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ABSTRACT FORM

DESIGN-RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC PLAYGROUNDS BASED ON A DANISH STUDY

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—ABSTRACT—

In this study, we investigated children's use of four public playgrounds in Copenhagen, Denmark. Such playgrounds are important everyday catalysts for promoting better childhood development. To inform decision-making in future evidence-based playground designs more research on what characterizes these spaces and their users is needed. We used behaviour mapping and semi-structured observations to study children aged 0-12 and visited each playground five times at various times of the day and week during a seven-week period in August and September 2010. Key findings show that the children used a broad variety of settings that afforded both active and passive play behaviour. To increase active play behaviour in the passive settings connections between features could be implemented to also increase potential affordances. However, as the settings with low activity also seem important opportunities for quiet play and rest should still be present. While boys and girls largely used the same settings, we observed some gender differences in play behaviours. All playgrounds were dominated by functional play, which seemed to be linked to the children's age, social relations and the design of the playgrounds. The playgrounds' vegetative surroundings were also significant for children's play.

Key Words: *Affordances, Behaviour mapping, Behaviour settings, Children's play, Physical Activity*

Oral Presentation: x

Poster: