

SESSION FOUR:
15:00-16:10

Advocacy, Policy and child-centred practice

Convener: Stefanie Chetty

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CHILDREN AS URBAN CITIZENS

12 October 2020

Topic	Speaker
How to institutionalise children's needs and rights into existing policies	Moderator: Stefanie Chetty (<i>Director: Urban Policy Development and Management at National Department of Cooperative Governance</i>)
Because I am girl programme	Kathryn Travers (<i>Advisor to the board Women and Cities International</i>)
Engaging children through participatory theatre	Alex Halligey (<i>Post-Doctoral fellow: Spatial Analysis Planning at the University of Witwatersrand</i>)
Mothers in the city	Margot Rubin and Alex Parker (<i>Spatial Analysis Planning at the University of Witwatersrand</i>)
Reclaiming public spaces: Child inclusive urban design	Ayanda Roji (<i>Head Research and Knowledge Management: City of Johannesburg parks</i>)
Discussion	
Insights and recommendations	Dr Maria Mabetoa (<i>President of the South African Council of Social Service Professions, board member DG Murray trust</i>)



the trinity session



Children and Urban Theatre: Making Place and Plays in Johannesburg Suburban Streets

Dr Alexandra Halligey

Currently: postdoctoral fellow, JIAS, University of Johannesburg, supervised by SARChI Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture

Mimosa School and Open Streets, Auckland Park research conducted while postdoctoral fellow with the South African Research Chair in Spatial Analysis and City Planning, School of Architecture and Planning, University of Witwatersrand

Bertrams Junior School research conducted while doctoral candidate with the African Centre for Cities and the Drama Department, University of Cape Town



Background to research

- Background in theatremaking
- Research interest in theatre and performance as practical tool and conceptual lens for understanding everyday placemaking in city spaces.
- Placemaking as ongoing construction through daily relational actions: routes traversed, work and social activities, urban planning, structure of municipal services, property development.
- How understanding placemaking through this lens might provide information of value in policymaking and civil advocacy and action to positively support our urban social worlds as they are already in the making.



Two projects

- Weekly participatory theatre and performance workshops with Bertrams Junior School Grade 3s and 4s, 2015-2016.



- Streets research with Mimosa School Grade 1s, 2s and 3s, February-April 2019.

What these projects offer to focusing on children as urban citizens

- Positioning children as urban researchers:
 - Conceptualising the role of children as urban researchers through the philosophies of Tim Ingold (social anthropologist), Dorothy Heathcote (drama educationalist) and the Reggio Emilia approach to children-centred learning.
 - Propositions for why children make excellent urban researchers.

Working with Bertrams Junior School

- Part of a larger year-long participatory public art project on daily placemaking in Bertrams, Lorentzville and Judith's Paarl.
- Grade 3s and 4s at Bertrams Junior School one of several institutional groups involved in the project.
- Project was entirely artistic: to find creative expression of what is with no structured intentions or mechanisms for social or spatial change.

Making with to know

- The Grade 3s and 4s as experts on the area's daily street life.
- Theatre and performance were 'interview' tools.
- Tim Ingold's concept of thinking through making with material. (Ingold, 2013).
- We joined together in making plays/performances with the material of the physical space and actions of daily life in the area.
- I offered some skills (drama) and knowledge (Bertrams, Lorentzville and Judith Paarl's history) to facilitate our research process.





Routes to school

- October-December 2015: embodied mapping of routes to school.
 - The route.
 - Something interesting you once saw on your route.
 - What if something magical could happen on the way to school?
- Used mime, storytelling and choral repetition.
- Became a short choral play performed for the whole school and Gerald Fitzpatrick House.



Bertrams Judith's Paarl Lorentzville history play

- Each week we explored a new section of the area's history, starting from precolonial times.
- Drawing on Dorothy Heathcote's system for using drama in education (DIE):
 - Visual images and brief storytelling of the passage of history are used to then enrol the children into an imaginary playing out of that time and space.
 - The initial 'information' provides a springboard which children detail with their own life experiences and imaginations.
- Resulted in a short play which was performed for the rest of the school and at the annual Joburg Cricket Club funders' lunch.

Performing in *Izithombe 2094*

- Grade 3s and 4s performed in a section of *Izithombe 2094* – the street theatre play which was the culmination of the larger, year-long participatory public art project.
- Choral performance on the pavement outside the school of the clapping and singing games played by the children on the street daily.
- Sharing their daily place-making actions with a public audience.

