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“Doing Time” and “Creating Space”: A Case Study of Outdoor Play and Institutionalized Leisure in an Urban Family

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Abstract

The New Urbanism trend has led to more Swedish middle-class families living in apartments in cities, with proximity to attractive schools and services but poor opportunities for outdoor play. Viewing families’ and children’s agency and living conditions as intimately connected with time-space variations, we investigate how children and parents in one urban family “do time” and “create space” in the domains of outdoor play and institutionalized leisure. Using a mixed-method approach, we find that within one family there are several ways of handling this. Initially a way of promoting physical health, the daughter’s soccer activity has become the hub of the family’s time-space organization and an important part of social life and identity for both the daughter and the parents. The son, refusing institutionalized activities, is considered a physically active outdoor child even though he spends more time indoors. When outside, he recreates child-unfriendly places in the neighborhood into spaces for play. We argue that using a mixed-method approach gives insight into variations within families. The results of this case study show that parents and children have to adjust to certain conditions and constraints in the domains of outdoor play, institutionalized leisure and family life, but that they also possess and can exercise agency regarding time and space within these domains.

Keywords: urban family, children’s outdoor play, institutionalized leisure, time-space organization, mixed methods

Introduction

Families' daily lives are structured to a great extent by their social and economic resources. Geographical location of the home, work places and schools, as well as neighborhood structure and children's leisure activities are other important conditions. Exploring the ways children and parents perceive, experience and negotiate the organization of time and space in everyday life is the aim of this study. Specifically, in this article we examine how the children and parents in a middle-class, inner-city family negotiate the organization of time and space within the family. Within this case study we address this question with examples of how children and parents "do time" and "create space" in the domains of children's outdoor play and institutionalized leisure.

Research on families' organization of daily life has often focused on the organization of time. In Sweden, Forsberg (2009) investigated parenthood and everyday organization in child-centered middle-class families, focusing on negotiations over the balance of work, leisure and family commitments between parents and children. Forsberg mostly focused on negotiations between parents (e.g., over who takes the children to day care and who goes to work early), but because in contemporary Sweden children are often expected to make their voices heard in family matters, he also addressed negotiations between parents and children (e.g., about when to do homework). Jurczyk and Lange (2007) have also addressed the balance between work and leisure, stressing time but also space, and discussing the effects that flexible work hours and parents bringing work home have on children's well-being. U.S. sociologist Annette Lareau has done important work in the field of families' temporal organization by adding class to the analysis of the organization of daily life. In her famous book *Unequal Childhoods* (2011), Lareau compared how families with children from different social backgrounds in the United States organize their daily life and move between different social and geographical contexts. In addition to noting class differences in organized leisure activity participation, Lareau showed that the daily lives of middle-class families had a much faster pace than those of working-class families. Members of well-off families talked in terms of "deadlines" and the amount of "wiggle room" they had.

Lareau (2011) also discussed differences between lower- and middle-class families in the balance between children's time for informal play and for institutionalized leisure activities. Working-class children could engage in informal play at their own pace and as they pleased. They exercised more agency over their playtime and were less tired and less stressed about tight schedules than middle-class children. In addition, their outdoor informal play led to children of different ages playing together. For middle-class children, time for informal play or hanging out in the neighborhood was more restricted (see also Karsten 2010; van der Burgt 2010). In her study, Lareau found that middle-class children sometimes had difficulty coping with unstructured time, feeling they had nothing to do. Time outside school was devoted to the development of different skills in sports and music useful in adult life, including what Lareau (2011, 39) called "white-collar work skills, including how to set priorities, manage an itinerary, shake hands with strangers, and work on a team." Institutionalized leisure activities are seen as desirable by middle-class parents and as an important part of their children's general education, a logic of

childrearing Lareau (2011, 238) termed "concerted cultivation." Middle-class parents are thus willing to spend their leisure time on different institutionalized leisure activities for each child, engaging in "cultures of busyness" (Karsten 2005). Tillberg (2002) and Lareau (2011) have shown that children's leisure activities take up a lot of their parents' time, both in chauffeuring to practice and weekday competitions and in attending competitions on weekends. Tillberg argued that the amount of time and engagement parents put into their children's leisure activities and clubs results in these becoming a considerable part of the parents' identities and identity construction. In addition, Lareau stressed the great deal of time that children's leisure activities often take up for younger siblings, almost taking "hostage" of their time. The children in Lareau's middle-class families also did not spend much time with their parents and siblings because every family member had his or her own time-space schedule. Even while at home, middle-class family members seldom spent time in the same room.

