UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

PhD in Reggio Childhood Studies

CYCLE XXXVI

Constrained Childhood: Parental Concerns and Children's Limited Freedom

A comparison between Italy and France

Candidate: Agathe GILLET

Tutor: Prof. Lia Karsten, University of Amsterdam
Course coordinator: Prof. Carla Bagnoli

Referees: Prof. Sonia Lehman-Frish, Paris X - Nanterre University
Prof. Maria Teresa Tagliaventi, Bologna University

M-PED/04 - Pedagogia sperimentale

October 2024

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to Fondazione Reggio Reggio for providing me with the opportunity to research topics that are truly close to my heart.

To Professor Karsten, it has been a rewarding challenge to work with someone so exacting. I must admit it was not always easy, but I sincerely thank her for pushing me to be more rigorous, more precise, and for her human qualities.

To Professor Jean-Yves Authier, for his warm welcome in Lyon, his invaluable feedback, and reading recommendations.

To Professor Federico Montanari, for believing in my abilities and encouraging me to pursue a doctorate.

To Cinnica, which we created and which inspired the idea for this research.

To all the parents, teachers and kids who accepted to collaborate to this perfect; a special thanks to Chiara Affronte who helped me find a school in Bologna.

To my sister Maud, for her hospitality in Lyon, without which this work would have certainly been much more challenging to envision and organize.

To my sister Marion, for her indispensable Excel hotline support.

To my PhD colleagues, especially Faustino Rizzo and the "A maggio vedremo..." group, with whom exchanges have always been enriching, and for the mutual support we have provided each other.

To the Biblioteca delle Donne in Bologna, for its relative calm and the opportunity for a cup of tea always at hand; I am surely considered a fixture there by now.

To Claudia Carini and the “ladre”, for their daily support and for being people to whom I could vent all my difficulties.

To Bar Maurizio, a beacon of light on the street and an incomparable source of human warmth.

Dedication,

To my parents, who raised us without fear of the outdoors.
(à mes parents, qui nous ont élevé sans la peur du dehors)

To my children, Victor and Ulysse, without whom this research simply would not have existed.
(à mes enfants, sans qui cette recherche n'aurait tout simplement pas existé)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER 1

GENERALE INTRODUCTION

If you were to ask the adult audience in a room who among them used to walk to primary school alone, you would likely see a large number of hands raised by participants over the age of 40. Repeat the test with children today, and you'll find only a minority of small arms raised. The same goes for outdoor play. If you ask someone with graying hair where they used to play as a child, the answer is often the same: "in the street." As far as my interest in children's mobility is concerned, it was born of a simple observation: why do we see so few children walking around the city? It is only at school leaving time that one can meet a few rare specimens of little humans, inevitably accompanied by an adult, the only children walking alone being those already of secondary school age. Having had two children of my own in Bologna, where we live, I could see how different their childhood was from mine in this respect. Born in 1978, I am not part of the post-war generation that had the chance to experience the "*golden era of unstructured play*" described by Chudacoff, but I am certainly one of the last generations to have enjoyed a certain degree of freedom of movement (Derbyshire, 2007; Wooley, 2015).

Not only in my private observations, but also in numerous studies published in the last thirty years, the possibility for children to enjoy a certain degree of independent mobility allowing them to move without constraints in public space has undergone a profound and ever-increasing decline in most industrialized countries (O'Brien, 2003; Karsten, 2005; Tonucci, 2014). Several factors are involved in explaining this increasingly significant loss of children's autonomy: physical factors related to urban planning choices that give ever-greater priority to automobile traffic

(Ward, 1978; Jacobs, 1961/1992), to the disappearance of natural play spaces such as sidewalks and courtyards (Borgogni, 2020). One of the consequences has been the creation of spaces specifically designed for children that are often located far from their homes and where they cannot go unaccompanied, inducing a form of segregation of childhood (Zeiher, 2002; Tonucci, 2014).

Subsequently, social factors come into play: the weakening of the community bond (Karsten, 2006), new parental educational choices (Furedi, 1998; Franklin, 2009), social pressure for increasingly ubiquitous control of children (Forni, 2002; Alparone, 2012), and a leisure schedule that is completely organized and controlled by adults (Valentine, 1997; O'Brien, 2003; Karsten, 2005). Some countries have even gone so far as to put in place legal provisions to prohibit autonomy, as is the case in Italy, which prohibits children from going home alone after school, a unique provision in Europe (Borgogni, 2020).