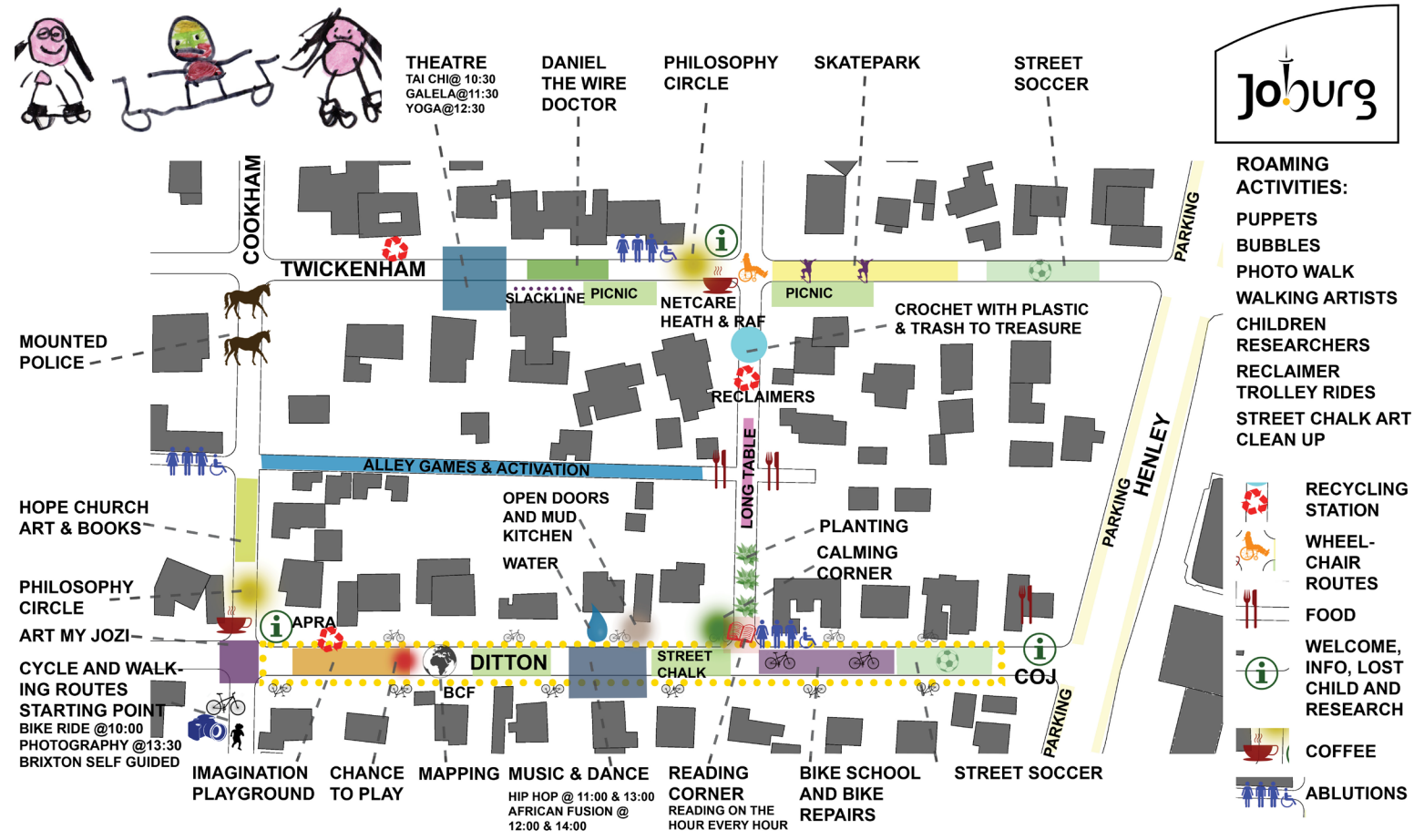


Mimosa School Auckland Park research



- A project which orientated around an Open Streets event on 7 April 2019, but involved over a year of research by children.
- The children of Mimosa researched the public spaces (and some private) of Auckland Park surrounding their school and the people that move through them and make them in various ways daily.

Open Streets, Auckland Park 7 April 2020



OPEN STREETS ACTIVITY MAP

AUCKLAND PARK
7 APRIL 2019
10:00AM TO 3:00PM

Reggio Emilia inspired

- An educational philosophy developed in the Italian town of Reggio Emilia, Italy, post World War II.
- Pioneered and championed by Loris Malaguzzi.
- The early childhood education articulation of Ingold's thinking through making:
 - Understanding children in relation to the networks of their worlds: people, objects, environments.
 - Children learn through experiencing their worlds, but their whole networks of adults and older children learn through their learning to.
 - Teachers as facilitating the child's curiosity.
 - Craft/skills are mechanisms to facilitate a 'thinking through making with' the material of the world.