The location of the neighborhood in which a family lives also affects the ways members are able to organize their everyday lives in time and space. An inner-city neighborhood with cultural and commercial services near at hand often offers poor opportunities for children's outdoor play. Compact city policies are being adopted in Sweden and elsewhere in Europe that increase the percentage of apartments in the housing stock throughout the city. The increasing density leads in many neighborhoods to a decrease in green spaces and an increase in traffic (Björklid and Nordström 2007). Limited access to good outdoor play areas and prohibitions against unsupervised play in the streets affects crucial aspects of children's mental and physical health (Kytä 2004; Hillman, Adams and Whitelegg 1991). Despite this, the New Urbanism trend has led to more families with children living in inner-city apartments, a tendency seen in Sweden as well as cities such as Amsterdam, London and Paris (Boterman, Karsten and Musterd 2010; Brun and Fagnani 1994; Butler and Robinson 2003). According to Karsten (2007), urban parents have several reasons for remaining in inner-city locations. They may want to retain the urban lifestyle for themselves as well as for their children, to keep close to local social networks or to avoid time-consuming commutes from the suburbs. Another reason may be proximity to what they perceive as good schools (Butler and Robson 2003; Holme 2002; Boterman, Karsten and Musterd 2010). To allow their children to attend a good school, parents move to a home within that school's district or in a location that makes commuting an option. In Sweden, free school choice has led to local school markets and an increased commuting among urban children (Gustafson, Pérez Prieto and Löfdahl 2011; Bunar 2010; Kallstenius 2011). Information on which neighborhoods and schools are well regarded is usually gathered (and even constructed) through parents' social networks (Holme 2002). Research focusing on children's perspectives and experiences shows that not only parents but also children's social networks play an important role (Gustafson 2011; van der Burgt 2008; Reay 2007).

Due to their age and dependent status, children are particularly restricted in their mobility, what they can do and where they can do it. Without assistance of a parent, children usually have a small activity zone within which they can move by themselves (Hägerstrand 1970). The densification of urban space, together with

more emphasis on institutionalized leisure, is decreasing the time children spend unsupervised outdoors, both in Sweden (van der Burgt 2010) and in other European contexts (Karsten 2005; Valentine and McKendrick 1997). The ferrying of children from home to school to leisure activities results in what Zeiher (2003, 67) calls the "insularization of children's individual life spaces."

"Doing Time" and "Creating Space"

In daily life, the ways individuals are able to organize their lives in time and space are bounded by different kinds of interacting constraints (Hägerstrand 1970), such as the needs to eat and sleep (capacity constraints), the need to come together and link in time and space for specific activities, and the need to follow rules and regulations in certain domains (authority constraints). In a family, the different members' paths adjust to the family's common timetable and spaces, forming what Hägerstrand calls family "bundles." This implies interacting schedules and a conceptualization of the family as a relational system (Jurczyk and Lange 2007; Karsten 2007). In addition, the time-space organization of families has to be understood in the context of the transition from the Fordist system, with its rigid external time structures, to a more flexible system, a process that "blurs boundaries" (Jurczyk and Lange 2007, 217) between different spheres. In early modernity the times and spaces of work and leisure were separated by clear boundaries, but such boundaries have in late modernity become more subtle and less clearly defined. A society with fewer fixed external time structures assigns more responsibility for time management to the individual (Jurczyk and Lange 2007). However, this blurring of boundaries does not mean that clear temporal and spatial boundaries have ceased to exist. In fact, Tillberg (2002) argues that the conviction that children should be engaged in institutionalized leisure activities has become such an important norm in today's society that such activities have become the dominating authority constraint in family daily life. An effect of the increasingly institutionalized daily life of children (Hengst 2007) amid the time bind of family routines is that children have little control over their free time and space.