But, more precisely, what does children's independent mobility mean? A definition could be: "*the freedom of children to travel around their neighborhood or city without adult supervision*" (Tranter and Whitelegg, 1994), or as stated by Camstra (1997) it is "*children being able to play outdoors, go to school, visit friends, go to clubs or associations, and go shopping all by themselves*".

The question of children's autonomy has been the focus of much research in recent decades, and it is a very negative assessment of its recent evolution caused by densification, high-rise, cars. It is now a proven fact that compared to previous generations, children today have a much more limited range of action (Hart, 1979; Lynch 1984; Wooley, 2015; Derbyshire, 2007), living increasingly under the strict supervision of adults accompanying them in spaces specifically designed for them (Zeiher, 2002). In the industrialized countries, we have assisted in the progressive exclusion of children from the urban spaces (Ward, 1978; Jacob, 1961; Tonucci, 2014; Ariès, 1993). For Ariès (1993) this little and disobedient group who doesn't consume in the privatized spaces has completely disappeared. Children are now "under arrest" (Ward, 1978) and it brings to a growth impoverished by the absence of essential environmental experiences.

As parental or adult control in general has become omnipresent (Alparone, 2012), for many children the conquest of autonomy comes at an increasingly advanced age and it does not allow them to experience the city in a playful and enriching way (Borgogni, 2020). The public space that used to be a space for all has been gradually transformed into a multitude of monofunctional and unidirectional spaces and for many children, their free time has been redefined and almost entirely occupied by organized activities.

Why did children disappear from the public space without any further outcry? It's obvious to everyone that the children who inhabit our cities no longer play in the streets. Where have they gone? Are we witnessing a form of sequestration of childhood, in indoor spaces and under surveillance, legitimized by society as a whole since it is done in the name of their protection? What societal changes have led to

such a result and what has been the effect of this restriction of children's everyday freedom of movement? Does parental upbringing play a role in this evolution?

Studies on the relationship between parenting styles and autonomy acquisition are scarce, which is why one of the objectives of this research will be to seek to understand the possible link between these two concepts.

How can we define the recent evolution of parenting? The subject is vast and many factors determine this evolution: geographical, social, and economic factors. Over the last fifty years, families have had to adapt to a new lifestyle which, mainly in urban areas, has changed their educational assumptions (Furedi, 1998). The explosion of the family circle and the reorganization of cities around the car have considerably changed parents' perception of their environment and the confidence they may have had in it has been strongly affected (Forni, 2002). For many, their neighborhood is no longer a safe place to let their children come and go freely (Alparone, 2012). Fear of the many dangers and the fear of looking like an irresponsible parent prevail over the children's need for autonomy (Rissotto, 2006).

Parenting is not, however, constituted as a uniform block where all parents follow the same path and where values and priorities are identical everywhere. On the contrary, in terms of children's ability to move freely in public spaces great disparities emerge between countries in parenting and it is not always clear why in some countries certain factors are predominant.

But, while parenting has been a subject of study for several decades in Anglo-Saxon countries, the very notion of *parentalité* as a subject of study only emerged very recently in France (Martin, 2017) just as the term *genitorialità* only appeared late in Italy. Because of its late emergence, studies concerning parenting in general are still very few in France and Italy, the mobility of young children (before 12 years old) is poorly known (Huguenin-Richard, 2010) and, as in the rest of the world, it is even more difficult to find any that take into consideration the link between parenting style and CIM (Karsten, 2005).

Therefore, another question I intend to explore in this dissertation is: to what extent do these developments in children's everyday lives vary across different locations?

Why a comparison between France and Italy? The first explanation lies in my own bi-nationality, being French myself and living in Italy for more than 20 years, and my knowledge of both languages and the social, cultural and political dimensions of both countries, I feel that I am able to understand and correctly translate the subtleties of the language and the unspoken that make up the systems of thought and the varied social realities they cover. The second reason is the nearly absence of international comparative research in childhood studies, based on the small number of international comparative studies that I will thus participate in enriching; in Italy, the great disparity between the cities of the north and the south of the country often encourages researchers to compare them with each other but, as a result, to remain within the national framework. The last reason is related to the beneficial

effects that international comparison produces: the decentring of the researcher in relation to his or her research object, seeking to escape ethnocentrism (Pinson, 2019), in short, comparing in order to better understand.

