

HOW MIGHT PARENTS IN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES ENSURE CHILDREN THRIVE IN THEIR FIRST FIVE YEARS

Team – (re)thinkhuman

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with thanks to:

Lana Bruskina – Inspiration Phase

Liz Ramsay – Ideation Phase

INSPIRATION BRIMBANK COMMUNITY



City of Brimbank, Melbourne

“Developed as one of the most culturally diverse municipalities in Australia

Over 150 different languages are spoken, with more than half the population speaking a language other than English .

Through the 1970s and 1990s, many migrants from Southern European shores arrived in Brimbank, establishing businesses, homes and vibrant communities.

Brimbank has continued to be a significant Western Region gateway for overseas migrants, although in more recent years residents from India, China, Vietnam and African countries have.

The rate of new arrivals with low or no English literacy has increased in recent years, describing one of the many challenges new arrivals face .”

A high rate of obesity and a significant proportion of residents with complex physical and mental health needs.

By the time a child is 3.5 years, 41.8% have a Child health assessment to assess various developmental milestones such as growth, physical movement, behaviour, play, hearing, vision, and interactions.

By 2009, 80 stores supplied fresh fruit & vegetables (a 35% increase from 2006), although eight out of Brimbank’s 21 suburbs (38%) have no fresh fruit and vegetable suppliers.

Family violence continues to be an issue, with Brimbank having the highest rate of incidence in the Western Region and a significantly higher rate than the State average.

Brimbank has quite large average household sizes compared to other Metro Melbourne areas. Families with children are the most significant household type, and of those families, one parent families make up a large proportion.”

Brimbank has the highest proportion of residents in receipt of a Carers Support Payment of all Western Region councils.

Alcohol related accidents and serious injury caused by road accidents continue to be issues, and at a higher rate than the State average.

One in five Brimbank residents is affected by some form of Disability & 33% of Disability Support Payment recipients in the Western Region live in the Brimbank area.

Brimbank has a lower number of general practitioners per 1,000 population compared to the State average, with Brimbank having 0.77 practitioners per 1,000 residents compared with 1.03 for the State.

