diagnosis of vulnerable urban areas, particularly without effective experiences in the territory and with the community.

CONCLUSION

The experience derived from the territory, and with the community, even if only partially grasping its complexity, can help to better understand how effective spatiality happens. By enabling researchers and other "foreigners", to engage together with the local community, can aid in identifying strategies and paths to transform the current vulnerability and move towards enhancing civil rights for

better living conditions.

To develop a work with permanence, continuity of "empowerment" is essential. In other words, to liberate the creative and community potential, the capacity of invention and innovation of all members of a vulnerable community, the integration of external agents to local community members and leaderships, and the transfer of enhancement and knowledge tools.

The complexity of combating inequality and transforming the precarious conditions to which billions of people are subjected to, requires a multi and transdisciplinary vision, with the experience of contact and learning within the territories of residents. Architects and urban planners, by incorporating strategies of listening, participation, learning, living and knowledge transfer, can contribute significantly to this process of transformation towards prosperity.
And all of this must be acknowledged by society as a legitimate way to earn our living.

"Materialism and morality are inversely proportional. While one stands, the other shrinks." – Arun Ghandi about Bapuji's (his grandfather Mahatma Ghandi) teachings.

MAPUTO'S CHILDREN TRANSFORM AREA THROUGH DIGITAL DATA COLLECTION

Chiara Tomaselli, Mitiku Woldesenbet and Gustavo Brant de Carvalho (UN-Habitat)

In Mozambique, more than half the population are children. Urbanisation in the country creates both a challenge and an opportunity to accommodate children's needs and influence their rights. When cities strive to provide better access to public services and facilities, and bolster economic growth, they still face challenging environments with specific risks and constraints. Specifically, in consideration of children, these endeavours often face new challenges, risks, and constraints for playing in public spaces.

Play is among the most essential elements of children's lives. Due to the lack and shrinking of public space, in addition to contaminated areas, dangerous zones, and chaotic car routes, child-friendly space is under pressure. Maputo city is often denying outdoor play for its children similar to many other cities worldwide. With play, children are able to learn, develop and grow. Children not only play in playgrounds, but also in all parts of their neighbourhoods: their living quarters, around their home, their neighbour's house, and all the way to their school.

Like many other cities worldwide, Maputo city also has several gaps in creating child-friendly focused urban settings, especially in its economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods. However, to narrow the gap, the Municipality of Maputo is working with UNICEF and UN-

Habitat to involve children for its transformation and betterment of their urban setting.

This project explores new forms of promoting child engagement in the reflection and design of urban space in Maputo, while using innovative tools to leverage their knowledge and opinions through an active participatory process. The objective is to ensure their voice is heard, thus influencing the decision-making process.

WHY FROM CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE?

Urban planners, architects, decision makers, and technical staff, in general, may be committed to including children's needs regarding public space improvement projects, however, this is not always the case. As adults, it can be difficult to recollect the hardships faced during childhood with the passage of time. This is why opening the dialogue with children by using adequate tools is crucial to collect their views. Thus, instead of the usual approach consisting of "planning for children", the initiative seeks to directly engage with children in the objective of conducting the planning process starting from data collection. The data collection includes their perception and opinions about the different areas in their neighbourhoods.

FUN DATA COLLECTION: URBAN WALK WITH A DIGITAL TOOL

Children are involved in fun data collection using a smartphone application. During the fun data, children traced their routes from home to school, as well as, the spaces and spots they consider relevant in between using GPS [1].

The children's urban walk is undertaken with the intention to robustly understand children's challenges faced everyday and exciting experiences along usual routes. To this end, children are grouped with their friends with whom they usually commute to school and back home together. Each group receives a phone with the installed application to map their everyday experiences and challenges along the different routes they take. They also document their everyday challenges, feelings, and opinions about the different public spaces or unique spots. During the data collection, children identified several places and spots including tree locations, sidewalks, streets, small public spaces, and a soccer field among many others. The application also helped them to easily capture multiple pictures of different places to help them explain their challenges more with pieces of evidence and proof using real-time information for decision-makers, professionals, and policymakers in urban planning.

CHILDREN'S VISUAL VALIDATION OF PLACES ALONG THEIR ROUTES

Following the completion of the data collection, the children gather together to discuss and visually validate the data they have collected. During the visual validation, children used a set of pictograms with different feelings labelled to exactly express their different perceptions about the same spaces.

Children during the participatory walks, each group was accompanied by an adult ensure a safe smooth process.

Children selected matching pictograms to describe the spaces they use as a soccer field in their neighbourhood.

A group of children is presenting their project to improve a vacant space in their neighborhood.

The discussion gave the opportunity to better understand the result of the information gathered and further explore the features of what they considered essential for fun, safety, and well-being in the public spaces they use on a daily basis. This activity triggered a discussion with other children, encouraging them to explain motivations and choices of pictograms describing each public space.

CHILDREN'S PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN, EXPERIMENTS AND PROPOSALS

Based on what has been discussed during the validation, children used cardboard, glue, clay, and coloured pencil on aerial photographs to illustrate their ideas in order to transform different types of public spaces. This included streets of different sizes, squares, or other urban sites not yet build on all adapted with their imagination and design solutions.

Each group presented their existing design model to the plenary with an argument for each of the built elements they chose for improvement. They highlighted why and how to make them more safe and convenient for themselves based on their needs; more often bringing out-of-the-box solutions to the problems preliminary identified.

LESSONS LEARNED

– Children could build an in-depth database which is very important for the better transformation of their neighbourhoods and cities.
– Children's knowledge, challenges, and experiences of their neighbourhoods are often different than of the adults. Such information has high value to create inclusive neighbourhoods built on sustainability.
– The capacity and willingness of children have to be a part of their neighbourhoods transformation process starting a pre-planning and urban design process.

– The importance of digital technology to involve children in urban planning and city design, for a better future and urban settings.
– The project highlighted the importance of engaging with the local community as a whole when it comes to working with children. In this case, the project has been implemented with the support of a platform of local associations already very active at the neighbourhood level. In addition, activities have been largely broadcasted on the community-based radio to explain the objective and process of the project, to inform about the progress, as well as to raise awareness about the importance of child-friendly public spaces for a safe and vibrant neighbourhood.

CONCLUSION

Involving children in the planning process with an equally weighted voice allows neighbourhoods to be re-shaped into an inclusive living environment and the sustainable city to be further developed. To do so, children need to be given the various tools to express their needs and priorities comfortably. This information then feeds into the decision and policy-making process for urban planning, neighbourhood upgrading, and public space rehabilitation.

36 LESSONS FOR A BETTER CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS

Hans Karssenberg (STIPO)

This chapter summarizes all the lessons from the book's chapters in full in a way that it becomes a hands-on guide for practitioners. To create a good city at eye level for kids, after all, we need to not only have the notion of why it is important, but also practical tools and criteria to then implement in area development and transformation. This chapter is divided into the 'why, how and what' to create better cities for kids.

THE WHY. The why exemplifies that children have a fundamental right to play, that more and more families live in cities, that these inhabitants are faced with a fundamental lack of public space and that millions of children are excluded from public space. Moreover, indoor play, protectiveness and obesity are additional challenges to this lack of space. On the positive side, developing cities can offer themselves as a learning environment and illustrate major opportunities.

THE HOW. It is important to understand different ages, young children, teenagers, girls, caregivers and various income groups. We recognise the importance in understanding the processes to enact these lessons. A good city at eye level for kids requires city wide strategy, bringing play beyond the playground, and engaging kids and their caregivers. For this, the book contains 7 key steps and 12 proven methods. Professionals and developers also need to develop new skills and roles.

THE WHAT. We can look at the neighbourhood level, safe routes, streets and active ground floors (the 'plinths'), hybrid zones as a transition zone from private to public, street corners, programming activities for kids, playful design and also lessons for good playgrounds. Opportunities lie in opening up schoolyards, public transit and seasonal planning.

We end with the list of criteria for design. We begin at the micro scale, first looking at smaller places such as neighbourhoods, squares, and parks, then at larger places like main streets and waterfronts, and finally at the city scale.

The numbers after each segment correspond with the table of contents at the end of this section. This table aims to orient you for further reading if you wish to learn more deeply about a specific element. It also shows how this book is truly a collaborative effort that we hope to keep developing further by sharing it open source.

WHY IS THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS IMPORTANT?

1. **Children Have a Fundamental Right to Play**
    "Children as citizens have their right to play. Play is their soul in the growing-up process. Children must exercise their right to have their voice in the decision-making process in public space wherever they go." (UNCRC). A child-friendly city is good for health and well-being, local economy, safety, stronger communities, nature and sustainability, resilience and also acts as a catalyst for improving cities. Often, however, children are regarded as part of the 'vulnerable population' and not as rights holders;consequently influencing decision makers' perceptions about, and consideration of, children within the public sphere.[34] [4] [13]

2. **More and More Families with Children Live in Cities**
    Families with children embrace living in cities more and more, and therefore children and their caregivers are a growing population. As cities around the world have focused on becoming more livable and less industrial, families are increasingly embracing urban life. They trade in car ownership and a sprawling suburban home for compact condos and townhomes with the ability to walk and bike to a range of amenities in their neighbourhood. Their reasons: the chance to provide their children with an active lifestyle, access to great amenities, reduced energy and goods consumption, exposure to diversity, and better family connections.[46]

3. **They are Faced with a Fundamental Lack of Public Space**
    At the same time, streets have shifted from social places to channels of movement, due to the arrival of cars. Consequently, streets are no longer considered primary places for children. There is a fundamental lack of public space in cities everywhere. In fast growing cities, Egypt for instance, there is a lack of public parks and gardens, with open areas ranging between meager 1.2% and 4.6% of the total city area. Half the Egyptian children do not find interesting areas to play and instead stay

at home and watch television. Alternatively, they do discover a space to play and often on streets facing all types of physical, social and behavioural dangers. In the western context, there often is a lack of public space, not because of a physical lack, but because public spaces are not used as such.[15] [14] [30] [18]

4. **Millions of Children are Excluded from Public Life**
Socio-economic differences start at an early age and even encompass a child's opportunity to play. Especially in the quickly expanding (mega) cities, safe spaces to play free of charge hardly exist. For millions of children, playing freely is not free. They have to pay to play. They cannot afford to go to the shopping malls or hotels, to pay for the man with the swing on the road, to pay the entrance fee of a park. Urban environments may be mainly structured around parks, streets and private commercial malls. A 'playground' may be seen as the realm of the children, who are then perceived as less entitled to comment on the broader urban fabric, because their experience is limited to dedicated "child-friendly" spaces that are not necessarily integrated with other urban uses.[29] [14] [67] [21]

5. **Indoor Play Takes Over Outdoor Play**
The misconception of play, combined with the car-oriented model, is threatening children's cognitive and physical development. On an urban scale, we see an uneven distribution, poor quality and socially-imposed restrictions of public and play spaces. Already in the 1970s, Lynch stressed that children had less time for free activities. Nowadays, as school systems turn to the full-time model, the majority of children's time is spent with daily learning and extra-curricular activities, and with digital devices during free time. Play is commonly in seats behind screens and virtual spaces causing outdoor play to disappear. This has physical and psychological effects, nor does it compensate for the benefits of outdoor play.[13] [59] [14] [19]

