



# Redlands Child and Youth Friendly Design Guide 2012





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# Redlands Child & Youth Friendly Design Guide



## 1.0 Introduction

### Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this Guide is to create a built and natural environment in the Redlands that integrates the needs and desires of children and young people through child and youth friendly design.

### How to Use this Guide

This Guide should be used by Council, private, government and non-government developers to inform their planning and design for new and existing built and natural areas of the city.

### What is Child and Youth Friendly Design?

It is design that invites and welcomes children and young people into community life.

### Child and Youth Friendly Design Process

A child and youth friendly design process engages children and young people as early as possible in a design or planning project. The process promotes and accommodates the vision and creative and explorative skills of children and young people.

### Aims for Child and Youth Friendly Design

A child and youth friendly design process, supported by child and youth friendly principles and design strategies aims to deliver:

- A sense of place for children and young people.
- A variety of experiences for children and young people.

- Design for all ages and abilities.
- Playful environs and places.
- Public spaces that engage children and young people.
- Safe circulation for non-motorised travel.
- Acceptable levels of risk for children and young people.
- Safe neighbourhood design.
- Connection with nature.
- Essential services to support children and young people.

### Council's Role

Council adopts child friendly principles and design strategies when undertaking its planning and design projects, and works with other government, private and community organisations to guide their practice to deliver good outcomes for children and young people in the Redlands.





## 2.0 Context

Under the Redlands 2030 Community Plan and the Corporate Plan, Redland City Council aims to promote the Redlands as an inclusive city, where children and young people participate fully in community life.

The Redlands 2030 Community Plan has a number of goals relevant to child and youth friendly design including:

- An egalitarian and inclusive community.
- A great place to grow up.
- Youth representation in decision-making.
- Vibrant commercial centres.

The Redland City Council Corporate Plan 2010-2015 has a strategy to:

*7.7 Increase children and young people's active participation in community life and support their social, cultural and physical development.*

This Guide:

- (1) Supports statements in the Redlands 2030 Community Plan and the Corporate Plan 2010-2015 that promote the Redlands as an inclusive community and a great place to grow up.
- (2) Creates a child and youth friendly environment by incorporating child and youth friendly design principles and design strategies into planning, design, construction, management and maintenance of the built environment.
- (3) Raises awareness of child and youth friendly principles and design strategies.

(4) Optimises children and young people's use of public space.

(5) Assists designers, planners, developers, construction managers and communities to understand and implement child and youth friendly design.

## 3.0 Policy and Standards References

- Redland City Council Corporate Plan (Child and Youth Friendly Redlands)
- Redlands 2030 Community Plan (Child and Youth Friendly Redlands)
- Redlands Social Infrastructure Strategy 2009
- Australian Standards
- Redland Planning Scheme
- Building Code of Australia
- Open Space Plan (under review)
- Built Environment Specification
- Skate Park Strategy
- Nature-based Play and Local Park Playground Guidelines
- Asset Management Plans
- Planning Scheme Policy 16: Safer by Design
- Planning Scheme Policy 9, Chapter 15: Access and Parking
- AS Playgrounds
- Physical Activity Strategy (under development)

## 4.0 Child and Youth Friendly Principles

The child and youth friendly city principles express Redland City Council's aspiration for its City. Council is committed to a city where children and young people:

**Principles:**

1. Influence decisions about their City
2. Feel included and connected to their communities
3. Live well and feel safe and are protected from abuse, neglect and violence
4. Live in environments that nurture their health and well being
5. Have local opportunities for learning, play, employment and creative expression
6. Experience activity centres as welcoming, safe places
7. Have access to green open space and natural areas for contemplation, exploration and play
8. Have safe circulation paths connecting them to where they want to go



## 5.0 Child and Youth Friendly Planning and Design Process

Successful child and family friendly places and spaces are strongly related to children and young people being involved in their planning and design.

Involving children and young people in the creation of child friendly places is more than a 'nice thing to do' – it is essential. UNICEF, through its Child Friendly Cities Program<sup>1</sup> places significant importance on the involvement of children and young people in decision making at a local level. Especially pivotal is that child and youth friendly design processes engage with children and young people at all stages of the project.

