

Session Three: Creating child friendly communities – Connecting to our strengths and the evidence base

Featured Keynote presentation by Dr. Karen Malone ~

How child friendly is my community?

Addressing physical and cultural questions of child friendliness

Dr Karen Malone is Professor of Social Sciences in the Faculty of Education at University of Wollongong. She is also Asia-Pacific Director of the global UNESCO-MOST Growing Up In Cities (GUIC) project that focuses on children and youth researching their quality of life. Dr Malone is also Chair of the Child Friendly Asia-Pacific network. Her most recently completed research grant was the Smith Family project: How child friendly is my community? She is currently coordinating seven international research teams in collaboration with the UK Policy Institute to replicate Hillman’s seminal project Children’s Independent Mobility.

Abstract

The UNICEF Child Friendly Cities (CFC) initiative is a global program of research, education and action that supports the rights of children to live in communities that are child friendly. The principles of CFC emphasise the importance of supporting mayors and municipal councils to work in partnership with communities, families and especially young children in evaluating the quality of their environments. Children in Australia, like many countries, around the world are being restricted in the opportunity to engage in free play in their neighbourhood streets and parks. The impact of this has been a drastic decrease in children’s independent mobility and environmental competence. While some research has focused on the physicality of neighbourhood’s in an attempt to understand how these environments could be designed to encourage children’s engagement in their community, this paper and the research it reports includes a focus on the impacts of fear and risk on children’s lives. To conclude this presentation I will make a case that a protectionist paradigm of parenting and a global culture of fear is disadvantaging a whole generation of children and changing their experience of childhood. In order to turn this around, I will give examples of how communities are addressing both physical and cultural questions of child friendliness.

(Refer to Child & Family Plan: Creating child friendly communities, pages 22-24)

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Presentation 8: Using the Plan to create child friendly communities

Presenters:

Judy Finch, Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre (Child and Family Plan, Part C lead agency)
Lyn Bevington, Mountains Outreach Community Service (Paint the Blue Read lead agency)

A presentation about the outcomes supporting the Child and Family Plan Part C: Creating Child Communities and the Alliance's Paint the Blue Read program. (10 minutes)

(Refer to Child and Family Plan: Creating child friendly communities, pages 36 - 39)

Part C: Creating Child Friendly Communities

Outcome 9: Learning is valued and supported from birth

Outcome 10: The community supports children and their families

Outcome 11: The built environment and public spaces are child and family friendly

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Activity 4: Imagining new possibilities for our work

Step one:

Individual work followed by pair work (10 minutes)

(a) For the following 3 questions write your responses in the space provided.

(b) If you and your partner finish early, briefly discuss your answers with each other.

1. What most excited you about the presentations?

2. What are you already doing in your work that can be built on or done differently?

3. What other possibilities does this open up for your work / your sector's work?

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Activity 4: Imagining new possibilities for our work (continued)

Step three:

(10 minutes)

- (a) Use voting to answer question six, each person has two votes and two stickers.
- (b) Place your two stickers by the one or two ideas you like the most.
- (c) The best possibilities will be (i) motivating (ii) achievable within the next year (iii) highly beneficial to children and their families.
- (d) Circle the two ideas with the most stickers.

6. What are the best possibilities for new ways of working to create child friendly communities in your group?

Feedback:

The data analysis team will look over all the results from question six above and feedback some of the ideas to the room. All possibilities will be available on the Stronger Families Alliance website after the Summit.

Afternoon tea (3.20pm-3.30pm)

For your convenience two afternoon tea stations will be in operation. This is a working break so please have a stretch, use the amenities and get some refreshments to bring back to your table as quickly as possible.

Please ensure you have re-seated by 3.30pm ready for the next activity.