6. **Obesity is Contagious**
For the past thirty years, obesity rates have been rising around the world. In 2010, lifestyle related diseases replaced clinically contagious diseases (such as Cholera) as the biggest cause of death globally. Financial losses caused by obesity are estimated to be, globally, billions of dollars for costs of direct treatment and indirect effects, such as loss of productivity and sickness absence. The rising children's and adolescents' Body Mass Index measures have finally plateaued in many high-income countries, but have accelerated in low and mid-level income countries, especially in parts of Asia. Serious cardio-metabolic disorders and mental health issues, such as depression, have been on the rise in adolescence and in early adulthood. Obesity is contagious, not clinically, but socially. Particularly primary school children are vulnerable. Children choose role models such as parents or family members, but also teachers, friends, social workers, celebrities or (social media) influencers. If the behaviour of a role model is unhealthy, the children will show unhealthy behaviour as well.[45] [10] [72]

7. **Protectiveness Leads to Unplayful Cities**
The rising protective attitude of parents toward children increasingly influences design and regulation. Excessive safety regulations to reduce risk at playgrounds lead to bored bigger aged children. Often, the general belief is that safe places for children are either inner or fenced. Playspaces get 'over-designed' and become environments that reflect adults' perceptions of play. In countries with a strong risk averse culture, governments implement top-down regulations to sanitise everyday life, in order to minimise chances of conflicts or accidents. Fencing, barriers and warning signage are common features that lead to environments that are highly regulated, zoned, and controlled.[103] [45] [34] [33]

8. **Cities as a Learning Environment**
Young children experience public space differently – things look, sound and feel very different to babies and toddlers than they do to adults and older children. Every experience is a potential learning encounter. Involving children in the evaluation of space, helps them to learn about their environment, increases their spatial knowledge, enables them to identify areas with high potential or those in need of improvement, and articulate informed opinions. From participation, young children can learn to construct, de-construct, re-construct, solve problems, and take ownership of the play space. They foster the skills of collaboration as they co-create. Furthermore, they gain skills to adapt to today's speed of change and disruption, as well as skills to apply in the future.[96] [27] [31]

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS?

9. **Understand Different Ages**
First, it is important to understand age differences. Children age 0-2 are within the Sensorimotor Stage and are learning coordination, language for commands, and the beginning of object permanence. Children ages 2-7 are within the Preoperational Stage, a phase necessary to acquire conservation and symbolic thinking. Young children play in a different way than older kids. Although often physically near each other, toddlers primarily play on their own, andeach make their own stack of cubes. Later, their play becomes more associative and social. As the develop, they play together, but don't tell each other what to do. Subsequently, children learn to play cooperatively- they organise themselves and assign each other roles to play. All children go through these phases, but each have their own pace.[32] [58] [104]

10. **Understand Young Children**
Young children experience public space differently. The brain develops the fastest in life's earliest years, with lasting impacts on physical and mental health and learning; this is known as the critical period for imprinting. The way in which caregivers interact with babies and toddlers in everyday life is critical. For example, when parents talk, sing, and play with their babies, they help to build a healthy brain that is well wired to learn, adapt and interact with others. In the urban environments, young kids need diversified urban spaces to optimise cognitive capabilities.

For a couple of decades, the "popsicle test" has been proposed as a

test of how liveable a city neighbourhood is for kids; can your kid go out for a popsicle and get back safely before it melts? This makes sense for kids old enough to go out on their own to get a popsicle. The "stroller test" would look at younger kids;how is the experience to get to parks, preschools or healthcare with a stroller? How long does it take, how easy is it, and what quality of experience do you and your child have along the way? Are the sidewalks wide, level and shaded from the sun? Are they cluttered with rubbish and parked vehicles? If your destination is far away, how stroller-friendly are your public transport options?

The next question regarding young children is, how do we engage and include them in urban development? Children either answer with an imaginary scenario (I want to play in a space station!) or very fragmented due to language development capacity (I want to play water here). Rather than asking what children want, and getting unrealistic answers, observe and document the play behavior, communicate with children without promising implications, decrypt children's language from imagination scenario to actual planning content. [46] [48] [57] [4] [70]

11. **Understanding Teenagers**
Teenagers can be seen as trouble-makers, but if they can also be visible and make a positive contribution, it can help legitimize their presence and shift adults' perceptions. Sometimes, there is a tendency to put facilities for teenagers outside of the city in the periphery, but teenagers like the center; that is where they feel a part of society. Rather than developing youth-only places, it is better to aim for a diverse mix of people. They want to be part of a crowd, see and be seen, and feel more safe.

Teens are in the developmental stage where building friendships and social footing are crucial. After school, they like to share headphones and music taste, pick basketball teams, and to talk together outside school structure. They prefer spaces without entrance fees, fences and gates, located near the street, open and part of city life. Spaces with open and hard surfaces supports their unstructured sport activities. If there is a lack of space, opening up the schoolyard after school hours is a potential solution to encourage a space where youth can move freely, shout, run, or check their phones- all things that they are restricted from doing elsewhere. [17] [64] [42] [30]

12. **Pay Special Attention to Girls**
Each individual is different, but generally speaking, there are differences related to gender. This review notes common behavioural patterns in the historically traditional gender norms - boys and girls- yet gender is a socially constructed identity and individuals can vary across the spectrum.

Toddler girls are quicker to play socially and in a more structured manner, while boys stay solitary for longer. At four to five years old, the boys overtake the girls in their associative play.Simultaneously, the girls

advance in cooperative play. At five to six years old, the boys, again, overtake the girls, now in the cooperative play, but the girls stay ahead with social interaction. When they grow older, the girls keep staying ahead of the boys in the area of social development. From the general behavioural developments and differences in focus areas, the lack of interaction in outdoor play between boys and girls is rationale; they are busy with completely different things.

It seems that girls lack playgrounds that meet their needs. Girls like places where they can play in pairs. Boys like to play in groups. So both need a different layout. Boys play in the street and prefer non-formal, open spaces. This then allows the boys to play in larger groups and engage in activities that involve more freedom of movement. They like football and social games that involve running (e.g., hide and seek, tag). Girls need their own places where they can be together with their friends and where the boys won't scare them away. Girls tend to occupy more intimate and cosier spaces (especially the space right in front of their homes). They play in smaller groups, preferring games related to social activities, such as rhythmic hand clapping, singing, and dancing. Benches faced towards each other make it possible to socialize and talk to one another. Girls are sensitive to the atmosphere of a place. It needs to look bright, with cheerful colours and good lighting. They love to play imaginary stories, they like chatting, but just like boys they also like being active.

Throughout the city, you can find soccer fields, basketball courts, and skate parks mainly controlled by boys. But are these spaces "typically for boys"? Or is it that there is not enough thought on how to give girls the confidence and societal acceptance to also freely use these places. In general, boys are louder and get more attention, and as these designers are majority men, they may have a blind spot for girls' wishes. It is necessary to start thinking on spatial and social solutions that would allow girls to make use of any space they want, without feeling the pressure that a place is "only and especially for boys". They should be able to perform all activities feeling safe, confident and empowered. Importantly, differences in behaviour between boys and girls is not inherent, it is also learned. We must take an active responsibility not to force gender roles or expectations in their play preferences onto any child.

Safety is important for everyone, but is a special concern for girls and young women. Places need good lighting, visibility and presence of authorities. Lastly, accessible water and sanitation - girls are the most vulnerable when there is insufficient or lack of toilets and sanitation facilities. [7] [32] [69]

13. **Reach Out to the Caregivers**
Children under 95 cm are always accompanied by caregivers, therefore it is important to keep the carers in mind as well. For them, time is an

issue and a priority. Caregivers rush over the streets with their children to do shopping, visit the bank, bring and pick up the kids, parents etc. Notably, caretakers are concerned about safety and hygiene and require clean spaces with no smoke, loud noises or risks. To avoid parents being limited while their infants sit on their laps and do not have anywhere to go, there is a clear need for a multiplicity of objects in play spaces with different heights and scales in order to benefit parents' comfort. When involving parents, it is important to first validate what their concept of public space is, as this is different in many contexts. It is important to use the right words, for instance, a case where 'public zones' was seen as entirely different term than 'community zones'.[14] [53] [29] [33] [11]

14. **Plan for Different Income Groups**
Brazil offers a clear illustration of global challenges related to monetary resources. In 2016, the country had 46 million kids, out of which more than 20 million were living in slums and vulnerable territories. Inequality and poverty are severe problems to face, as so many children live in urban environments subjected to constant toxic stress, absence of civil rights, and consequently, no right to the city at any level. Kids' perception of urban space is strongly affected by the social, economic, cultural and climatic context they are embedded within. Therefore, it is beneficial for each municipality to introduce workshops and participatory design processes that include children from all backgrounds locally in schools, architecture studios, and planning committees. A collaboration of participants of all ages and backgrounds strengthens community ties and relationships, and thus allows design professionals to expand their practice through the exchange of ideas and concurrently empowers children to participate in shaping their own environment.

Children in low income neighbourhoods thrive on resourcefulness; the ability to respond to needs or stressors with the resources available, often in limited supply. This scarcity fosters a high level of adaptation and produces highly social, creative thinking. Although this hyper attention in response to stress increases problem solving abilities, it also depletes long term mental capacity, such as memory, and emotional well-being. We should pay close attention which strategies children adopt spontaneously to create play opportunities and strengthen these strategies through planned interventions that also seek to buffer negative effects correlated with low income neighbourhoods and lack of resources.[72] [7] [42]

15. **Develop a City Wide Strategy**
Helping to create a better city at eye level for kids is done not only at the street level, but also at the city wide level. Several articles have provided insights on how to build a more child-friendly city:
1. **Density** – The benefits of city life for families- such as walkability, more free time and access to public transit and services- would not be possible without living in compact homes.
2. **Family–oriented Housing** – We need homes designed to meet the needs of families, particularly homes with three bedrooms that are in family-friendly neighbourhoods with parks and amenities nearby.
3. **Access to Schools and Childcare** – Parents cannot raise a child in the city without having nearby access - ideally walking distance - to good quality childcare, elementary and high schools.
4. **Access to Public Transit** – It has been said that families need a privately owned cars to tote kids around from place to place, but many families are proving this is not true. Access to public transit is much easier when you live in a more compact and walkable community. If you do need a car, many cities now have car-sharing, allowing families to access one when necessary.
5. **Walkability** – This is not just a matter of being able to walk where you need to go. Walkability means crosswalks, paved sidewalks and nice things like tree-lined streets.
6. **Bikeability** – The greatest joy for a child is riding a bike. It teaches them independence and it's just plain fun. For many urban families, it is a primary main mode of transport. Cities need to do their part to make it safe and plentiful.
7. **Access to Nature** – Children and even their parents, need access to nature. We know the benefits it has on physical and mental health. Every family should be able to access a park within 5 -10 minutes walking distance. There are many ways to improve access to nature in the cities, such as planting community gardens and adding trees to the urban forest.
8. **Access to Amenities** – One of the greatest benefits of city life is easier access to amenities like community centres, libraries, public pools, movie theatres, and playgrounds. The best way for cities to attract families is by providing an abundance and diversity of amenities that appeal to children and do not require car transport.
9. **Public Safety** – Measures like traffic calming can help parents be more confident in letting their kids roam freely.
10. **Fun and Whimsy** – Children can find magic in almost any everyday object. To aid their curious minds, cities can add features to inspire the inner child in all of us, like water parks, swings, rainbow crosswalks, street art, parklets, sidewalk swings and public pianos.

