



# a Guide to teaching Urban Planning for Child Friendly Cities

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# 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 five times from 2016 - 2021, at three Universities in Israel. And can be taught in a 13-week semester with 90-minute classes. This guide present structure, methods, and student work from across the different terms it was taught, including spring 2021, when COVID-19 restrictions made use of online platforms: zoom for live meetings and MIRO- an online whiteboard, to enhance discussion, brain-writing, and presentation for student outputs. 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

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**Session 1**

**Introduction to  
Urban 95: Big  
Cities, Little  
Children**

# Introduction to Urban 95

## 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.

# Introduction to Urban 95

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=AZRh7JfXs4&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](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=PL7lulYUNzXezrjXiwVrbHXIC-Sugu0Xjn&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHu_idPv2kY&t=141s&list=PL7lulYUNzXezrjXiwVrbHXIC-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,

# User Stories

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.

# User Stories Examples

## Meirav's Environment

Ramat Remez neighborhood, upper Haifa

**A Typical view on Meirav's walking route**

\* She goes through there very often: When going to synagogue or to visit her grandparents, or almost every day with her parents to take a walk or play in nature

**Meirav's kindergarten**

**The common neighborhood playground**  
\*Meirav goes there on a daily routine with her family

**The family Synagogue**  
\*Meirav goes there on Saturdays with her father

**Meirav's grandparents' house**  
\*She goes there about 2-3 times a week with her father or whole family

**Legend:**

- Meirav's walking route with her parents in the local nature
- Walking route between Meirav's kindergarten and home

**Meirav's building**

\*The playground from the family's balcony

# User Stories Examples

**6:00** Good morning City  
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

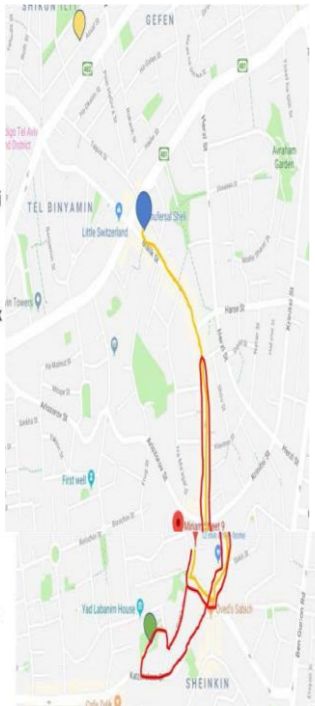
**7:00** Dad leaves to work, and we are in the car going with mom for grocery and to the mall to buy a gift for grandma's birthday. In both places there are lots of people, high shelves all around and I can neither see what's behind them nor reach all the sweets on the top ones. I help my mother with 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!

**9:00** We are in the kitchen preparing coffee for dad and our breakfast

**12:00** Hurraaaaaay! 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.

## 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.

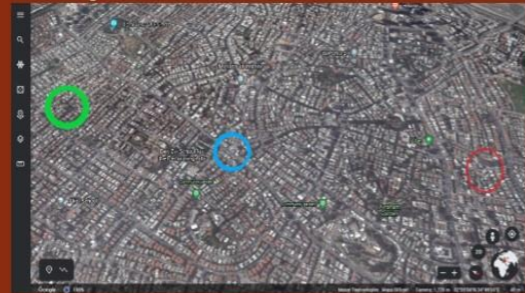


## evening comes

though he had an hours' nap before picked up or right after daycare, by 6:30 p.m. either mum, dad or grandmum would have gotten him fed and bathed. by 7:30 he will be in his bed. (bit later if done by dad or coming from grands.)

a ritual of time and darkness is kept and actually it is the only impediment to parents plans.

## Locality



home ring thickness is with accordance to time spent at each location over a day and a week.  
daycare center  
grandparents

## 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





**Session 3**  
**Early Childhood  
Development  
and  
Neighborhood  
Effects**

# ECD 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', Villeneuve 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:

1. 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)
2. 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

# ECD and Neighborhood Effects

through age three...

3. 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.

# ECD and Neighborhood Effects

## Examples

“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 chooses 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.”**

# ECD and Neighborhood Effects

## Examples

“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

Villanueva, 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.

**Session 4**

**Good Practices and  
Understanding Local  
Context**

**and  
Theory of Change**

# Theory of Change

## Goals

To expose students to strategy-oriented interventions.

To become familiar with five strategies of which one or more can be implemented in real-world scenarios to encourage a change in behavior and spatial use.

