Children and Youth as Catalysts in Greening Cities & Neighborhoods

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Wellness through Nature Connection across the Lifespan
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Presenter Disclosures
Louise Chawla
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no relationships to disclose

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Growing Up in Cities     Child Friendly Cities
UNESCO                           UNICEF

rights-based initiatives that integrate child and youth participation into city planning

United Nations
Convention on the Rights of the Child
(ratified by UN in 1989)

Its principles have been integrated into Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda of the United Nations.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, this entails guaranteeing the rights of every young citizen to:

Protection:

For example
- Protection from exploitation, violence and abuse
- An unpolluted environment
Provision of basic needs:

- Safe water and proper sanitation
- Basic services such as health care, education and shelter

Participation:

- Participate in family, community and social life
- Participate in cultural and social events
- Have a voice in decisions that impact their lives, consistent with their developing capabilities

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

Constitution of the World Health Organization, 1948 endorsed by the American Public Health Association

Capabilities Approach to Human Well-being

- Certain inherent universal capabilities constitute our nature as human beings
- The more fully we develop our constructive human capabilities, the more fully we flourish and find happiness and well-being

Growing Up in Cities

A UNESCO project which uses participatory action-research to forge intergenerational partnerships to create child friendly cities and to integrate young people into civic action
Indicators of Urban Environmental Quality: Children’s Perspectives

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<td>Freedom from social threats</td>
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<td>Cohesive community identity</td>
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<td>Secure tenure</td>
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Positive Physical Qualities

- Green areas
- Provision of basic services
- Variety of activity settings
- Peer gathering places
- Freedom from physical dangers
- Freedom of movement

Building a **Child Friendly City** is the process of implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child led by local government, reflecting children’s rights in local policies, laws, programs, budgets, and the physical structure of the city.

A city that is friendly for children is friendly for all ages.

Growing Up in New York City – a neighborhood tour to a favorite place. Wherever children find safe corners of nature, they are highly valued resources.

What do we do if we operate in the United States, which hasn’t ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Growing Up Boulder is in the process of creating a **Child and Youth Bill of Rights** for adoption by the city council.

Growing Up Boulder activities to review draft Bill of Rights, October 2011
Growing Up Boulder

UNESCO Growing Up in Cities advocacy planning participatory action research
UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative children’s rights Convention on the Rights of the Child
UN HABITAT Habitat Agenda

Boulder County (2010 census)
• 294,567 population
• Ethnic breakdown: 87% white, 14% Latino, 4% Asian, 1% Black/African American
• 23% of children under 18 are Latino
• Education: 94% h.s. degree, 58% bachelors degree, 26% graduation degree
• Boulder Valley School District four-year h.s. graduation rates: 90% white, 61% Latino
• $85,602 median family income
• 14% individual poverty rate, 13% child poverty rate, 23% poverty rate for children under 5

City of Boulder
Community Planning and Sustainability
Parks and Recreation
Children, Youth & Family Services
Boulder Valley School District
University of Colorado

Youth Leaders
Youth Action Groups
YMCA * I Have a Dream * Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art * Boulder Housing Partners *
Boulder Journey School * The Loft teen program * other groups as they share interests

Partner with groups that work with marginalized young people.

AVID high school classes * teen mothers class * vocational ed classes * I Have a Dream
Foundation * Boulder Housing Partners * San Juan del Centro Family Learning Center

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update - January-May 2010

youth mapping and brainstorming youth present to adults

GUB youth leaders summarize youth suggestions for the Comprehensive Plan to mayor and members of City Council.
The city consults young people on their ideas for areas targeted for redevelopment.

Boulder Civic Area Project - 2012 ongoing

Summer 2012
Elementary, middle and high school students and young people in I Have a Dream Foundation evaluate current civic area.

In 2010, all second year studios in the University of Colorado Environmental Design Program worked with Mesa Elementary School fifth graders to help them design a new school playground accessible to children with all abilities.

Since 2006, undergrad design students in classes taught by doctoral students and instructors have worked with students at Casey Middle School on participatory design projects.

Burke Park, Boulder 2012 ongoing
Department of Parks & Recreation seeks to make this park between the Frasier Meadows Seniors Center and Horizons K-8 School a model for participatory approaches to park design and maintenance involving children, youth, the elderly and other community members.
nature play area designed by Department of Parks and grade 4/5 students

for more information

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www.childfriendlycities.org
www.unesco.org/most/gulc
www.growingupboulder.org
explorationsinburkepark.weebly.com

also recommended:
www.participationworks.org.uk