

Inviting for Play

The Play Everywhere Challenge

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@citiesforpeople

@jddnyc

Gehl



**Our Focus is Creating Cities for People.
People are the Starting Point in our Work.**



We approach our work both as social scientists and designers



investigating the inter-connected loop between life...



...and form in cities around the world

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**Where should
play take place
in cities?**

Kids used to play everywhere in the city.

Few cars on the streets and few formal 'play' spaces meant kids could **make their own play in public.**





Public spaces created opportunities for informal, imaginative, and challenging play!





Today, we see few kids in everyday city spaces.
Yet more and more families remain in cities.

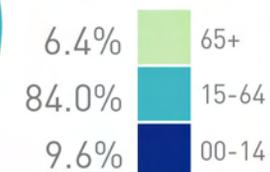
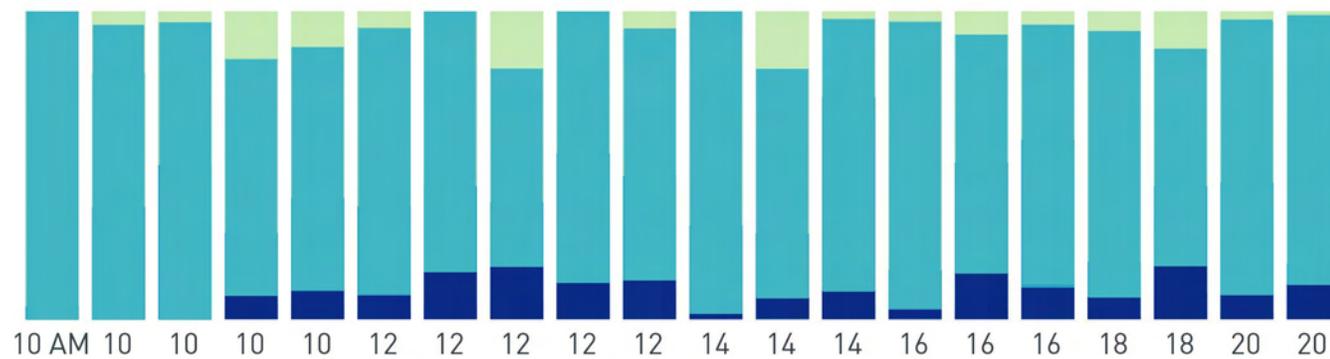
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Children are under-represented in public.

Gehl studies find the rate of children in public is low compared to the rate that live nearby.

Denver, July Weekend, 2015

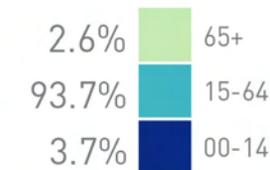
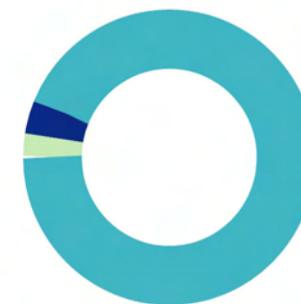
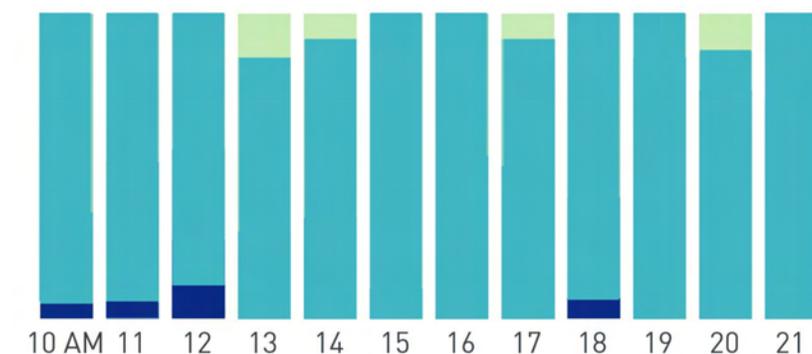
Mall between Larimer and Lawrence Streets



