Child Friendly Cities
and Communities

Ngā Tāone Whakaratarata Tamariki

Barbara Lambourn and Marcus Boshier
The UN Mandates UNICEF to advocate for children’s rights, interests and healthy development - the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as platform.

NZ ratified UNCROC in 1993

Govt. reports every 5 years
• Nov 2008 - Last report submitted
• Feb 2011 - Govt. examination
• Feb 2011 - Recommendations received from UN Committee for Children
“A Child Friendly City is a local system of good governance committed to fulfilling children's rights. The voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are an integral part of public policies, programmes and decisions.

As a result, it is a city that is fit for all.”

Child Friendly Cities Secretariat, Innocenti Centre, Florence
Why?

- **It is their right** - all organisations concerned with children must work towards their best interests.

- **Children have their own culture, world view, understandings, needs and opinions** - they are not just small adults.

- **Children are active and important consumers of local government services.** They live in houses and walk on streets, attend schools, go shopping, use community facilities e.g. transport, cycle ways, walkways, parks, pools, libraries, halls……and more

- **Children contribute** to the culture, character, social and economic life of the city

- **Local Councils have obligations** to implement children's rights
**UNCROC and Local Government**

- No explicit legislation requires NZ Councils to recognise UNCROC in governance, planning or to report on compliance

- UNICEF NZ argues that Councils are “agents of the State” – derive powers from central government therefore bound by UNCROC

- Supported by UN CRC in Concluding Observations to NZ Government (Feb 2011) after submission of NZ 5-yearly periodic report

- Agreed by Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Local Government 2012
UNCROC: relevant Articles

Children have rights to:

12: say what they think when decisions affect them and have their opinions taken into account
13: get and share information
24: good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment
27: a standard of living good enough to meet their physical and mental needs
31: relax, play and join a wide range of activities
You are only a child once

How we treat the child the child will treat the world.
What underpins a CFC agenda?

- Child Rights
- Sustainability
- Cultural diversity and biodiversity
- Think globally, act locally
- Good governance
- Citizenship
- Participation
Childrens Rights in the context of:

- Climate change
- Increasing urbanisation
- Industrial expansion
- Economic recession
Child-Friendly Cities: 9 Building blocks

1. **Children’s Participation**: promoting active involvement of children in issues affecting them, listening, taking their views into account in decision making

2. **A Child Friendly Legal Framework**: ensuring legislation, regulatory frameworks and procedures which consistently promote and protect the rights of all children

3. **A City-wide Children’s Rights Strategy**: developing a detailed, comprehensive strategy or agenda for building a Child Friendly City, based on the UNCROC

4. **A Children’s Rights/Issues Unit or Coordinating Mechanism**: developing permanent structures in local government to ensure consideration of children’s perspective

5. **Child Impact Assessment and Evaluation**: ensuring a systematic process is in place to assess the impact of law, policy and practice on children - in advance, during and after implementation
6. A Children’s Budget: ensuring adequate resource commitment and budget analysis for children


A CFC agenda benefits the whole population

- Informed participants - democracy, citizenship, city planning and development
- Rights appreciation - all sectors. Caring for the common good
- Better multi-generational, multi-cultural and cross-sectoral relationships
- Tourist, retail sectors can capitalise on the ideas
- Discovering and learning - more interest in the city: geography, settlement, people, environment, facilities, history and future
- Environmental responsibility - eg less vandalism
- Cost savings - better decision making
- Children grow being valued, respected and important in the scheme of their city

Pride in their city – spin-offs for all sectors
A CFC agenda includes:

- **Housing**: children’s living and playing spaces - development, building, standards, safety
- **Transport**: children moving around the city - public and private transport, walking, cycling, skating...bus and train shelters/terminals, airports
- **Events**: children participating in city-sponsored festivals, concerts, special events, media programmes...
- **Facilities**: natural and built features: trees, rivers, walkways, bridges, fountains, pools, parks, public spaces, halls and community centres, toilets...places for kids to congregate
- **Business and retail**: Child Friendly supermarkets, shops, outdoor markets, car yards, construction sites, malls
- **Commercial premises**: Child Friendly spaces in banks, offices, government departments...
- **People**: drivers, pedestrians, park staff, traffic wardens, police, city officials, librarians, restaurant, retailers, cafe and shop staff
- **Back-room services**: rubbish disposal, sewage ponds, waste-water treatment, waste management, cleaning routines, animal control...

What’s it like to be a child here?
“Parks and play areas should not be physically separated from other public spaces, but rather incorporated into the fabric of the city (climbable art, outdoor seating that doubles as a climbing frame, public amenities like libraries, law courts, hospitals etc. all providing safe but enticing play spaces).”
Claire Freeman
Child Friendly Cities around the world

Italy, Spain, France, Brazil, South Africa, Slovenia, Switzerland, Palestine, Ukraine, the Philippines, UK, Nepal, Japan, Australia and …

New Zealand?!

Can we do it? Auckland and Whangarei leading the way!
UNICEF NZ’s Role:

- Provide leadership, information, incentive, access to expertise

- Mobilise and inform champions in government and non-government agencies, academia, education and business sectors, institutions and communities to take up CFC agenda

- Promote benefits of CFC to decision makers and champions
Child Friendly Cities Website

www.childfriendlycities.org.nz

• Connecting like-minded people and organisations.
• CFC Network
  – Establishing and maintaining a CFC network
  – A Knowledge Library
    • Making information on Child Friendly Cities—from town planning to research on
      behaviour and education—available to allies and the public
• Sharing Space
• Description and celebration of Child Friendly Initiatives that are happening around NZ
Becoming an “accredited” Child Friendly City

1. Register or be nominated as a Child Friendly City

2. Plan and implement child Friendly policies and practices across the city

3. Become a UNICEF accredited Child Friendly City

4. Continue the good work and regularly review progress
Accreditation Cont’d

• Council or Community led

• Ultimate goal is that Councils consider children’s interests in policy

• Accreditation document is a work in progress. It is well under way.
  – Thanks to Hannah in Whangarei and Catherine in Auckland.

• Ensuring the criteria is relevant for the NZ context.

• Always welcome feedback.
A journey not a destination

Building a child friendly city is an on-going, evolving process. Needs and ideas change over time.
A role for everyone

Let the elephant fell the trees
Let the bush pig dig the holes
Let the mason wasp fill in the wall
Let the giraffe put up the roof
Then we will have a house

An African proverb seen at Wellington Zoo.