Because France and Italy are geographically and culturally very close and as cross-national comparative studies on the subject are very few (Kytta, 1997), analyzing two groups of children in a french and an italian cities is shedding light on the existence of specific characteristics related to autonomous frequentation of urban space that would be present in all children. The purpose of this research is therefore to contribute to the increase in cross-national studies by seeking to learn more about the factors that influence parents' choices about CIM on both sides of the Alps. Are there significant differences? What are the nature of these differences?

Finally, once the specifics of children's independent mobility in these two French and Italian neighborhoods have been highlighted, the last question I wanted to address concerns the potential relationship between CIM and their ability to interact with their environment.

For millions of children, the contours of their everyday life and experience are (in part) shaped by city environments (Christensen, 2003). However, even if it is estimated by the UN 60% of the world’s children will live in cities by the year 2025, whilst attention is often focused on the different childhood experiences of the poor and the rich, it is also important that attention is paid to what we must, for want of a better term, call “ordinary childhoods”. This involves moving beyond ideas of the city as a problem or children as a problem, highlighting how such ordinary city childhoods are formed, lived and experienced (Authier, 2007; Caroll et al., 2015). Apart from concrete experiences on the benefits of play, in terms of other forms of learning, such as social or cognitive benefits, these are mainly theoretical hypotheses that have been little confirmed by field studies.

“Emplaced knowledge” is the expression Christensen (2003) uses to explain how children experience a place and how they construct a sense of place. It is not only about spatial knowledge but also about social and personal content. As stated Chawla (1992), relations can also be with other-than-human beings, in fact, with places the children create a real relationship (Cele, 2006; Bodenhorn et al., 2022) and this place attachment is part of how children construct their identity (Christensen, 2003; Malone, 2006; Authier, 2007). Seek to understand what they like but also what they don't like because it is part of emplaced knowledge, both kinds of cognitions serve to define who the person is (Proshansky et al., 1987).

Studying the link between the development of emplaced knowledge and the CIM means recognizing that "*character and habits are formed under the influence of the environment*" (Grafmeyer, 2019), that the space occupied or traveled through "*is an integral part of social life likely to exert effects on mental structures and individual behaviors*" (Grafmeyer, 1994). This is what Authier (2007) calls the "effects of the neighborhood": everyday spaces influence the ways in which individuals are, act and see. The children are in the neighborhood, and the neighborhood is in the children.

Knowledge of the neighborhood is not always expressed in verbal language, but rather through physical "knowing how to do". (Rasmussen, 2004).

After presenting the fields of investigation and the chosen methodology, the first part will illustrate what children's independent mobility look like in terms of time and space by interpreting the diaries they themselves completed and analysing their utilization of public space.

The second part of this thesis will be to try to provide clarifications on the role of parental style on CIM and if there are any significant cultural differences between France and Italy. For this purpose, interviews with parents in both countries, as well as interviews with educational staff in the schools from which the selected groups of children came and with municipal administrative staff in each city, will enrich this table dedicated to the evolution of parenthood in these two different contexts and to the comparison of different parenting styles and their effects on CIM.

The last part will be devoted to the effects of CIM on children's emplaced knowledge. The technique used here is walking interviews, which shed essential light on the real skills that children demonstrate when they move freely in their neighbourhood. They are also an opportunity to assess their own relationship to autonomy and to the rules set by their parents while providing their vision of the world around them.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Commencing with an investigation into the concept of Children's Independent Mobility (CIM), this section addresses its definition, significance, evolution over recent decades, and its current status in France and Italy. Following this exploration, the historical progression of parenting ideals in both countries will be examined to elucidate the factors that may influence parents' decisions regarding CIM. Finally, an examination of emplaced knowledge, intricately linked to parenting styles and CIM, will be conducted.

2.1 The concept of children's independent mobility

As explained in the introduction, it is now an established fact that Children's Independent Mobility (CIM) has been in serious decline in industrialised countries for about 30 years (Derbyshire, 2007) and although this has been noted in many studies, the first being Hillman's study in the UK from 1970 to 1990, it is clear that in some countries these have had little impact on education professionals, policy makers and parents.

This is the case in France and Italy, where the CIM is far from being an educational priority, given the lack of research by French or Italian authors on the independent mobility of children. What we know is largely based on Anglo-Saxon or Nordic studies, but even here the mobility of young children (before 12 years old) is poorly known (Huguenin-Richard, 2010). The idea that a delay of a few years does not seem to have major consequences on children's learning persists. However, even if they are still few in number, the hypotheses that demonstrate the contrary are accumulating: the physical or psychological consequences of such a decline are worrying: the explosion of cases of childhood obesity (Prezza, 2009; Borgogni, 2020) as well as the psychological damage to children's short or long-term development are now proven facts (Rissotto, 2006; Prezza et al. 2001; Gray, 2011; Alparone, 2012; Senda, 2015).