Children made up less than **10%** of visitors

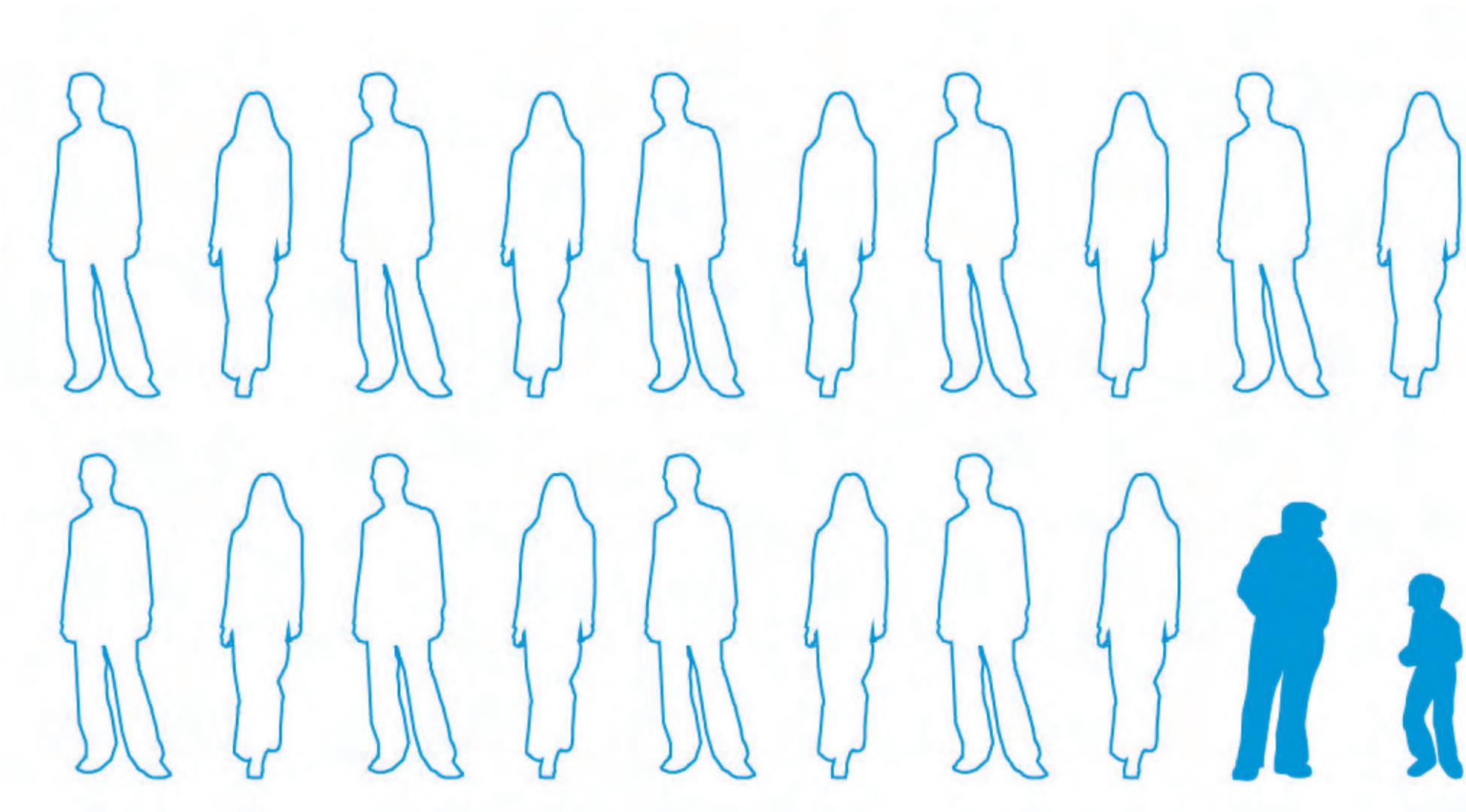
Columbia, SC, November Weekend, 2015

Main & Lady



Children made up less than **4%** of visitors

Even in cities with vibrant public life, like New York, children (and seniors) are missing from the public realm, and account for only 10% of pedestrians (though they are a combined 30% of NY's population).



