

CONNECTED COURTYARDS FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY, MOBILITY AND BELONGING



INVITING ENTRANCES

Enclosed courtyards can easily become separated and disconnected from each other and surrounding public spaces. To encourage children and adults alike to explore the district, entrances to courtyards and other such transitional places need to be inviting.

We propose the use of nature-themed statue art and murals to make gateways feel like entrances to wondrous places on an adventure. Good lighting and care put into their design will ensure that these entrances always feel safe.

| Statues | Murals | Mosaics | Lights | Stories |



CONNECTING COURTYARDS

A district full of separated and tightly defined play areas creates fortresses of houses that build a sense of unwelcomeness. Creating clear and safe pathways through the housing form enables people to feel more at ease in their own neighbourhood without worrying whether they're using a path they're not supposed to.

We propose marking children's school routes with a pavement style and colour of their own, similar in idea to some existing bike paths. Districts across Teivo-Mäkkylä can also incorporate their own general design principles for how their pavements, border stones and lighting fixtures for example should look.

| Paving colour and texture | Streetlights and Furniture |

Teivo-Mäkkylä has a vision of cohesive districts, each with its own distinct identity to build a sense of belonging. The use of similar materials, shapes, and colours creates communities larger than just singular courtyards within the city.

However, closed-off and clinically standardised courtyard design commonly used in urban planning, risks courtyards becoming inward-facing fortresses splintering the cityscape and hurting especially children's movement and play.

To bring the downtown of Teivo-Mäkkylä alive and together, we propose three ways of connecting housing blocks in the district with special focus on child-friendliness through urban art, storytelling and nature.

PLAY AREAS

Courtyard playgrounds have a standardised mold: swings, a sandbox, swinging animals, and maybe a carousel or some other attraction. This model cuts costs through mass-production but also risks making playgrounds dull and uninviting.

Natural playgrounds involve natural elements in their design to make courtyards both more interesting environments for children and more biodiverse. Centering playgrounds around natural features offers more opportunities for diverse types of play, especially ones involving social connections and imaginative play. Children themselves prefer their play settings to have high natural value!

Common elements of natural play areas are logs, which also serve natural functions by harbouring small critter and plant life, water features, trees for climbing and wildlife, as well as a comprehensive natural surface cover. Manufactured play elements are still important, as they help children develop fine motor skills and provide a well-rounded and stimulating environment, but they work best in conjunction with natural areas.