Children have been hidden inside family statistics, especially in research investigating society and families (Qvortrup 1997). In our research, however, we view childhood as socially situated and children as social agents (James and James 2004). Accordingly, agency is an important concept in our research and we stress both children's and parents' agency when it comes to the organization and negotiation of time and space within the family. Children's and parents' agency in regard to the organization and negotiation of time is emphasized by the concept of "doing time" (Jurczyk and Lange 2007). Jurczyk and Lange argue that an active "doing" of time—such as creating "family time," "quality time" or "own time"—is becoming more important for both children and parents. These authors also point to the relational aspect of agency in that children and parents demonstrate different capacities to "do time" depending on their social and economic resources.

In the present article we aim to contribute to this discussion by emphasizing the importance not only of family members "doing time" but also of "making and creating space." Time and space are intimately connected dimensions (Massey 2005; Hägerstrand 1970) and omnipresent in that every action is taken in a certain

place at a certain time. We argue that while researchers such as Jurczyk and Lange (2007) and Lareau (2011) do discuss space to some extent (the blurring/ articulation of spatial boundaries), they pay insufficient attention to the ramifications of space for agency. People do not only act passively in regard to spatial restrictions, they are also involved in the production of space; that is, the making and creating of space (Massey 2005). Parents' and children's agency and living conditions are not only intimately connected with time-space variations (Holloway and Valentine 2000), but their agency may also differ in different domains. According to Jurczyk and Lange (2007), for example, children often exercise relatively strong agency in commercial domains (e.g., toys, computer games, clothes), but it is much more difficult for them to influence their parents' work hours.

Methodology

The present article is based on a pilot study conducted to ascertain which aspects of families' time-space organization of daily life could be investigated with different research methods. While planning research on the time-space organization of families in neighborhoods with different class and geographical characteristics, we decided to do a pilot study of one family in particular—two parents, a son and a daughter—in a well-off, inner-city neighborhood in Uppsala, Sweden. This yielded not only valuable methodological insights but also valuable data on the time-space structures that frame this family's everyday life. In addition, the study suggested important concepts concerning parents' and children's agency in negotiating the family members' shared and individual time and space. The study had a qualitative mixed-method character, with a broad thematic approach to different family members' perspectives on time and space in daily life. We asked the parents and children to fill out time-space diaries across a seven-day week. We conducted separate interviews with the children and parents to encourage them to express their unique perspectives on and experiences of organizing and negotiating their time, spaces and activities. After the interviews, we took walks through the neighborhood with both the children and parents during which they showed us the places they frequented. Speaking with the parents and children separately yielded differing insights into how the family's decisions were negotiated (although we did not study the negotiation process itself).

The Setting

The centrally located upper/middle-class district of Kungsängen in Uppsala is a new residential neighborhood consisting of five- and six-story buildings with some sections still under construction. Apartments constitute 95 percent of the residences. The studied family lives on the fourth floor in one such building, in a five-room apartment with a large balcony facing a courtyard. Before moving to Kungsängen the family lived in a detached house in a fairly new development in the countryside, approximately a half-hour drive from Uppsala.

The neighborhood consists of predominantly well-off Swedish inhabitants (only 14 percent of residents have a foreign background). A sushi bar and a posh clothing boutique reflect the neighborhood's economic level (Figure 1). Proximity to a well-stocked grocery, the Uppsala city center, the highway to Stockholm and public

transportation including the train station provide easy access to commercial and cultural services and make Kungsängen a good location for commuters. There is a high rate of car ownership (52 percent), and the parking areas were built underground (Uppsala Municipality Statistics 2010)—an advantage for outdoor play since it reduces traffic dangers near the apartment buildings. A bus to schools in nearby areas serves the neighborhood. Children constitute 17 percent of the inhabitants and as a demographic group are slowly increasing (Uppsala Municipality Statistics 2010). However, Kungsängen was clearly not planned with children in mind. There is a lack of child services such as day-care centers, schools, and leisure activity sites. While there are a few playgrounds for small children, larger green spaces, playing fields, activity sites and playgrounds for older children and teenagers are lacking. Accordingly, the neighborhood does not meet the criteria for a child-friendly environment (Kyttä 2004).

Indoors, the family's apartment has a large kitchen with a dining table and a spacious living room with a television and a Wii gaming console. The children have their own bedrooms, the parents share another and a spare room is used as an office with a computer. The shared laundry is located on the first floor.