Through engagement in designing and planning their local areas, children can:

- develop respect for members of their community
- learn about working with local government
- develop a sense of ownership to a place
- improve their self-worth by being able to participate in the process and importantly, and
- share their knowledge of places that they regularly use.

A significant challenge throughout any child and youth friendly design process is how to best demonstrate this process at a local level – with 'hands on' involvement of children and young people – and to ensure that this involvement occurs at each stage of a project.

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF [www.childfriendlycities.org](http://www.childfriendlycities.org)

This can occur in a number of ways. Attendances at design workshops, membership on the working groups and involvement in place-based vision workshops have all been significant and formal strategies that not only encourage attendance from children, but are ideally reliant on their participation and 'hands on' involvement. When addressing specific design features, many children and young people are able to come up with suggestions for all ages in mind, not just their own, and thereby embrace a blueprint for the entire community to use

Opportunities for children and young people to be more involved in the design process include:

- commenting and rating places and spaces in their local community for their child friendliness and useability include using a rating system from 1 to 10 for particular sites;
- becoming young designers in their own right, commenting on places that they regularly utilised, suggesting design features to improve these places, and get 'hands on' by drawing what they considered to be a child friendly design for that area;
- constructing an 'ideas table' where children and young people interact with all members of the community to refine design features of nominated places and spaces, and
- creating young designers awards, with school also receiving appreciation certificates.

Diagram 1 shows broad stages of a typical design or planning project and some opportunities for engaging children and young people.

The following checklist provides some useful general principles for engaging with young people.

### A Useful Project Checklist for Working with Children and Young People

- Go to where children and young people are, and feel most comfortable (schools, vacation care, informal gathering places, skate parks, shopping centres, parks, sports ovals, youth organisations, child care centres etc)
- Invite children and young people to be a part of the design or planning process (don't expect them to engage in generic activities such as public meetings without special invitation or effort on the part of the project team)
- Be creative in the engagement of children and young people (engagement of young people at vacation care as part of the Child and Youth Friendly City project demonstrated that young people are not a uniform group and they will participate differently- some prefer drawing and model building and others verbal expression of their ideas). Allow for many techniques.
- Make sure they know that their ideas and thoughts are valued and important
- Plan for consultation with children and young people to take time
- Provide feedback on how the information has been used
- Say thank you and acknowledge their contribution



Diagram 1 Some Ideas for Children's Engagement in Design and Planning Projects

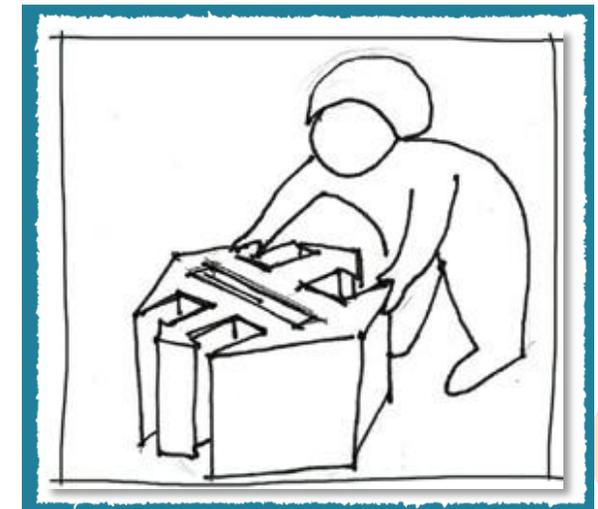


## 6.0 Child and Youth Friendly Design Strategies

These design strategies are intended to guide the development and design of Redlands built and natural environments. The accompanying sketches are provided to assist interpretation of the strategies.

### Sense of Place/Quality of life

- A scale that accommodates both young children and older children
- Wayfinding and orientation guides suitable for children and youth
- Landmarks that assist orientation and make a place memorable
- A mix of uses and experiences in the built environment



Way finding and orientation guides for children and youth



Playful elements for all ages

- The design of the place reflects the local heritage, culture and conditions
- Interpretative features provide opportunities for fun and learning
- A place that is comfortable for all users
- Opportunities are provided for incidental meetings with neighbours and connection to everyday community activities

#### Getting there and getting around

- Design that gives preference to pedestrians and cyclists
- Set-down areas
- Access and circulation for non-motorised travel
- Routes to children's play areas that are safe, welcoming and accessible to all
- Understanding key places of value to young people and integrating these in the non-motorised circulation system

