



City of
DAREBIN

the place
to live

Darebin Play Maps: Advocating for children's voice

Jo Smale



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FROM VISION TO ACTION

Overview of the presentation

- Policy context
- Children's consultation processes
- Key findings
- Where to next



Project Team

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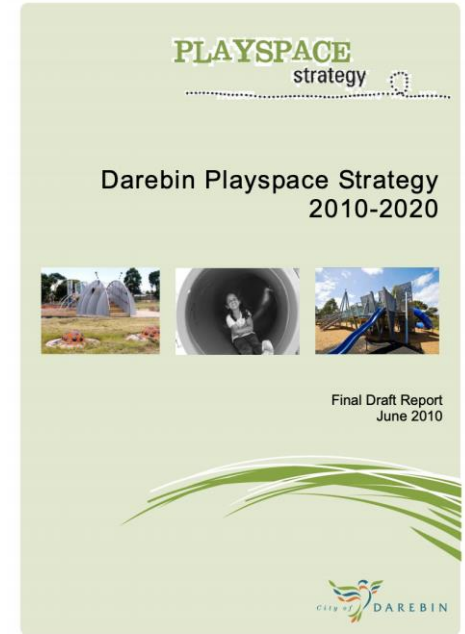
City of Darebin

- Home to the Wurundjeri people for many thousands of years.
- 5 -15 kilometres north of Melbourne's central business district.
- Population 158,745 (ABS, 2017); estimated to increase to 230,118 by 2041.
- One of the largest, most diverse communities in Victoria (culture, language, religion, socioeconomic background, employment status, occupation & housing need).
- Twenty five per cent of Darebin residents arrived in Australia between 2011 – 2016.
- There were 20,959 children aged between 0-12yrs in 2016.
- Darebin has 120 play spaces.



Policy context: Darebin Playspace Strategy 2010-2020.

“A well connected network of accessible open spaces that meet the diverse needs of the community and provide a range of social and environmental benefits” (2010, 7).



Playspace Strategy

1. Accessibility and inclusion committing to ‘provide an environment where children, youth, older people and people of all abilities and backgrounds are welcome’.
2. To provide for play within 500 metres of every home.
3. Creating ‘sustainable and safe play spaces that are evolving, dynamic and challenging’.
4. Respect for diversity, inclusion and engagement across many areas including ability, culture, gender and sexuality.
(2010, 7).



Play Maps

Let's **PLAY** in Preston!



1 **SPIN** round and round on this clown swing.

2 **BALANCE** along low brick fences as you walk.

3 **CHAT** to a cat, talk to the birds, smile at a dog, the world is yours...

4 **MIX** a magic potion with petals and leaves and water.

5 **HANG** upside down and spin around.

6 **GRAB** a handful of sand and let it slip through your fingers like rain.

7 **BECOME** a superhero, a zombie, a teacher, a bee...

8 **ADD** blocks and rocks to build a tower.

9 **RELAX** in a bean bag with your favourite book.

10 **BEND** your body to make a bridge.

11 **GO** for a mark! Catch that ball!

12 **FLOP** on a cushion and bounce on the bed.

13 **PEEP** out at the view from this egg shaped cubby.

14 **FEEL** your senses open and sing at the fresh food market.

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Thanks to all the children, staff and families of the many Primary Schools, Kindergartens, Childcare Centres and Playgroups in Darebin who participated in the project, joining in a Play session, drawing pictures of their favourite places to play and making their stories.



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Consultation methodology

Sociological perspectives

- Children as competent meaning makers with valuable knowledge about their worlds and the places and spaces they explore (Woodhead, 2008).
- Children as active citizens in their world (MacNaughton & Smith, 2008);

Rights perspectives

- Children as rights bearers - General Comment No 7 (2005) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that young children have the right to have a say in matters affecting them irrespective of age.



Sites and Services Consulted

- Every playgroup, childcare centre, kindergarten and primary school in Darebin & invited to participate in the project (over 58% of sites participated)
- 1,407 children aged between 1 - 12yrs completed drawings about play (roughly 50/50 split between boys/girls).
- Total of 111 adults (families, carers and teachers) did drawings about play.
- A further 179 children and 95 adults attended the launches of the completed maps, as well as over 80 adults involved in discussions in playgroups.
- 1,854 people took part in conversations about the importance and value of play in our community!



