

THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL FOR KIDS



HOW TO USE THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL KIDS MANUAL

If you want to co-design neighbourhoods and city centres that are healthy, safe, accessible, interactive and stimulating for children and their parents, here is the solution you need - The City At Eye Level for Kids Manual!

“The City at Eye Level” is an international platform advocating for more people-centred planning practices in today’s urban development, which includes many cases worldwide. Now it aims to cover the city at “kids” level as well, as it is a crucial angle to add and draw more applied theoretical knowledge to.

Through “The City at Eye Level for Kids” project we wish to advance the existing scientific research into an applicable methodology that can be used in the daily practice in cities while populating the available resources on placemaking with the aspect of the children and their familiars. We seek to address issues related to urban daily life, the perception, experience, use and management of public and common space in the cities through the “measurement” of a child’s level: from the physical attributes such as height, walking and running pace, balance, reach of hands etc, to attributes such as inspiring elements, sounds, smells and colours, other people, natural and manufactured elements, etc.



This booklet includes some of the various existing tools that can be used by practitioners, placemakers and decision-makers to include the children’s perspective into their projects. The tools are inspired by the international case studies from “The City at Eye Level for Kids” Book and have been tested on several workshops in Greece, Sweden and The Netherlands.

This booklet allows you to analyse locations critically in various scales, from the micro to the macro level, and it also provides customized tools for parents and children, for urban planners and for trainers. You can freely use one or several tools according to your needs and the type of stakeholders that are involved.

Finally, the booklet presents a list of criteria to be considered when planning and creating spaces for children and their caretakers.

We hope this booklet serves as a guide and tool towards more child-friendly spaces!



1. PREPARATION

STEP 1

Define the following:

1. What is your goal?
2. Who is your audience?
3. How much time do you have?

Since the City at Eye Level for Kids has several tools, you can choose which activities match your expectations and conditions better. By understanding your goals, your audience and the time you can make use of one or more activities.

GOAL:

The following are just examples of the different reasons why you would like to use this toolbox.

- You are an urban planner and what to assess a specific place from the kids' eye level.
- You want to include kids and parents in a project.
- You want to understand what children and parents perceive from a place?
- You want to train others about child-friendly places.
- You want to create awareness about the importance of child-friendly cities.
- And many more...

AUDIENCE:

- Authorities
- Urban Planners and/or practitioners
- Parents and children
- Students

The manual contains different activities according to the public. Hence, you can go for the activities related only to parents and children. Or if you want to create awareness among practitioners and authorities you can use the tasks described in the section "train the trainers". Finally, you can use the criteria individually or in groups to assess a space for intervention.

TIME:

Considering the time is very important. This will allow you to choose one or more activities from the toolbox.

Remember that children and parents can get distracted by other activities as well and this will influence the time of your activity. In this case choose shorter activities and allocate more time.

IMPORTANT: Based on these three elements you can decide if you want to use

1. JOINT TASKS designed to be done with parents, children and urban planners.

2. TRAIN THE TRAINERS MODE if you are working with adults only. In this case you still use the Joint tasks but you give everyone a role: "child, parent and urban planner". Use the **role adaptation** section included in each activity for guidance. Also, use the **secret tasks** to help the participants follow their role easily.

Finally, you can always use -individually or in groups- the **criteria** described at the end of this manual to assess a place from the kids' eye level.

1. PREPARATION

STEP 2

Choose a location:

Once you have defined your goal, audience and the time you have. You can choose a location to work at.

To choose a place to analyse, consider the following scales, based on The City at Eye Level for Kids Methodology:

- Micro-place
- Square, park, plaza, neighbourhood.
- Main streets, big squares, parks, waterfronts, stations.
- City scale

We have defined criteria for each of these scales, that you can find at the end of this manual.

Outdoors or indoors:

A variety of activities is presented for both outdoors and indoors. However, make sure that if you are inviting people, you have a meeting point, places to sit and a good environment to explain the activities to your participants.

You can also choose to start the activity indoors and move to the location selected.



STEP 3

Prepare invitations:

This step depends on your audience. If you know the people who you would like to invite to your workshop prepare invitations and if possible, send them some materials in advance. Specially for parents it is important to understand how much time they will spend and what they will do with their children to prepare everything they need (food, diapers, water, etc). Parents appreciate a more detailed explanation of the objective and activities, so try to be very clear when inviting them.

If you are approaching people in the selected location, prepare some materials like a small brochure or other innovative way to quickly present yourself and your objective. Some element that explains where you come from and what do you want to achieve is helpful to build trust with the people you want to approach, especially when working with children.