#### Designing for all ages and abilities

- A range of interesting activities for young and older children and children with disabilities
- Inclusive design for all age and socio-economic groups
- All children have access to the elements of everyday life
- Playful elements encourage physical activity and fitness for all ages

- Residential accommodation (particularly medium and high rise) considers the needs of resident children for outdoor and indoor play

#### Playful environs/places

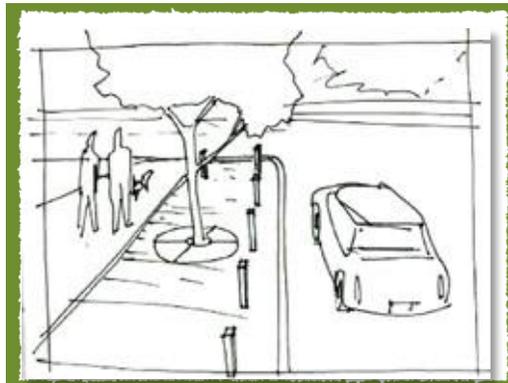
- A range of experiences that is safe and interesting
- Opportunities for supervised and unsupervised play
- Well maintained, well used and attractive parks and open spaces
- Play is integrated into the heart of new residential development and activity centres
- Play opportunities are available to all ages and encourage intergenerational play

#### Acknowledging/acceptable risk and safety

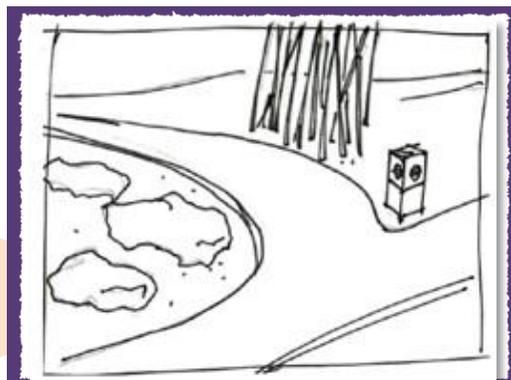
- Consolidate pedestrian connections in activity centres to the main spines
- Ensure safe interaction between pedestrians and vehicles

#### Public Space

- Multi-functional, multi-use public spaces in activity centres
- Comfortable and high quality public space
- Public spaces are engaging for children (e.g. bubbling water, jumping jewels)
- Public space is clearly delineated from private and commercial space



Safe interaction between pedestrians and vehicles



Activity centres with a variety of natural elements



- Streetscape that supports movement of young and older children
- Variety of experiences
  - Shady and contemplative space /quiet places
  - Celebration & gatherings
- Public spaces that are separate but visual (for young people)

### Neighbourhood living (school and home)

- Schools
  - Activation of community use – gardens, sports, community, culture
  - Schools as a primary centre of children & young people's lives
- Residential/community interface
  - Fence heights/visual permeability from the street
  - Avoiding blank walls, noise attenuation barriers and gated estates
  - Perception of safety/risks
- Housing – low, medium and high density living
  - Child Friendly Housing
  - importance of shared spaces, community space
  - need for children to be able to play safely, to initiate and make local friendships – neighbourly places

- housing design should support families needs – storage (indoor and garage spaces), living areas
- role of hard surfaced places for informal play
- Design of medium and high density housing must consider the indoor and outdoor play needs of children and young people

### Connection with nature

- Activity centres must integrate a variety of natural elements into their core (particularly elements that represent a 'wild place') with different textures, materials, heights, vegetation types
- Easy access to natural areas
  - Local park with nature based play
  - Conservation areas
  - Waterways, creeks and the bay
- Wild places
  - Acknowledge these places [(ranging from Weinam Creek, overgrown allotments)
  - Climbing trees, gullies, forests
- Community gardens and bush care
  - Greening children's environments
  - Child care centres
  - Schools
  - Sporting grounds

### Get the basics right /essential services

- Shade
- Toilets, sanitary facilities
- Change facilities
- Water points
- Telephone
- Comfortable seating
- Gathering spaces
- Wireless/broadband
- Signage – public noticeboards
- Safety through design





**Redland**  
CITY COUNCIL