Course 49836 - Spring 2019

Urban Planning
for Early Childhood Development

Final Report

Dr. Emily Silverman
Luisa Venancio

Introduction

The course Big Cities, Little Children: Urban Planning and Early Childhood was developed by the Urban Clinic at Hebrew University as a model for graduate student courses internationally. The course was tested four times from 2016 - 2019, at three Universities in Israel. This version was delivered in Spring 2019 in a 13-week semester with 90 minute classes. Our course was funded through the Israel Bernard van Leer Foundation, but future courses could explore funding by local municipalities, in return for practical course deliverables

Report Contents

- Course modules
- Student assignments
- Insights from class sessions.
- Evaluation of the course and next steps

Key Questions

- "How does growing up in cities affect young children?
- What urban policies and design and planning interventions can help to promote early childhood development in cities?"

Methods

The taught course is based largely on a 'flipped classroom" experiential education approach, with some frontal lectures. Students read and watch videos, and perform site-based assignments, that then inform class-time discussions. Most materials are in English, but students were given the option of turning in and presenting their work in Hebrew if they preferred.

Course Modules

Introduction to Urban 95: Big Cities, Little Children

Goals

- Explore the rationale for the nexus between urban planning and early childhood - exercise.
- Learn about the Bernard van Leer Foundation Urban 95 initiative internationally - formal lecture.
- Teachers and students begin to get acquainted, including experiences, skills, and reasons for selecting this course -discussion.
- Describe the course goals, structure, methods, and assignments.
- Frame the course also as an exercise in the role of urban planners in creating/implementing changing paradigms.

Methods

- Individual experiences: Did you grow up in a city? What are strong positive or negative memories from being a child in a city?
- The difference of early childhood: What are some of the ways small children experience urban space differently from adults, or even older children?
- Are you raising children in the city? If so -how does your city/neighborhood help or hinder the experience of raising small children in the city?
- Why did you choose to take this course? Does it relate to your work?

Insights

- Many of our students are parents, typically of small children growing up in the city, and have quite a lot to say about issues of mobility and access.
- An intuitive discussion of 'the difference of early childhood' was a helpful introduction, and should happen before delivering a formal lecture.
- Can also ask students to view online videos of toddlers exploring the city and recommend one to class. This will be a good start to looking at the city from a toddler's perspective.
- When answering the "where you grew up" question, answers fell into two categories. Those who grew up in villages felt they had a lot of freedom, but not much to do. Conversely, those who grew up in cities had less freedom to roam about, but had more opportunities.
- We distributed the Urban 95 'starter-kit' in the first session, with time to explore it.

Resources

Maria Farinha Filmes (2016, Mar 17). The Beginning of Life - Official Trailer [Video File]. Full series available on netflix and select videos available on Bernard Van Leer Foundation's Youtube Channel. Trailer retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHqUMqvL1RQ&feature=youtu.be

From a toddler's perspective - the videos below are helpful to get a perspective from a toddler's experience. Each one follows a toddler in different parts of the world, showing how they experience the city.

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2018, Mar 23). Trailer: Life in Istanbul from a Toddler's Perspective. [Video File]. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZRh7JfX_s4&t=204s

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2019, Feb 5). Walking with Amadou: Antou Walking to the Market. [Video File]. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81iA5pUNm84&trk=organization-update-content_share-video-embed_share-article_title

Krupnick, J. (2016, Dec 28). Young Explorers. [Video Files]. Retrieved from: https://www.youngexplorers.club/home

OCARA urbana (2017, Jun 6) Strolling with Tim Tim! English Subtitles. [Video File]. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHu_idPv2kY&t=141s&list=PL7IulYUNzXezrjXiwVrbHXIC-Sugu0Xjn&index=2

Session 2

User Stories

User Stories

Goals

- Guide students through a shift in perspective - how is a city experienced by toddlers and their caretakers?

Methods

- Lecture on Urban 95 project internationally
- Classroom discussion based on student assignments, which were handed in before class. Allowed students to present their own, and comment on other students' assignments, building a positive shared learning environment.

Assignment

This assignment is an introduction to the experience of getting around in the city with a small child under age 3. You will be preparing a poster, or a Prezi/Power Point presentation of a day in the city with a small child, for presentation to your classmate. In order to do this exercise, you will need to interview /walk about with a parent and their small child. It is FINE to choose your own life and your own child.

Selecting your user: this exercise will form the basis of the assignments for the rest of the semester, so you need to choose carefully. We recommend choosing someone who:

- Lives close to you, in a place you can revisit in the next assignments.
- Is interested in the idea of evaluating the 'child-friendliness' of their neighborhood - the challenges and opportunities and possible fixes (or just someone who loves you enough not to mind!).
- Gets out of the home (i.e., probably not a new parent with one new-born baby!).

What to ask:

- In the interview/walkabout: try to elicit a full description about a typical day in the city (i.e. not just in the house!) with the child/children. Be sure the description relates to the perspective of both the child, and the caregiver: You can use the interview guide below.
- Where and when does the typical day begin - for the child, for you?
- Where is the first place you go with this child, outside the apartment?
- How do you get there (car, bus, bike, walk, etc)? What does the child see, hear, smell, touch and feel on the route? What makes this route easy, playful or interesting? What makes it difficult?
- Tell me about the experience of the child at this destination - what does s/he do, touch,

enjoy or dislike?
- Where else do you go with this child? To play, shop, receive services, or meet other people? Describe the child's experiences at one or two more of these places?
- Are there destinations that you want to go to - but can't because of the child (i.e. cultural norms, transport access, cost, topography, etc.)?
- Consider additional issues such as risks and challenges, issues of loneliness and community support, information tools, healthcare, childcare, and activities friendly to small children.

What to present:

- What about this story do you want to present to your classmates – and how? Some ideas:
- Organize the material along a timeline, or map or diagram
- Illustrate the journey and destinations with images that show the good and difficult aspects of the day. You can use real photos, Google earth, or illustrations.
- Be sure the printed presentation tells the story on its own, without narration.
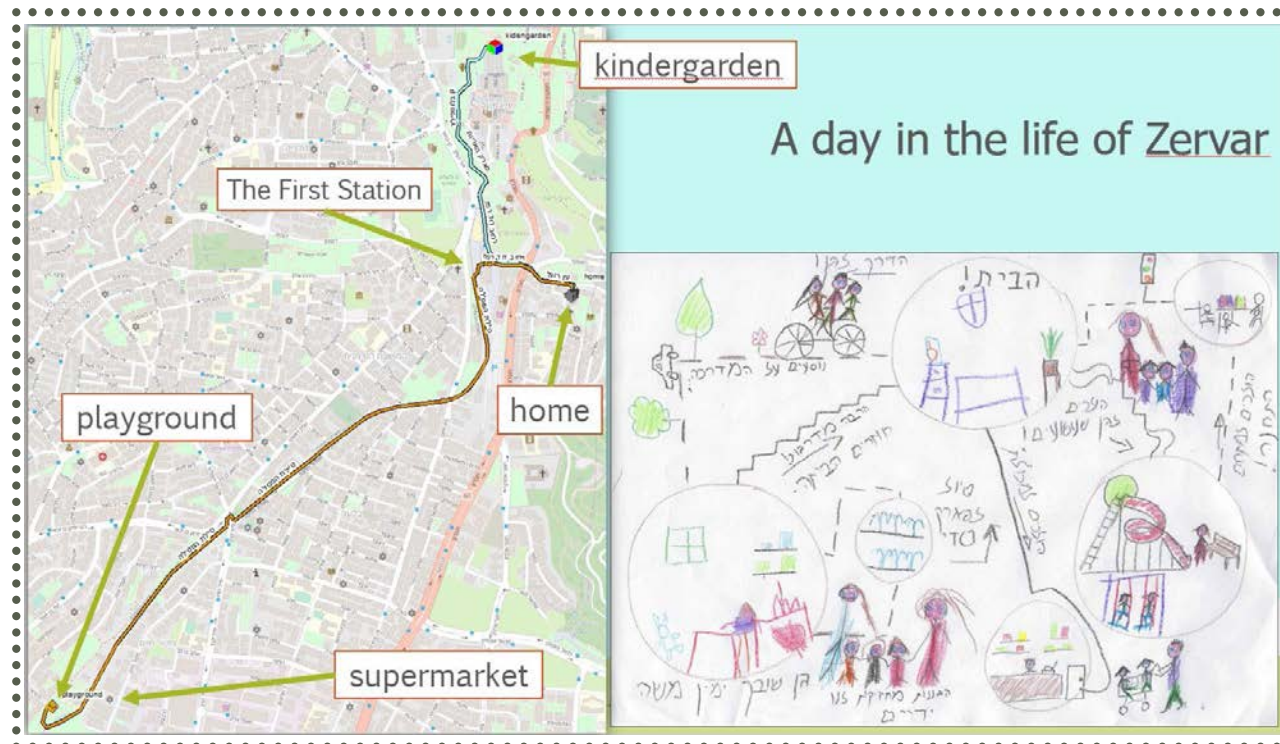
Discussion Points

- What were some things that surprised you when doing the assignment?
- What was the toddler's day like? What kinds of places did they go?
- How did your interviewee and their child move around the city? By car? Public transportation? Walking? Bike?
- What did you think was most important for the child? And for the caregiver? Where did their interests collide?
- Were there things the caregiver you interviewed found were harder to do with a toddler?

Insights

- Some assignments focused solely on the point of view of the child, while others were limited to the perspective of the caretakers. It is important to remind students to look at both and notice where their interests contradict each other.
- This assignment gives students tacit knowledge on how toddlers and caregivers experience the city and it became the basis for all other course assignments.
- Stories showed a difference in perspective between carer and toddler: for the caregiver, it was more practical to have the child in a stroller, while for the child, it was infinitely more interesting to walk and explore, but this would mean a longer commute for the mother.
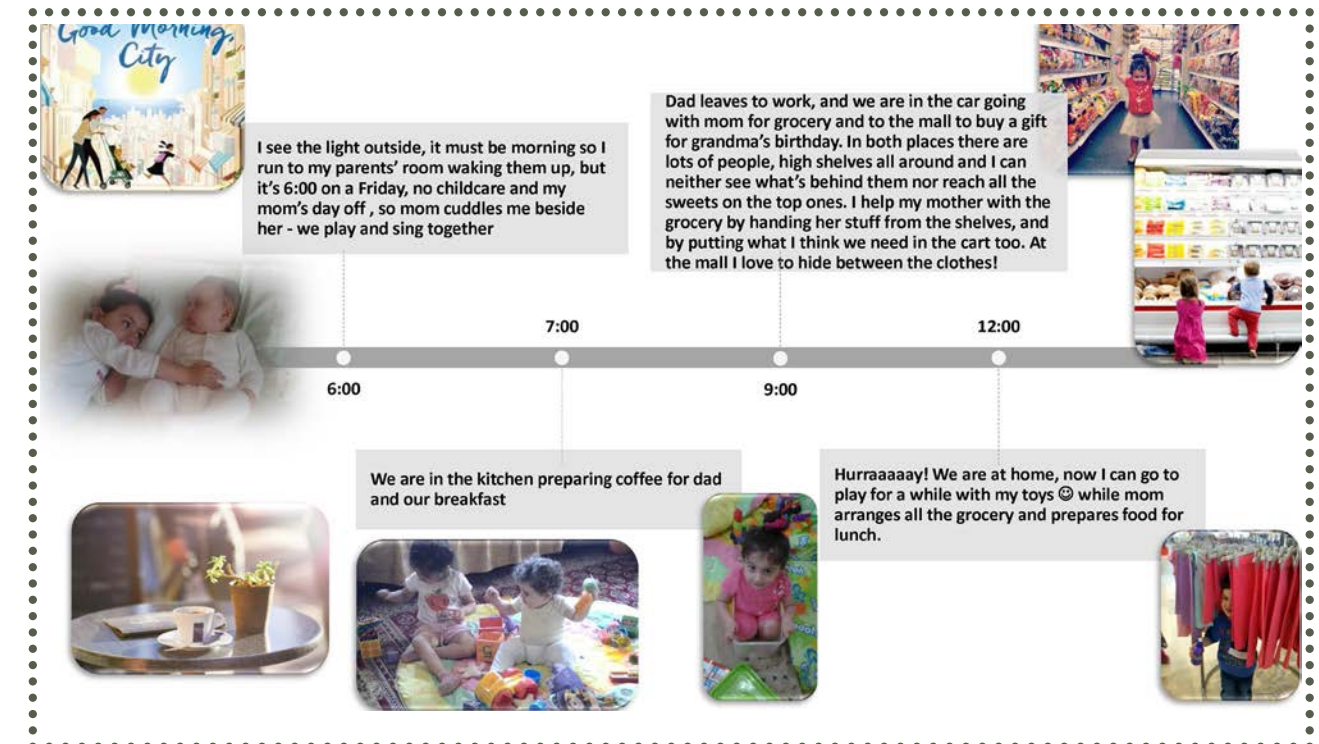
kindergarden

## A day in the life of Zervar

The First Station

playground

home

supermarket

I see the light outside, it must be morning so I run to my parents' room waking them up, but it's 6:00 on a Friday, no childcare and my mom's day off , so mom cuddles me beside her - we play and sing together

Dad leaves to work, and we are in the car going with mom for grocery and to the mall to buy a gift for grandma's birthday. In both places there are lots of people, high shelves all around and I can neither see what's behind them nor reach all the sweets on the top ones. I help my mother with the grocery by handing her stuff from the shelves, and by putting what I think we need in the cart too. At the mall I love to hide between the clothes!

We are in the kitchen preparing coffee for dad and our breakfast

Hurraaaaay! We are at home, now I can go to play for a while with my toys 😊 while mom arranges all the grocery and prepares food for lunch.

6:00   7:00   9:00   12:00

The family

Tamar is a young stay at home mother living in Ramat Gan with her Husband Avi and son Joey who is now 18 months old.

A few times a week Avi's parents will look after Joey while Tamar does some freelance work.

Avi works all day, while Tamar mostly spends her time with Joey.

