

Research on children playing outdoors in their living environment 1983 - 2008



Projects of Research Centre Childhood and Society - Belgium

Dr. Jan Van Gils, president ICCP,
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Introduction

- ▶ Number of playing children versus children living in the environment
- ▶ Age of the children: 3 - 14 years old
- ▶ Gender: girls and boys
- ▶ Types of play
- ▶ Where are children playing: districts and areas
- ▶ Spatial qualities of the living environment
- ▶ Not: when are they playing, with how many players, ...



Types of play

- ▶ Receptive passive, observation,
- ▶ Social talk to each other
- ▶ Phantasy imitation
- ▶ Construction sand, huts
- ▶ Repetitive the same movements: bike, training
- ▶ Exploration try outs,
- ▶ Rule games all kind of rule games



Types of districts

- ▶ urban districts
- ▶ sub-urban,
- ▶ rural
- ▶ woonerf
- ▶ revaluation area
- ▶ social district



Types of districts - more details 2008

- ▶ Spatial context and location
- ▶ Strategic and urban characteristics
- ▶ Residential types, residential density
- ▶ Layout of public space
- ▶ Neighbourhoods with an example function



Types of areas in the districts

- ▶ Squares
- ▶ Green spaces
- ▶ Community provisions
- ▶ Streets
- ▶ Parking lots



Partners

Observers of the children

- ▶ training
- ▶ without intervening in the activities of children
- ▶ Suitable situation to play (good weather, no lunch time, no nearby attractions, daily situations)
- ▶ ten times
- ▶ every area within every district
- ▶ Number of children, age, gender, activity



Contacts with municipal services:

collecting demographic data by district
maps of the districts

Urban planners

figure out the types of districts and areas of the districts

Researchers

collecting, organizing, interpreting data
create report



1983 - 2008

Comparable districts

- 1983: 11
- 2008: 7 (2 same as in 1983)
- To be compared on type of district and demographic data

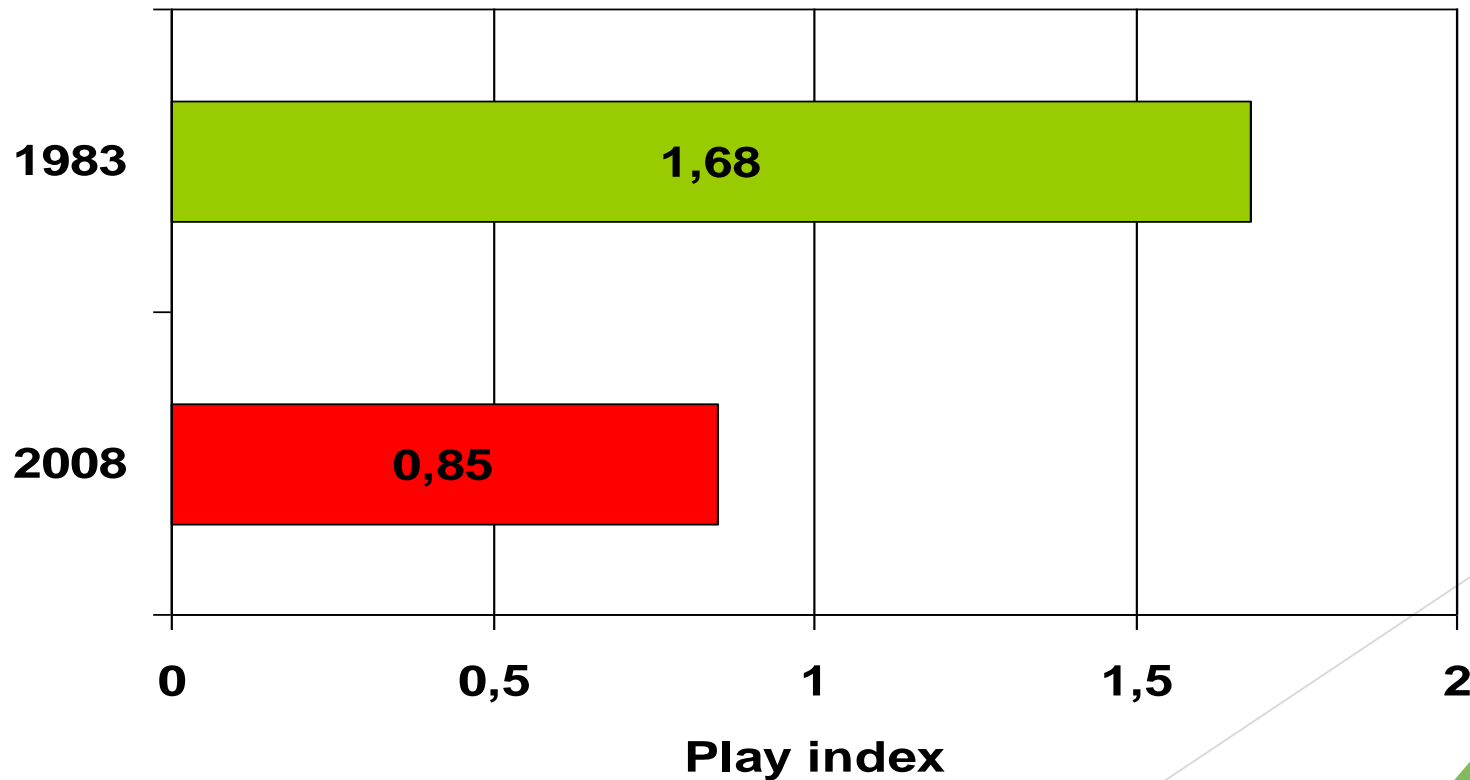
Age of the playing children 1983 en 2008