The most successful strategy to develop the city and the streets as a playful experience is to design bottom-up mechanisms by collaborating with key actors from the community. To generate a citywide change, the prototypes need to balance action-research, knowledge and data-driven measurements to demonstrate the impact of play in order to translate evidence-based policy into reality. One of the examples is the Child Friendly Places programme in Belfast that has developed two practical engagement models that helped put children higher on the agenda of the built environment sector and provided a structured platform for dialogue between children and decision makers. [46] [13] [12] [66] [50] [11]

16. **Bring Play beyond the Playground**
No matter the living situations of children and respective geographical

locations, play is vital for all in many aspects, including physical and mental growth and development. If planned well, play goes beyond the playground. Integrate play into daily routines and reimagine everyday spaces such as streets and sidewalks, bus stops, business plazas, parking lots and civic spaces as mini play destinations. [21] [18] [55]

17. **Engage Kids**

Children's knowledge, challenges, and experiences have high value to create inclusive neighbourhoods. It is possible, but it requires commitment to place children at the center; and the will to listen to their opinions and to implement design policies and decisions that accommodate their needs — and not what we as adults assume they require.

Children often experience cities as boring. Public spaces are often formed by picking some elements from design catalogues of play equipment companies. We have to convert this institutional approach to a more situational approach (customisation). This means moving away from adult-led and formal strategy, and giving more space (both literally and figuratively) to the unique wishes of children at a specific location. Children prefer less structured play in which they can have adventure and make their own fantasy.

"To plan with children is to learn from children." By engaging children in public space regeneration, we can create child-enabling environments and grow a next generation of responsible citizens. Involving children is tangible and leads to immediate sense of achievement and pride. It builds hard and soft skills and increases their knowledge about their neighborhood. It involves a variety of tasks and skills, allowing kids to make a meaningful contribution to a significant project through something they enjoy. And, most of all, they really like to be involved. [62] [69] [64] [8] [4] [33] [73]

18. **Seven Key Steps to Engage Kids**

1. **Make engagement child-led** —Children experience the world differently than adults. They may want to explore places by using all of their senses and physical abilities like jumping, rolling, sliding, or crouching. Observe, ask caregivers to take this role, and/or use mapping exercises where children create 2-D representations of how they interpret their physical environment.

2. **Engage children and caregivers where they are** – Families are busy. Engage with families in spaces they already visit. Partner with institutions such as schools, libraries, parks, community centers.

3. **Build trust** – You can for instance start with a walking tour and let children show the most important buildings, places and assets of the area, while bringing the designers to their level and understanding what they found relevant. Use activities such as "citizen fines" (to remind their neighbours to respect the maximum speed or not to park in forbidden places). Provide them with the knowledge and steps to request formal institutional change and

organise a petition, with the kids knocking on their neighbours' doors collecting signatures.

4. **Make engagement reciprocal** – Community engagement is not just about collecting data from people. Participants may want to gain community connections, local knowledge, fun experiences, and/or decision-making power.

5. **Stimulating kids' creativity**, for instance, start with storytelling and neighbourhood observational games to motivate a collective atmosphere. You can use competitions to get the best ideas from youth groups and stimulate diversity in a neighbourhood. Ask children to make photos with ideas of how their local neighbourhood can become more child friendly. Use cultural history to create awareness among children of the city around them. Encouraging kids to try something new. Keep designs open-ended to spark imagination. Modularity, challenges and games preserve excitement and adaptability while inspiring wonder.

6. **Make engagement playful** – Children learn by playing, and play can be used strategically to engage our youngest citizens and their families in the city building process: storytelling, board games, role-playing games, design games, open-ended drawing or building.

7. **Learn by doing** – Listening to children is not only about spoken words, traditional interviews, questionnaires and adult observations. Art-based activities, like photography, map drawing,or task-based methods are more interesting to children and reduce pressures of an uncomfortable interview on them. Instead of asking directly, offer simple unstructured and random materials for children to play with and observe how they organize the play activities, noting physical and social actions they prefer per age group and how they manage risk. DIY urban design allows children to "participate by doing" and allows urban planners and designers to "design by doing"; build prototypes, models from clay. Create space for testing children's ideas – be flexible, let the making of the place emerge out of community programming. Host festivals, BBQs, movie nights, and public meetings in the parks and provide food and childcare to help families participate in co-design exercises. Be sure to celebrate your successes by engaging with local newspapers, radio and social media. Have children make photos where they walk, observe and play.

8. **Use tactical urbanism for kids** – Create a pop up child friendly space, such as the Kids Space model. Urbanism becomes tactical when aside from "planning" through large-scale and long-term urban policies, plans and projects. Instead, it is able to guarantee and promote the actual possibility for all to "remake" the city, by way of micro-transforming, co-managing, and taking care of public spaces and streets of their neighborhoods, while at the same time, tactical urbanism can interfere with the sanctioned system of planning and government of the city (whether in a collaborative or antagonistic manner depends on the case and the context). You can

reuse materials to create awareness and to develop a culture on reusing material and reduce cost.[1] [05] [57] [41] [9] [13] [8] [12] [21] [66] [5] [4] [55]

19. **Use One of the 12 Proven Methods**
This book contains 12 methods, proven in practice, to engage kids. We give a brief description of the key elements of each of them; for further reading, we refer to the chapters about them:

1. **UNCRC Professor Lundy's children participation model** was the fundament for a model for Taiwan's Children's Right to Participate, applied in Taipei.[34]

2. **UrbanToys** of Laboratorio para la Ciudad in Mexico City reactivates underused public spaces located in proximity of high population of children, and promote by exemplifying, the importance of children's participation in the design of their surrounding urban environments.[13]

3. **Video game Minecraft** is used by UN-Habitat's Global Public Space Programme and Block by Block Foundation to engage children and youth in city planning. The creative and building aspects of Minecraft allow players to build structures out of textured cubes in a three-dimensional computer generated world. It is helpful to include non-traditional stakeholders, particularly children.[56]

4. **MoMe@school** is a mobile application and co-design toolbox developed by TU Darmstadt. It is inspired by Lynch's work and includes three main techniques: individual/group interviews with the children, taking photographs and analysing them, and the collaborative creation of spatial mental maps. The toolbox integrates a new generation of digitally-supported surveys, mapping, and co-design tools.[59] [73]

5. **Peatoniños | Peatoniñas** of Laboratorio para la Ciudad in Mexico City is for planning, designing and implementing playstreets developed under community centered design methodologies, urban analysis through GIS tools and pedagogical approaches to the right to play and the city.[13]

6. **The Speckle** of OBB is a practical quick scan for rating the playing opportunities: Is there space for multiple playtypes? Is interaction between children and between parents stimulated? Do the place and the surroundings have a varied design that gives multiple playing opportunities? Are children of different age groups challenged? How many playing activities are there?[69]

7. **Tracing Public Space (TPS)** is a participatory method to transform public spaces in informal settlements bottom-up. "How does the community, specifically children between 10-15 years old, see the public space?" 1) Observe and illustrate, 2) Imagine and design, and 3) Build and transform. Interventions for three categories: urban furniture, landscaping and art intervention.

8. **Hack Our Play (HOP)** a participatory, community-built play space in Singapore and aims to be an alternative to playgrounds that are mostly bought from a catalogue, resulting in cookie-cutter and standardised play experiences. HOP includes children, educators, and parents from the beginning of the design process so that each play space can become a tailor-made experience.[62]

9. **Illustrated postcards** in Guimarães encourages child engagement in landscape and participation of the urban future, using postcards as a means of expression. The age range is between 6-13 years old. Youngsters are challenged to discuss the urban geography and to experiment with copies of 6 current postcards of streets, squares and historical places.[63]

10. **Design-built placemaking** in Sydney uses a number of common participatory design activities such as user group analysis, photography, participatory mapping, brainstorming, photo elicitation, and prototyping. Visual and creative methods help to facilitate sharing of knowledge and ideas with kids, who may be less able or willing to verbally articulate their thoughts. There are lots of resources available, such as those at designkit.org/methods, for instance: mapping, prototyping, plastering, stencelling, spray painting, and mosaics.[64]

11. **Jump into nature** in Dordrecht aims to give children aged 4 - 12 and their parents a way to experience nature close to home and they learn how nice it is to spend time outdoors.[19]

12. **"Integrated Child Impact Assessment" (ICIA)** in Stockholm introduces the right of the child early on in city planning process, ensuring that the needs of coming generations are secured.[68]

20. **Skills of the professionals involved**
Methods only are not enough to make a project successful. It is also the method facilitated by somebody that influences the result. A great deal relies on a practitioner's judgement in the moment. The attitudes and abilities of the practitioner are important. The traditional curriculum of Architecture and Urbanism education does not include the problematic and precarious settlements, vulnerable areas, and do not relate to early childhood development, race, nor gender. There is a need to include multi and transdisciplinary skills and abilities to work in vulnerable territories, as well as in-depth cultural knowledge. Architects and urban planners, by incorporating strategies of listening, participation, learning, living and knowledge transfer, can contribute significantly to this process of transformation towards prosperity.

– **Valuing young people's knowledge and ideas** – If you see your role as convincing kids rather than listening, it is not really participation. On the other hand, there may be aspects that are not negotiable, so don't give the impression they can make all the decisions if it is not true. If kids make unfeasible proposals, explain why it is not possible rather than just saying no. Further questions can uncover the desires behind the proposal and prompt new ideas.

– **Reflexivity** – Study yourself, because who you are will impact on how you relate with others and how you guide the project. What are your beliefs about children and childhood? What commonalities and differences do you have with the kids (such as gender, ethnicity, class, and economic background)? What assumptions do you carry, and what

assumptions might they have about you?

- **Respect and friendliness** – Power relations between adults and young people will always be present but practices such as learning names, avoiding patronising language, and being interested in them shows that you recognize and value them. This helps build rapport, confidence and a good working partnership.
- **Noticing and being supportive** – Kids have different skills and interests. Acknowledge their contributions, and remember things they said or did previously: perhaps someone with a special interest in photography might like to produce an animated slideshow to put online, adding value to the project and giving them a leadership role. If someone is hanging back, try to find out what extra support they need.
- **Reflection and adaptability** – Kids are diverse, and context also influences a project. What participation means, and why it matters, will be different on Friday evenings at a youth center compared to Monday mornings in a school. Try to get a feel for the context beforehand, and be prepared to adapt activities, structure, and pace as you progress and reflect on the most important outcomes to achieve in that context.
- Questions about wanting can easily lead to expectations and unrealistic dreams (I want to play in a space station). **Observe and document** play behavior, communicate with children without promising implications, decrypt children's language from imagination scenario to actual planning content.[72] [26] [64] [4]

21. **The developers' and planners' role**

Places that have potential to develop into playscapes are also interesting for developers. We should find a way to involve developers (private clients) in the project. This requires guidance, adequate instructions for private companies for housing developments, and mechanisms that address the specific needs of local conditions. Urban planning culture matters. It is important to work toward child-friendly city with the support of public and private institutions.[50] [70] [18] [4]

WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS?