1. Knowledge and awareness
2. Participatory action – individual and group
3. Behavioral defaults and nudges
4. Regulatory, legal and budget actions
5. Design and spatial interventions

To be able to assign examples of mitigation with appropriate strategies

To identify different stakeholders

## Methods

A lecture to promote a strategy driven understanding of inner workings within any process of change.

We found that a clear flow chart (as shown next page) was helpful to indicate different components of different stages for any choice for action to best facilitate a fundamental hypothesis or a rationale .

A discussion stems from specific examples in the presentation serves as an exercise to better solidify students' comprehension of the subject.

Students were asked to identify stakeholders, advocates for, and critics against proposed examples.

# Theory of Change

A slide from "Theory of Change" presentation



A slide from "Theory of Change" presentation taking obesity with children as case study

What information do parents and children actually need?

**Sessions 5-6**

# **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 online 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!

## 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.

# Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

## Examples

Park 1 - "Aluminum park"

### Physical challenge

- ✗ Sliding - 1  
no 'classic' slide. even my 4 years old son doesn't slide there
- ✓ Climbing and jumping - 4
- ✓ Swinging - 4
- ✓ Spinning - 5

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

# Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

## Examples

### 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 |
| <b>Overall evaluation</b>                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Comments:                                 |   |   |   |   |   |





# Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

## Examples

### 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.



# Play, Playgrounds and Public Spaces

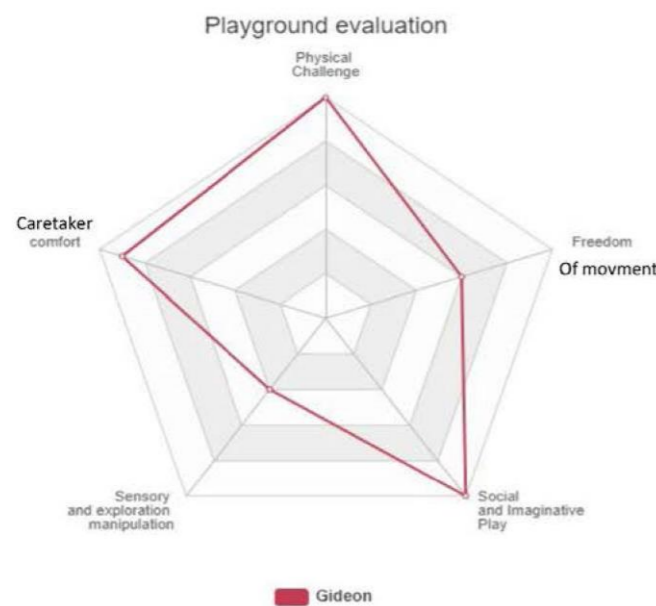
## Examples

### 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.

### Avishai



Improvement 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



**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

הערכת גינות משחקים ותרומתם להתפתחות ילדים בגיל הרך

The Urban Clinic, Drier Shilo, Y. (2018). Playground Evaluation Tool. Jerusalem: The Urban Clinic.

Also available in Hebrew: [ררה ליגב מידלי תוחתפתהל סתמורתו סיקחשמ תוניג תכרעה](#)

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-forstudying-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](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=jlz1WVZ0IEA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=jlz1WVZ0IEA)

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-schoolyardreport-2016.pdf>

**Session 7-8**

**Mobility and  
Streets  
and  
Theory of Change  
Implementation**

## 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

In this assignment, we lay the foundations for understanding the importance of mobility, and street design in particular, for early childhood development. You will learn to evaluate the quality of children's mobility in a given neighborhood, and to assess streets using an assigned assessment tool and supplementary materials.

The assignment is in four parts. Parts 1 - 3 should be done individually, and part 4 can be in teams of 2.

**Part 1 Watching Reading and Commenting** Please watch the webinar launch of Designing Streets for Children - minutes 5 - 20. This gives a background on WHY design streets for children. Then, read either the Healthy Streets Indicator (London) or the Infant Toddler Caregiver Friendly Neighborhood Guidelines (India – focus on 'streets'). Identify one surprising, perplexing or intriguing finding or direction, and upload this as a note on Miro, including images or quotes to support your point.

**Part 2: Selecting Indicators:** from the reading, choose 3-4 indicators that speak to you as appropriate for Israel/your city/neighborhood as important for toddlers and caregivers. Prepare a slide listing the indicators you have selected, and explain why you chose them. Upload this slide to Moodle.

**Part 3: Assessment:** Choose a significant walking route from your user story, one which is important (perhaps to the park you profiled in the previous assignment?), and perhaps also challenging, for the child and caretaker. Show the selected route as a map or an overview diagram, and mark main points on the route – destinations and distances. Evaluate this route using each one of the selected indicators. Make a slide for each indicator, showing the scores for different legs of the routes, and explaining how you measured/ derived these scores. Use images to explain your scores, and text to explain the images. 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?