Method



Total of 24 Facilitated Sessions

A 1-hour facilitated session facilitated offered to Primary Schools and stand-alone Kindergartens.

Children asked to do a drawing that illustrated any/all of 3 questions: What is your favourite thing to play? Where do you like to play? Who do you like to play with?

Adults were asked to draw and respond about memories of *how they played as a child*.

Total of 50 In-service Responses

Playgroups and child care services were given posters and prompt questions to assist in leading a discussion with children. It was up to the site as to how many children were involved, and what format they sent back responses in.

Total of 7 facilitated sessions also had video/sound recording

Photographers recorded in photography and videography to document the process and capture footage for our Play Map Videos. Sound Recordists worked with children to interview them and record the children's voices as they explained their drawings.

Data Analysis

Cat Sewell reviewed every drawing done by children and adults and categorised the types of play, places of play and people explicitly mentioned in each one.

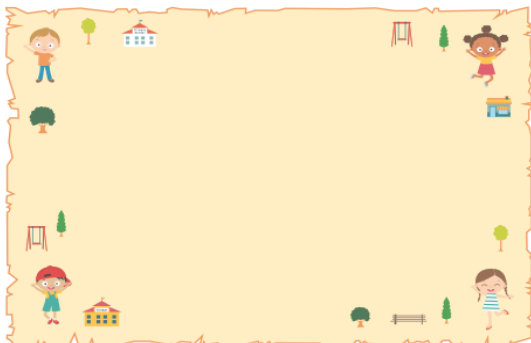


Let's
PLAY
in Darebin!



PRESTON WEST

What do you like to play?



Where do you like to play?

We are developing a play map in your area.
Please write and draw your responses on this poster.
We would love to hear from **children** and **adults** about their experiences and memories!

Darebin Play Map Project

Community Consultation Sessions NOTES & TIPS

We are creating a map of this area with ideas for how and where to play. As children, you are the experts in play. We would love you to draw a picture and write some words about your favourite ways to play.

PROMPT QUESTIONS:

How do you like to play?

Does anyone like to climb? Build? Create? Pretend? Explore? Dance? Hide???

Where do you like to play?

What place makes you feel excited/energised?

What place makes you feel comfortable/safe?

Who do you like to play with? (family, cousins, friends, alone etc)

Adults (parents, carers and teachers): We would love to hear about your memories of play as a child.

What is different, what is the same, in the way (and where) children play today?

*** PLEASE note on your posters the number of people who participated and their age**

TIPS:

- Chat for 15 minutes or so as a group
- Spend 10 minutes or so drawing individually
- Share the drawing with others and talk about what you have drawn
- **Add a few words or a simple sentence** to help describe what the picture is about
- Write your age on the drawing

- Use markers or crayons so that the drawings are easy to document (not light pencils)
- Collect the drawings. Cat or Linda will pick them up from your site to document, then return them a week later if the children want to keep the drawings.