Figure 1. View into a courtyard from the central plaza with a women's clothing boutique on the left and a sushi bar on the right

In the following section, we discuss the ways that the children—Anne, age 12 and Tom, age 9—and their parents, Hilda and Oskar, each 37—organize time and space in the domains of children's outdoor play and institutionalized leisure. We also relate this time-space organization to structural conditions such as neighborhood location and characteristics as well as social class. In addition, we provide examples of how the children and parents "do time" and "create space" for outdoor play and institutionalized leisure, which generally involves the balancing of different kinds of activities.

Outdoor Play

The opportunities and limitations for outdoor play are shaped by the family's apartment lifestyle and Kungsängen's structure and inner-city location. As noted above, playgrounds, larger green spaces, ball courts and activity sites for older children and teenagers are lacking. What spaces are available are small greens in the courtyards, a central plaza (Figure 2) with a circular green and paved area surrounded by the apartment buildings, and the streets that circle around the buildings.

Figure 2. The Plaza

In adjacent neighborhoods there are large green spaces and playgrounds for older children, but a river and major roadways surrounding Kungsängen effectively limit its children's access to these facilities. For outdoor play, then, the neighborhood is neither inviting nor very interesting for older children. The parents view this as the downside of the neighborhood. In addition, outdoor play is more complicated when living in an apartment on the fourth floor rather than the first or in a single-family house. The children and the parents spend less time outdoors now than they did when living in their country house with a garden. Discussing their choice of geographical location, we learned that the move to an apartment had not been their first choice. They had preferred a nearby area with detached houses, but due to Uppsala's limited stock of such housing a single-family home there was too expensive for the family.

Choosing School over Outdoor Play and Mobility

While the parents were not explicit as to why they decided to leave country living for an inner-city location, it is clear they actively searched for housing in the part of the city to which they eventually moved. They had two main reasons. One was proximity to the workplace; both Hilda and Oskar now travel short distances to work (Karsten 2007). The more important reason, however, was the proximity of what the parents considered to be two "good" schools, one in a neighborhood that could be reached on foot and another just a little further away. Even if the possibilities for children's outdoor play were taken into consideration by the parents, this factor was not given priority when choosing where to live. Instead, the parents placed greater value on access to a school with a reputation as a well-defined, workable environment (as reflected in effective procedures and sufficient order). In line with other research (Holme 2002), the parents' school preference was based on what they had heard from friends and colleagues at work. Specifically, the mother's best friend is a teacher at the school the children now attend, so it seems likely that her view of the school influenced the parents' choice. The children exercised little agency in the decision. Tom had preferred the nearer school because he would be able to walk each day, while now he has to take the school bus. This offers insight into the ways family social networks and the information that circulates within them affects children's time-space conditions and practices and, consequently, their well-being and competence. While gaining access to the "best" education and the experience of riding the school bus, Tom loses the experience and physical activity of walking to school. Thus, in line with other research (Karsten 2007; Jurczyk and Lange 2007), we stress the importance of conceptualizing the family as a social network.

Creating Space and Doing Time for Physical Activity

Although Tom misses out on the physical activity of walking to school, his parents value the children's physical activity a great deal. Yet, the outdoor environment of inner-city Kungsängen struck their daughter Anne at first as dull and she preferred indoor activities. She does not have any friends in the neighborhood and there is not much for her to do there. Worried about Anne being physically inactive and gaining weight, her parents convinced her to join a soccer club. She now practices soccer on Tuesdays and Thursdays and then plays in weekend matches—a significant increase in physical activity. The soccer club practices in another neighborhood, so her father now drives her there and back twice a week. In this way, together they create both time and space in order to organize Anne's physical activity. The family's middle-class status (which means they have access to a family car and flexible work hours) allows it to conform to the time-space conditions required by this institutionalized activity (Lareau 2011; Karsten 2005; Tillberg 2002).