Urban childhood environment is not only about schools and playgrounds. It is also about safe and playful paths for children's daily mobility; the impact of urban environmental quality on health and well-being issues of children; to reduce tensions among families, children and other users in public space through a more thoughtful socio-spatial arrangement for children making noise; and take children's opinion as part of the work input. In an ideal city, children can be close to nature, safe, physically comfortable (neither too cold nor too hot, neither too tired of walking nor too hungry or thirsty) and visually engaged. Children like nature, trees, clear visual guidance, narrow streets and cosy houses, interactive functions on the ground floor, a place where neighbours know each other, absence of noise, city activities such as festivals and markets, sufficient light, comfort from the sun on hot days, being able to reach others easily in danger, and music in the streets. This part further describes the lessons for design and activation.[42] [4]

22. **Neighborhood**

Children grow up in neighborhoods, a scale that becomes integrated with personal identity over time. Part of the neighborhood is a network of child-friendly home doors and sidewalks. Neighbourhoods that go through a series of transformational changes can lead to improved environments for and with children. Specific improvements include increased access to natural open space systems and public spaces, and enabling independent active mobility and free play.[13] [10]

23. **Safe routes**

The caregivers' subjective perception of unsafety can detach children from their own city. This perception is supplemented by facts such as traffic accidents or crime rates. Improving the subjective perception of safety mainly lies in safe routing and visibility. On the playable space itself, and the routing towards it, there should be high visibility from adjacent roads and houses: sufficient lighting, many passers-by and neighbouring windows. [51] [49] [29] [48]

A first step is to create active transportation opportunities:
- cycle lanes and pedestrian routes, especially on the routes that most children walk between home and school, with limited motorised traffic
- cars can cross the road on a 'crosswalk' especially for cars – this way cars are clearly secondary users of these routes
- speed reduction,
- educated lifestyles allowing children's play to be prioritized,
- imaginative and pleasant transit stops with facilities and infrastructure provision that is child/family friendly
- creative "Kids at Play" signage, designed by the communities. [72] [10]

An example of a safe routes method is the Thessaloniki Safe Routes to School Scheme. It includes physical measures and policies for improving streets and environmental and societal challenges, such as air pollution and child obesity. A toolkit is designed with a set of activities for public awareness on traffic safety and school community participation. Along the route from home to school, children should be triggered to explore and play in public space. The route can facilitate different types of games for different age groups: jumping stones, walls with holes of different sizes that trigger children to climb and stones or walls of 1.00 m to hide behind and climb on.[72] [70]

24. **Streets and active ground floors ('plinths')**

Streets to stay and play are the next step in child-friendliness.
1. Roads should have a decreased carriageway, obstacles, corner expansions, floor painting and pedestrian crossings.
2. Pavements should have a minimum width of 4 meter allowing children to play while passengers can still pass. Combine parking spaces at a parking lot around the corner; divide parking spaces in groups of four and create zigzag streets, lowering car speed; change parking spaces into bike-parkings.
3. Use elements differentiating from their surroundings attracting

children to experience the different tactile, visual, physical or auditive appearance. Ready made play elements are not necessary. Promenades should have furniture with different heights for children to rise, multipurpose furniture, free area for running, safe-hit posts, sound emitter elements, colorful furniture and panels, relaxed seating areas, bookshelves for exchanges, sculptures that turn into playgrounds, and low thermal transmission materials.

4. Attract the parents with seats looking out over the children. Benches turn sidewalks into places to stay, either linked to the adjacent houses or forming the barrier between road and pavement.

5. Vegetation should have color, different sizes of treetops, fruit or not-fruit trees, and urban vegetable garden.

6. Make sure shop windows are at a height that invite the child to look inside.

7. The plinth should have an easy transition between internal and external space, color, materials of low thermal conduction and reflection, games on the wall or areas for coloring, vegetation, differentiated lighting, volume and shape games, attractive points with music and movies, and learning games of numbers and words embedded in the façade. Use materials for the plinth that are fun for children yet disregarded by adults- such as glass façades that offer a mirror function to children but restrict seeing inside.

8. Small shops are important, twice as many social encounters happen in front of them. This is the safe zone where children pet a dog, or where they get fascinated by something they see and stop.

9. Plinths should have a high degree of interaction, playfulness, and colour; consider the difference between a bank or property seller and a toy store, pet store or florist.

10. Shop owners can place fun objects for kids in their shop windows. In one example rabbit-shape lamps, a historic symbol for the quarter.

11. Include public art and ornaments on roofs, facades and walls. For small children, these attributes are interesting to look at and (learn to) speak about.

12. Make open areas or small squares to interrupt the pace on a continuous sidewalk. They give undefined and secure spaces for play, make the itinerary less linear and give an opportunity for rest, spontaneous conversation or closer observation of the environment.[24] [25] [94] [15]

25. Hybrid Zones

Minor changes in streets will regain the normality of playing independently. Create a network of child-friendly home doors and sidewalks to not only please children and parents, but to also help activate the neighbourhood's residential streets and make them suitable for socialising, walking, playing ... for 'living' them. Child-friendly hybrid zones are important, as the home door is a portal between the familiar home space and the adventurous outer world. How?

– Soften the plinths at (child's) eye level alongside adjacent houses. Give ownership of a strip (60 cm / 2 tiles) of the pavement to the residents, for greenery or benches. The street will change into a more mixed-use street. The minimum width of the pavement is less important than the presence of a 'soft' pavement strip with greenery and benches, these form the key to child-friendly pavements.

– Wide (or possible to be widened) and car free sidewalks offer enough space for, although limited, satisfactory movement.

– Funny or playable pavements (e.g. hopscotch). Children have an intrinsic drive to play and are always looking for elements that give them new input, perspective, sound, ability or a new feeling. Making use of children's internal drive to experience whatever attracts them by differentiating materials, heights, shapes or structures. Necessary street-furniture forms great playing opportunities for children. Some designers combine necessity with playability- creating playable street furniture.

– A few steps or side niches are always welcome as they offer places to sit or hide.

– Create (physical) barriers between the pavement and the street (bike parks, concrete blocks, seats, benches, greenery) to prevent children from running directly onto the street.

– Pergolas or awnings act as great sun and wind shelters.

– Green fences offer protection from curious outside eyes and a boundary that comforts the parents.

– An unrestricted view from and towards the windows for children's surveillance.[26] [29]

26. Street corners

Corners are nodal points and indicate connections between paths that facilitate the flow and concentration of people. Corners offer a greater angle of view, are significant for quality spaces, and encourage the sense of defensible space. Corners can contribute to facilitating the relationship between children and the city and their interaction with other people in the community and thus create stronger social bonds. Corners can also serve as places to stay and to learn. Proposing guidelines for developing projects for attractive, safe and accessible corners can help in the interaction development between children and the community which they are part of.[25]

27. Programming

A good city at eye level for kids is obtained by the combination of hardware (design) and software (programming). Children are the most active during programmed events - for example, the combination of music with a bouncing castle fills the street up with children. For activation of public space, the book contains a great wealth of ideas:

– Inflatable games.

– Weekend pop-up road closures, introducing temporary play spaces for all.

– A flea-market that takes over the streets occasionally, closing it down for traffic and creating a popular event. Children can make their first business experience by selling old toys to their younger peers.

– A bookshelf in public space where passers-by can serve themselves or

bring their own books.

– Huge corporeal 2-meter tall letters forming the word 'Music' invite the kids to climb and play with them, through sounds, shapes and textures.
– Musical and acrobatics shows, fairy tale and sports.
– Theatre plays improvised by actors that impersonate characters made up by the kids, such as kings, queens and dragons; 8-year old kids become script writers on the spot.
– Distorting mirrors placed close to a school became part of the morning ritual of children on their way to school. Children will laugh, talk and fight against their own distorted mirror images.
– Food and drinks, for instance supplied by food-trucks, including one managed by disabled youngsters, promoting diversity and inclusiveness. [27] [8] [58] [10] [24]

28. Playful design = learning

Using child ideas in urban design is a starting point for unusual and playful designs. Freud was the first to say that funny things contain the potential to re-invent the rules. Surprising temporary elements, like art by children, are openings in the conventionalism that normally dominates cities:

– Communicate that it's okay to play! Eye-catching and intuitive design paired with clear signage encourages play and facilitates behaviour change. Show a welcome contrast to the everyday environment.
– Understand the cultural practices and traditions of the community that kids play according to. This can involve seasonal games that include natural elements such as the wind.
– Create variety by colour and texture in streets to help children orientate and create a place where they can meet. Indications like "let's meet in the blue street after school" are often used by children.
– Encourage physical activities with natural elements, elevated places and loose play parts. Natural elements can be: trees, animals to interact with, water to swim in, mud and dirt to play with, and allowing play on grass. We can also think of a place for cooking and similar pretend games, or a maze and tunnel to play adventurous games.
– By pigmenting the surface of a plaza, you can create a precious area that becomes the spot where kids spatialise their own games and became the real placemakers, deciding not only the rules but also the representation of the game. [14] [31] [72] [7] [21]

29. Playgrounds

Playgrounds are absolutely essential. They create joyful oases throughout cities and neighborhoods. However, standard swings and seesaws are often found too boring, not challenging enough, and made for younger children only. The design of play areas is the main cause for this, whether it is unattractive, dangerous, wrongly located, or not maintained. But, in reality, a greater problem is that it is usually NOT what children want. Traditional playgrounds make children segregated in a place with non-moveable play equipment and lack of opportunity for discovery and experimentation. Features such as towering, chained

fence boundaries and endless blacktop can make the playground feel unwelcoming. Intrusive layouts, like sharp corners, and segmentation of space by railings and cement walls, limit movement around the playground.

Design often starts with play providers leafing through catalogues with a 'let's have one of those' attitude. Instead, we should ask; what do we want this place to look and feel like? What do children and parents say themselves? What makes a good place for children and why? The following are some lessons for playgrounds from the chapters in this book:

– Play installations should be located near existing kid and family hubs.
– A play area should be flexible enough to accommodate different types of play - physical, social, and cognitive - as well as having rich varieties for playing in natural elements, elevated places and customised play parts.
– Children prefer spaces that let them play comfortably in groups or alone. They love colours and want to have the freedom to choose how and what to play.
– They also wish for spaces where they can indulge in their fantasies and imagination.
– Playgrounds need moldable materials, a variety of surfaces (water, grass, sand, bark, rubber, dirt), height differences and coloured markings. Children appreciate loose materials and exciting shrubbery of which they can build huts, roam and discover.
– Parents want a balance of nature and man-made elements, as well as sensorial stimulation in play spaces that are safe yet challenging, where they can play with their children.
– Parents need comfort, seating elements, public toilets, racks for bikes with child seats, clear sight lines, and safe routes to the place of destination. They appreciate areas for them to rest comfortably. [14] [17] [69] [62] [21] [55]

30. Schoolyards

During opening hours of public schools, the adjacent schoolyard is a private "school space," not open to the public. After school and on weekends, the schoolyard can remain open and accessible to the general public. The schoolyard then can play an important role as a common, outdoor public space for young students and adults who come together to engage in the space. The schoolyard creates a familiar space where kids can chat, play, run, hide and seek, dance, plug in their headphones. In cities with (too) little public space for children, opening up existing schoolyards, can add new spaces. The Open Schools Program is an example for this. It enables access to the schoolyards during after-school hours, offering additional open space. It also enriches the school's schedule with extracurricular activities that range from environmental education to active citizenship, promoting a model of non-formal and community-based education. The activities are coordinated mainly by citizen initiatives. It can help to increase the number of families that live in the city and eventually regenerate the

vibrant public realm in residential neighbourhoods. [17] [70]

31. **Public transit**

Kids use public transit. Through encouraging the use of public transport, parents are more likely to be able to enjoy the freedom of reduced chauffeuring responsibilities while their child grows up as a confident and active individual enjoying daily bicycling or walking habits. Also here there are opportunities for a better city at eye level for kids:

– Bus stops can contain stimulating and appropriate posters on shelter facade and small scale benches.
– Metro platforms can contain a mural on the platform wall.
– Children enjoy the boards displaying information about the approaching trams to prepare for accessibility and build confidence.
– Within carriages we need small scale seating, and posters / art on walls.
– Intuitive and fluid wayfinding integrated within cities' transit systems. [51] [8] [38]

32. **Seasons**

City planning, management, programming and use of public space seem to focus too much on the circumstances in good weather and therefore ignore the potential of public space throughout the other seasons. In general, summer is all about celebration and pleasure, whereas winter is perceived as something we need to survive in order to enjoy summer again. Playing children are catalysts for public life and will stimulate neighbours to go outside and be active as well, in other seasons too. [45] [40]

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CRITERIA

Rosa Danenberg

What makes a place child-friendly? How can we rank places according to its child-friendliness? What can be improved on various urban scales to enhance child-friendliness? Learning from the abundance of sources involved in this project, we have set up a list of criteria for child-friendly public spaces. The criteria are extracted from the experiences, insights and approaches from each chapter and case within this collaborative book as well as from the try-outs conducted by the team. As presented in the introduction of this book, the staged independency forms the scale matrix for structuring the criteria.

