SIX YEARS CHILDREN'S USE OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD

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Introduction

Most studies in environmental psychology in general, and on children’s behaviour in relation to their physical environment in particular are short-term in character. In most cases one environment is studied or several different ones are compared at only one point in time. Longitudinal research is rare, mostly due to restrictions in money, time and long-term perspective. But in order to evaluate the effects of physical transitions in environments, information about the ‘normal’ fluctuations in behaviour of its users is necessary as a frame of reference.

Method

To collect the above-mentioned information, the behaviour of children in a part of a neighbourhood was studied for six years. Systematic observations during the same time of the year (fall) made it possible to compare the children’s behaviour over a long period of time.

Results

Activity patterns of the children during these years will be compared and analyzed. Central in the analysis are the differences and similarities in time in the relationships of activities with various parts of the environment. Special attention will be given to differences between boys and girls, and between children of various ages. Alternative explanations of the results due to external developments as for instance changes in population figures will be considered and discussed.