Make a final slide with an overall assessment of this route for early childhood development.

You may submit the parts of this assignment separately but be sure to have parts 1- 3 uploaded on MIRO for discussion in class. If you have a laptop, please bring it to class!

**Part 4: Interventions –due before session 9** Choose one or two sites on your route, and recommend interventions that might help to improve the weakness – use the NACTO document, or starter kit, or documents from other International study cases 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.

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? You may want to use explanations drawn from literature on early childhood development...

Who might oppose these plans? How would you respond to their opposition? What additional strategies might you propose? Consider awareness and knowledge, behavioral nudges, regulatory and budget issues, individual and collective actions.

## 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?

# Theory of Change Implementation

## Goals

Create a better view on THEORY OF CHANGE, drawing from previous session on the matter.  
To practice understanding and explaining rationale that drive interventions.  
An opportunity to critically observe a real-life campaign.

## Methods

A guest lecturer who will demonstrate an intervention that took or takes place in real-life.  
The lecture will show an intervention to bring a change in peoples' behavior by physical and or cognitive interventions.  
Students will analyze lecture in light of  
Guest lecturer might be of urban / community planning fields or indeed of advertising and public opinion

## Theory of Change Implementation

### Key points for discussion

With regards to guest lecture, which of the five strategies is most correct to describe the intervention presented?

1. Knowledge and awareness
2. Participatory action – individual and group
3. Behavioral defaults and nudges
4. Regulatory, legal and budget actions
5. Design and spatial interventions

Note that more than one strategy might have been chosen.

Continuing last sessions' discussion on walkability, try to sort methods shown below to each strategy.

- 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.

### Insights

*To make change together with residents the professional staff has to come up with limited number specific ideas in order to guide them. I believe that the fact that we came with printed page with ideas and photos help to explain and connect to our vision, despite the cultural gaps."*

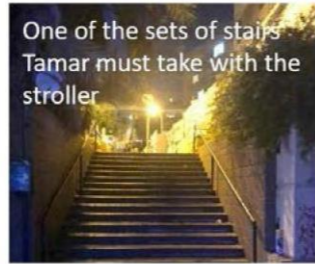
Examples

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



A trashcan blocking the sidewalk



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



Chairs and tables from a restaurant blocking the path

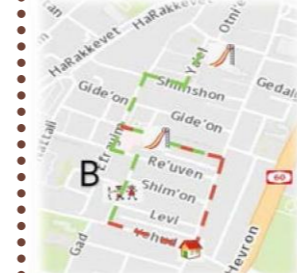


This is an example of a wide and comfortable section of the sidewalk

Examples

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

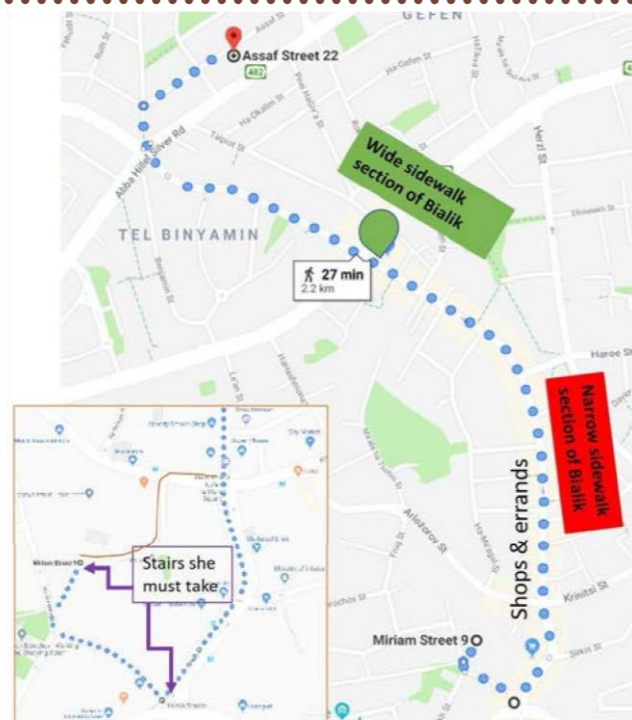


Resting place, no shade



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**



Recommendations

Ben-Yehuda Street

Urban 95 starter-kit

Street in Prague

Main roads to cross

Kaye Park

Main roads to cross

Urban 95 starter-kit

Urban 95 starter-kit

Urban 95 starter-kit

Examples

Selecting relevant indicators for Israel

Not too noisy

Noisy streets can be intimidating and frightening for young children. Let's try to imagine how they see the world: everything looks big and scary. Car sirens, engine noises, crowds of people raising their voices all around only increase the feeling of fear and make children and their caregivers avoid walking down the street as much as possible. For this reason, this is an important indicator for me - noise limits, enforcement against drivers who honk unnecessarily will already make a significant difference and improve the lives of all road users, toddlers and adults.