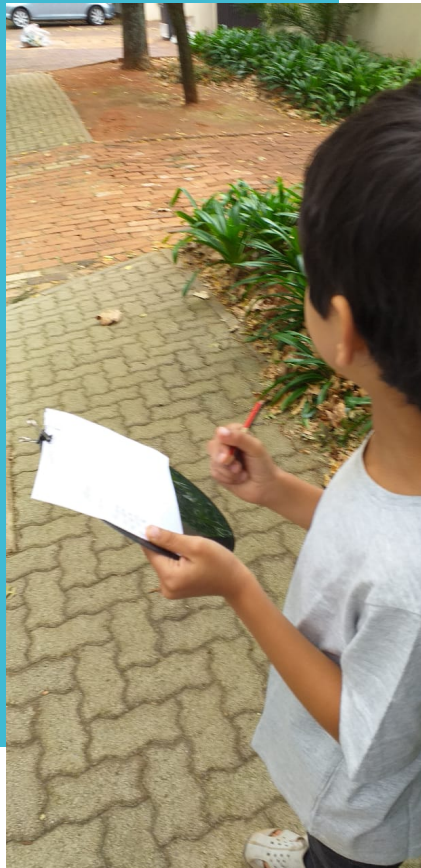
Researching the streets

- Children were provided with the skills to conduct research: counting, observing, interviewing, audiorecording, sketching, writing, re-enacting, reporting.
- They provided their observational skills to gather qualitative and quantitative data on spatial structure, natural and built environment materials, on vehicle and people's movements, activities, experiences.
- The research led up to the Open Streets Auckland Park event – a public sharing and a public enrolment in the research experiments – and continued beyond.
- Fact finding, but also propositional: what could streets be or become?

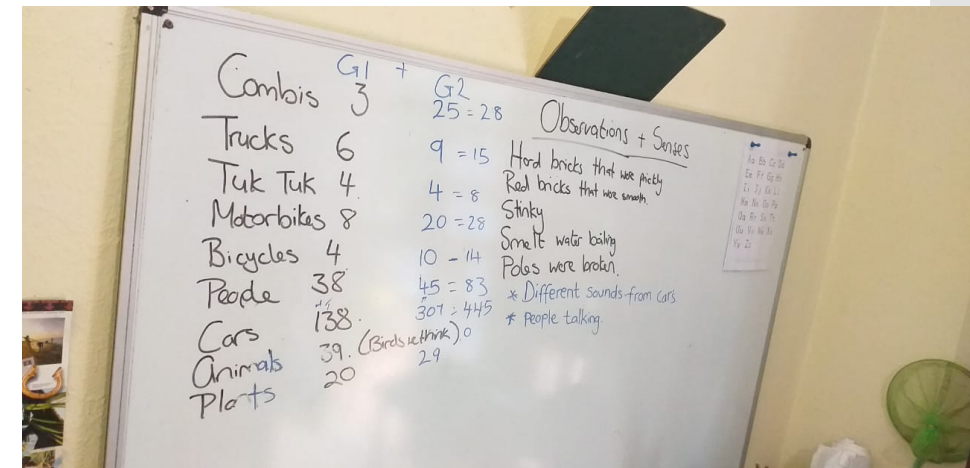
Interviews with pedestrians



Learning with children as a collaborative process



- That Ingold, Heathcote and Reggio Emilia all offer different articulations of understanding learning as a relational, communicative, active process between people and people and the world.
- Positioning children as the research guides in this process is productive and meaningful for developing factual knowledge and conceptual possibilities for cities.



Tentative hypotheses

- Children as exceptional and expert urban researchers:
 - High levels of observation.
 - Lateral thinkers.
 - The process of research is mutually beneficial to them and cities (a two-way educational exchange).
 - Schools and ECDs hold potential as providing time and an organisational structure for children's research.
 - They are tightly networked into a wide range of people and there is a high visibility for the connections of their network.
 - Children's findings and reflections if taken into account in policy will inevitably enable the prioritisation of choice for kinder, gentler, more hospitable cities that would be desirable for all ages and demographic groups.