Another idea is to have an open invitation: Prepare communication material to share by social media or posters you can paste in the location. Always check if you need a special authorization for this by the Municipality or other regulatory entities.

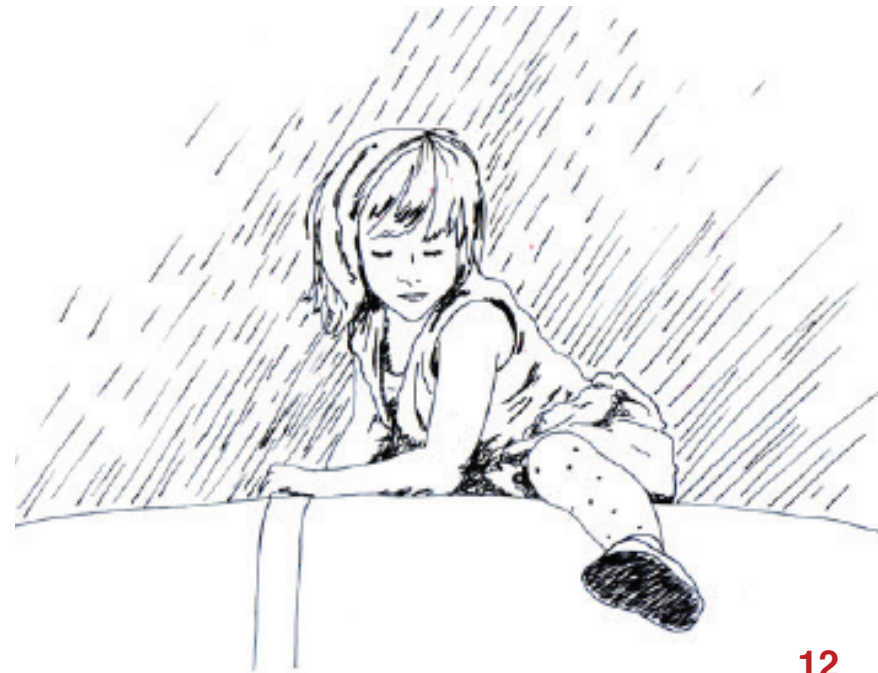
1. PREPARATION

STEP 4

Do some research on the parenting style:

Parenting is strongly context-dependent. If you do these activities in different places you will easily notice how the dynamics change between parents and children depending on the place. Hence, it is always a good idea to get information about the culture, the social dynamics and the preferences first.

You can ask some friends who are parents there to give you advice, follow parenting groups on social media, read blogs on the topic or do some academic review of literature.



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STEP 5

Chose the activities:

Yahoo!! Finally, you are ready to define the activities you can use from the City at Eye Level for Kids Manual!



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2. JOINT TASKS: SENSORIAL TOOLS

INSTRUCTIONS:

The following tasks are meant to be done by the children, parents and urban planners together outside.

You can make one or several activities in one time slot. The suggested time to spend is 45 minutes in total.

Go to the designated location. And choose as many tasks as you would like to complete from the ones listed below according to your role.

Make sure you have all the materials needed. You can also prepare an Activity Kit with materials to be handed to the participants.

2.1 FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS

2.1.1 FOLLOW YOUR WAY

How much time? 7-10 minutes

What you will need? A phone with a camera.

What to do?

1. Parents to choose a specific route from point A to point B in the neighbourhood. This route has to be “led” by their child.
2. The parent has to indicate the arrival point (B) to its child and then follow him or her.
3. The parent also has to take pictures (using a phone camera) of the child’s stopping points. This way both the parents’ and childrens’ options can be observed.

// Role adaptation //

The adult “child” needs to step into a young child’s perception and make route choices that she/he would make (e.g. where there are interesting elements such as trees, animals, other children, food, flowers etc). *Think what you loved as a child*

The adult “parent” records the route as mentioned above.



Take notes here:

2. JOINT TASKS: SENSORIAL TOOLS

2.1.2 A TRAIL WITH A STRING

How much time? 7-10 minutes

What you will need? Camera & Ball of yarn.

What to do?

Each child has a ball of yarn and is asked to attach it at a starting point and follow its own route. The chosen route will indicate a child's preference in taking a certain path or another.

(All ages from 2 years onward)

// Role adaptation //

The adult "child" needs to get into the shoes of a young child and realize the interesting/inspiring/etc elements of one's environment and walk towards them. The adult "parent" needs to take notice of the places that the adult "child" goes to, the routes that it makes and write them down. Take pictures.