Shade and shelter

When I thought of appropriate indicators for Israel, I thought of the hot climate that prevails in the country for most of the year. Avenues of trees and special shading will improve the quality of life of road users. I know many families who choose not to leave the house during the summer months because it is so hot and humid in many areas and that is why it is an important indicator for creating a street friendly for its users of all ages

Places to stop and rest

As a former babysitter and as an aunt to toddler, I have a lot of experience with kids who get tired in the middle of the road and just want to stop to rest. In order to make the street suitable for its various users - little children, the elderly, the disabled and also families who just want to rest, this is an important indicator for me. Benches and any creative facility that allows you to stop and rest makes the road accessible and suitable for little ones and adults



Reut Astary 318294675

Examples

Corail Dai Maman

Meirav's Environment

Ramat Remez neighborhood, upper Haifa

**Topics**

**Indicators**

evaluating UZIEL st. in Ramat Gan by adhering to grading instructions, I focused on every criterion's weakest point. so, although sidewalk is wide on average, there are two spots curb narrows to less then 1.5m and at one to 1m.

**Healthy Streets Indicators' scores (%)**

| Indicator               | Score (%) |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Easy to cross           | 85        |
| Shade and shelter       | 75        |
| Places to stop and rest | 65        |
| See the valley          | 55        |
| People foot safe        | 45        |
| People foot relaxed     | 35        |
| Close Air               | 25        |

### Resources

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

Bernard van Leer Foundation. (2019). Infant, Toddler, Caregiver-Friendly Neighbourhood (ITCN) Framework and Guidelines. Retrieved from: <https://bernardvanleer.org/news/fivepublications-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-foraction/>

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](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/why_walking_is_so_good_for_parents_toddlers_and_the_cities_where_they_live)

Global Designing Cities Initiative, Designing streets for kids (2020) <https://globaldesigningcities.org/streets-for-kids/>



**Sessions 9-10 (choice A)**

**Around the  
Neighborhood and  
Site-Visit Experience**

## 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 .

To synthesize the learning throughout the semester in a real-life project.

To identify culturally appropriate recommendations for positive activating specific locations.

### Methods

A class Site-Visit to an Inner-city dens neighborhood that is home to many children. We found that a site-visit can be an incredibly useful way to develop a sense of locality to help generate site-oriented ideas for interventions. Thus, it is our preferred choice for sessions 9 and 10.

### 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).

After the class visit in the field, try to evaluate what you witness and pick two zones (locations) one that represent a 'good practice' in planning, and another 'bad practice' Example.

1. Document and describe the good practice and the bad practice examples, using images, sketches or drawing.
2. Refer to literature to describe the positive and negative potential impacts on early childhood development at each of these sites.

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 neighborhoods planning practices do not always meet the needs of the Actual number of children living in it. And that some are conducive to ECD while some are not.

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.

## Neighborhood and Around the Building

### Goals

To Choose a handful of interventions suggested in previous assignment, that can be implemented in the case-study neighborhood.  
Mainly by ruling out or making adaptations to ideas for interventions to be left with only the most Suited for a specific location, community, needs, etc.

### 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 commenting on peer's ideas and shared thoughts, and a discussion to Result in a shortlist of ten to twelve ideas for interventions.

### Assignment

1. **Brain writing ideas for the streets:** Come up with an idea/intervention/activity that you think might be appropriate for these streets. Find an image showing that idea. On Miro, write your name on one of the 'Brain Writing' sticky note colours, and post the image of your idea below your name (some examples already on Miro). Follow the colour of your sticky note to comment on at least two other posted ideas, suggesting ways to improve them.
2. create a work sheet describing in a clear photo and a short heading, the best most suited ideas for the neighborhood examined.
3. A meet at the neighborhood we met last time. , bring lots of good energies and calm listening skills. We will explain the exercise, distribute work sheets, and **assign a specific street to each group of 4- 5 students.** Each group will walk to 'their' site, where they will meet about two mothers and their children, and a facilitator.
  - a) **Describe the street** -- what works/supports children and play? What doesn't? Consider shade, slope, public buildings, connection to streets and cars, other uses. Use your knowledge of indicators and streets, and your knowledge of play, as you listen and then respond.
  - b) **Review potential interventions** – using the sheet of images, drawn from your postings on MIRO. Review the ideas one at a time with the mothers.