Unlike Anne, Tom has no interest in getting involved in any institutionalized sports activity. According to his parents, this is not a problem with regard to his need for physical activity and fresh air. Oskar and Hilda view Tom as a typical and physically very active outdoor child, involved in informal play outside all the time with friends. This is also the way Tom describes himself and his leisure in the neighborhood. Although uninterested in organized soccer, he is keen on playing soccer with his

friends in the small green spaces of the several courtyards. While outside, Tom is indeed very active, moving about all the time. He is also outside much more than Anne according to the data of their time-space diaries. Tom played outside in the neighborhood 280 minutes and Anne 60 minutes during the study's seven days. However, the time Tom actually engaged in outdoor play was quite limited compared to his other leisure activities. His passion for soccer showed itself more in the amount of time he spent watching matches on TV and playing soccer video games on the Wii console. In fact, Tom spent three times as much time with the TV and computers—860 minutes—than he did playing outside. Thus, even if he plays outside more than Anne and is physically very active while doing so, according to his diary he is more an indoor child than an outdoor child. The fact that Anne's soccer activity generally takes place outside serves to increase her time outdoors. So while Anne is viewed as an indoor child by her parents, the amount of time she spends outdoors is actually higher than her brother's: Anne is outside 17 percent of her time awake and not at school, compared to only 12 percent for Tom. In fact, it is the parents who spend the least time outdoors: only 6 percent for Oskar and 8 percent for Hilda of their time awake and not at work—biking, walking or standing and watching Anne's soccer matches. Apartment living seems to be negatively affecting the parents' physical activity levels more than the children's.

Creating Play Space in a Place Not for Play

When playing outdoors Tom exhibits an intense and creative use of space. Together with his friends—mostly boys of different ages but also Anne and sometimes a friend of hers—they play soccer and other games in the small green and open areas between the buildings. While playing soccer in a small space promotes the development of techniques for maneuvering the ball, Tom and his friends yearn for a large green space in the neighborhood where they could play "proper" soccer. In Kungsängen the lack of a large ball court means they have to be careful not to break any windows. They also have to avoid kicking the ball into a fenced-off construction site just behind the small green where a neighbor (a sports instructor) has erected a mini soccer goal (see Figure 3). This does not mean, however, that the children always stay within this small green space and obey safety rules. Tom showed us a hole in the fence where they sometimes enter the construction site to play. Also, in one of the courtyards there is a single swing and here both Anne and Tom express wishes for another so they could swing together or with someone else, compete for the fastest and highest swinger, etc.

Figure 3. The mini goal

As Christensen, James and Jenks (2000) show, children construct a sense of home and family by moving “in-and-out-and-around” the home. However, when living in a fourth-floor apartment, going in and out is not as easy as in a single-family house, and when Tom and Anne are outside their parents want them to stay there a while and *not* be going in and out all the time. Tom has found a way in his outdoor play to connect the inside of his home with the outdoors while remaining outside the apartment. When soccer games end and he wants to do something else outside, he must first return the ball to the apartment—and so puts it in the elevator to transport it up, while using the building’s intercom to tell his parents upstairs that the ball is on its way for them to collect (Figure 4). This way he does not have to spend time climbing stairs or on the elevator to return the ball and then going back down and outside to continue play. In a way the elevator becomes part of Tom’s play space; his creative use of it and the intercom, with his parents’ help, gains him time to play. Thus he takes control over his own time and space and transforms places not meant for play into play spaces.

Figure 4. Soccer ball in the elevator

Another creative and effective way in which Tom recreates “places not for play” into “play spaces” is through the use of private courtyards in the neighborhood. As noted above, the lack of variety in play spaces (Kytta 2004) leads Tom and his friends to bend some of the rules. Each apartment building has a courtyard intended for the residents of that building. The courtyards are accessible only by keying in a door code (Figure 5). In order to use shortcuts into the different courtyards and be able to play in more than just their own, Tom and his friends have discovered and memorized the door codes for each building. Thus, they create additional space for play.