INSPIRATION WHO WE TALKED TO & WHERE WE VISITED

People

Expert Interviews

GP

Maternal & Child Health Nurse & Team Leader

Migrant Worker – training programs for migrants with young families & youth

Psychologist – program manager for migrants with young families & youth

Childcare Educators

Social Worker, Parent Support Group Coordinator, Migrant Resource Centre

Group Interview & family maps

Grace

Amran

Acol

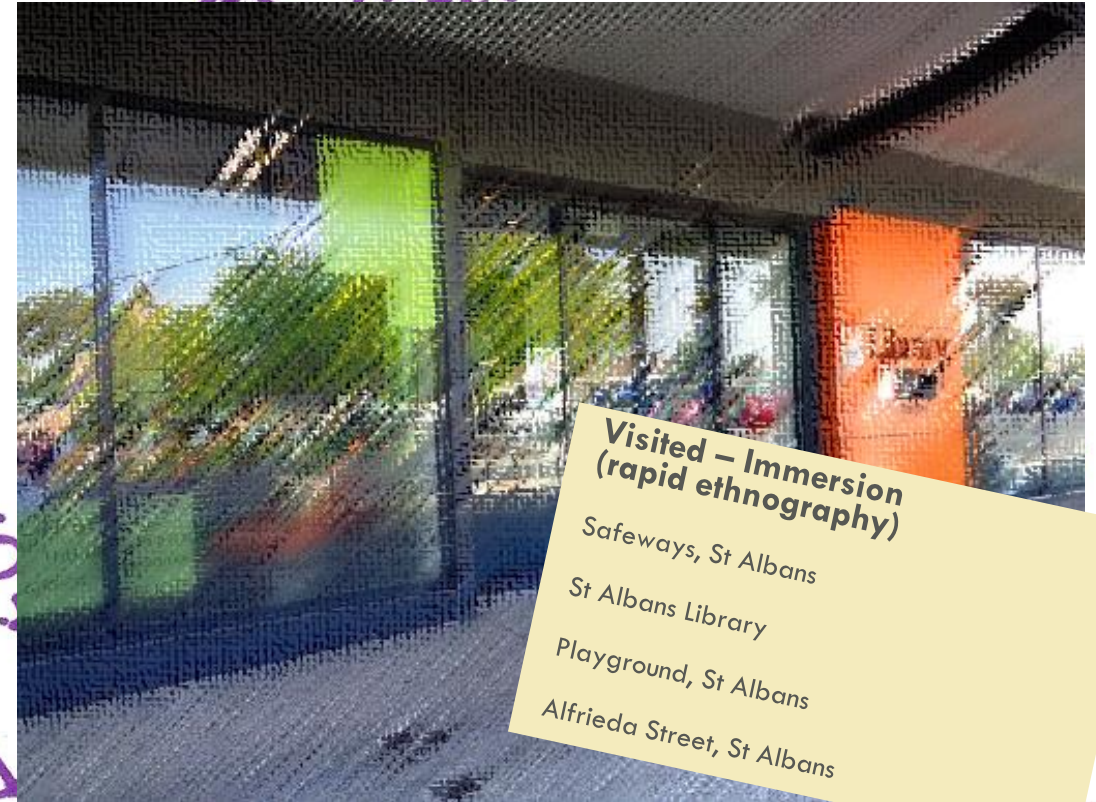
Abuka

Buku

Individual Interviews & Photo Journals

Grace

Buku



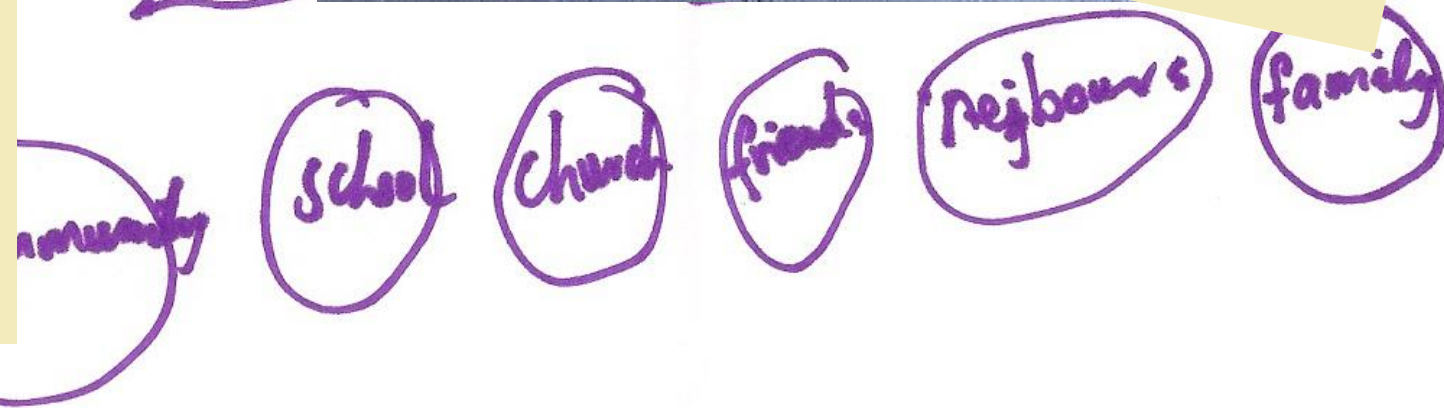
Visited – Immersion
(rapid ethnography)

Safeways, St Albans

St Albans Library

Playground, St Albans

Alfrieda Street, St Albans



IDEATION



IDEATION - INSIGHTS & HOW MIGHT WE

Insight: The importance of public perception may prevent early identification, acknowledgment and action to address developmental problems.

How might we: How do you encourage parents to value their child's development needs ahead of public perceptions.

Insight: The mechanisms to impart information on parenting styles may not be the most appropriate.

How might we: Involve the community in creating and disseminating information or campaigns about their children's development needs

Insight: Parents believe their role is to provide the basics, and while they value other things like education & play (higher order needs), they trust / rely on others to help them identify and address those needs.

How might we: Get parents to actively participate in their children's education through play and interaction.

IDEATION - BRAINSTORMING



Introduce games at social events

Card pack with photos of activities children & parents can do together

Create play festivals “social events for the whole community”

Create visual tools to show importance of each development stage

Create Sudanese family soap opera in Australia

School assignments encouraging parents involvement & reflection on what “we” learnt

Story times for people to share their stories/how they dealt with problems

Provide demonstrations – random – at libraries / schools / playgrounds “theatre”

Fund play camps for the local community and families

Create family models who teach other families how to interact with kids

Describe games that help dev. Higher order needs

Create youtube parent games ideas – using local community as actors

Create more opportunities for interaction between parents and children via schools

Get parents who have been successful at this to help newer mums & dads.