While everyday is different for them, Tamar leaves the apartment with Joey almost every day to go run errands, go to the playground or to the beach.
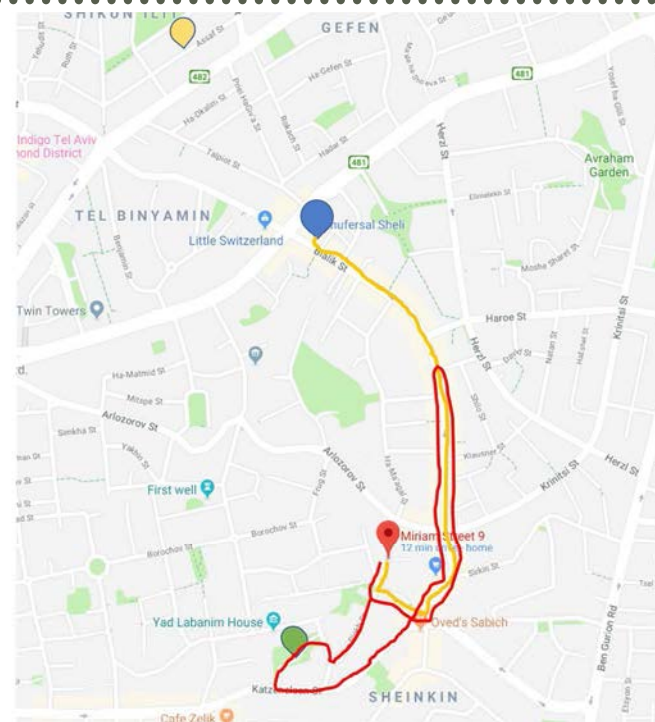
3. The Park near Ofir's Kindergarten

I love the smell of pines and touch the stones. I wish Mum would let us stay in the park for a while to see the dogs

Early Childhood Development and Neighborhood Effects

Goals

- Give students an understanding of how the brain develops from ages 0-3 - through a lecture with a child development specialist.
- Give students an overview of the research on the impact of the built environment on early childhood development.

Methods

- Frontal lecture on the importance of brain development from pregnancy to baby to toddler.
- Students were asked to read a review article on the impact of the neighborhood built environment on early childhood development, and to respond to structured questions. Class time included a formal lecture and a discussion of their responses to the article.

Assignment

This week's reading is 'Can the Neighborhood Built Environment Make a Difference in Children's Development? Building the Research Agenda to Create Evidence for Place-based Children's Policy', Villeneuva et al (2015). The authors review research on the impact of neighborhood and the built environment on early childhood development in three key areas: housing density, access to nature, and traffic exposure. They argue that improved evidence-based research can and should help decision-makers to design neighborhoods that enhance early childhood development.

This reading is a foundation for the course, and we will return to it for references and ideas as we move through each of the experiential assignments.

Writing assignment (about 500 words) should encompass four questions:

- What are the basic competencies developed during the first three years of life? ? Consider issues of risk and autonomy, stress, play, parental interactions, nature… based on Klein (2011)
- The first half of this article surveys evidence for the impact of the built environment on children's development, in the fields of housing density, traffic exposure, and access to nature and other neighborhood destinations. Choose one of these fields that you think is most important for urban planning and design of neighborhoods in Israel. Describe the research findings in your own words. Focus on the findings that are most relevant for very young children, in the early stages of brain development - from pregnancy

through age three…
- Return to your User Story from Assignment One – or to the neighborhood which you are choosing for the rest of the course assignments. Try to use these research findings to help you more deeply interpret and analyze the challenges and opportunities shown in your User Story.

The second half of the article argues for the importance of better evidence, to help city builders ensure that neighborhoods better support early childhood development. The article concludes by discussing the importance of indicators. Looking again at your User Story - what might be a relevant indicator? A good indicator should be measurable, significant, comparable across areas and population types, and communicable (emotional, narrative, understandable, intuitive). Don't worry – you're not committing to measure it!

Discussion Points

- What elements from the article did you find the most relevant for your neighborhood/city/country? Why?
- Did anything surprise you in the reading?
- What are some things missing for the research? What questions should we be asking?

Insights

- Some of the research ends up focusing on older children, because they are more independent and mobile
- Students highlighted: safety from cars; the increase in high rises in Israel - meaning there is less opportunity for interaction with nature, and that we need to plan streets that support social interaction and public space.
- One student pointed out that security in other aspects - in this case, because his user story lives in a neighbor on the seam between East and West Jerusalem - can be more important than safety from cars and prevent children from playing outside. This is a good example of context-specific issues that may arise during the course.

"When applying the findings from the article, one can say that the added walking time, the lack of crosswalk and Nathan's inability to perceive a traffic threat, is influencing Daphna's parental decision of **putting Nathan in the stroller as opposed to letting him walk, thereby limiting his opportunity to experience walking outside on his own and learning from it.**

Because of Nathan's tendency to attempt to run into a busy street, Daphna also choses to almost only go to fenced playgrounds, even if they are farther away from home. There is one playground in particular that is about a 15-minute walk from their house that they often visit due to the safety it provides as well as variety of playthings. **This closely resembles the findings of the article, that some children did not necessarily visit the closest park, and that they would go to farther more attractive parks if available**."

"My husband and I usually walk around the neighborhood with our 3 kids during the afternoons and on weekends. Every time we go out for a walk, we have to be very careful because of the heavy traffic of Derekh-Hevron, Derekh-Betlehem and Emek Refaim.

To go to "yes planet" for example, we need to cross Derekh Hevron with its 6 lanes! To do that, one needs to stop twice in a very small island with heavy traffic and vehicles driving with speed which is very dangerous. In the smaller streets, of Derekh Betlehem and Emek Refaim there is heavy traffic too with poor pedestrian crossings and poor visibility for young children because both roads are usually very busy. **Although there are parks around, we restrict from our kids to go out to the street alone because of the heavy traffic, and we prefer to do our walks at the "mesilla" park since it is safer for the kids to walk and run around."**

"It is interesting to note that the **streets that are considered to be worse in terms of classic design (streets with no exit, streets without many intersections and branches) are safer streets for children's games**. These streets enable the control of at least some of the parents on the children playing outside.

Although there is room to play in the children's living environment, the children's level of stay in the outdoor environment is relatively low. **The girls are not outside much, mainly because of a feeling of insecurity in the neighborhood.** In my opinion, emphasizing the degree of exposure to transportation in the article is correct and interesting, but in Israeli neighborhoods in general and Jerusalem in particular, **emphasis should be placed on the level of security in certain neighborhoods."**

Resources

Villaneueva, K., Badland, H., Kvalsvig, A., O'Connor, M., Christian, H., Woolcock, G., Giles-Corti, B. , & Goldfeld, S. (2016) Can the Neighborhood Make a Difference to Children's Development? Building the Research Agenda to Create Evidence for Place-Based Children's Policy. Academic Pediatrics, 16 (1) 10-19.

Goldfeld, S., Woolcock, G., Katz, I., Tanton, R., Brinkman, S., O'Connor, E., Mathews, T., Giles-Corti, B. (2015) Neighbourhood Effects Influencing Early Childhood Development: Conceptual Model and Trial Measurement Methodologies from the Kids in Communities Study. Social Indicators Research, 120 (1), 197-2012.

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2014). Small Children, Big Cities. Early Childhood Matters, 123 37pp.

Churchman, A. (2003). Is There a Place for Children in the City? Journal of Urban Design, 8 (2) 99-111.

Goldfeld, S. (2016). A Place-based Approach to Improving Outcomes for Children: How Can Research Help? Presentation at Rashi Foundation and Goshen.

Goldfeld, S. Kids in Communities Study Presentation.

Goldfeld, S. (2015). Kids in Community Study Information Sheet. 3pp.

Klein, T. P. (2014). How toddlers thrive: What parents can do today for children ages 2-5 to plant the seeds of lifelong success. Simon and Schuster.

Good Practices and Understanding Local Context

Goals

- To expose students to good practice case studies internationally.
- To understand the importance of local context when applying international materials, including tools, case studies and policies.
- To identify aspects of Israeli cities and parenting that may be unusual, different from, or special to this context.
- To continue to update this list in evaluating adaptation of international materials to the local case.

Methods

- Ask students to identify and present one 'good practice' case study of any aspect of urban planning or design that enhances early childhood development, using videos and images and explaining what they liked.
- Students present these cases to one another in small groups, and then one example from each small group was presented to the full group.
- For each case study, identify issues in which the local context -- Israeli cities -- are different than the cities in the international example. Ask 'why' is this different, and what might be the implications of the differences for urban planning and early childhood.

What makes Israeli cities special?

1. The number of children (double the OECD average) – **there is a high child density.** Here are some examples of how this impacts space:

- Often more strollers than what the area reserved for them predicts – in buses or "stroller parking"
- Buildings need more elevators because many families with children are using it at the same time (i.e. in the morning when going to school)
- The number of kindergartens do not match the demand, so they are often set up in improvised buildings

2. Compared to Western countries, there is **not extensive longitudinal data**. However, there is some **promising data** from other sources that have potential to be explored.

3. Very **high incidence of children forgotten in cars.**

4. Lower salaries compared to Western countries, meaning **less disposable income.**

5. **Long work hours,** with a high level of female employment. **Daycare hours do not match** those long hours and **create logistical issues** for working parents.

6. A culture of **childcare by the extended family** – particularly grandparents – as opposed to many Western countries where this is not a common practice.

7. **Geo-political conflict** – in certain cities/neighborhoods this creates a feeling of insecurity outside, so small children may not be allowed to spend time outside.

8. The law makes **cities liable for accidents occurred in public spaces**, leading to **risk-averse design for playgrounds**, which makes them more boring to children

9. Unlike in many Western countries, **families of lower and middle income** (often with many children) **live in high rises**. This is important because it often means **less opportunities for children's interaction with nature** in their daily lives.

10. The **climate allows for outdoor play for most of the year** – unlike in countries at higher latitudes where much of the research comes from.

11. **Spatial segregation by religion and degree of religiosity, in both housing and education.** Neighborhoods tend to have a fairly homogeneous population, with strong feelings of safety. In contrast, **there is often suspicion of those who are different, and, particularly in Jerusalem, strong feelings of anxiety and tension in crossing neighborhood 'borders'.**

Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

Goals

- Give an understanding of the types of play that toddlers engage in, and the design features that support those activities
- Develop the ability to analyze the suitability of a play space for toddlers and caregivers
- Children learn and develop through play, therefore they need spaces that support that
- Natural materials are better than concrete and plastic
- Playground design needs to pay more attention to smaller children

Methods

- Frontal lecture presenting the Urban Clinic "Evaluating Play" publication
- Individual student reading, and site-based assignment before class.
- Discussion of student assignments, with presentations and feedback.

Assignment

In this assignment, we lay the foundations for understanding the importance of play, and of playground design for early childhood development. You will learn to evaluate the contribution of a playground, nursery school yard or other public space to core early childhood development capabilities, and to assess a play space using an assigned assessment tool and supplementary materials.

The assignment is in four parts:

1. Background information: Please read the attached Urban Clinic guide to evaluating playgrounds for early childhood development. We strongly recommend watching the Darrell Hammond KaBoom video as well. Recommended supplementary materials below include the lecture with Tim Gill, on risk, Alexandra Lange's lecture on the history of playgrounds, and the Gehl-Kaboom 'Play Everywhere' document.

2. Site evaluation linked to User Story: choose a playground and/or day care center/nursery school yard from your user story. If appropriate, you might choose to contrast two sites.

Evaluate the playground/ yard using the worksheet tool shown in the guide - and attached below, in English and in Hebrew, and discussed in class. Where possible, base your evaluation on observations of a young child at play. If you can, ask the caretaker you interviewed to evaluate the site along with you, and/or for feedback on your assessment.

Prepare a graphic presentation of your evaluation. We recommend taking photos of the site, and annotating the photo(s) with labels explaining the contribution of the element to early childhood development. Organize the photos and annotations, with the worksheet into well-designed slides for presentation in class.

Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

3. Analysis: Discuss your findings, referencing the research literature:
- Which developmental skills are well-supported at this site? Which are not?
- What are the developmental outcomes associated with these skills?

4. Recommendations: Would you suggest any changes? Use the 'Starter Kit', or other onlines sources, for ideas and illustrations. At this stage, just show a few ideas, with images or drawings, without going into detail. How would you explain the need for these changes to a city official who controls the budgets? Why are these changes important/worth spending money on? Hint - use explanations drawn from early childhood development!

Observing other people's children at play can make parents uncomfortable! Please use the Student Letter, along with your University identification, to respond to questions or ask for permission, especially if photographing!

We recommend submitting your evaluation by end of 28.04, for analysis in class on 30.04, towards parts 3 and 4 of the exercise. Please bring a printed copy of your exercise!

Discussion Points

- What are the common elements in the analysis?
- What was difficult about the assignment? What was easy?
- Is this a useful tool? How can it contribute to better play spaces for toddlers?
- How did your analysis compare with the impressions of the caregiver you interviewed?
- In which ways is this city/country/neighborhood special?
- What elements did you think were missing from the playground tool?

Insights

- Students appreciated having a concrete set of criteria to use in their analysis and it were sometimes surprised with the results that (or did not) match their first impressions.
- Most playgrounds examined were low on the "social and imaginative" play category
- Many playgrounds were built with plastic and synthetic materials, lacking sensorial stimuli.
- Lack of shade was an issue in many cases. Students noted that this could be easily solved by trees, and advocated integrating more natural materials into play sites.
- Students gave ideas for improving the publication, including a section on "places for breastfeeding" in the analysis tool.

