CITY AND CHILDREN STUDIES

MASTER PROGRAM

(NON-THESIS, ENGLISH)

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This interdisciplinary program reviews the relationship of the child and the care givers to the urban environment in the light of psychological, social, design and public administrative aspects. In spite of serious need, there is no other education program in this field in Turkey. In fact, it can be said that the programs are quite limited throughout the world. Therefore, it is assumed that City and Children Studies Master’s Degree Program has a leading position in an urgent matter.

Urban95 is an initiative started by the Bernard van Leer Foundation to create permanent changes in the environment and opportunities which shape the very important first five years in the lives of children. Urban95 was developed on the assumption that a neighborhood which functioned well for its women, babies and children would bring economic development and eventually result in strong communities.

More than half of the global population lives in cities. By 2050, this figure is expected to be 70%. With the rich possibilities of education they offer, cities may be wonderful places to grow up in. However, urban environment can also pose certain difficulties for families with small children:

\* Due to unsafe streets and limited public transport, reaching child care units, doctors, shopping areas, or even taking a walk can become a grueling struggle,

\* Air pollution affects babies and small children more than it does healthy adults,

\* As urban populations grow, parents may become separated from extended family members and find it difficult to make friends who could support them by giving help through advice or child care, or simply by listening to them.

Studies show that the effects of childhood experiences from the first years continue for a lifetime. Cities which offer small children a chance to make a good start in life, help to shape new generations of diligent achievers and good citizens.

Urban growth –in population and capital– defines Istanbul’s priorities and demands. Although 28.7% of Turkey’s population consists of children, their effect on urban design is debatable. Similarly, design education has also overlooked children.

The aim of the non-thesis master program is to develop the master students’ knowledge in this context. The focus of the program will be on presenting the theoretical and critical background of child-oriented design in an urban backdrop. Different subjects will be pursued such as developmental psychology, parental guidance and urban design theory, and the students will be given the chance to have extensive discussions with experts in their fields. City and Children Studies Master Program will be conducted in collaboration with the ongoing Communication Studies, Psychology, Political Science and Public Administration and Design master’s degree programs. This cooperation will be carried out in the regular curriculum as well as in joint projects.

The Urban95 partnership in Istanbul (Istanbul95), which has the aim of strengthening the capacities of the Istanbul county municipalities in conjunction with Kadir Has and Boğaziçi universities, is amongst the present and future partners of this program. Another target of the program is to support the education of public personnel working on urban space by awarding scholarships to some of master students.