Figure 5. Coded-lock entrance to a building with a courtyard

Institutionalized Leisure

Anne's soccer activity consumes a lot of her leisure time both during the week and on weekends (17 percent of her time awake and not at school). Anne herself does not see this as a problem. On the contrary, she really enjoys the time spent and enjoys the sport so much that she plans to enroll in a secondary school with a soccer program. It is her hobby, she says, together with hanging out with her friends. A big part of why Anne enjoys organized soccer is that the soccer club is a place for meeting and socializing. Her teammates are also her friends and classmates and it is when she plays soccer that she meets them outside school. Thus, to Anne, playing at the soccer club is about doing and creating social time and space rather than time and a space for physical activity. The importance of the social dimension of institutionalized leisure is often ignored in the debate on children's leisure. It is also her parents' perception that Anne likes to go to the soccer club. Although at first they had to persuade her to start soccer for health reasons, they are happy to now see that her own driving force inspires her playing. Both parents are interested in Anne's soccer and like to go to her matches to cheer on the sidelines. Oskar describes himself as a leisure-club person who has always been engaged in some kind of team sport. He believes that playing a team sport is all about team spirit and being there for your team, so Anne's attendance at

practice and matches is therefore very important to him. He is willing to help her attend practice by ferrying her to and from the soccer club twice a week. Hilda thinks that Anne's soccer is very time-consuming and wonders if Anne would rather skip practice or a match now and then, then concludes that this is probably her own perception rather than her daughter's. Anne herself does not speak of being stressed by or tired of her soccer activity, unlike children in Lareau's study (2011). Having one leisure activity and not several seems to allow Anne enough time and space for recuperation (Tillberg 2002). The ways she creates such time and space, between school, homework, meals and soccer, is by watching TV and chatting with friends on the Internet at home.

Resisting Institutionalization

Although Hilda and Oskar are confident that Tom does not need an institutionalized leisure activity to be physically active and get fresh air, they would still like him to engage in such an activity. They have tried to get him involved in a variety of sports and are currently trying to persuade him to start playing organized soccer. This can be understood as socialization into middle-class practices and in this respect the family is typically middle-class (Lareau 2011; Karsten 2005; Tillberg 2002). So far, Tom has refused to take part in any organized leisure activities or after-school clubs. Resisting institutionalization outside school, he manages to retain quite a bit of autonomous time and space. Not attending an after-school club allows him, for example, to be the first in the family to arrive home in the afternoon, make his own snack and eat it while watching TV or playing a computer game. This he greatly values, in line with Jurczyk and Lange's (2007) discussion of the importance for children in mid-childhood of a degree of autonomy in determining, doing and creating their times and places as well as having time alone.

Soccer as an Important Family Time-Space Constraint

Looking at the family's time-space organization from a time-geographical perspective, it becomes clear that the members' paths on the weekend are bounded by Anne's soccer activity, which consumes a good deal of the family's common time as well as her parents' and her little brother's leisure while gathering the family at institutionalized leisure spaces. Anne's leisure activity is also an important authority constraint upon the family (Hägerstrand 1970; Tillberg 2002). Oskar drives her to practice twice during the work week and does not stay to watch but instead makes the 20-minute drive back and forth each time. Soccer practice also affects the way the family eats their meals. Oskar says that he often eats by himself, before, after or in-between his ferry runs. In order to have enough energy for practice, Anne has a large snack beforehand then eats dinner afterwards, either by herself or together with her father.

On the weekends there are usually soccer matches somewhere in the area that both parents and often Tom attend. Although Tom did not talk about this himself, his parents say that he does not always like to come along to the matches. Due to their length (they often take the whole day) he cannot stay home alone and it is not always possible to stay at a friend's house for the whole day. Sometimes Hilda stays home for Tom's sake. Oskar, however, does not, attending Anne's matches

whenever possible. This indicates that her soccer activity is primarily Oskar's parental responsibility.

"Soccer Parents"

Anne's soccer activity has grown to be an important part of her parents' social life as well. Hilda and Oskar like to go and watch the matches on weekends and to cheer Anne's team on from the sidelines. They do not often miss a match. Especially for Oskar this is an important part of parental identity. While Hilda was not very interested in watching soccer at the start, she is now very engaged in attending Anne's matches, both for the fun of seeing the team win and for socializing with other engaged parents. For both Hilda and Oskar the weekend matches have become social events as they have grown acquainted with a small group of parents who are as committed to their children's activity as themselves. Thus, Anne's soccer activity and the social network it has generated have become important parts of her parents' social life and a way of "doing parental time" and identity. However for Tom, who would rather stay home and play with his friends, Anne's soccer is a disadvantage. He misses out on social activities while those of his sister and his parents increase.