After school / weekend parent and child playgroups

Uncover specific aspirations parents have for their children

Combine social opportunities with learning opportunities

School assignments encouraging parents involvement & reflection on what “we” learnt

Create specific community events based on play to learn

Use existing cultural / community events – tag this info onto what already happens

THE IDEA

Class 3:
Ideation Phase

learn & play
at the
toy library ①

② mobile
toy library
play & learn
at the toy
library

Place Post-It Note
Here

③ play → learn
app → borrow toys

HMW Question:
How will get parents to
actively participate in
their children's early
education through play &
interaction

Describe the Idea:
Mobile toy library staffed
by a professional
early childhood educator
who can teach parents and
their children to play with
toys/games together designed
to support developmental needs

How Will This Idea Have Impact on the Challenge You're Addressing?

DESIGN Thinking Course for Human-Centered Design 19



Describe the Idea:

Mobile toy library visits various community centres, and are staffed by a professional early childhood educator who can teach parents and their children how to play together with toys & games designed to support developmental needs during a play session. Parents can then borrow any toy, and each toy has a description - either written & attached to the toy or audio/visual via a toy library app to describe how to play together, with communication tips, and the benefits of this kind of play.

How will this idea have impact on the Challenge you're addressing:

We learned that parents may not always allocate dedicated time or know how to play or interact with their children. By using the mobile toy library, this enables parents to gain access to a wide range of toys which are tailored for different developmental needs, but they also get the opportunity to gain ideas from the early childhood educator, learn from other parents in the group during the play session, and get additional support from app in a visual way and can be used in the privacy of their own home.

PROTOTYPE

What to Prototype

- At least one question that you'll need to answer to understand if your idea resonates with people
- What will their first experience with the service be like?
- How does the experience culminate at the end?



What is the most important question to answer?

1. Would parents like to borrow toys on any level?
2. Would you like to partner 3 other families?
3. Would you use this service if it was on mobile?
4. Would you prefer to go to the toy library by yourself, with your child, or as a group with other children? Where would you expect the toy library to be located? Would you prefer for the toy library to still stay in your community space?
5. Will people be willing to attend a play and learn session, and play with other children in a group, with their child as well as children whose parents attended the session - before they borrow toys to take home with them? Will you use the library?
6. Would parents be prepared to join the toy library?
7. Would you pay for the service? If yes, how much? Monthly? Quarterly? Yearly?

How might we meet it? Create a diagram

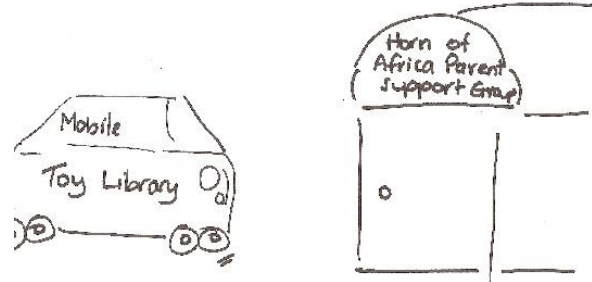


What is the most important question to answer?

1. Would they use a computer app or website to select toys on how to play with their children with the toy and their ideas about the development of the toy?
2. Would you use the app or website to get your comments or photos on how you play with your child on their?
3. Or are the information with attached to the toy relevant?