Created by Cat Swain on 06/06/2019. Edited by Linda Swain on 04/10/2019

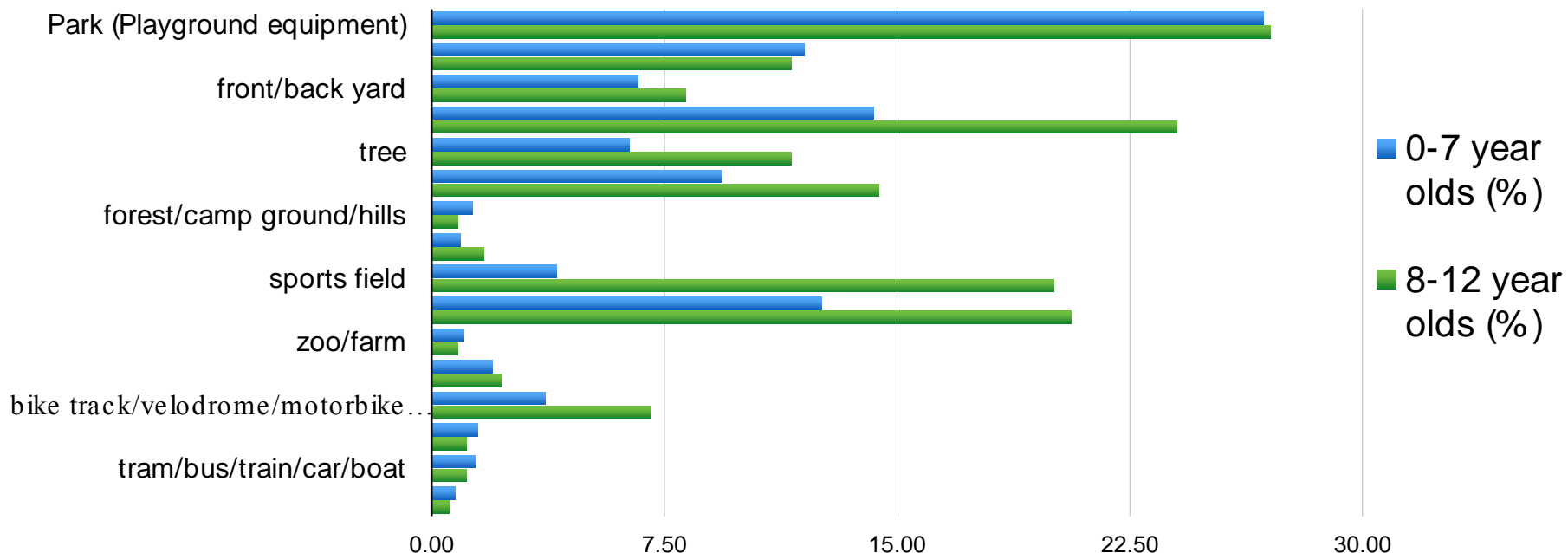


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What did children say?

NOTE: As there were more 0-7yrs olds (1053) than 8-12yr olds (354), the data was converted into percentages for comparisons between younger and older children.



Playground equipment

“Upside down monkey bars”



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Nature

“Green spaces”



Water

“Swimming Pool and water”



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Risk and challenge

A big slide and you climb up



Jumping on big rocks



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Creating the Play Maps



Using the Play Maps

- Support children and families to get out and about exploring their local community.
- Educational tool to promote awareness of the importance of play for children
- A resource for primary schools incorporating the map into curriculum studies across subject areas: mathematics, geography, literacy, physical education, and social and emotional learning.
- Ideas for no-cost activities across the municipality; to welcome new families to the area; and connect families, communities and services with each other.
- Visual design to support children and families with diverse linguistic skills



Practical Considerations & Recommendations based on Project Findings

- Low branches on tree; branches and sticks in public spaces
- Provide wet weather gear so children can play outside in all weather
- Incorporate sensory elements in play spaces e.g. water, sand, sound, light
- Value trees, nature and animals as important ingredients to play and wellbeing
- Provide materials, build playground equipment and public spaces that promote open-ended play
- Provide play structures and opportunities for more risky/challenging play
- Provide spaces for sports and ball play (in formal, structured games, but also in general play)
- Public spaces should provide opportunity to play on your own/hide away, as well as interact with family and friends, and meet new people
- Find ways to promote playing on the street, in the local neighbourhood e.g. 'Playing Out' movement
- Improve bike/scooter/skating access of local streets
- Promote & provide high quality toy libraries, libraries, theatre, arts and cultural experiences
- Promote recycled loose-parts play. E.g. set up a lending play-pod for communities to use in parks, street parties etc.



Play Maps Launch & Exhibition

- Ethical engagement – honour children’s voices and report back to them
- Every map officially launched by the children who helped create them
- Children’s drawings, photos and videos displayed at the Play Maps Exhibition
- Chapter in a forthcoming book: The International Handbook on the Rights of Young Children, published by Routledge (December 2019)





Questions?



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