Links

- *Izithombe 2094* documentary:
<https://www.wits.ac.za/sacp/featured-projects/izithombe-2094-documentary/>
- Open Streets, Auckland Park Report:
<https://www.wits.ac.za/sacp/featured-projects/open-streets-auckland-park/>

Thank you

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The mobility of children and their carers in the Gauteng City-Region

Margot Rubin and Alexandra Parker

Children as Urban Citizens

12 October 2020

Joint Project of the SARCHI Spatial Analysis & City Planning, University of the Witwatersrand and Gauteng City Region Observatory

Background

SA cities remain spatially segregated and poorer residents spend more time and money travelling to economic opportunities and to use spatial amenities than wealthier residents

However layered over that is the role that gender plays in how cities are navigated? What does this mean for men and women, their household responsibilities and childcare?

What difference does gender and location make for how households navigate and engage with the city in their daily lives?

Data drawn from two studies:

- Mothers in the City: 2016 - 25 mothers across Johannesburg
- Families in the City: 2019-2020 - 43 respondents across the province
- Qualitative interviews, mobility apps and focus groups, as well as, voice notes and auto-photography
- Communities under stress: malnutrition/hunger, substance-abuse, extreme poverty

Inter-dependence

My daughter is my gun (L10, Edenvale)

My son is handbag and daughter is my purse - (M3)

Parents do not allow children to go very far without them

- concerns around their safety. Fears of violent crime and awareness of child abuse etc

Constructs “assemblages” of parents and children and their things - parents are consistently “encumbered” by their children

Creates dependency until children are much older relative to other cultural norms



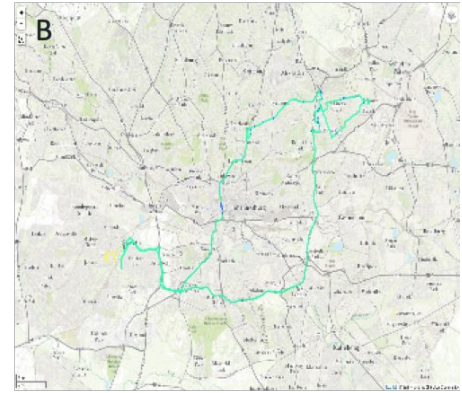
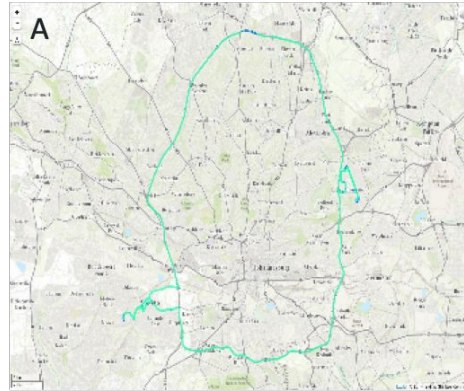
Spatial interdependence

Parents, especially mothers, tend to make spatial choices, such as jobs, depending on where their children are located:

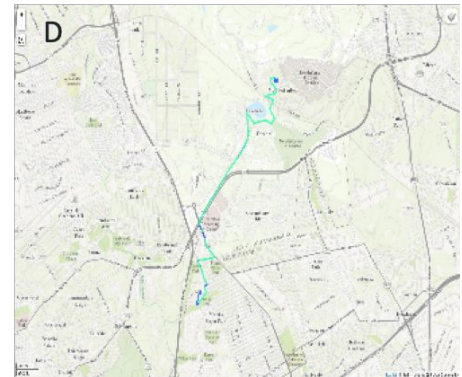
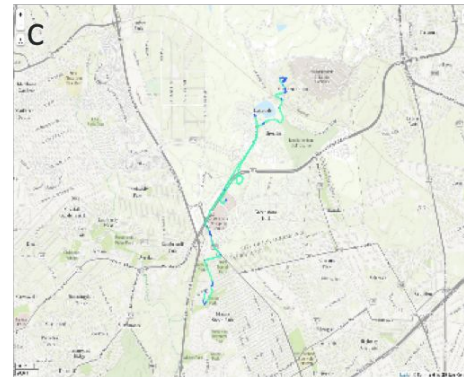
I wouldn't move out of Lens...because I know... God forbid anything happens to her [her daughter]...but I'm close to her. (L4)

The consequence is that women's spatial footprints can often be much smaller than their partners.

This constrains the employment and activity choices for women



A and B: Male partner



C and D: Female partner

My decisions are based mostly on proximity. I am trying as much as possible to create a world that is quite close (M1)



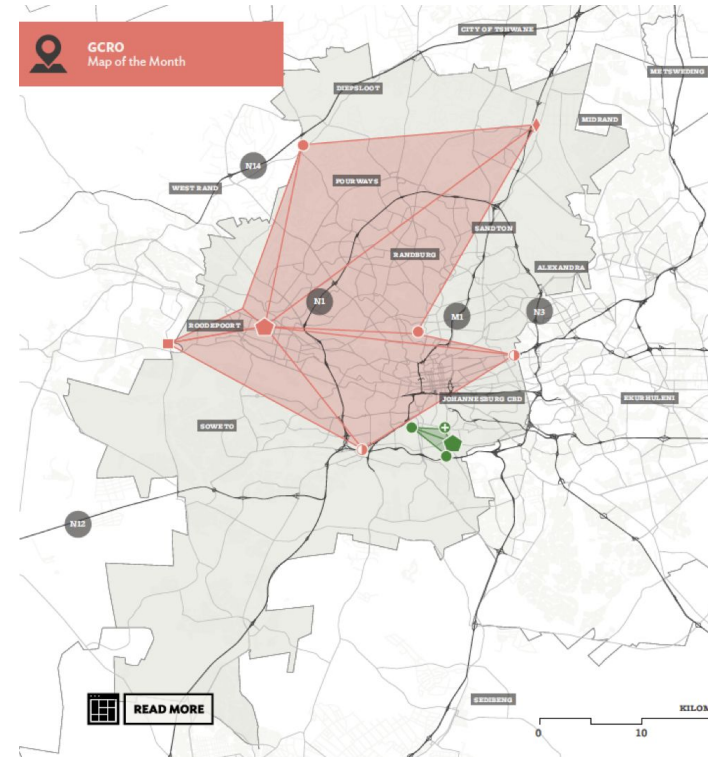
Household Configurations and Spatial Footprints

- Households in South Africa are very fluid - changing in terms of configuration, membership and proximity
- Many configurations include children being looked after by other family members in other parts of the city or the country

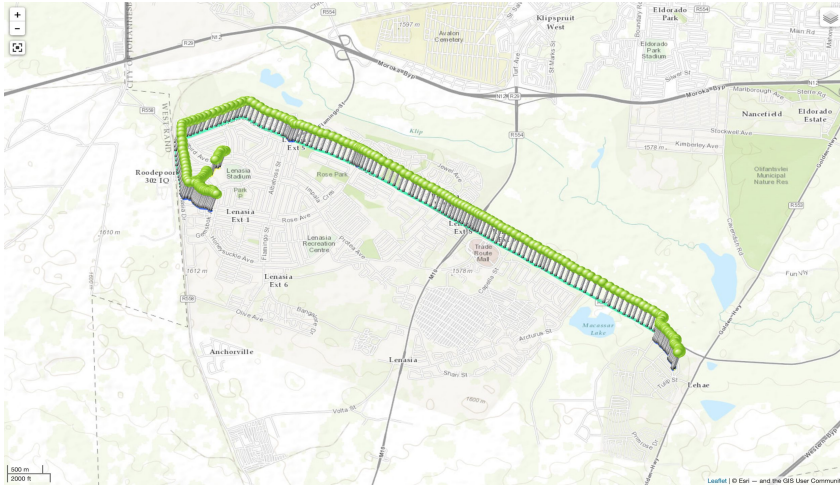
This impacts on people's spatial footprints

He [17 year old son] is in Mpumalanga..At my mother's home with my mother... Yes, it's okay. I tend to visit once or twice in a month... For him. [and to bring] Yes, money and groceries. (M3)

There are 3 children. I gave birth to two of them. I say three because I am also referring to my sister's child who passed away. The one who took care of my child Yes. So, I count him as one of my children because he has no parents; I take of him and he lives with me... at home...in Senotlelo. (M10)



Household Configurations and Spatial Footprints



[I stay with] my husband, my 16 year old, my 11 year old and our 6 year old. [Has other children] ...they don't stay with me. They stay at Extension 10. They are 20 and 18... It's a very long story... actually my adopted mother...she was my father's sister... she took me in when my mom and my dad passed away since I was a baby and she did the same with my two boys. They have been there ever since (L3)

Local Neighbourhood Scale

Denver and Bertrams:

Choices for accessing health care, job seeking, schools were all constrained by the available transport options with enormous costs:

When we [she, her mother and three disabled children] go to Charlotte Maxeke [Hospital], we use taxis. When we do not have taxi fare we walk... During summer we leave exactly at 5 am and past 5 am during winter. We cross George Goch [Hostel] and we get there around 9 am or 10 am (D5, 48 year old, Black mother, 2019).