Adjusting Work Hours for Children's Activities

Tillberg (2002) has shown that parents adjust their work hours to children's leisure activities. Hilda and Oskar describe their family as one with "common" routines and members who like to be at home and in each other's company. They portray themselves as family-oriented parents and say they have adjusted their work hours and personal interests to family life. The way these parents "do family time" is to spend a lot of time at home during after-school hours. Hilda has adjusted her work hours and leisure time to family life. She works part-time in order to see to the children eating breakfast, packing bags and getting off to school, then arrives home again around four p.m. Oskar works full-time. Having flexible hours, however, he chooses to start work early in the morning, before everyone else in the family gets up, and comes home around 4:20 in the afternoon. He is then often the one who takes Anne to soccer practice, but this is not the explicit reason for the way he organizes his work hours. His main reason for starting and leaving work early is his preference for spending more time with other family members at home. He likes to start work early to be able to get home early, and then, being home, does not mind driving Anne back and forth to soccer practice. Oskar's time-space diary shows that he spends 71 percent of his time awake and not at work at home. Thus, while at first glance it appears that the parents' choices were based on logistical demands of family life, when we look more closely at the ways these parents organize their everyday time and spaces, we see that their choices were actually mostly made to obtain a home-oriented lifestyle and more time for the family to be together. According to Hilda, moving into town from the country has also contributed to more "family time" as well as more time with extended family and friends. Still, since Oskar often sits at the computer while home, sometimes for work and sometimes for pleasure, the spatial and temporal boundaries between work and family are not entirely clear.

Conclusions

Compact city policies and New Urbanism have in Sweden and other European countries resulted in the planning of urban neighborhoods without sufficient regard for the well-being of children and youth. In this article we have discussed results from a case study of how a middle-class family in a child-unfriendly inner-city neighborhood organizes time and space for outdoor play and institutionalized leisure. The ways children and parents within a family context "do" and "create" time and space for outdoor play and institutionalized leisure have not received enough attention in the literature. Our results show that parents and children have to adjust to certain conditions and time-spatial constraints in the domains of outdoor play, institutionalized leisure and family life, but that they also possess and can exercise agency regarding time and space within these domains.

The neighborhood in which the study family lives does not meet the criteria for a child-friendly environment in terms of outdoor play space. While the parents value outdoor play as physical activity for their children, this factor did not steer their choice of neighborhood. Their middle-class status allows them to reach beyond the neighborhood for physical activity and institutionalized leisure. As a result, their daughter Anne's soccer activity has become an important authority constraint for family life in time and space. It has also become central to the identities and social life of her parents and the ways they "do parental time," while Anne herself enjoys the social dimension of organized soccer most of all. For her the soccer club is a social time and space. For her younger brother Tom, however, spending weekend days at his sister's soccer matches reduces social time with his own friends, reflecting the effect of institutionalized leisure on siblings' weekly paths.

While Anne does not engage with the (for her) dull neighborhood, Tom recreates outdoor places into play spaces in a creative and physically intense manner. However, he also spends a lot of time indoors. The parents' construction of Tom as a physically very active outdoor child should be understood in relation to their daughter's limited independent play, her organized soccer activity and their own indoor and physically inactive everyday lives. In addition, although the parents are noticeably affected by the discourse of "concerted cultivation" (Lareau 2011) regarding institutionalized leisure (but not informal play) as an important part of children's general education, they justify Tom's disengagement by leaning on the discourse of physical health. So far Tom has been able to resist socialization into the middle-class practice of institutionalized leisure by being physically very active and creative while outdoors. By also refusing institutionalization in after-school clubs he simultaneously creates autonomous time for himself indoors.

It is noteworthy that this family's interest in their daughter's leisure activity has not led them to engage in a "culture of busyness" (Karsten 2005). Although Anne's soccer activity is the hub of the family's time-space organization, they manage to maintain a home-oriented lifestyle at a rather relaxed pace and with plenty of time for recuperation and socializing with family and friends. They do not talk in terms of "deadlines" and "wobble room" in the way Lareau's (2011) families did. This reflects the importance of understanding middle-class practices not as uniform but rather as

diverse, depending on family and cultural contexts. On the other hand, if and when Tom's parents persuade him to join the soccer club, this family's "family time" at home will increasingly be converted into "family time" at the soccer club.

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