– **micro spaces scale** where parents/caretakers are bound to be careful and conscious about the child within clearly defined borders and with small-scale comfort both the parent/caretaker and child can enlarge and explore each other's boundaries (e.g. sandbox, picnic table, play object, bench etc.)
– **public space scale** offer spaces where children in eyesight of parents/caretakers are stimulated and supported in the exploration of their personal space within the surroundings while moving within semi-clearly defined borders and visible objects (e.g. a street corner or part of a park and plaza with engaging ground floors, water fountains, natural elements and so forth)
– **neighborhood scale** extends beyond the supervision of parents/caretakers and playfully triggers exploration of places and boundaries for children, by themselves, together with their friends, or with their parents/caretakers
– **city scale** is the strategic level for advocating for the child-friendly city

agenda as well as the largest implementation level where public spaces and actors are connected to lay out a city-wide urban agenda anticipated to child-friendliness.

The extensive list of criteria is an attempt towards comprehension and completeness, however we acknowledge that every context is different and demands contexts-specific measures. This list can be considered as a baseline for child-friendly criteria that applies to a wide range of public space, which is also open for modification, expansion and correction in the future to meet an even wider range. For practitioners and policymakers, this list can be used for evaluation and implementation of child-friendly measures. For students and researchers, this list can be used for thematic and scale sorted criteria that is intended to inform public space improvements towards child-friendliness. It is our aspiration to continue to engage with child-friendly measures within the public realm to be able to refine the list of criteria, and invite others through the process of co-creation to take part.

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
Micro	**Scale-sensitive design**	
	– Variety of heights and scales - such as benches, steps, bars, shop outdoor extension - to engage children in different ages	
	– Urban elements at children's height and scale to stimulate senses	
	– Elevated urban elements to climb, jump, hide and sit such as steps and side niches	
	– Variety of materials, textures and surfaces such as hard/soft, smooth/rough, colorful/natural	
	– Natural elements and terrain such as water, mud, plants, rocks	
	– Designated spaces to freely play on flat and open surfaces	
	– Furniture and panels in creative shapes, colors and use of non-standard structures, recycled and everyday material	
	– Facades that trigger interaction, such as mirrors, games on the wall, colours, vegetation, lighting, moving media image, information signs, history stories, creative and educational art	
Micro	**Comfort & character**	
	– Social, multi-age, multi-purpose and gender-sensitive seating close to play areas for parents to relax and stay close	
	– Sound emitter elements	
	– Where parents can interact with other parents comfortably	
	– A place that calls for recognition and that shapes a distinct identity: what can be called a favorite spot	
	– Facilities for parents to feel comfortable such as public toilets, seating with low thermal transmission materials, bins	
	– A place that offers overview and feels safe and enclosed where the child can move somewhat freely	
	– Safe zone in street or on square for children such as corner, hybrid zone, or green space while accompanied by parents	
Micro	**Play and learn**	
	– Signs of animals, trees, flowers and plants to touch, smell and play with and learn from	
	– Presence of loose parts, wooden sticks, sand that inspire to use their bodies to build and replicate experiences and live their own stories	
	– Narrow and enclosed spaces to roam and hide that evoke excitement and give new feeling, perspective and ability	
	– Coloured markings, flexible structures and installations that allows for setting up own rules and imagening another world	
	– Variety of play options for multiple ages and gender	
	– Repetition alternated with surprises to stimulate senses and motor skills that encourages learning and development	

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	U95
Micro	**Play and learn** – Children's admiration for round elements to twist, bend, turn in various sizes – Signs and information on child's height to learn – Share and negotiation for play elements (who sits on the swing)	
Micro	**Accessible and safe** – Well-lit during daytime and nighttime without dark corners – Clear, safe and accessible routes to and from other destinations – "Eyes" on the street mechanism and mixture of people passing by – Clear physical barriers between traffic/place, public/private space, play area within a larger park – Appears clean and well-maintained	
Micro	**Engagement and inclusion** – A co-creative design process that includes children, parents and educators from start to finish for the place to address needs and learning objectives in order to foster stronger bonds, greater community investment and a sense of pride and excitement throughout the process – Places and play equipment that is designed for a variety of ages and genders that accommodate different preferences for play, interaction and development – Inclusive design that offers coexistence to different user groups that avoids conflict and disturbances – Space for multiple playtypes (roamer, pusher, builder, viewer)	

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
Square, park, plaza, neighborhood	**Child-prioritising design** – Reasonable scale to roam and run while also meet physical delimiting borders – Defined urban elements: end of street, start of park, border of playground with respect for balance public-private space – Fine-grain street structure to allow for choice and surprise and support orientation – Differentitation between house, garden, sidewalk in front of building, hybrid zone or plinth, neighborhood street and arterial street – Nearness, variation and cohesion in urban elements leading to a network of child-friendly home doors – Presence of nature, (fruit) trees, flowers, water that can be seen and touched and tree canopies along the streets – Colorful and temporary urban elements such as rainbow crosswalks, parklets, potted trees, furniture, speed reducing traffic obstacles and public pianos creates a sensory experience and invites people to stop and interact – Public art, ornaments, fountains and murals: reference to history, happenings, activities, community and function as landmark, recognizable places and educative elements – Dedicating central locations of child-friendly parks makes children part of society, they can interact with other people in society, this prevents loneliness (in particular for migrant youth) and they can assert their youthful lifestyles to an audience.	
Square, park, plaza, neighborhood	**Accessibility and safety** – Walkability, including presence and width of side walks, even surface materials, continuity and facilitated pedestrian crossing – Network between public spaces that offer safe access and resting places between A and B – Differentiated floor materials or sensorial elements to indicate danger (waterfront pavement, sidewalk edge) – Lighting, many passers-by and neighboring windows on eye level while factors such as scooters, unleashed dogs, troublesome groups and vandalism are diminished – Negotiated traffic to increase safety for parents to for instance push the stroller while child learns how to ride a bike – Accessibility to parks without entrance fees, fences and gates and located near the street as well as access to schoolyards after school hours to move freely, shout, run, or check phones, all things that they are restricted from doing in school, on the subway, and in most spaces.	

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
Square, park, plaza, neighborhood	– Access to outdoor play spaces by temporarily transforming residential streets into playgrounds or more livable outdoor environments – Wayfinding encouragement for children to learn to navigate and position – Well-maintained, defined as durable materials, design quality, cleanliness and maintenance – Stroller friendliness by adjusted sidewalk heights, general reachability and spaces for strollers near places to stay	
Square, park, plaza, neighborhood	**Play and learn** – Interactive space such as activities wall, chess, chalk board, history signs, as well as static space such as sculptures – Playspaces that promote interaction, generate opportunities for wonder and provides challenges – Flexible furniture that can be moved, climbed up, stacking, assembling, creating own spaces, which engaged other kids and parents – Improved health outcomes for children and adults by making everyday exercise easy through play – Bodily experience of weather conditions, seasonal changes and evolution of nature (colors, size of tree tops, fruit or non fruit trees, urban vegetable garden) – Boys and girls prefer different kinds of playing: non-formal vs formal, open vs intimate spaces, larger groups vs pairs and engage in activities that involve freedom of movement vs rhythmic and social activities games – Learning from recycled materials, recycling systems, natural mechanism	
Square, park, plaza, neighborhood	**Quality and comfort** – Flexible public furniture with different heights and multi-purposes for children to rise and grow up while it offers parents a comfortable place to stay – Negotiated sound factors to reduce noise from traffic such as trees and enclosed spaces while highlighting natural sounds – Presence of lit clean and secure public toilets for both genders – Open areas or small squares interupting the relatively disciplined pace on continuous sidewalk for play, rest, spontanous conversation or closer observation of environment – Colors, painting streets, planting flowers and introducing more dust bins. Comfort, defined as protection from weather elements, provides a sense of safety, availability of seating and activities for adults – Good balance of what adults and children prefer	

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
Square, park, plaza, neighborhood	**Networks** – Private and citizen engagement where initiatives teach children how to be involved in the upgrading of quality of the environment, creating new experiences for children (flea market to sell something), developing citizenship and learning how to address local needs – Nearby schools, nurseries, sports facilities and after-schools – Familiarity and connection between people, a sense of community – Programs and initiatives for children, neighbors, officials, visitors and others to meet and have the opportunity to influence the place – Inclusion of both younger and older children in co-creation of the space – Conscious acts of being present at the public spaces in ways that significantly contribute to changes in the socio-political meaning and use of these public spaces. As such they can read as politics of the street, that we have called everyday urban youth politics	

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
Main streets, big squares, parks, waterfronts, stations	**Elements and scale** – Fine grain block structures, vertical orientation and mixed use zoning – Streets adjusted to children dimension by designing children oriented elements on the streets and sidewalks and division of space for scale-adjustment – Where children, parents, random pedestrians, bikers and even cars can live together: similar to a quiet and safe street of a little town – Clear visual guidance, distinctly visible car lanes, separate lanes for pedestrians, bikes and clear visual boundaries for play – Presence of micro spaces that offer a safe playful zone for children and families – Variety in material, textures and colors help children to orientate and create a place where they can meet	URBAN95 (×7)
Main streets, big squares, parks, waterfronts, stations	**Safety** – Use of design to reduce sense of danger from traffic or other user groups – Differentiated floor materials to indicate danger (waterfront pavement, sidewalk edge) – Visibly active maintenance program for comfort of children and parents, especially women and girls – Good lighting, particularly for girls – Design that accommodates different user groups next to each other for social control, safety and comfort	URBAN95 (×5)
Main streets, big squares, parks, waterfronts, stations	**Accessibility and transportation** – Safe and connected routes to and from schools that offers a streamline daily routine which can facilitate constructive interactions between children and caregivers – Green surfaces, access to nature connection or park in 5-10 min walking distance, planting community garden, presence of fruit trees, flowers and plants – Transportation hubs or bus stops that offer educational and playful material including murals, posters and signs at 95cm height, as well as child-scale seating	URBAN95 (×3)
Main streets, big squares, parks, waterfronts, stations	**Maintainence and comfort** – Well maintained spaces that are lit clean and secure comfort and encourage children's exploration – Well-working water and sanitation facilities that serves all gender identities	URBAN95 (×2)