WORK

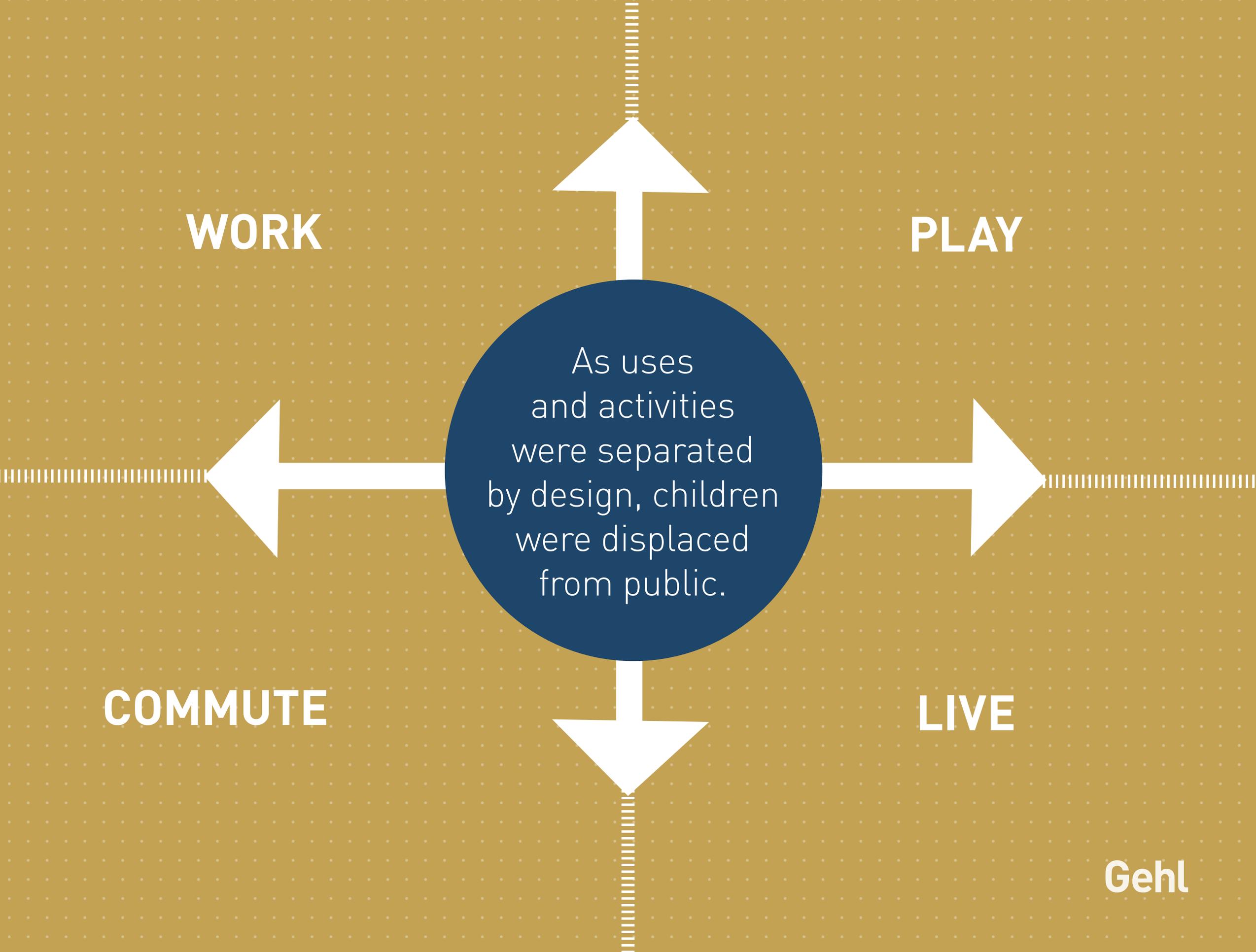
PLAY

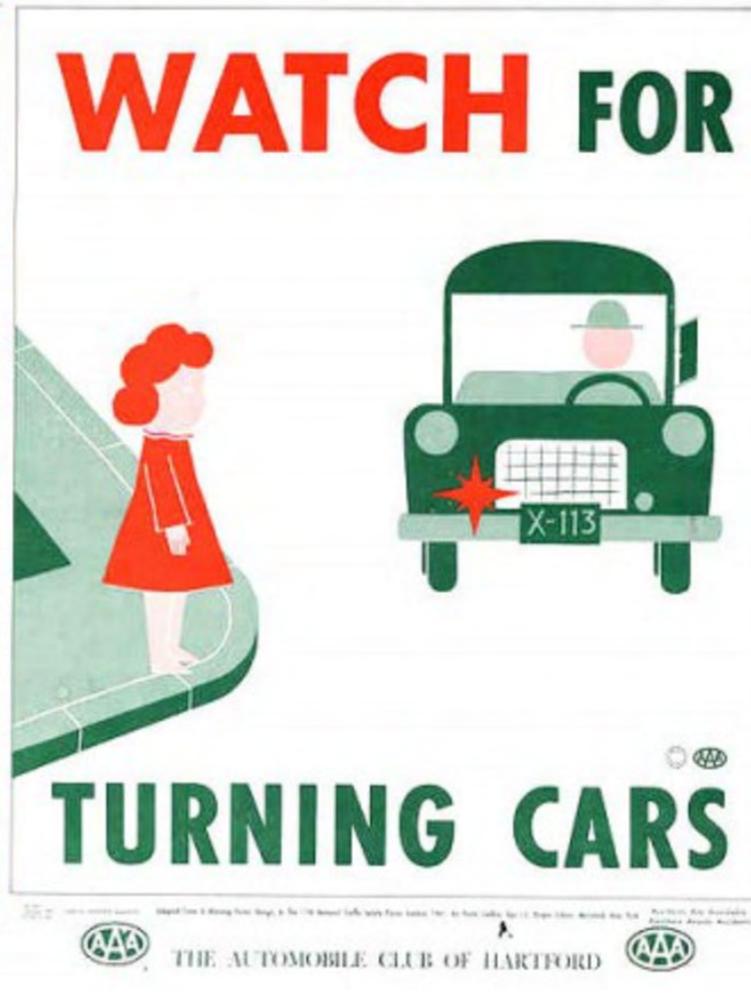