Take notes here:

2.1.3 NATURE ETCHING

How much time? 7-10 minutes

What you will need? Paper, crayon.

What to do?

Each child will have a piece of paper and a crayon. We show them the technique of the "frottage" (The technique or process of taking a rubbing from an uneven surface to form the basis of a work of art) and ask them to find a surface that they like in order to apply this technique. This can also be applied indoors with collected elements.

(All ages from 2 years onward)

// Role adaptation //

The adult "child" needs to investigate one's environment to realize the elements on one's level (95cm) that might be attractive or/and accessible to a young child. The adult "parent" observes how the adult "child" selects the textures/materials in order to reflect back on them.



Take notes here:

2. JOINT TASKS: SENSORIAL TOOLS

2.1.4 A SHOW THE BEST PLACES FOR...

How much time? 7-10 minutes

What you will need? Camera.

1. ...jumping
2. ...climbing up.
3. ...laying down
4. ...running to

*do all or as much as you can!

What to do?

The adult “child” seeks to find the places where the four actions are possible to be made (and if wanted attempts to do some of them). The adult “parent” needs to take notice of these places that the adult “child” interacts with, and write them down or take a picture.

2.1.5 CLOSE YOUR EYES AND LISTEN

How much time? 7-10 minutes

What you will need? Listen and take notes, or recorder.


What to do?


Children close their eyes and describe to their parents what they hear. Parent takes notes and if possible records in her phone how the child describes/makes the sounds.

(From the age of 3 years)

// Role adaptation //

The adult “child” closes one’s eyes and attempts to focus on surrounding sounds, having the filter of what might sound interesting or annoying for a young child. The adult “child” describes these sounds to the adult “parent” who writes down these sounds and any keywords that the child might be referring to.

 Take notes here:

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2. JOINT TASKS: SENSORIAL TOOLS

2.1.6 NATURE IN A COLLAGE

How much time? 10-15 minutes

What you will need? Elements from nature, cardboard paper, glue.

What to do?

If the weather does not allow a long outdoor activity, the children can be asked to quickly collect elements from nature and once indoors, they can create one group or atomic collages.

(All ages from 2 years onward)

// Role adaptation //

The adult “child” handpicks the elements of the environment that seem to be mostly interesting and representative of the place for a young child, and together with the adult “parent” create a collage/card that they can take back home.



Take notes here:



2. JOINT TASKS: SENSORIAL TOOLS

2.2 FOR URBAN PLANNERS

2.2.1 WORKSHOP EVALUATION

How much time? 10 minutes

What you will need? Pen.

Questions:

Have you ever participated before in a similar task/workshop/discussion? The parent has to indicate the arrival point (B) to its child and then follow him or her.

What did you learn about kids in open and public space, through your observations?



Did your child and you feel safe and comfortable during the process, and how did it differ between the playground, park and street?

What elements contributed to child-friendly and parent-friendliness? List.

Other comments:

2. JOINT TASKS: SENSORIAL TOOLS

2.2 FOR URBAN PLANNERS

2.2.2 OBSERVE THE CITIZENS

How much time? 5 minutes

What you will need? Pen.

What to do?

the routes they make, the stops they make, anything related to their interaction with the place.

// Role adaptation //

The adult “child” handpicks the elements of the environment that seem to be mostly interesting and representative of the place for a young child, and together with the adult “parent” create a collage/card that they can take back home.



Take notes here:

3. TRAIN THE TRAINERS MODALITY

3.1 SECRET TASKS

INSTRUCTIONS:

When your goal is to create awareness or prepare people to work with children.

You can first prepare a workshop only with adults. You can separate them in groups and assign them a role: Parent, children and urban planner. During the activity outside they can have cards with secret task according to their role. This will help them to have ideas on how to act.

Each activity is 5 to 10 minutes. They can complete one or two at any moment.

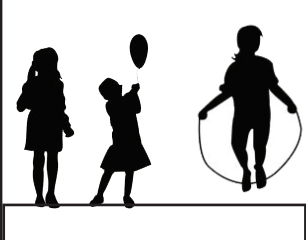
* Do not tell your group partners about your secret task!

CHILDREN

Get tired // 5 minutes
You are so tired. Find a place where you can rest and indicate it to your caregiver. Get moody if you need to.



Hide // 5 minutes
Without informing your caregiver find a place to hide and keep in mind that your caregiver is still able to find you.