Park 1 - "Aluminum park"

Physical challenge

✗ Sliding - 1   ✓ Climbing and jumping - 4   ✓ Swinging - 4   ✓ Spinning - 5

no 'classic' slide. even my 4 years old son doesn't slide there

Park 2 - "Nature-climbing park"

Free movement

✓ Running and jumping - 4   ✓ Riding on wheels- 2   ✓ Crawling -4   ✗ Climbing- 1

There is a serious slope where she can easily deteriorate with wheels, so I must be close to her all the time. she is not allowed to ride freely

Too high

No climbing options at all. the main attraction is too difficult to climb

sensory exploration and manipulation

- There is a sand box, but it is in a different part of the play ground with less shade
- No place for drawing
- There are flowers and plants around
- Dog park within the park
- For sensory exploration I give this playground a 4

Social and imaginative play

Social and Imaginative Play					
Hiding and peeking	1	2	③	4	5
Play make-believe with objects and places	1	2	3	④	5
Role play games	1	2	③	4	5
"Hide and Seek"	1	②	3	4	5
Overall evaluation	1	2	③	4	5
Comments:					

Playing princesses

Exploring the castle

Analysis

- The playground seemed like it was planned with the caretakers in mind: there is sufficient seating, bathrooms, a water fountain and shade.
- In addition, the area is blocked off from traffic making it safe.
- The playground also does a really good job at incorporating play facilities for a variety of ages, allowing families with more than one child to play here together
- This also allows children to encounter others of different ages, encouraging social development.

Playground evaluation

- Physical Challenge
- Freedom Of movment
- Social and Imaginative Play
- Sensory and exploration manipulation
- Caretaker comfort

Gideon

mprovement suggestion:
Bordering with the playground we have a very big asphalt court.

to utilize open space, we can use it to other activities from its original purpose.
pop-up play is very suitable. Once a month for example, the community center will bring color chalk and different materials. In addition a Petting zoo is suitable. what is better than a huge canvas that is already there?

Cons: this surface is as far from nature as it can get so it is defiantly not suitable for marital experience

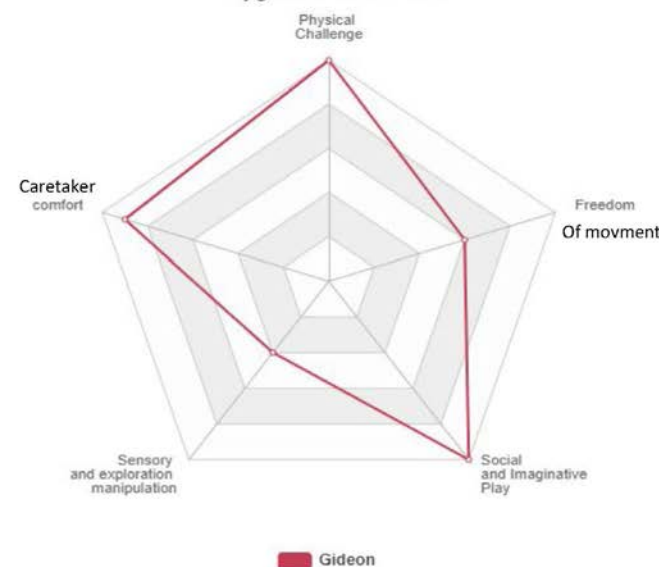## The Kaye Garden and Playground Recommendations

- Children age 0-1 are completely dependent on their caregiver. When they are hungry they cannot wait, therefore providing a suitable area for breastfeeding where mothers are less stressed to breastfeed encourages mothers to go out more with a child which is also an opportunity for the parent to walk and exercise.
- Important to include in the planning open natural spaces for free play and playworkers because it improves the imagination, creativity, risk evaluation of a child. In these places children with several ages can play together. They learn to share, distribute tasks, help each other and communicate.
- Living in a city is breathing unhealthy air. It is important to support the idea of "A tree for every baby" in order to provide healthier and better environment for children living in cities.

CENTENARY LAKES NATURE PLAY
"The nature play concept supports unstructured outdoor play, which has been shown to have a positive impact on children's cognitive and physical development. It focuses on enjoying the outdoors and exploring the simple wonders of the surroundings"

Recommendations – Examples of Nature Playgrounds

The Natural Playground In Oregon

Oregon is a natural wonderland for kids, but all too often, they're stuck spending their time on plastic and metal playgrounds that suck all the creativity right out of playtime. There's a park in Portland that seeks to bring nature back into kids' everyday fun, and even though it's in the city, it will make you feel a thousand miles away.

Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

Resources

עקרכת ניגוד משחקים ותרומתם להתפתחות ילדים בניג הרר

The Urban Clinic, Drier Shilo, Y. (2018). Playground Evaluation Tool. Jerusalem: The Urban Clinic. Also available in Hebrew: עקרכת ניגוד משחקים ותרומתם להתפתחות ילדים בניג הרר

Columbia GSAPP (2018, Nov 28). Urban Playscapes Conference: Alexandra Lange - Introduction to the 'Can play be without risk?' panel. [Video File] Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=613pec--QTY&feature=youtu.be

Villanueva, K., Badland, H., Hooper, P., Koohsari, M. J., Mavoa, S. Davern, M., Roberts, R., Goldfeld, S., Giles-Corti, B., (2015) Developing Indicators of Public Open Space to Promote Health and Wellbeing in Communities. Applied Geography, 57, 112-119.

Gehl and Bernard van Leer Foundation (2018). Toolkit for Measuring Urban Experiences of Young Children. 40pp. Retrieved from: https://bernardvanleer.org/publications-reports/urban95-tools-for-studying-public-life-public-space/

The Grabble Foundation (2018). If Kids Built a City: Possibilities for Play in Pittsburgh, PA. 24pp. Retrieved from: https://moodle2.cs.huji.ac.il/nu18/pluginfile.php/359339/mod_resource/content/0/If-Kids-Built-a-City%20-%20LEGo%20Pittsburgh.pdf

Salzburg Global Seminar (2017) The Child and the City: Health, Parks and Play. Parks for the Planet Forum Session Brochure. 8pp. Retrieved from: https://www.salzburgglobal.org/multi-year-series/parks/pageId/session-574.html

Ben Attar, D. (2017). Open Space in Urban Areas: Applying an Early Childhood Lens. Presentation Cities4Kids Urban 95 Conference in New Delhi, India.

Bernard van Leer Foundation. (2018, Jun 8). Creating spaces to play in Bucaramanga [Video File]. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=jlz1WVZ0lEA

Hatzer 4-1 (Hebrew)

Children & Nature Network (2016). Building a National Movement for Green Schoolyards in Every Community. Green Schoolyard for Healthy Communities Report, 27pp. Retrieved from: https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/741159fc4c1741019ae96273c1a0a0f0/cnn-green-schoolyard-report-2016.pdf

Sessions 7-8

Mobility and Streets

Mobility and Streets

Goals

- Introduce students to methods for assessing streets and mobility with regard to early childhood development, and caregiver needs.
- Develop the ability to think critically about indicators, and to apply them for quantitative or qualitative evaluation of a street / neighborhood.

Methods

- Short lecture about using indicators: rationale, benefits and limitations.
- Frontal lecture presenting the two main readings: Healthy Streets (London), and ITC Friendly Neighborhood Guidelines (India)
- In-class exercise in pairs, selecting an indicator and considering adaptation to Israeli climate, demography, and built environment.

Assignment

1. Review either the Healthy Streets Indicator (London) or the Infant Toddler Caregiver Friendly Neighborhood Guidelines (India). There are 2 main documents for each. For ITCF (India) focus on the "streets" section.

2. Choose 3 indicators that speak to you as appropriate for Israel/your city/neighborhood as important for toddlers and caregivers. Why did you choose each of these? Consider importance for very young children, relevance for Israel, for your user route, the combination of indicators)?

3. Evaluate the route in your user story, using each one of the selected indicators. For each indicator, show the scores for different legs of the routes, and explain how you derived these scores. Use images to explain your scores, and text to explain the images.

4. Where possible, ask the caregiver from your User Story to review your evaluation. Does his/her analysis differ from yours? How does the perspective of the young child differ?

5. Recommend some interventions that might help to improve the weakness – use the starter kit, or the compendium (India docs) or documents from our "International study cases" section in the moodle for good examples and inspiration. Consider adaptations for the local context, including climate, politics, religion, numbers of children per family, or other reasons for adaptation.

Mobility and Streets

Discussion Points

- Which indicators do you think are the most relevant for your context?
- When is it appropriate to use a quantitative or a qualitative measurement?
- How was it to use these concrete measurements? Did your route do well in the criteria you chose?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of either set of indicators?
- How would you adapt them to your country's context?

Insights

- Most students were happy to use a concrete set of measurements, and felt that having both sets was very helpful.
- Students suggested distinguishing between obligatory and optional indicators.
- Students noted a distinction in types of trips: some are more functional, while others are more 'strolling' for pleasure.
- Most students assignments found significant obstacles and difficulties in getting around the city with small children.
- The role of transport planners in considering different modes of transport - vs. different speeds of mobility. Class discussion about the topic of walkability: whose job is it (In Israel, responsibility is moving from 'the city architect' to 'the transport planner') ? Why isn't it happening? What would it take to make it happen?
    - City statement of purpose – we WANT walkability
    - Kit of what prevents walkability – for residents
    - Single body who is responsible for fixing?
    - Call to residents to report
    - Indicators for measuring walkability at block level.
    - Community planners/workers/ with children and parents, and/or high school youth team to evaluate and prepare GIS maps.

Evaluation by indicators:
Accessibility – free of obstacles

- The walk takes them on the main street of Ramat Gan. The busy-ness of the street means there are quite a lot of obstacles on the sidewalks, this will include chairs from restaurants, garbage bins and even cars themselves.

- Tamar is very bothered by the high amount of smokers along Bialik street, which is definitely an obstacle in her eyes.

- While there are sections of the route with wide sidewalks, these obstacles make the sidewalk narrower at certain places making it more difficult to walk through with the stroller.

- On the route, there are two sets of stairs she must take with the stroller that greatly inconvenience her, she used to take Joey in the carrier to make the stairs easier, but he is too heavy for that now.

- score: 1/5

One of the sets of stairs Tamar must take with the stroller

A trashcan blocking the sidewalk

Chairs and tables from a restaurant blocking the path

This is an example of a wide and comfortable section of the sidewalk

Route evaluation

- Overall, this route has some core issues such as many obstacles, unavoidable stairs and lack of shade. However, Tamar and Joey thoroughly enjoy the plentiful shops along the way.

- The average of all the scores: (1 + 5 +2) / 3 = 2.6
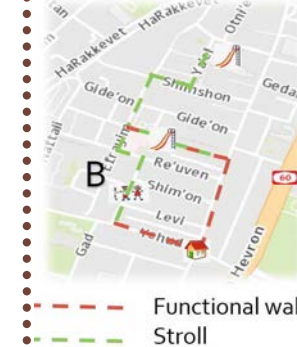
- I would give the overall score of the route a **2.6/5**
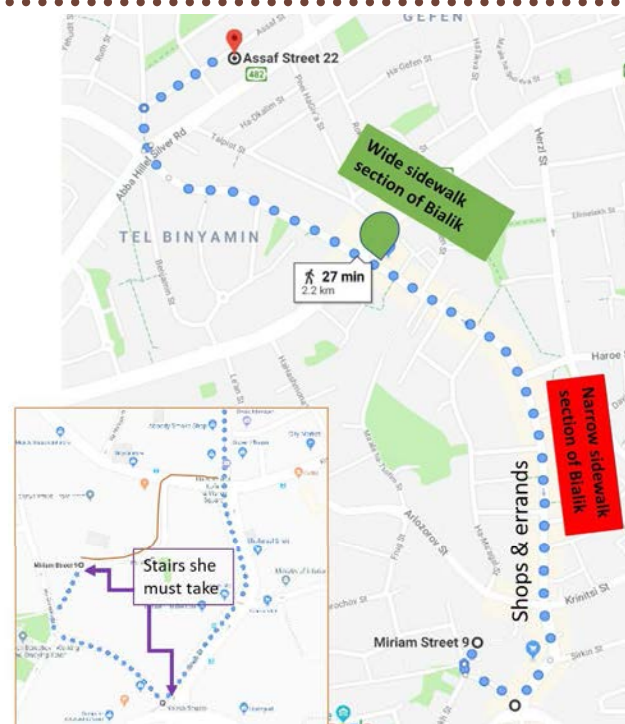
Indicators – segment B

- Shade and shelter (London) – some part has no shade and some is fully shaded 4/5
- Places to stop and rest (London) – you can find a seat within a 5-10 minutes 5/5
- Things to see and do (London) – shops nearby 4/5
- Green (India) – many parks in the neighborhood, but not enough in the street 3/5