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
	– Safe spots that offer an escape from fuss and noise – Shelter or flexible furniture to provide protection from sun, wind, rain and cold	URBAN95 (×2)
Main streets, big squares, parks, waterfronts, stations	**Character** – By designing their own neighbourhood children become owners, develop pride for their neighbourhood and take better care of it. They grow self-esteem and are more likely to use their neighbourhood to play and be physically active. This process helps the child to make their own healthy choices. – Neighbourhood characteristics and quirks based on the location and surrounding demographics to help children identify their location and create interesting landmarks	URBAN95
Main streets, big squares, parks, waterfronts, stations	**Functions and fun** – Interactive functions on the plinth level on children's height that trigger curiosity through various senses – Street artists, music, markets, vendors – Watch moving images of traffic and watching people and activities – Programming that invites families from other neighborhoods – Using child ideas in urban design is a starting point for unusual and playful designs, polycentrically in a neighbourhood so that they could function as different destinations. These places on the route are multipurpose and create variety and play opportunity.	URBAN95 (×3)

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
City	**Accessibility** – Schools playgrounds to be open for more public play space. Open Schools Program is two-fold. Opening schoolyards during after-school hours, offering additional open space for play and socializing that also enriches the school's schedule with extracurricular activities that range from environmental education to active citizenship – Hold events like No-Car Days – 'Place for Adults' into a 'Place for Kids' – Family facilties accessible through safe routes, such as community centres, libraries, public pools, movie theaters, and playgrounds – Integration of the (reclaimed) public space into urban dynamics: the public space has to become a space for the entire city and not only for the closest neighbours	
City	**Health and development supporting design** – Encourage adventurous, risky and challenging playgrounds in the planning and design phase – Curiosity and flexibility design approaches integrated in the planning and design phase – Urban design that triggers activity to get the physical activity to stay healthy such as walking distances to destinations as well as exercise equipment, skateparks, green fields etc – Walking trails, access to greenspace, places for relaxation and interaction and alternatives to driving motor vehicles	
City City	**Connectivity** – Dedicated bicycle paths and safe pedestrian connections between home and public space, playgrounds, schools and facilities – Independency stimulation of children and parents to move around the city and advance orientation and wayfinding – The "stroller test" and other indicators for walkable city – Provide public transit access within 800 meters of most residences – Outlining park locations throughout the city – Public transport that is colorful, easy and accessible, walkability, and family-friendly transport options such as cargo bike parking, tree-lined streets, traffic calming – Connectedness between public spaces, homes, pre-schools, green space and streets that encourage active transportation options such as walking or biking	

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
City	**Environmental-awareness** – Ecological and natural elements integrated to trigger sustainability discussions – Planting education for edible and non-edible (flower, plant) vegetation and learn about seaons and how valuable trees are to combat global warming – Cities can promote youth as a priority in urban matters in order to address sustainable solutions	
City	**Play and green spaces** – Availability of green spaces in the city – Children wish to be close to nature, safe, physically comfortable – Parents consider it important to introduce children not only to green space but also the real nature. Need for public transport connection to nature areas	
City	**Safety** – Visibility and presence of authorities contribute to the conception of saftety for all gender identities – Variety of streets that allow for lower speed streets where children learn and develop cycling skills, knowledge and understanding of traffic, and, gradually, the literal and figurative space from caretakers which incrementally boosts the child's level of independence – City with a full WI-FI coverage, in case there's an issue caretakers, friends or police can be informed	
City	**Initiatives and programs** – Initiatives with temporary implementation of redesigning public spaces to experiment with participation and livability in neighborhoods such as Leefstraten – Engage children in the ideation of park spaces through regular programming to strengthen commitment, support and ownership of the space – Build upon existing social capital: Children are the experts. For transformation to happen, kids need the tools to help them decide what cities could and should be in the future – mproving the living conditions for girls and young women through participatory design and public space planning promoting public health, sanitation, access to education, employment and security – A joyful, viral, and provocative political campaign aiming to keep the attention of local administrators	

LEVELS	CRITERIUM	
	– Building up online gardening community, setting chatting groups, blogging, etc. make communications easier and effective for all stakeholders	
City	**Comfort** – Sufficient light, especially in a northern city with a short daylight period in winter, through design interventions for light reflection and/or increase or encouragement of outdoor play – Places to hide in uncomfortable weather and materials that work – Parents want to raise their children in places that are safe, clean and attractive, that enjoy a sense of charm and place, and that have lots of fun and interesting stuff going on	URBAN95 URBAN95
City	**Network** – Reinforce relationship between the government and the communicties to strengthen the capacties of government officials to to be sensitive of early childhood development and urban space needs and introduce an integral vision on child-friendly cities at the municipal level – Collaboration with university that provides academic advice and volunteering students from different backgrounds – The Child Friendly Places programme with two practical engagement models that help put children higher on the agenda of the built environment sector and provide a structured platform for dialogue between children and decision makers	

APPENDIX

BIOGRAPHIES

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Aimilia Fakou *works as an Early Childhood educator. She is a graduate of Faculty in Early Childhood Education (BA), School of Education in National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She received her MA in Social Justice and Education from Institute of Education, University of London and her Phd in Sociology of Education from Faculty in Early Childhood Education (BA), School of Education in National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.*

Alexandra Epeshina *lives and works in Saint Petersburg and Lisbon, holds a Masters degree in architecture from San Francisco Academy of Art University. Together with Alice Markova, Alexandra co-founded YAS and Arch Dacha festival. Her research paper on participatory methods of design that incorporate children during the festival Arch Dacha was awarded and presented on the I Bienal Internacional de Educación en Arquitectura para la Infancia y Juventud «Ludantia» in May 2018.*

Aliaa Maged Kamal *is an architect, teaching assistant and PhD student at the German University in Cairo. During her 8-year research journey she focused on designing for children, specifically child development in play areas and listening to children, in her master degree thesis and a few papers. Besides research, she teaches design and building technology to undergraduate Architecture students.*

Alice Markova *is a professional architect who practices both architecture and children education, and investigates participatory approaches to urban design. In 2014 she co-founded two educational projects in Saint Petersburg, Russia: Young Architects Society (extra-curriculum architecture school for children from 5 to 16 years old) and festival Arch Dacha (outdoors architectural festival for children and design professionals where all participants together design and build playful spaces in 1:1 scale).*

Aline Peres *holds a Master in Urban Management from TU Berlin, Germany, and a Bachelor in Communications from PUCRS, Brazil. She is passionate about the relationship between people and place, and believes that storytelling is a powerful tool for transformation in cities. In 2016, she joined Urban Synergies Group and her work focuses on sustainable urban development, urban sociology, right to the city and placemaking.*

Amal Musa *is passionate about developing programs that connect children and their families to nature. At Evergreen Amal coordinated various aspects of a national program dedicated to greening school grounds and led the program delivery for the neighbourhood nature play project. Amal holds a Bachelor's in Urban and Regional Planning and currently works at Toronto and Region Conservation Authority where she continues to deliver programs that connect people to nature.*

Amanda Larsson *creates a mix of social practice, participatory art and social collaborative art. Her aim is to influence or highlight a prevailing social discourse. The projects are interactive scenografies whose aesthetics are naive and playful — an inclusive platform for in-depth meetings.*

Amanda O'Rourke *is the executive director of 8 80 Cities. She has been with the organization since the beginning in 2007, and was a key architect of the 8 80 concept. She has been a key driving force in the development and growth of 8 80 Cities and has worked on numerous projects related to parks, public spaces, and sustainable transportation in North America, Europe, Mexico, and Australia.*

Amowi Phillips *leads the Playtime in Africa initiative of Mmofra Foundation, a Ghana-based civic organization working to expand cultural and physical child-friendly spaces. She is a founding member of the Africa Play Network and serves on the Children, Play and Nature committee of World Urban Parks.*

Amy S. Levner *is the Vice President of Communications and Marketing for KaBOOM!, the US-based non-profit dedicated to giving all kids – especially those living in poverty – the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play. Amy leads the communications, marketing, digital strategy and thought leadership efforts for KaBOOM!, helping people understand how they can reimagine cities with kids in mind – and turn spaces into PLAYces.*

Anastasia Noukaki *is an architect Msc MA NTUA. Her research interests focus on cities as historical landscapes and as learning and playful environments for kids.*

Angela van der Kloof *specializes in bicycle education, engagement and planning, working as a consultant, trainer and researcher on projects locally, nationally and internationally. She combines her job at Mobycon with a PhD position at Radboud University (Nijmegen, Netherlands) in which she researches the passing on of "cycling knowledge" from parents to children in the Netherlands. To her the bicycle and cycling are tools to stimulate participation and interaction in an environment that is social and accessible for all.*

Anna Louise Bradley *is an urban researcher and network manager at STIPO. She has received an Honours Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Toronto looking closely at the connection between mental illness, environmental inputs, and epigenetics. Moving forward, she seeks to investigate the relationship between the built environment, habitual behaviours, and well being, while especially considering influence from power relations.*

Anna Têhlová *is a Urban Development Practitioner with specialization on African Cities, Anna has been involved with Dandora Transformation League in Nairobi as Programmes Coordinator: among others, she has helped to conceive and implement a participatory design process involving children and carried out a research on the impact of the community-driven public space restoration and management model in the low-income neighbourhood of Dandora in Nairobi. Currently, Anna is also coordinator of the Public Space Network in Nairobi.*

Anna Zdiara *is a postdoctoral assistant committed to teaching and research in urban planning at TU Darmstadt. With a background in social sciences much of my work is focused on improving neighborhoods and on citizens engaged in urban development processes.*

Annemarie Lammers *works as advisor sustainability education for Sustainability Centre Weizigt in Dordrecht. Annemarie has a lot of experience in the field of sustainability education at many different institutions: from non-profit to national and local government and also as a volunteer for "Het Bewaarde Land", a nature experience program for children from 8 - 10. Her passion for reconnecting children with nature started during her internship at Alterra. There she researched the impact of green school yards on nature sense of primary school children. She also did a policy research on the same topic while she was working at the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. It is Annemarie's deep wish that all children can experience the beauty and power of nature.*

Ardan Kockelkoren *is experienced in the field of early childhood development, urban planning and political geography. At the Bernard van Leer Foundation he has been part of the development and scoping of the Urban95 strategy since its inception which has the improvement of city living for young children and their parents as its primary objective. Ardan received his B.A in Human Geography from Groningen University and holds a MSc in Political Geography from the Nijmegen University School of Management, where he focused on the use of (new) media in contemporary conflict.*

Beata Patuszynska *is a PR professional with 14 years experience in the real estate sector. She has worked variously for commercial and residential developers, as well as management funds. She has an active interest in urban issues and is a lifelong learner and promoter of urban topics among the young.*

Benedetta Rodeghiero, *PhD, is an independent researcher in post-disaster resilience and participatory design. She has been a professor of Urban Planning and Design at the Ear-URV (2014-2017) and at the Etsab-UPC (2009-2014); invited professor in Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Chile, Mexico. Thanks to her three kids, since 2007, she investigates body and space. In 2011 she's the co-founder of Lemur, an association that combines Awareness through the body, Seitai, inclusive urbanism, participatory design and building, active education.*

Brenda Vértiz *is project manager at Peatoniños and designer for social innovation. Her practice focuses on creating a positive impact in our society and on citizen participation. She holds a B.I.D. (ITESM, Mexico), a minor in Sociology and an MA in Creative Sustainability (Aalto, Finland).*

Christine Saalfeld *is a independent fine art professional and studied Fine Arts and Philosophy in Hamburg, Berlin, Jerusalem and Rotterdam. She has lived in Rotterdam since 2000, exhibiting locally and internationally. In her work, Saalfeld deals with questions of humanism, social philosophy and art in public space.*

Catherine Witt *is engaged as a consultant for United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat, including two years as Settlement Architect in Kalobeyei, Kenya. She previously worked in U.S. private sector residential architecture, and a myriad of commercial, health, and arts projects. She was inspired to move to Kenya based on three years of reserve officer training for the U.S. Air Force, and think-tank experience with Office of Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in Rotterdam.*