Find something that amuses you // 5 min
If you see something that looks playful to you, try to stay there even if your parent is in a rush.

PARENTS

Think and Share // 5 minutes
"What did you like to do when you were at the age of your **ON**."



The baby is hungry // 7-10 minutes
Find a location close to you where you can buy a proper snack for your young child and eat it properly..



Change the diaper // 7-10 minutes
Find a place where you can change your baby's diaper.

3. TRAIN THE TRAINERS MODALITY

3.1 SECRET TASKS

MATERIALS:

What materials can be used in the 'train the trainers' workshop?

FOR EVERYONE:

- You can start with an introductory activity, where you invite the participants to think about the place where they used to play when they were children. Can they draw it in a paper or talk about it? How different is the place now? What do they liked and disliked about the place?
- Prepare a kit with the materials needed for all the activities and tasks.
- Print a copy of the tasks, secret tasks and criteria for the participants.



FOR CHILDREN:

A great idea is to help the adult be in the children eye level. You can cut broom sticks or any kind of stick in 95cm, then paste an eye mask on the top of it. Adults can go down and see from the mask, understanding what is it to be a child. It also makes an amazing element for all the group to experiment.



FOR PARENTS:

You can give the parents a baby. Get some bags of sand, rice or any other material that weight 5 kilograms (the weight of a newly born. You can dress "the babies" with some nice clothes and ask the participants to do all the activities carrying the baby as well.

Also, you can get some strollers and go around. This is helpful to understand and analyse mobility and accessibility.

Finally, if you prepare an Activity Kit, hand it to the 'parent' as well.

All these elements will help to make the situation closer to what parents live when they go out with their children.



4. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

4.1 MICROPLACE SCALE

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4. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

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4. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

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Temporality for livability	Colourful and temporary urban elements such as rainbow crosswalks, parklets, potted trees, furniture, speed reducing traffic obstacles and public pianos creates a sensory experience and invites people to stop and interact																				
Landmarks	Public art, ornaments, fountains and murals: reference to history, happenings, activities, community and function as landmark, recognizable places and educative elements																				
Centrality	Dedicating central locations of child-friendly parks makes children part of society, they can interact with other people in society, this prevents loneliness (in particular for migrant youth) and they can assert their youthful lifestyles to an audience.																				
<p>Square, park, plaza, neighborhood scale Accessibility and safety</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Walkability</td> <td>Walkability, including presence and width of side walks, even surface materials, continuity and facilitated pedestrian crossing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public space network</td> <td>Network between public spaces that offer safe access and resting places between A and B</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical safety</td> <td>Differentiated floor materials or sensorial elements to indicate danger (waterfront pavement, sidewalk edge)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Perceived safety</td> <td>Lighting, many passers-by and neighboring windows on eye level while factors such as scooters, unleashed dogs, troublesome groups and vandalism are diminished</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Experienced safety</td> <td>Negotiated traffic to increase safety for parents to for instance push the stroller while child learns how to ride a bike</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Access to play space</td> <td>Accessibility to parks without entrance fees, fences and gates and located near the street as well as access to schoolyards after school hours to move freely, shout, run, or check phones, all things that they are restricted from doing in school, on the subway, and in most spaces.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Access to streets</td> <td>Access to outdoor play spaces by temporarily transforming residential streets into playgrounds or more livable outdoor environments</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wayfinding</td> <td>Wayfinding encouragement for children to learn to navigate and position</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maintenance</td> <td>Well-maintained, defined as durable materials, design quality, cleanliness and maintenance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stroller-friendly</td> <td>Stroller friendliness by adjusted sidewalk heights, general reachability and spaces for strollers near places to stay</td> </tr> </table>	Walkability	Walkability, including presence and width of side walks, even surface materials, continuity and facilitated pedestrian crossing	Public space network	Network between public spaces that offer safe access and resting places between A and B	Physical safety	Differentiated floor materials or sensorial elements to indicate danger (waterfront pavement, sidewalk edge)	Perceived safety	Lighting, many passers-by and neighboring windows on eye level while factors such as scooters, unleashed dogs, troublesome groups and vandalism are diminished	Experienced safety	Negotiated traffic to increase safety for parents to for instance push the stroller while child learns how to ride a bike	Access to play space	Accessibility to parks without entrance fees, fences and gates and located near the street as well as access to schoolyards after school hours to move freely, shout, run, or check phones, all things that they are restricted from doing in school, on the subway, and in most spaces.	Access to streets	Access to outdoor play spaces by temporarily transforming residential streets into playgrounds or more livable outdoor environments	Wayfinding	Wayfinding encouragement for children to learn to navigate and position	Maintenance	Well-maintained, defined as durable materials, design quality, cleanliness and maintenance	Stroller-friendly	Stroller friendliness by adjusted sidewalk heights, general reachability and spaces for strollers near places to stay
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4. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

