Idea 4

SAFE, INTERESTING AND PLAYFUL TRANSIT

Mobility also implies moments of immobility, which can be opportunities for learning and play.

Turning a bus stop into a learning experience can be done via messages and stories, or games relying on colours or shapes. Messages can also be included inside the buses or trains to encourage interactions or games. Similarly, enhancing safety at stations and other transport access points – by reducing gaps and allowing for pushchair access, or ensuring shade and lighting – can greatly improve the caregivers’ experience and enhance their mobility. This can also be done by ensuring a level of comfort at stations.

Thinking multimodal transit for young children and their caregivers – by providing ‘strollable’ (stroller-friendly) pavements to reach a public transit station for example – will greatly boost their mobility.

At a glance...

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GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT
- Social Services
- Education
- Health
- Parks
- Planning
- Transport

MINIMUM SCALE
Neighbourhood

EXISTING IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL
Tested and implemented

Photo: Vanessa Touzard/Bernard van Leer Foundation
OUTCOME AREAS

- Reduced cost and average time to reach healthcare, childcare, preschool, green space and a source of healthy food
- Reduced caregiver stress and isolation
- Improved access to early childhood services

REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

- The Urban Thinkscape Project in Philadelphia, USA, focuses on maximising opportunities for play throughout the public space. This includes playful bus stops with puzzles and street lighting projecting animated stories on the pavements.

- ITDP’s Gold Standard for Bus Rapid Transit systems requires, among other factors, to ensure pushchair accessibility for all buses and stations, defined as a gap of no more than 1.5 cm (vertical) and 10 cm (horizontal) between the bus and the platform. There are gold-standard BRT systems in Yichang, China; Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Bogotá, Colombia; and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

- The city of Melville, Australia, has an artistic programme named ‘Adopt a bus stop’ which encourages and funds artists, students and community groups to turn a bus stop into a local landmark. Some bus stops have been decorated with educative paintings for children, reflecting a nearby school’s curriculum. These interventions could be adapted for young children.

- Medellín, Colombia, introduced safe routes for preschoolers who live in neighbourhoods with high levels of violence. Children walk to school together with a group of adults, playing games and accompanied by music.

RELATED IDEAS

1. Pop-up play
2. Urban stories
3. Temporary play streets
4. Design for play
5. Pedestrian improvements
6. Traffic calming
7. Data dashboards
8. Play Everywhere Playbook by KaBOOM
9. Global Street Design Guide by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)