Christine Yuihwa Lee *is one of the Parks and Playgrounds for Children by Children (PPFCC) originators, who has been mainly in charge of (i) the localisation of international literatures of children's right to play/participation, (ii) generating Taiwan local advocacy discourses, and (iii) liaison affairs, for the advocacy group PPFCC.*

Chucho Ocampo *works at dérive LAB, a multidisciplinary laboratory that seeks to explore, understand and inspire other (new) ways of living and thinking about life in the City. They develop projects of art, architecture, urban design and other disciplines that impact on three specific scales: public life, the built environment and everyday objects.*

Clara Muzzio *is undersecretary of Use of Public Space at the Ministry of Environment & Public Space, Buenos Aires City Government, and former General Director of Urban Regeneration. Lawyer, passionate about urban planning. In love with Buenos Aires, and transform the public space so that the city is more accessible and more enjoyable.*

Chiara Tomaselli *worked for the United Nations Programme for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat) in the field of urban development and resilience in sub-Saharan Africa. She supported governments and their local authorities in the analysis of urban dynamics and how to best plan actions to strengthen the resilience of their cities. Between 2014 and 2018 she has worked in Mozambique, Madagascar, the Union of Comoros, Malawi, Cape Verde, São Tome and Principe, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Guinea Bissau*

Cristina Canciovici *graduated in 2008 from the Faculty of Urban Planning (Bucharest, Romania), where she also worked as a teaching assistant. In July, 2017 she defended her doctoral thesis on the topic of play and urban planning in the everyday life of the child.*

Danielle Maranhão de Castro *is graduated in architecture and urbanism from the University of Fortaleza, Brazil. She is a researcher in urban planning at multiple scales focusing on corners as spaces of quality for people.*

Darell Hammond *has more than 25 years experience in community development, social innovation, public-private partnerships and volunteerism. He founded and served for 20 years as CEO of KaBOOM!, a national US non-profit dedicated to bringing balanced and active play into the daily lives of all children. Currently residing in Tirana, Albania, he is advising the city's Mayor on establishing a parks and recreation department and implementing the Tirana2030 Masterplan. In his role of Senior Advisor for the Bernard van Leer Foundation, he advises team members and partners on the Urban95 strategy and implementation.*

Donovan Finn *is an urban planner and an assistant professor in the Sustainability Studies Program and School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences at Stony Brook University. He is a founding member of the Jackson Heights Green Alliance and lives in New York City.*

Dyah Fatma *entered architecture studies because of her interest in heritage buildings. She found herself gravitated into urban studies during the end of her undergraduate. She is interested in CPTED and land use in urban setting.*

Elin Andersdotter Fabre *is project manager Sustainable Cities at Global Utmaning (Global Challenge), Sweden's leading independent think tank with focus on sustainable development. Elin has a broad experience of working with various on sustainable development development issues - democracy, human rights, gender equality and security from international organisations, government institutions and civil society. Elin has previously worked with policy development and advocacy leading up to the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. Her academic background is in political science with Goals and the New Urban Agenda. Her academic background is in political science with degrees from Stockholm University, Sciences Po Paris and King's College London.*

Elissa McMillan *is a social planner and Associate with CoDesign with ten years of experience in planning, placemaking and community development. She is committed to enabling communities to create places that improve where they live, work and play.*

Elli Sarrou *is co-founder of Playful Dust. Together with Lamprini Chartoflylaka and Ermina Kallinikou they form a pedagogical team, founded in 2014. They use theatrical play practices and support the concept of multiculturalism in the design of educational activities, adapt them on a micro level, depending on the local context or/and on the cultural theme of an event (a festival initiative, a call for actions, a community-based program).*

Ermina Kallinikou *is co-founder of Playful Dust. Together with Lamprini Chartoflylaka and Elli Sarrou they form a pedagogical team, founded in 2014. They use theatrical play practices and support the concept of multiculturalism in the design of educational activities, adapt them on a micro level, depending on the local context or/and on the cultural theme of an event (a festival initiative, a call for actions, a community-based program).*

Eudora Tan *is a preschool educator in St James' Church Kindergarten who had worked as an architectural designer before entering the early childhood education field. She*

believes that environments have the power to inspire children to explore and learn but conversely, children can also be empowered to inspire changes to their surroundings.

Eva De Baerdemaeker *is founder of Cultureghem after teaching for 10 years in a Brussels college. Cultureghem is a Brussels based socio-cultural organisation that focusses on reclaiming private space, turning it into public space. Together with her team, she uses this space in all possible ways. Be it as a classroom, a concert hall, a football pitch, livingroom or a kitchen. Anything goes, as long as it's open to anyone willing to join.*

Fernando Tavara *is a social psychologist from Perú. His work is focused on education and public policy research. He is part of the "Recovering children's lives: Urban space and emergency" project. Bernand Van Leer Foundation and Pontific Catholic University of Peru.*

Francisco Paillie *is co-founder of dérive LAB, a multidisciplinary laboratory that seeks to explore, understand and inspire other (new) ways of living and thinking about life in the City. They develop projects of art, architecture, urban design and other disciplines that impact on three specific scales: public life, the built environment and everyday objects.*

Francesco Rossini, *Ph.D, is an architect, and assistant professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In 2014 he completed his doctoral studies in Barcelona at Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya. In addition to his research and teaching activities, he worked for the last 15 years as a registered Architect in Italy, as well as in Spain and China, realizing projects related to architecture and urban design.*

Garyfallia Katsavounidou *teaches Urban Design at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She holds an SMArchS from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a PhD from University of Thessaly. Her research interests include the relationship between city and history, the transformations induced to city space due to immigration, and the design for the child in the city. She has written Invisible Parentheses; 27 cities in Thessaloniki (Patakis, 2004), and translated Jan Gehl's classic book Life between buildings (University Press of Thessaly, 2013).*

Gerben Helleman *is a father and urban geographer with a strong passion for public spaces. His research and writings on his blog 'Urban Springtime' are about the interaction between the 'Planned City' and the 'Lived city'. Giving insights in the relation between 'the city as it is designed and made by professionals' versus 'the city as it is experienced and filled in by its residents'.*

Gina Maskell *has a background in urban environmental education, developing curriculum related to urban infrastructure and the urban environment as well as facilitating workshops on urban farms and New York City's water system. She currently lives in Berlin, Germany, where she is pursuing a Masters of Planning.*

Giselle Sebag, *MPH, LEED AP, Fitwel Ambassador, is an impact-driven healthy places development specialist who has been working to promote healthy, resilient and inclusive cities for more than a decade. Previously, she was Head of Built Environment at the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI). Other past experiences include work with the Brookings Institution, Southface, the Center for Research in Environmental Epidemiology (CREAL), the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), MASS*

Design Group, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and the Project for Public Spaces (PPS). Her areas of expertise include sustainable architecture, public policy, urban development/planning and NCD prevention. Ms. Sebag holds a B.S. from UT-SOA, B.A from UT School of Liberal Arts, M.Sc. degrees from TU Darmstadt and ESARQ-UIC and an M.P.H. from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Greg Labrosse, *originally from Montreal, is a university lecturer and educational consultant in the city of Cartagena, Colombia. He holds a Master's degree in Development and Culture from the Technological University of Bolivar where he works in the fields of critical urbanism and cultural studies.*

Gregor H. Mews *is the founder of international think and do tank, Urban Synergies Group, a consultant, writer and academic who dedicates his life, as one of the UN-Habitats Urban Thinkers voices, calling for a transformational paradigm shift towards better outcomes for future generations.*

Gustavo Brant de Carvalho *is an aspiring Architect and Urban Designer. In between working and studying in Germany and Switzerland, he supported the United Nations Programme for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat) for the Child Friendly Cities Initiative project 'Public Spaces for Children' in Mozambique*

Hannah Yu-Pearson *is project assistant at dérive LAB, a multidisciplinary laboratory that seeks to explore, understand and inspire other (new) ways of living and thinking about life in the City. They develop projects of art, architecture, urban design and other disciplines that impact on three specific scales: public life, the built environment and everyday objects.*

Heidi Campbell *is the senior landscape designer at Evergreen, a Canadian charity that makes cities more liveable. Heidi has a Master's degree in Landscape Architecture and a Bachelor of Education with over 20 years of experience in the programming and design of children's outdoor spaces for play and learning.*

Helen Rowe *is the head of innovation & strategy at CoDesign Studio, an urban innovator with over fifteen years of experience in planning cities with a passion for rethinking our use of streets.*

Helena Friman *worked for many years as Head of Education at the Stockholm City Museum and as Head of the Cultural Department at the open air museum Skansen. She participated with her own project, Stockholm Education, when Stockholm celebrated as Cultural Capital of Europe´98. Since 1999 she has worked as a freelance with various projects, arranging courses, writing books and historical signs for the city, lecturing and city walking.*

Dr. Jacqueline Chung *is the senior principal and Academic Director of St. James' Church Kindergarten, Singapore (SJCK). She believes that play is essential for developing children's cognitive and social skills, as well as their creativity and imagination. Under her leadership, SJCK's Nature Playscape and Creative Sensory Playscape have won national early childhood innovation awards.*

Dr. Jaz Choi *is a Vice-Chancellor's Senior Research Fellow at RMIT and researches designing with and for care at RMIT, after serving as the Director of the QUT Urban Informatics Research Lab, where she explored designing*

novel technologies and services across self-care, mutual aid, and co-creative urban transformation.

Jillian Glover *is a communications specialist in urban issues and transportation. She is a former Vancouver City Planning Commissioner and holds a Master of Urban Studies degree from Simon Fraser University. She was born and raised in Vancouver and writes about urban issues at her blog, This City Life, named one of the best city blogs by The Guardian www.thiscitylife.tumblr.com.*

Jing Jing *is a professional architect SAR/MSA actively engaged in cross-cutting fields of architecture, urban design and art in China, Sweden and internationally. A Chinese-national based in Stockholm, she is currently working as a PhD fellow at the Centre for the Future of Places (CFP) in the School of Architecture and Built Environment, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) Sweden. Her previous research on children in cities is titled 'Built environment for Children - Stockholm experience', while her current research investigates the value and use of public space for particularly children and families, the elderly and individuals vulnerable to loneliness.*

Johan Oost *is a father and founder of OBB, a consultancy agency for playful spaces. He finds his motivation in the understanding of the need for children to have good and challenging places to play and meet outside. He wants to continually strengthen his vision and methods based on the latest insights, and sees it as one of the goals of the company to implement this insights and their own research into their work as advisors.*

Jonna Monaghan *is a health and wellbeing manager and leads the innovative Healthy Urban Environment programme of Belfast Healthy Cities, which aims to explore ways to put people and health at the heart of planning. The programme engages partners across sectors to develop, test and integrate new approaches and ways of working.*

José Luis Chong *is an urban planner and licentiate architect (Lima, Peru). He holds Master degrees in Renewal Energies, Sustainable Architecture and Urbanism (Huelva, Spain), and in International Cooperation (Darmstadt, Germany) & Urban Development and Sustainable Emergency Architecture (Barcelona, Spain). He is Programme Management Officer of the Global Public Space Programme at United Nations Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat), supporting the development of city-wide strategies and innovative tools for community participation and collaborative urban design.*

Kate Ferguson *is an architect, placemaker, participatory designer and researcher who is interested in how design projects can be avenues for learning, empowerment and community strengthening. She co-founded Design Build PNG and CoDesign Studio to pursue participatory projects that have since been awarded in Australia and internationally. Her current PhD research in the Centre for Urban Research at RMIT University was conducted in partnership with the City of Blacktown in western Sydney.*

Karima Wanuz *is public management specialist from Germany. Her work is focused on early childhood development and public management. She coordinates urban 95 Project: "Recovering children's lives: Urban space and emergency" Bernand Van Leer Foundation and Pontific Catholic University of Peru.*

Klairi Tzoufla *works as an Early Childhood educator. She is a graduate of Faculty in Early Childhood Education*

(BA), School of Education in National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She received her MA in Education in Arts and Cultural Settings from King's College London. She has worked as a Museum Educator at the Whitechapel Gallery in London and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice.