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4.2 SQUARE, PARK, PLAZA, NEIGHBOURHOOD SCALE

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4. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

4.3 CITY SCALE

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<p>CITY SCALE Connectivity</p>	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Family friendly routes</td> <td>Dedicated bicycle paths and safe pedestrian connections between home and public space, playgrounds, schools and facilities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobility independency</td> <td>Independency stimulation of children and parents to move around the city and advance orientation and wayfinding</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Walkability</td> <td>The "stroller test" and other indicators for walkable city</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Access to public transport</td> <td>Provide public transit access within 800 meters of most residences</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green connections</td> <td>Outlining park locations throughout the city</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mobility</td> <td>Public transport that is colorful, easy and accessible, walkability, and family-friendly transport options such as cargo bike parking, tree-lined streets, traffic calming</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public space network</td> <td>Connectedness between public spaces, homes, pre-schools, green space and streets that encourage active transportation options such as walking or biking</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Family friendly routes	Dedicated bicycle paths and safe pedestrian connections between home and public space, playgrounds, schools and facilities	Mobility independency	Independency stimulation of children and parents to move around the city and advance orientation and wayfinding	Walkability	The "stroller test" and other indicators for walkable city	Access to public transport	Provide public transit access within 800 meters of most residences	Green connections	Outlining park locations throughout the city	Mobility	Public transport that is colorful, easy and accessible, walkability, and family-friendly transport options such as cargo bike parking, tree-lined streets, traffic calming	Public space network	Connectedness between public spaces, homes, pre-schools, green space and streets that encourage active transportation options such as walking or biking
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4. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

4.3 CITY SCALE

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CREDITS

This manual is based on the methodology and criteria from **The City at Eye Level for Kids** book edited by **Rosa Danenberg, Vivian Doumpa, Hans Karssenberg** and supported by the Bernard van Leer Foundation as part of the Urban95 Challenge.

The manual was developed by **Giulia Gualtieri, Viviana Cordero, Vivian Doumpa**.

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Picture #11: BUILDING A CHILD DEVELOPING PLAY SPACE IN CAIRO THROUGH LISTENING TO CHILDREN Aliaa Maged Kamal (German University in Cairo), The City at Eye Level for Kids, 2018. pg. 95

Picture #12 & #13: GIRLS, MAKE ROOM FOR THEM Nadine Roos & Nikki Daniëls (HUNK Design), "The City at Eye Level for Kids" 2018. Pg. 173

Picture #14: MICRO URBAN RENEWAL COMMUNITY GARDENS IN SHANGHAI Jing Jing (KTH Centre for Future of Places), "The City at Eye Level for Kids" 2018. Pg. 186

Picture #15: BUILDING A CHILD DEVELOPING PLAY SPACE IN CAIRO THROUGH LISTENING TO CHILDREN Aliaa Maged Kamal (German University in Cairo), The City at Eye Level for Kids, 2018. pg. 95

Picture #16: Photo by Michal Smid; DTL Archives, From: HOP, SKIP AND MAKE: CREATING CHILD-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT IN DANDORA, Anna Têhlová (Public Space Network), The City at Eye Level for Kids, 2018. pg. 66

Picture #17: YOUTH PRACTISES TRANSFORMING THE MEANING OF FORMAL PUBLIC SPACE IN HANOI Stephanie Geertman (Hanoi Youth Public Space), The City at Eye Level for Kids, 2018. pg. 165

Picture #18: WHAT WE LEARNED ON 78TH STREET: MAKING PUBLIC SPACES WORK FOR ALL AGES Donovan Finn (Stony Brook University), The City at Eye Level for Kids, 2018. pg. 124

Picture #19: Photo by: Fabian Álvarez, From: PLAY, URBAN SPACES AND CHILDREN'S CAPABILITIES Greg Labrosse (Technological University of Bolivar) The City at Eye Level for Kids, 2018. pg. 61

Picture #20: SHAPING SPACES FOR GENERATION Z Gregor H. Mews & Aline Peres dos Santos (Urban Synergies Group) The City at Eye Level for Kids, 2018. pg. 74

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