Edenvale:

In reporting the moment in which distance and her struggles became clear she remembers her husband saying "Your life needs to get smaller." "And when he said that, I said "yes!" like in so many ways, my life needs to get smaller" (E7, 39 year old white mother, 2019).

But made possible because all amenities are close-by - in walking distance or short drive

Gendered Moral Rationality and the City

The spatial footprints of carers, particularly mothers, are informed by pragmatic considerations (time and money), external conditions (policies and urban geography) but also by value judgments (concerned with being a 'good' parent and raising children 'well') that combine to produce a set of moral geographies.



Conclusions

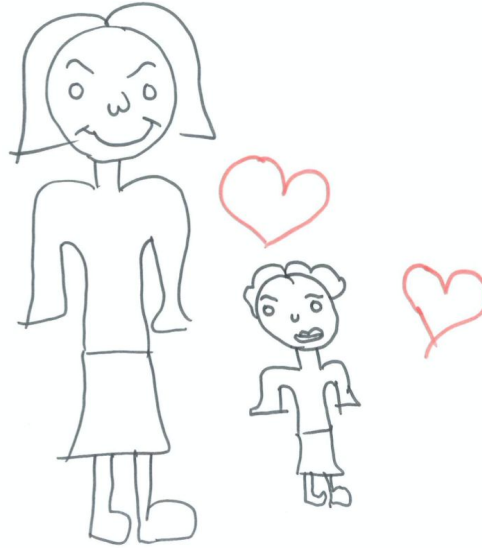
- Carers and their children interact with and use the city extensively
- Spatial footprints varied widely and are determined by a complex concatenation of factors: urban material conditions; socio-economic status; spatial inequalities; value judgments
- The experiences of carers in the city cannot be understood through socio-economic status or through material conditions, rather insight into their identities, ideologies and moral geographies is required in order to design adequate policies and interventions



Policy recommendations

- The need for locally available amenities and facilities (the 15 minute city)
- The need for good, safe, reliable, affordable childcare
- The need for safe public spaces and transport for both children and their carers
- Policy needs to recognise the fluidity of households
- Bureaucracy is difficult to navigate, particularly for foreign nationals, with implications for accessing services

Thank you!



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RECLAIMING SPACES : CHILD INCLUSIVE URBAN DESIGN – LESSONS FROM THE INNER-CITY



LESSONS FROM TWO INNER-CITY INITIATIVES



- Production of Children's book, The Big Show;
- Safer parks project - End Street North Park pilot project;



CHILDREN'S ROLE IN PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT



SHORT STORIES ON CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES IN PARKS



■ Story #1

In the first play, two girls are walking through a park **when a passerby grabs one by the arms and runs away with her**. The remaining Girl screams and cries. A boy hears her crying and asks her what has happened. She explains. The boy then chases after the girl and her abductor. The Abductor is then beaten as a "thief".

Story#2

In the second play, a boy and his friend are walking through a park. When the boy puts his bag down to play a **game, someone steals the bag**. When the boys discover that the bag is missing, they find a park ranger and ask him if he can help them recover the bag. The ranger says he is unable to.

Story#3

In this play, three children are eating bread on a park bench when a dog rushes at them, barking. The children scatter and run in different directions. The **dog eventually catches one of them, a Girl, and bites her in the stomach**.

