



# Planning with children and young people for better cities

Photo: Colin Ward

■ Claire Freeman University Otago

With thanks to

Elizabeth Aitken-Rose Auckland University

Ruth Johnston GHD consulting Manukau

And the children of Mayfield Primary Otara

# Planning and children the connection

- Policies, design, and planning decisions influence children and young people's lives
- Planners mostly don't understand or reflect children and young people's needs



# What makes a good environment?

- Welcoming
- Diverse
- Flexible
- Peopled
- Identity
- Avoids conflict



# Changing nature of society: changed lives

## Physical change

- Transport
- Decentralisation of facilities
- Zoning
- Inhumane architecture

*"It is hard to find meaning in a human or physical landscape that does not make any sense" Lennard and Crowhurst Lennard*



©Aidan O'Rourke www.imagesofcities.com



## Social change

- Removal from outdoor/ public space
- Loss of independence
- Loss of security- alienation-unease

# Does it matter?

Public realm is where children learn,  
explore, absorb, belong, become  
independent...

Community gets to know each other, looks  
out for each other

Why do we need a children's  
perspective?

# Redressing the balance a new approach

- Understands changing and complex worlds of children and young people
- Recognises and values children and young people's experiences - views
- Inclusive

# Is this happening?

- Do planners consider the needs of children and young people in planning?
- Do planners take children and young people's views into account?
- Do they think children and young people matter?

# What does our research tell us about planners

- Children and young people are not a significant planning concern
- Planners find it a difficult area to work in
- Most initiatives take place outside the statutory process
- Planners feel marginalised with regard to child and youth initiatives

Planners are keen - they  
want to work with  
children and young  
people

# What is the challenge for us as professionals?

Work around not on behalf of bureaucracy/  
technical requirements/ legislation

Work together

Understand the needs & views of those for  
whom we plan

Vision of what type of society we want

*Thank you*