## Neighborhood and Around the Building

Which might work on this particular street? What adaptations would need to be made? Which won't work, and why? **Record their answers in writing, on the sheet.**

4. **Group summary slide:** Each group of students should submit one or two slides describing the outcomes of the session at your site. The goal of the slides is to advance implementation of the interventions, on site. Please include:

- location, participants (students, accompanying person, and any parent names/numbers).
- description of the site. What are the main features or issues, what aspects did the parents wish to enhance or change?
- proposed interventions: What items on the 'menu' were of most interest to the parents? To the children? Why? Where?
- analysis: What are your own recommendations for this site?

### Discussion Points

**Consider** order of implementation, process of getting it done, and thoughts about what might work - or not, and why. For example - if you are recommending green gardening interventions, consider religion and or other restrictions. questions of shade and water and surface area.

What interventions would be easier to carry out then others? Who might oppose, who should make consent, who will benefit?

The roll of facilitators- can such a process be possible if not for a facilitator?

### Insights

**The** students got to experience a field-oriented approach. Most students noted it made them regard public participation as an important component in a good city planning. As IK mentioned. *"This is one example of many, which proves how important joint planning is with the public, and not just by professionals in offices. Urban planning is a process carried out for the benefit of the public: it is not worthwhile in itself, and therefore any such process must express to the public for whom the space is designed."* So did AG shared his thoughts *"(good) city planning is about being very strict about good/ideal planning rules at macro level and at micro level there should be room for compromise between limitations and ideals to achieve as much change while considering other users and functions of a place and of a community."*

## Site-Visit Around the Neighborhood

### Insights

AL, stated " This is the only course on my degree that created a close link between knowledge and implementation"

"I learnt from this implementation exercise About consulting residents: significance of the participation of the civil society / the first people concerned (children and their caregivers). They were actually just waiting for us to engage with them," said LA.

"even suggestions as trivial as floor-painted games should be in keeping with tradition to determine the graphics, and exact location on the street, to keep boys and girls to their own zones" AR said

"on the street we examined, any intervention will have to consider a planned construction that will last several months and will induce heavy trucks traffic" NA said.

## Site-Visit Around the Neighborhood

### Self-Explanatory work sheet



Students and residents might benefit if the students' work is commissioned by the city/ neighborhood / or tenements body. A strong community might also be able to refund travel expenses for students to get on-field.

This can lead to a fruitful collaboration to which both sides are committed.

**Sessions 9-10 (choice B)**

**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, etc.)

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 1950's and 1960's were more conducive to early childhood development than neighborhood plans from the 1980's 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.

# Neighborhood and Around the Building

## Examples



**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. .

# Neighborhood and Around the Building

## Examples



### 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



The second entrance:

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

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



Adding a bench



Lowering the intercom and using a non-heavy entrance door



### Interventions - at the entrance to the building

Minimum investment with maximum community profit





**Sessions 11-12**

# **Final Assignment and Review**



## Final Assignment and Review

### Final Assignment

Individual final reflection: please submit one slide or one page in English describing what you learned from this final exercise, in light of the course. Consider questions such as

- what did I learn from this implementation exercise ? About seeing space, about thinking about children in the city, about making change on a neighborhood or site-specific level, or about consulting residents or the specific interventions?
- Did the implementation exercise really draw on what I learned over the semester? Had I participated without the learning from the course - would my experience and contribution have been any different? how?
- What do you take from this course overall? How was this course similar to or different from other courses? What worked for you, and what didn't?

### Additional Resources

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.

## Additional Resources

Early Childhood Matters, 127, 116pp. Retrieved from:

<https://bernardvanleer.org/publicationsreports/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](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](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](https://issuu.com/bernardvanleerfoundation/docs/culturally_appropriate_approaches_in_early_childho)

#### Israeli Context

בישראל סביבת חיים לגיל הרך בישראל Viaplan final report

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-citymaking-early-childhood-a-strategic-priority-in-tel-aviv/>

#### Examples of students past work

**Session 13**

# **Evaluation of the Course**

## Evaluation

### Goals

- To understand what the strong and weak points of the course were
- 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*

### 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.”*

TA added " *The course gave me a creative point of view on the urban space. In addition, that small changes in space can make significant changes in life of people*"

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

## **A Note on Language...**

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 Hebr.

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.

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 act

