How can urban planning practitioners capture children’s independent experiences of the city in robust ways that will respect child citizens’ contributions, build their role as citizens and aid in responsive planning and development?

**Case study: ‘Citizen Kid’**

- extension to CATCH/MATCH, a 3 year ARC-funded research into children’s independent mobility and active travel
- 13 children and 9 practitioners involved in the CKPG in Moreland, April - June 2012
- Co-planning process focusing on two ‘live project’ sites

More is known about the behavioral needs of some species of wild animals in their natural habitats than is known about children in theirs.

Clare Cooper Marcus 1976: 22

Many planners avoid community engagement processes with children, arguing that children - especially young children - have nothing to offer.

Sarkissian et al 2009: 203

Our two ‘live project’ sites...
**Sparta Place, Brunswick**

**Morgan Court, Glenroy**

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**The CKPG process...**

1. **what is this place like now? (child-set site observations and mapping)**
2. **what should/could it look like, ideally? (community and ‘preferred future’ model making)**
3. **how can we achieve this idea? (supporting and prioritised action planning)**

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**‘is this a good place for kids?’**

- **Arthur (Melb002): Not yet...**
- **Jana (Melb008): I wouldn’t be allowed to go this far just without an adult**
- **Walt (Melb026): It’s a little bit, like... hidden**
- **Carson (Melb139): Not so good. This terrain here ruins the wheels [of scooters and bikes]**

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**we saw kids climbing...**

**we saw kids wheeling...**
we saw kids exploring…

dreaming the future…

aspirations for the sites…

• do physical things at the sites
• engage in the sites economically
• engage in sites that are ‘fantastic’ and inspires creativity and fantasy
• gather and have fun with other people in the community at these sites
• learn new things at and through the sites

priorities, priorities, priorities…

the BLUE DOT is for voting on the most important activity for your site.

the GREEN DOTS are for voting on the best ideas for your site (big dot = best, small dot = second best)

the RED DOT is for voting on the other group’s neatest idea
**kid-friendly place priorities...**

**Sparta Place**
- Priority activities:
  1. Climbing
  2. Hanging out
  3. Skating
- Priority ideas:
  1. Kid-friendly shops
  2. Bigger trees for shade and climbing
  3. Electronic go-carts
  4. Rotating activities

**Morgan Court**
- Priority activities:
  1. Hanging out/relaxing
  2. Creating
  3. Eating
- Priority ideas:
  1. Rotating activities
  2. More colourful and attractive
  3. Performances/festivals
  4. Kid-friendly shopping

**2 examples of co-planned ideas...**
- Sparta Place: The ‘Epic Seal of Approval’ for child-friendly shops
- Morgan Court: The Kids’ Street Festival for celebration and social connection

**kids’ messages about CKPG...**
- Ideas are great only if someone hears them.
- People can be in bad moods and have a hard session.
- It is hard work, even if it is good work.
- People don’t always like each other or get along.
- Adults (and kids sometimes) can be too busy to take part.
- Not all activities will appeal to all people.
- We got to experience things.
- Kids are citizens.

**Favourite planning activities...**

**Reflections on the CKPG**
- Strong retention of children
- Richness of data and strong ‘voice’ of children
- Variety of information sources for triangulating
- Post CKPG progress on site plans and on networking with kids
- Social dynamics, on occasion
- Difficulties engaging practitioners
- Uncertainty about the ‘tool’ being developed
- Practitioner role (learning-by-observing vs. learning-by-doing)

**Lessons learned...**
- Disturbance
- Experience
- Vending
- Exploration
Thank you...

Thanks for your time today!
Do you have any final questions?

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some readings informing the study


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research into practice workshop

How can action research and kids’ co-planning processes like those described in this session influence planning/policy outcomes and be sustained in practice?

What would help to build confidence/skills amongst practitioners to enable and refine these sort of methods of engaging children?

Please nominate a scribe who can also report back to the larger group at the conclusion.