How might we meet it? Create a mock-up

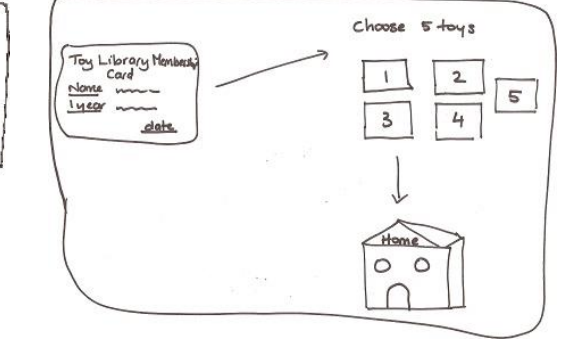
1. Mobile Toy Library visits community



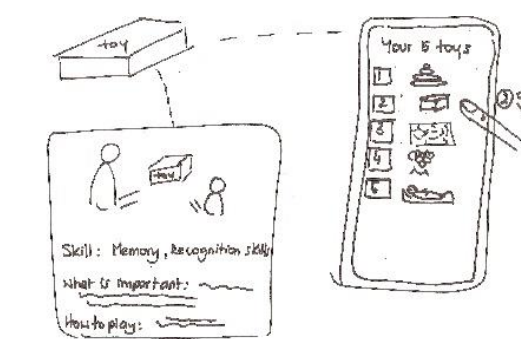
2. Educator helping parents



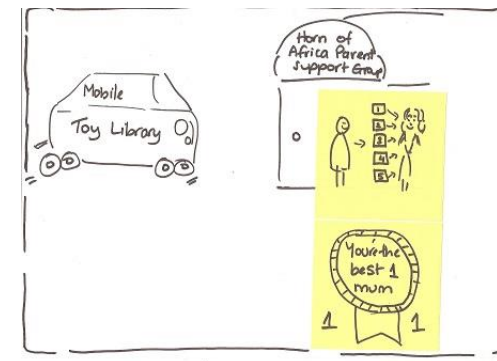
3. Parent joining & borrowing toys



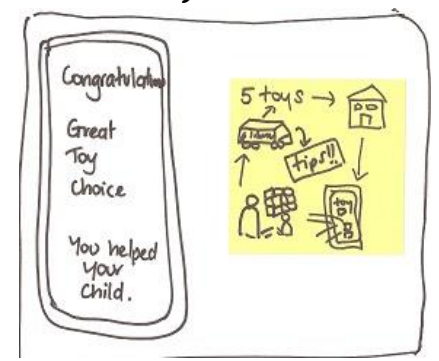
4. Parent learning play instructions



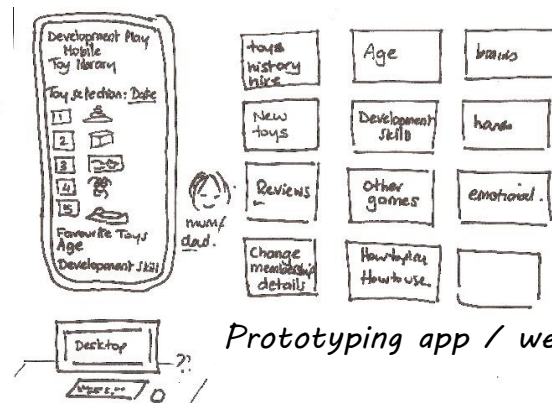
5. Parent return toys & recognition



6. Recognition & re-borrow



Recognition of parent's role & reinforcing value of play & interaction with their child is highly valued by the parent.



Prototyping app / web features

Example toy from toy library



Sorting things is about classifying

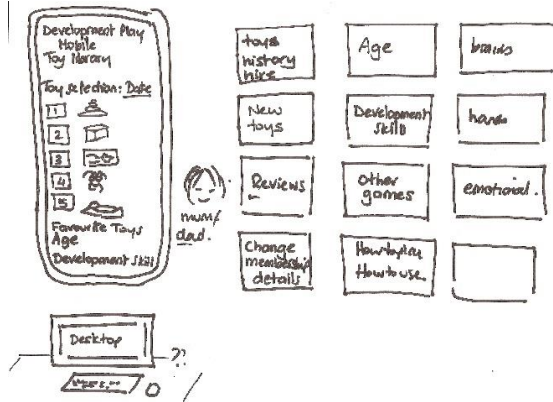


Sorting things is about classifying. Develops cognitive skills - concentration, memory and recognition. A game for 2 to 4 players that takes about 10 minutes to play. The game is made through 10 cards. What we do and what it means. Mum: Where does the card belong? Me: In the garden. Mum: Where does the frog live? Me: In the pond. We lay the pictures in the middle of the table. Take it in turns to turn over the playing cards and the first person to match the playing cards to the picture wins the card! Keep taking turns. The player with the most cards wins. Easy on, children can play with 'the same', 'what is different' and 'what is classified'.