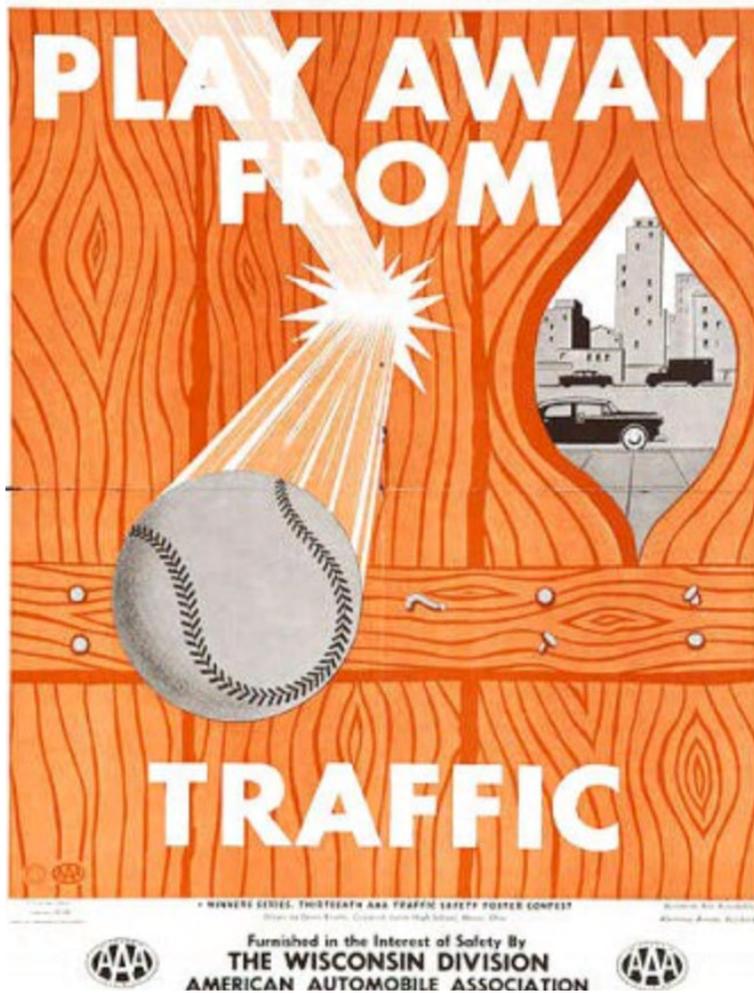
As uses
and activities
were separated
by design, children
were displaced
from public.