Functional walk
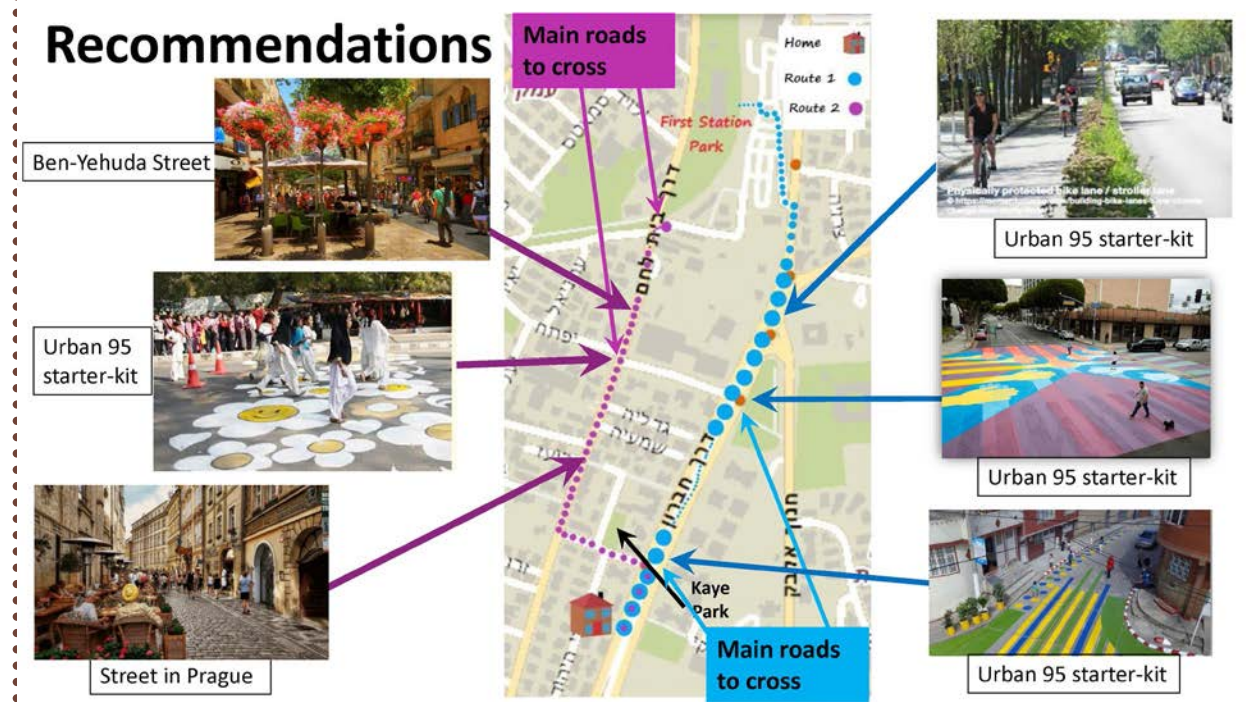Stroll

Places to stop and rest

Resting place, no shade

Recommendations

Ben-Yehuda Street

Urban 95 starter-kit

Street in Prague

Main roads to cross

Urban 95 starter-kit

Urban 95 starter-kit

Urban 95 starter-kit

Main roads to cross

Mobility and Streets

Resources

Healthy Streets Toolbox: https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/how-we-work/planning-for-the-future/healthy-streets

Bernard van Leer Foundation. (2019). Infant, Toddler, Caregiver-Friendly Neighbourhood (ITCN) Framework and Guidelines. Retrieved from: https://bernardvanleer.org/news/five-publications-help-indias-smart-cities-to-serve-infants-toddlers-and-caregivers/

Bernard van Leer Foundation. (2018). Urban95 Starter Kit - Ideas for Action. 90pp. Retrieved from: https://bernardvanleer.org/publications-reports/an-urban95-starter-kit-ideas-for-action/

Feigelson, M. (2016, Oct 24). Why Walking Is So Good for Parents, Toddlers and the Cities Where They Live. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved from: https://ssir.org/articles/entry/why_walking_is_so_good_for_parents_toddlers_and_the_cities_where_they_live

Neighborhood and "Around the Apartment Building"

Neighborhood and Around the Building

Goals

- Introduce the idea of "around the building", where many children may spend a lot of their time with their caretaker or supervised by a sibling.
- This issue is absent from many Western contexts, but is common in Israeli cities and in other parts of the world (Istanbul, Latin America..)
- Reflect on how these spaces can be made better for early childhood development - this is particularly relevant as many high rises will be built throughout the country in the next few years.

Methods

- Lecture on analysis of neighborhoods from early childhood perspective, including from detailed field-work at an ultra-Orthodox city with average 7 children per household
- Classroom presentations of assignments and discussion.
- Examine together a typical proposed or existing neighborhood plan, including aerial photograph, sections and land use allocations. What spatial interventions might make the neighborhood more conducive to early childhood development?

Assignment

Very young children often spend a great deal of their time in or around the home, in apartment buildings in particular. In this assignment, you will analyze one good practice and one poor practice promoting early childhood developing in and around the home.

Please read either the Toronto guidelines for high-density housing and children (English) or, in Hebrew, the draft Urban Clinic analysis of neighborhoods and apartment buildings for small children (Esakov, 2018).

Select one or two apartment buildings in the area where your User Story takes place. Consider the basement, the ground floor and lobby, the parking area, inside the home, shared spaces within the building (play room, roof-top, etc). Identify at least one 'good practice' and at least one 'bad practice example'.

1. Document and describe the good practice and the bad practice examples, using images, sketches and sketches.

2. Refer to literature to describe the positive and negative potential impacts on early childhood development at each of these sites.

3. Where possible, ask the caretaker from your User Story to review your responses. Does his/her analysis differ from yours? How does the perspective of the young child differ?

Neighborhood and Around the Building

4. What interventions from the 'Starter Kit' or elsewhere might help to improve the weaknesses? Describe at least one of the Starter Kit interventions, using international and local examples as appropriate. Where would you suggest using it? What adaptations would need to be made locally? Consider climate, politics, religion, numbers of children per family, or other reasons for adaptation.

Discussion Points

- What are the other ways children experience the city? In Israel, the area under and around the home is particularly relevant for some neighborhoods and communities.
- With the current expansion in high-rises, more and more children will have this kind of spaces as they grow up - how should we prepare for this? Especially as a country with a high fertility rate?
- What opportunities can be explored in "under the home" spaces? What changes can be made to make them more supportive of early childhood development?

Insights

- Note that this topic is particularly important in countries with climate, topography and housing structure have these kinds of spaces - under and around the home, that are more private and considered safe. Many times children will be allowed to play downstairs under the supervision of an older sibling.
- Students noted that neighborhood plans from the 1950s and 1960's were more conducive to early childhood development than neighborhood plans from the 1980s onwards. The importance of learning from the good and the bad of previous experience.
- Shared private spaces and courtyards: the advantages and disadvantages for different population groups, including issues of maintenance, management, diversity and potential conflicts in uses.
- Discussion of informality and early childhood.

Resources

City of Toronto (2017, May) Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities – Draft Urban Design Guidelines. 57pp. Retrieved from: https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/growing-up-planning-for-children-in-new-vertical-communities/

Esakov, L. (2018) Dense Neighborhoods Friendly to Toddlers in Israel. Jerusalem: The Urban Clinic. 53pp.

There's nothing really interesting in the lobby other than stealing letters from the neighbors and playing with the tin!

Analysis

The lobby is not intended for children, there is no meeting place / games, for which the lobby is used mainly for fast transit.
The lobby also does not create a safe space for toddlers, as a mother every time we pass through the lobby, I am mainly under pressure not to destroy anything.
In the winter, there were cases when large children hovered in the lobby and the neighbors complained about it and forbade it (the games are usually quiet and also with a ball). However, the lobby is excellent for older people, on Saturdays older people sit and talk, sometimes neighbors hold meetings with residents or other private meetings. .

The second entrance:
- Large space protected from cars, toddlers can run freely
- There is earth and plants, offering opportunity for sensory exploration and manipulation

Building front

- There is no common yard, only garden apartments
- Entering the building by using a digit code, but the buttons are high so even a 4 year old will find it difficult
- The door is heavy and requires adult help
- Front does not provide opportunities for meeting
+ The front of the building is clean and orderly
+ There is a shaded area that is more pleasant to be in
+ A toddler can walk in this area without holding the hand of an adult

Adding a sculpture at the front of the building to create interest and a separate identity for each building in the street

Lowering the intercom and using a non-heavy entrance door

Interventions - at the entrance to the building

Adding a bench

Minimum investment with maximum community profit

Sessions 11-12

Final Assignment and Review

Final Assignment

This assignment pulls together your previous assignments into a full 'user story'. Your user story begins with an introduction to the people (child and caretaker) and the neighborhood. You will include your analysis of the experience of the child and the caretaker for two of the following three topics: play and access to nature; mobility; and the home, building and immediate environment. For each topic, be sure to describe the experience, cite the literature on relevant considerations for early childhood development, and analyze the challenges and opportunities. Please add your recommendations for improvement at each of the two themes, using the Starter Kit or other materials to generate ideas -- https://bernardvanleer.org/publications-reports/an-urban95-starter-kit-ideas-for-action/.