■ Story#4

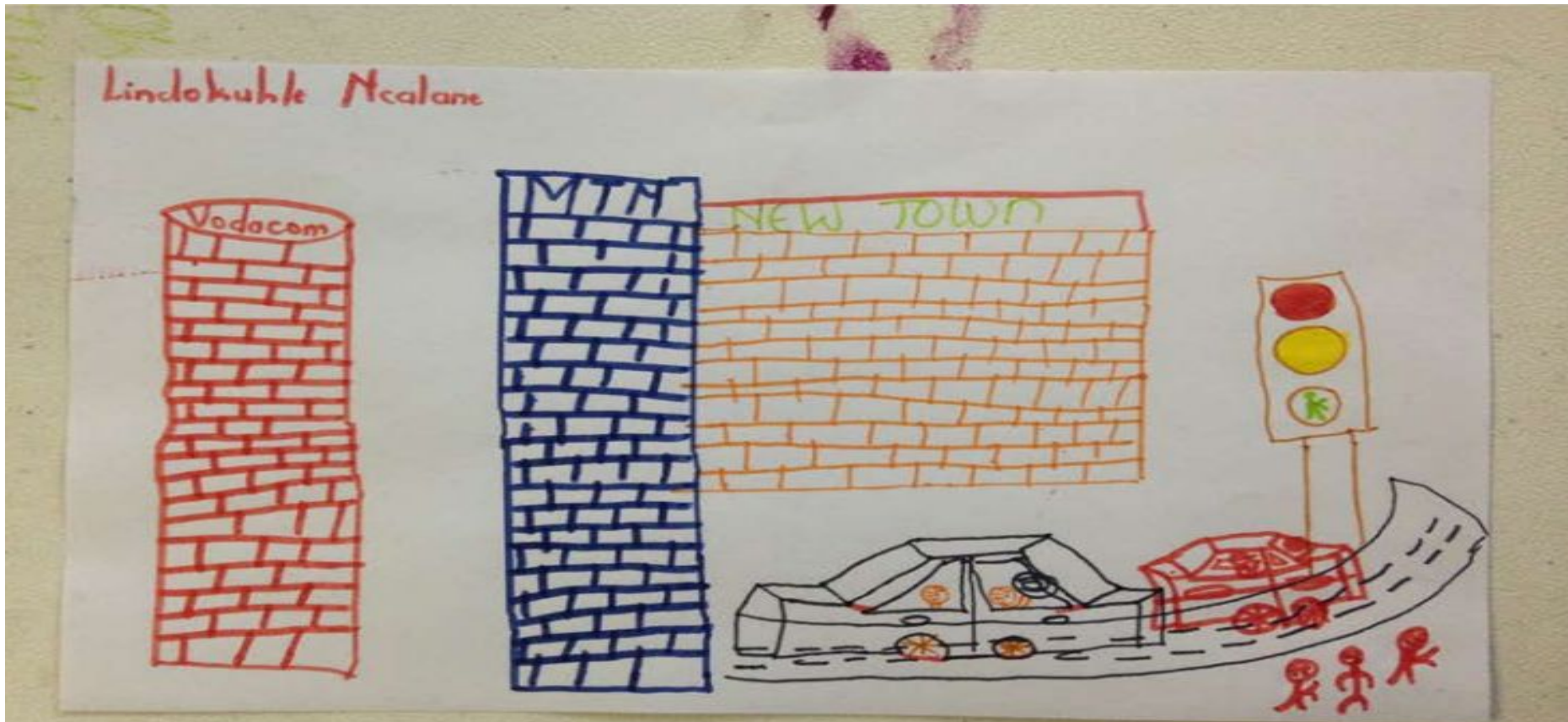
In the final play, two girls are playing in the park when they are approached by another little girl, who begs them for money. They do not want to give her money but **she won't leave alone. She disturbs the game**.



CHILDREN'S VISION OF THE CITY

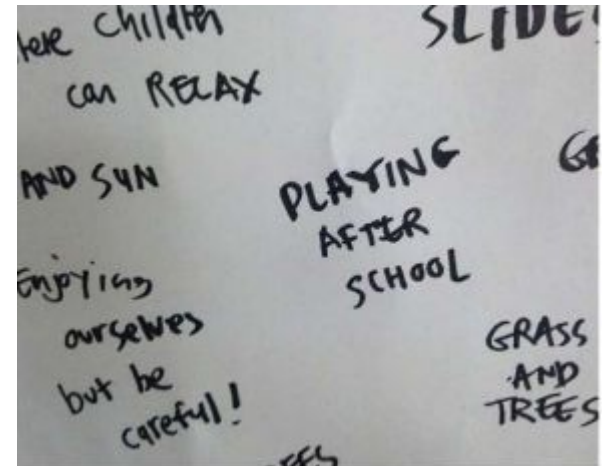
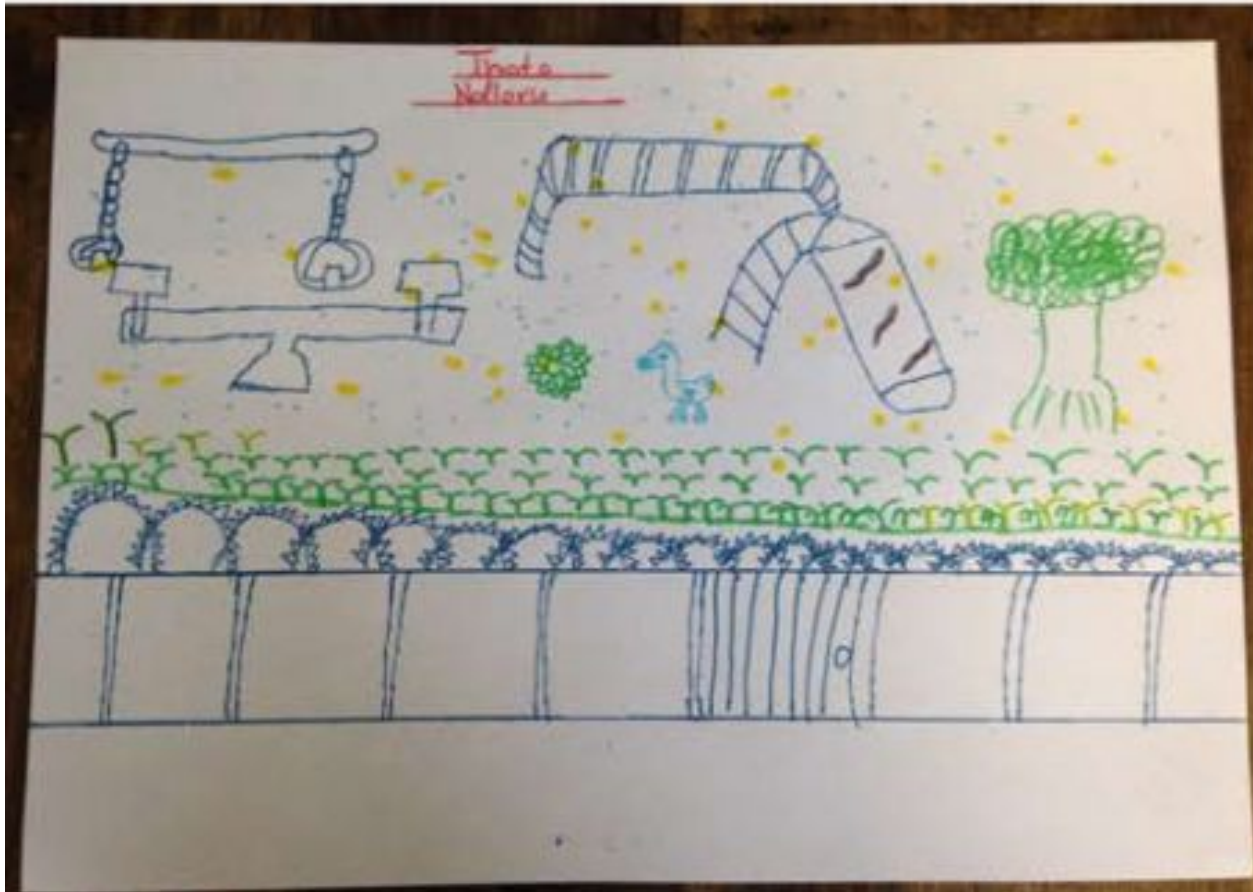


- ME and the CITY : The City for them consist of buildings, billboards, streets, cars, road signs;
- Rethink the use of PS in different ways – share it with schools esp day time use e.g, Jeppestown, Gilfillan Park
- Contested spaces – Jeppestown (nurseries); End Street Park North (homeless)



CHILDREN'S VISION OF PARKS

What are parks for? The best park I can imagine..
Is the concept of women and children park viable? Pollingerkop



WAYS TO INCLUDE CHILDREN IN URBAN DESIGN

- Safer parks, End Street North Park;
- Beyond jungle gyms – domain for children as future citizens;
- All of society approach - language and methodologies;
- Importance of partnership;
 - with CSOs ,Sticky situations;
 - GIZ , documentation
 - UN-Habitat, Minecraft video game
- Technology - Partnership with UN-habitat
- Integral involvement of schools (e.g. IHS Harris);
- My Dream Park – school competitions – partnership with private sector



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY



- ❑ Pedestrian safety integral it is for safety of children;
- ❑ Parks not as projects/destinations;
 - Integrate them into the urban fabric
 - Need for cross sectoral and integrated approach to planning;
 - Small scale improvements/ tactical urbanism;
 - Involve them not only once but throughout the project lifecycle;
 - Little planners – IH Harris Primary – Inner City Transport Master Plan;
 - JDA's indlulaminithi project - upgrading of routes that connect Yeoville five partner schools with parks and public transport - street art, lighting, public wifi and security cameras

WAYFOWARD



- **How do you embed and institutionalise the practices as priorities shift and practitioners leave the city?**
- **How about the City cooperates with schools and local Universities (Schools of architecture & planning departments), with a view to involve children and make sure they participate effectively in city making?**



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