COMMUTE

LIVE

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Monofunctional design, along with more cars, made playing in public 'riskier'.

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And play was further isolated from day-to-day activities, such as working or running errands.



No sidewalks -
only accessible
by car

Play areas can also be difficult to get to.

A young boy with light brown hair, wearing a red t-shirt and blue pants, is sitting on a grey couch. He is holding a large glass bowl filled with yellow chips and is eating from it. He is looking towards a television set on the left side of the frame. On the couch next to him are several bags of chips and a remote control. A large orange circle is overlaid on the image, containing text.

Childhood obesity
has more than **doubled** in the
past 30 years.

And today, invitations to stay inside are stronger than ever! (It's not just design.)

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“Children are a kind of indicator species. If we can build a successful city for children, we will have a successful city for all people.”

Enrique Peñalosa
Mayor, Bogota, Colombia

**City design can
invite kids to play
and make them
more visible in
our cities.**

WORK

PLAY



COMMUTE

LIVE

'Mixed Use' can mean creating opportunities to play everywhere.

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When cities put kids first, they can design places that are...

THE PLAY EVERYWHERE PLAYBOOK

Turning spaces into PLAYces

¹ wondrous

² challenging

³ convenient

⁴ inviting

⁵ shared

⁶ unifying

Gehl

And that incorporate play into **places where people already are, or have to be (sidewalks)**

**The
Play Parklet**
Philadelphia

Roofmeadow, Studio
Ludo, University
City District



Incorporate play into **places where people already are, or have to be (bus stops)**

Bus Stop Boogie

New York

Gigantic Mechanic



Incorporate play into **under-used or inactive city spaces (low-traffic residential streets)**



iPlay MIAMI
Streets
Miami

City of Miami

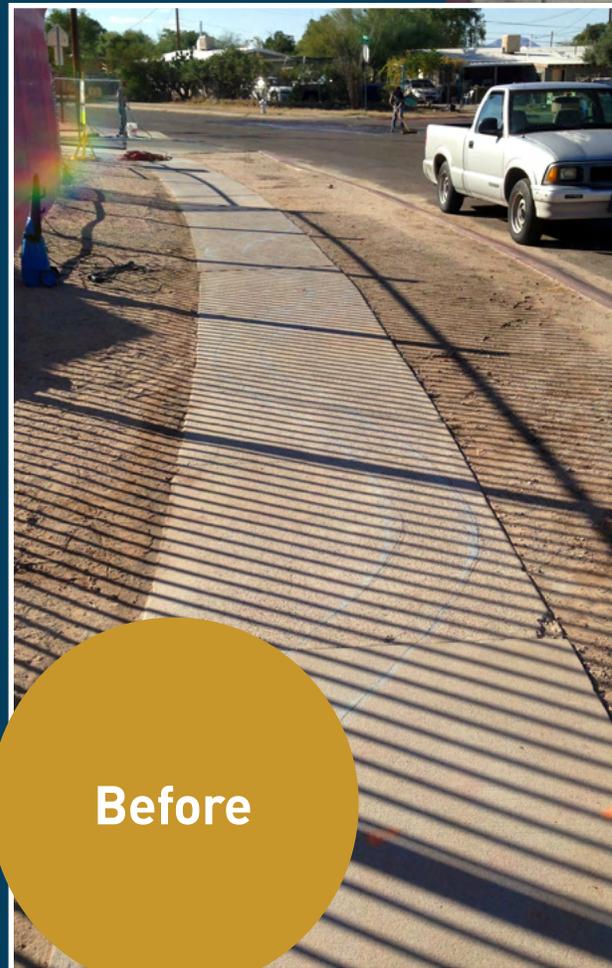
Incorporate play into **under-used** or **inactive** city spaces (government centers and city plazas)



GovPorch
Charlotte, NC

City of Charlotte,
Living Streets Alliance
Urban Design

Incorporate
play into
**places where
people walk
(greenways,
sidewalks)**



Before



After

Playful Gardens

Tucson

Living Streets Alliance

**People don't do things
because designers
tell them to.**

**People do things
when the context
makes it easy.**





Convenient

Inviting

Wondrous

Shared

Unifying

Challenging

How can play everywhere be the easy choice?

How can play everywhere become...