Age	3-5 y.	6-8 y.	9-11 y.	12-14 y.
1983	22,32	41,72	26,12	9,84
2008	22,30	41,25	26,48	9,97



Observation in districts: evolution 1983-2008

The play index is the ratio of the number of children observed in the number of children that live there.



Comparison play-index 1983 en 2008

	Observed children	Children living in district	Play-index
7 wijken in 1983	1751	1042	1,68
7 wijken in 2008	1435	1687	0,85

PLAY INDEX				
		Observed children	demographic	playindex
Antwerp	Highrise	108	84	1,29
	rowhouses	371	987	0,38
Zwijndrecht	apartment building	16	13	1,23
	rowhouses	11	71	0,15
Rumst	Highrise	1	16	0,06
	rowhouses	27	126	0,21
	open construction	29	128	0,23



Comparison types of play 1983 en 2008

Type of play	1983	2008
Receptive	15,80	7,32
Social	18,60	26,55
Phantasy	12,90	3,07
Construction	6,10	6,62
Repetitive	19,60	20,84
Exploration	16,60	6,13
Rule game	7,40	29,48

Comparison types of play 1983 en 2008

	1983	2008
Creative: fantasy, constr., explor.	29.42	11.66
Movement: repet., explor., rule	36.03	41,62
Social: social, rule	21.49	41,32
Passive: receptive	13.06	5.10

Gender 1983 en 2008

	Absoluut			Percentage	
Year	boys	Girls	Totaal	Boys	Girls
1983	1880	968	2848	66,00	34,00
2008	795	640	1435	55,40	44,60

Most played zones

- The size of the area of more played zones is not important
- Centrally located in the district, well accessible
- Linked to other facilities
- Various layout equipment and equipment
- Green zones with adventurous character
- Broad spread play in streets



Percentage of playing boys and girls in different areas

		boys	girls
square		54,04	45,96
green space	adventurous	69,01	30,99
	district	63,87	36,13
	street	56,25	43,75
provisions	play spaces	44,62	55,38
	Sports facilities	95,39	4,61
streets		46,63	53,37



Types of play in different areas

		rec	soc	fant	const	expl	repe	rule	n
Square		6,8	39	4,7	5,1	4,7	17	22	235
Green space	adventurous	0	11	8,3	8,3	11	19	42	36
	district	4,2	18	9,2	13	5	18	33	119
	street	25	25	0	0	19	6,3	25	16
provisions	playspace	2,8	12	1,6	16	15	45	7,2	251
	Sports facilities	15	12	0	0	0,7	0,7	72	151
street		11	40	3,1	4,6	4,3	23	14	416