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Leticia Lozano is head of Playful City. Experience designer, creative strategist and researcher. She has collaborated in diverse international projects as a creative consultant due to her passion for public space, behavior change and citizen engagement. She holds a BArch (UDLAP, Mexico) and an MA in Narrative Environments (UAL, UK).

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Lisa Klingwall is employed as a City planner at Stockholm City planning administration since 2010. For the last 4 years focusing on bringing the UN convention of the right of the child into the forefront of city planning. She is the project leader of the cross sector working group City at Eye Level and has presented at several international conferences on the topic of child rights in expanding cities.

Ir.drs. Lisa ten Brug studied Urbanism and Science Communication at TU Delft. After successfully finalizing a double degree graduation project on childhood obesity in cities, Ten Brug founded the company ObeCity Consulting. She is now working on several obesity related spatial projects in the Netherlands. Need more information? Contact lisa@obecity.nl or check the website www.obecity.nl

Marcela Guerrero Casas is passionate about cities, public space and most importantly, people. Her personal and professional drive emanates from connecting with others and contributing to improve the place where she lives. Born and raised in Bogota, Colombia, Marcela lived in the US for most of her adult life before moving to South Africa in 2006. Marcela holds a Masters in Public Administration and International Affairs from Syracuse University. She has worked in policy and advocacy for almost ten years in organisations that include The Carter Center, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, and Fairtrade Africa. Marcela is also a co-founder of SUR Collective and was a contributor to the African Centre for Cities' Serious Fun project in 2014.

Manuel Polanco Perez-Llantada works for Basurama, an artist collective dedicated to research, cultural and environmental creation and production whose practice revolves around the reflection of trash, waste and reuse in all its formats and possible meanings. Their aim is to study those phenomena inherent in the massive production of real and virtual trash in the consumer society, providing different points of view on the subject that might generate new thoughts and attitudes.

Marco Terranova is a Sicilian born architect and craftsman with a nomadic attitude. He designs and self-builds with wood and natural materials, often through participatory processes.

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Maria Ustinova is an education consultant at the World Bank's office in Russia and Associated Researcher at the Department of Architecture, Technische Universität Darmstadt. Her areas of professional and research expertise include early childhood development, education facilities design (kindergartens and schools) and education quality assurance. In 2015-2016 she served as a German Chancellor Fellow of Alexander von Humboldt Foundation doing a research on education facilities design in Germany.

Marianne Halblaub Miranda is a research associate in the Urban Health Games group, Department of Architecture at the Technische Universität Darmstadt. Her research focus is on user-centered architecture and urban design and the dynamics of the built environment and human behavior. She is leading the project Active Learning Spaces, presented in this chapter, and co-developed research tools such as MoMe, a context-sensitive mobile application to assess spatial perception and behavior in the built environment; and its adaptation for schools settings, MoMe@school.

Dr. Martin Knöll is professor and head of the Urban Health Games research group, Department of Architecture at Technische Universität Darmstadt. He leads new transdisciplinary collaborations between urban designers and health experts to address global health challenges such as more sustainable mobility systems, inclusion, physically inactive lifestyles, diabetes and urban stress.

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Mitiku Woldesenbet is a senior architect, urban planner and designer working in various public space related topics worldwide with focus on how to address Children's and communities' friendly public spaces. He got curious about understanding children and urban settings while he worked on a thesis project for his MSc with the title "How to Fill-in Child Friendly Public spaces in Existing Cities and Neighborhoods". He is currently working in UN-Habitat at the Global Public space program starting 2015 involving public space projects in different cities across the world.

Mizah Rahman is a designer and community organizer who is a strong advocate for a participatory and community-centric approach in the design and planning of cities. She is the Co-founder and Director of Participate in Design (P!D), a non-profit design organisation that helps empower communities by designing their neighbourhoods with them -- not just for them.

Nadine Roos is founder and co-owner of HUNK-design. This design studio strives for irresistible attractive cities. The studio operates in the fields of architecture and interventions in the public domain. The best-known project is The Flying Grass Carpet, which received a Dutch Design Award. Nadine loves to travel, to explore cities and to be amazed by how urbanites interact with the physical urban elements. Currently, she is writing for the blog seductivecities.org. She can be contacted at info@hunkdesign.com.

Natalia Bazaiou is an architect Msc AUTH, MA NTUA. Her research interests focus on cities as a learning and playful environment for kids, through various media such as cinema and narrative techniques.

Namata Serumaga-Musisi is a 'decolonial spacemaker'. Through her work she explores the lived experience of the citizen (the Living City) as they navigate the imposed Physical City. Her goal is to create platforms from which the marginalized can define their own development narratives.

Nikki Daniëls is a Dutch graphic artist with an urge to understand human experiences and interactions. She focuses on the field of environmental psychology at the University of Lund, Sweden. Our experiences are always situated in a physical environment, which shapes our perceptions, intentions and behaviors. In turn, we are constantly shaping the environment. Together with HUNK-design she investigates and writes about the urban environment, and how to make it a more sustainable, more playful and utterly enticing place.

Noor Fajrina Fistiani is Indonesian young interior architect and independent urban interior researcher living in Rotterdam. She graduated from Master Interior Architecture and Research Design, Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam University of Applied Science, The Netherlands. She is interested in research about the potentiality of interior architecture realm in larger social context related to the built environment at various scales through developing design exploration that combines drawing research analysis, material experimentation, and practical making in spatial design. Most of her research project focused on the idea of interiority within the spatial setting of domestic and public interior.

Rachel Phamhas a background in urban environmental nonprofits, including some experience in urban environmental education. She currently works in development at a grassroots environmental justice organization in West Harlem, New York City.

Renée Miles Rooijmans is urban anthropologist expert at STIPO. She just recently joined STIPO after working in Vancouver, Canada as an urban catalysts to change people's perspectives on public space, throughout all seasons. She believes in placemaking through experiential learning and play, prioritizing impact over outcome.

Ir. Renet Korthals Altes combines since 12 years her dual background as a primary school teacher and as an architect in designing spaces to play and meet. She has lead projects worldwide in diverse contexts: in The Netherlands and abroad, in urban settings and parks, (greening) schoolyards, dense streets in city centers. She emphasizes the importance of the co-creation process, with communities, schoolchildren, or with refugees and their host communities. www.makespace4play.com

Ricardo Nogueira Martins is a researcher in Geography at the Landscape Laboratory of Guimarães, working on topics as landscape studies, territorial identity, environment and planning policies. He has a master degree in Geography - Planning and Territory Management a degree in Geography and Planning and a postgraduation in Communitarian Politics and Territorial Cooperation by the University of Minho. He lived in Mallorca, Spain and studied at the University of Balearics Islands.

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Saša Radenovic (Sarajevo, 1970) came in 1994 to the Netherlands after the fall of Yugoslavia. He obtained his master's degree in 2006 at the Academy of Architecture in Amsterdam. Since 2012 he is running his own architectural practice, Architectuurstudio Radenovic.

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Stephania Vouvousira *received a BSc degree in Early Childhood Education from the Faculty of Early Childhood Education, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, and a MA degree in Political Science and Sociology from the Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She has been working as a preschool teacher, as a discussion leader in various workshops at the Faculty of Early Childhood Education of the University of Athens (Differentiated Education/Social Inequality and Education), as a trainer of primary school teachers in a teacher training program on the education of children from the Muslim minority of Thrace and as well as in various teacher training seminars concerning the use of visual arts in education.*

Stephanie Geertman *is an independent scholar in urbanism who seeks to understand the role of everyday politics in urban space appropriation in the informal housing sector (PhD, TU-Eindhoven, 2007), urban youth and their use of public space (post-doctoral fellow, INRS, Montreal, 2013–2016), and urban public space appropriation by the creative sector (since 2016).*

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ABOUT STIPO

Stipo is a multi-disciplinary consultancy team for urban strategy and city development. Its operating area consists of spatial planning and strategy with economic development, culture, urban anthropology, community planning and placemaking. Stipo, based in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, is affiliated with the international network Inspiring Cities and has extensive experience in international exchange settings. Stipo works for cities, housing providers, regions, ministries, private developers, knowledge and innovation centres, international networks and universities.

Stipo stands for Strategy, Innovation, Process development and Open-source. Stipo started at the University of Amsterdam in 1995, and is based on the principle to create stronger cities and stronger societies. Stipo's core values are the breathing city (long lasting quality), the public city (public realm quality) and the soul city (identity). Stipo approaches the city as a whole with connecting spatial, social, economic, and cultural components. The Stipo team works by the innovative and strategic Stipo approach on urban development. Stipo works in collaborative networks, involving partners and co-makers from both the 'planned city' and the 'lived city'. The Stipo approach ensures that results are not shelved, but used. It is only by integrating content, process, and management that we can safeguard real innovation, improvement, and production - and this is the ultimate objective. Often the Stipo approach leads to new ideas for cities. As a public developer we make ourselves co-responsible to bring these ideas from the strategic level to implementation, always with the co-makers we involve in the projects.

Stipo has an extensive experience in innovative projects, both in The Netherlands and internationally. Stipo shares its knowledge through training programmes, concept development, complex project management in urban practice, knowledge exchange, and social media. The Stipo Academy shares knowledge and insights in the what and how of urban development. Recent themes are the shift from making to being a city, new investment strategies, smart cities, urban development after the crisis, collaborative urban development, co-creation, incubator strategy, organic renewal, urban anthropology and urban psychology, cultural clusters, social enterprise, public squares, area coalitions, child-friendly areas, co-working, vacant buildings, temporary use, the future role of housing providers, synchronicity, soul and plinth strategy.

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PHOTO CREDITS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL
For Kids

The quality of public space is the backbone of a sustainable city.

Great streets, places where you intuitively want to stay longer, interaction between buildings and streets on a human scale, ownership by users, placemaking and good plinths (active ground floors) and a people-centred approach based on the user's experience - that's what The City at Eye Level is all about.

It's a book, an open-source learning network and a programme for improving cities, streets and places all over the world.

This edition focuses on the dimension of children and their caregivers in the city and the active role that they (should) have in city-making. Powered by the Urban95 Program, by the Bernard van Leer Foundation, this book travels through 65 research studies, city programs, case studies, and personal stories from 30 different countries around the world.

Using the knowledge we gathered for our book and in our other projects as foundation, we help cities and their partners to develop strategies to create or improve their own great city at eye level. In addition to being part of the worldwide and European open-source learning network, through this edition and project we have also started a dedicated "for Kids" network focusing on developments on child- and family-friendliness of cities around the world.

With our network partners we:
– devise rules and strategies for new city development;
– help to transform existing streets and districts;
– set up "place and city at eye level" games to co-create with the local network;
– set up street coalitions and place management;
– initiate and carry out our own projects;
– give public lectures and organise training programmes and master classes.