Testing how to play instructions

- Written
- Audio
- Video

TESTING THE PROTOTYPE

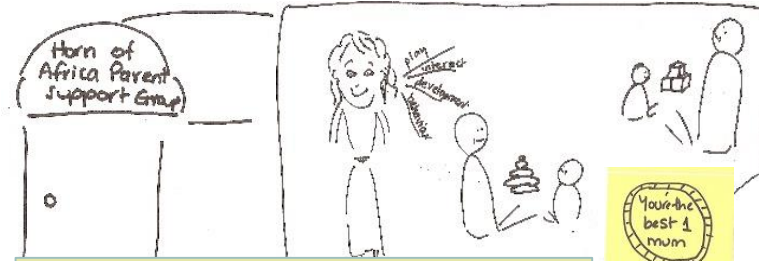


Prefers support via an app on the mobile phone due to ease of use

- Limited computer literacy - children or husband assists - but likes how apps work - easy @ press of button on the screen
- Likes search toy selection by age, developmental stage, and development skill needing more support
- Likes more info on developmental stages
- Likes video to show play instructions

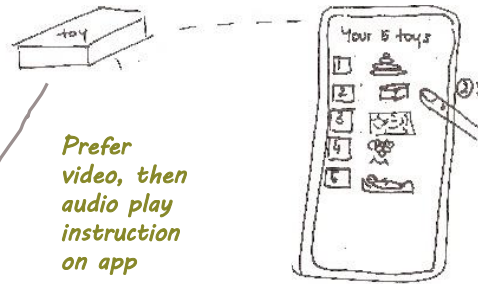
Insight - Toys need a low price point if bought. Parents may not aware that toys can be designed to educate or extend a child's skills from a development view point. Toy library concept needs further testing... The feeling expressed was "it would be good for others, but not for me..." Concern is not focussed on borrowing 'used' toys, but that toys will be the same as they already have - and will result in clutter...

1. Educator visits community centre & helps parents



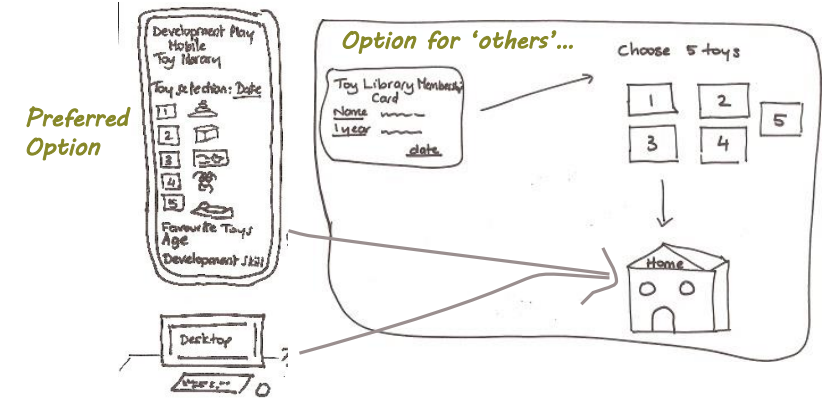
Educator focus is on importance of play, models how to play, how to interact with child, child development, child behaviour.

4. Parent learning play instructions



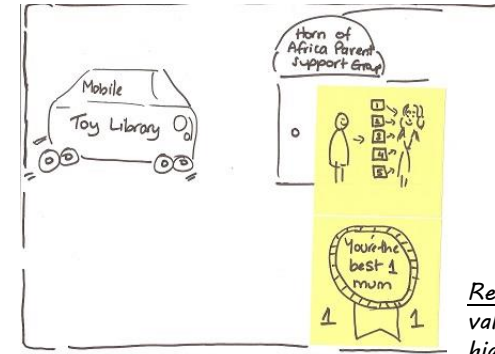
Prefer video, then audio play instruction on app

2. Parents can buy new toys online ('others' can borrow?)



Preferred Option

5. Optional step - If toy borrowed - parent returns toy



6. Attends next session with educator to learn more about play, and buys or borrow new toy...



Recognition of parent's role & reinforcing value of play & interaction with their child is highly valued by the parent.

Example toy @ toy library



Sorting things is about classifying



Ranking on how to access play instructions

1. Video (preferred the most)
2. Audio
3. Written (many parents cannot read English or their mother tongue)

Information on how to play, instructions on how to interact with the child while playing, and the benefits of play highly valued

NEXT STEPS...

More testing needed...

...more iteration...

...more ideas to explore....

Thank you IDEO.org and +Acumen for an inspirational program and enabling so many to learn & use human centered design.