Adaptations: what factors about this site require adaptations from the Starter Kit proposals or other original site. Consider issues of culture and demography, climate and topography, religion and politics, and among others.

You can access two examples of students' final assignments on the links below:

https://en.urbanclinic.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/urbanclinic/files/lk_final_assignment.pdf

https://en.urbanclinic.huji.ac.il/sites/default/files/urbanclinic/files/oc_final_assignment.pdf

Additional Resources for Final Assignment

These can deepen your understanding of the course and be relevant for your final assignment:

Introduction to Early Childhood Development

Heckman, J. J. (2016). Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing in Disadvantaged Children. Science, 312, 5782. 1900-1902.

Design of Daycare and Early Childhood Centers

Rinaldi, C. (2004). In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, researching and learning. Routledge.

Planning Policy

Ben Attar, D. (2016). Designing Cities that Support Healthy Childhood Development. Presentation at the Healthy Cities Conference.

International Examples

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2018). Small Children, Advances in Early Childhood Development.

Early Childhood Matters, 127, 116pp. Retrieved from: https://bernardvanleer.org/publications-reports/early-childhood-matters-2018/

Denboba, A. D., Sayre, R. K., Wodon, Q. T., Elder, L. K., Rawlings, L. B., & Lombardi, J. (2014). Stepping Up Early Childhood Development: Investing in Young Children for High Returns. Retrieved from: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/21094

Urban 95 Bogotá (2018) Experiments and Public Space Interventions in the Circuit Neighborhood La Acacia. Experiments Report. 14pp.

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2017). A Good Start for Children. Annual Report 2016, 95pp. Retrieved from: https://bernardvanleer.org/app/uploads/2017/04/BvLF-AnnualReport16-LowRes-SinglePages.pdf

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2017). Urban95 Strategy Memo. 8pp.

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2018, Nov 21). A Window into Urban95 Bogotá [Video File] Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_tnMqmK4Ug

Friedman-Rudovsky, J. (n.d.) The Buried Seed: How Nicaragua Came to Have One of the Most Progressive Early Childhood Learning Policies on the Planet. Bernard van Leer Foundation. Retrieved from: http://historical-cases.bernardvanleer.org/the-buried-seed/

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2015). Small Children, Big Cities: Impact Through Design Intervention. Report on the National Conference Small Children, Big Cities: Building Smart Child-Friendly Cities for 21st Century India. Retrieved from: https://issuu.com/bernardvanleerfoundation/docs/small_children_big_cities_impact_th

Bernard van Leer Foundation (2011) Culturally Appropriate Approaches in Early Childhood Development. Early Childhood Matters, 43pp. Retrieved from: https://issuu.com/bernardvanleerfoundation/docs/culturally_appropriate_approaches_in_early_childho

Israeli Context

Viaplan final report לארשיב ךרה לינג םייח תביבס

Ben Attar, D. (2018). It takes a city: making early childhood a strategic priority in Tel Aviv. Bernard van Leer Foundation. Retrieved from: https://bernardvanleer.org/ecm-article/2018/it-takes-a-city-making-early-childhood-a-strategic-priority-in-tel-aviv/

Session 13

Theory of Change and Evaluation of the Course

Theory of Change and Evaluation

Goals

- To understand what were the strong and weak points of the course
- To give students an opportunity to offer suggestions for improvements
- To explore how students might use this learning in their work
- To reflect on the practice of urban planning, and the role of urban planners, in encouraging social change

Methods

- Students were asked to fill out a written questionnaire.
- Discussion of opinions about the course, implementation potential, implications for other emerging topics, and the role of the urban planner in facilitating social changes.

Student Evaluations and Review

General Comments

Nearly all students had a positive experience in the course, with one student even stating that it was "the best course in her MA degree so far." Six out of seven students said they would recommend it to a friend, with one student emphasizing that she would recommend it to friends who had children. The hands-on aspect of the assignments, was highly appreciated by some of the students,

> "I'm now convinced that [child friendly planning] needs to be embedded in urban design guidelines. Now what? How do we make that happen?" - OC

> "I had a great time. In general, I prefer implementation courses like this one, where you learn by being in the field." - OC

> "I was very happy to do the exercises, to look at my own built environment for the critical and professional eyes" - DY

When asked what was the most important thing for them in the course, students mentioned how they learned about the importance of planning for early childhood, for example, DY said,

> "[The most important thing] was the philosophy and ideas behind the course. At first, I didn't totally agree with it, I thought that planning for children was planning for everyone, but I learned in the course that you need to do separate thinking that meets their needs."

> "This is a very important topic, with a perspective of children that is completely missing from urban planning, and it's particularly important for Israel, where there are so many families with young children." - SA echoed by MAF

Theory of Change and Evaluation

Course Content

Regarding the amount of work expected from students, most deemed it "hard, but worth it", with one student who said, "it was really fun, I had a lot of fun with my nieces and nephews." A few of the students appreciated being able to learn from each other's assignments,

> "Usually in class you just listen to assignments and you go on to the next one, it was good that there was the opportunity to review and compare across assignments, for example learning that nearly all the playground lacked imaginative play" - LK, similar sentiment expressed by DK

Most students felt that the course did not teach them enough about early childhood development in itself, for instance, SA said,

> "I would have been happier to have more background materials to use before each exercise, which would improve our site analysis - specifically more background on early childhood development."

Some of the students emphasized the knowledge and skills they acquired during the course. For example, OC believes that the skills they learned are transferable and learning how to use indicators was the most important thing he learned during the semester,

> "This is not a niche course, learning how to use indicators and site analysis are part of mainstream urban planning. I've learned this for example in my environmental courses about nature protection, but never on social issues. The tools of evaluation and site analysis I'll take with me. Also the process of learning how to research and then having it implemented in specific sites."

And LK said,

> "The course works as a model for how to adapt urban planning for specific populations, for example: elderly, refugees, teenagers."

When asked if they would use this in the future, most students said yes. SA explained,

> "Absolutely, [I will use it] in my work as a community planner in a ultra-orthodox neighborhood, especially in playgrounds and public space areas and in improving mobility and walkability. And on a personal level, with my own son."

One of the students thought that the course could have been better linked with a studio course on multi-generational urban planning, explaining that "Each course had lectures that the other could've used and assignments that could be helpful."

A Note on Language...

In this edition, the course was taught in English in order to demonstrate the opportunities of this course globally, and to allow for sharing of the final assignments with international actors. However,

because it was more comfortable for some guest speakers and for the students, some of the lectures were done in Hebrew. Students were allowed to submit their assignments in Hebrew or in English.

When asked whether language was a problem for them in this course, responses varied: for some it was not a problem, for others it was "a good challenge". But for some students, it was different, "I can understand English, but I needed to be able to express myself in Hebrew: verbally and in writing assignments."

Moving forward, the course in Israel could be delivered in Hebrew, with materials in English. If the course is delivered in partnership with a municipality, then all assignments should be in Hebrew.

Similarly, if the course is delivered at several Israeli Universities simultaneously, with shared assignments across the Universities, then assignments should be in Hebrew… However, if the course is part of an international collaborative effort, with shared assignments, then either outstanding assignments should be translated by a TA, or some students encouraged to write in English.