2.1.1 Children's use of the street and a new social construction of childhood

It is important to understand what childhood is today and how parents deal with its changing nature. For Hugh Cunningham, in *The Invention of Childhood* (2006): "*Children in the past have been assumed to have capabilities that we now rarely think they have… So fixated are we on giving our children a long and happy childhood that we downplay their abilities and their resilience*." This definition of childhood appears highly relevant within the context of CIM and its recent evolution, as will be explored throughout this research.

First of all, it should be made clear that the mobility we are talking about here is that of children in industrialised countries. Indeed, there is an abysmal difference between children using the streets and street children as they exist in developing countries. However, it is interesting to note how the use street children make of the street differs from what is normal, usual and acceptable: instead of using the street as a channel through which one circulates in order to get from one point to another, they stay on the street to work, eat, sleep and roam about. In industrialised countries, it has become unacceptable not only to see children eating, sleeping or working on the street, but it is also less and less tolerated to see them playing or simply circulating independently. Thus, using the innocence of childhood to protect them from the "adult world" has resulted in the outright segregation of childhood, depriving them of a range of experiences that would normally take place on the streets (Glauser, 2015).

To comprehend the evolution of spatial boundaries for children in Western societies, it is imperative to revisit the discourses that transpired between 1780 and 1840 in industrializing nations like England and France. During this period, a novel conceptualization of childhood emerged. By its conclusion, the paradigm had shifted away from viewing the wage-earning child as the norm, instead recognizing childhood as a distinct phase necessitating protection and cultivation through formal schooling. This resulted in the institutionalized segregation of children from broader society, cementing their separate identity, with their primary domain now being the classroom (Hendrick, 2015). Building upon this notion, scholars such as Matthews, Sibley, and Valentine have proposed that urban streets are considered an extension of adult private space, rendering children's presence therein as incongruous and disruptive to social order (Matthews, 2002; Matthews et al., 2000; Sibley, 1995). Consequently, the concern surrounding street children arises not solely from their potential vulnerability, but also due to their perceived disruption of societal tranquility, stability, and normativity (Glauser, 2015).

However, children did not disappear overnight from urban space in the industrialised countries, on the contrary, the post-war period is even defined by Chudacoff as "*the golden age of unstructured play*"; by unstructured play we mean

free play, not controlled by rules created by adults. Indeed, since children's work had become illegal and their parents were not yet subject to the dictates of "good parenting", they could enjoy a freedom in the organisation of their free time that later generations would envy! The demographic pressure was not yet so great that they could still find unused space in the city and use it to their advantage. It was also the time of the invention of the adventure/junk playground where inventiveness reigned supreme.

Yet, the trend of increased adult control over extracurricular activities and the subsequent decline in free play has been observed over recent decades, with noticeable changes becoming more prominent starting from the latter half of the 20th century, becoming more prominent from the 1970s onwards (Gill, 2007; Gray, 2011). Leisure is institutionalised, with many parents seeing it as essential for the proper development of a child's physical and cognitive abilities and free play seen as a waste of time. At the same time, the increase in car traffic and the fear of abuse and aggression mean that parents see no alternative but to fill their children's schedules with all kinds of activities and to accompany them so that they can also control their movements (Tillberg, 2002). It should be noted that the emergence of the idea of children's specific rights (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1991) coincides with the erosion of this freedom that children have to play with each other (James e Prout, 2015).

The conquest of public space by children is however an essential stage in the evolution of the child and as Matthews (2002) explains, the street constitutes the liminal setting or a site of passage, a place which both makes possible and signifies a means of transition through which some young people move away from the restrictions of their childhood roots towards the independence of adulthood. With "The child in the city", published in 1978, Colin Ward has perhaps most clearly demonstrated what the child's place in the city should be and how it should be used. According to him, the child should be at the center of urban planning and not relegated to the margins in spaces designed especially for him: "*I don't want a city of children. I want a city where children live the same way I live*."

2.1.2 Evolution of CIM

The twentieth century is said to be "the century of the child" (James e Prout, 2015). Childhood's central role in legal, welfare, medical, and educational institutions, along with extensive academic research in psychology and medicine, followed by the popularization of findings through magazine articles and television programs, has led to the characterization of contemporary societies as "child-centered" (James e Prout, 2015).The very idea of their suffering has become unbearable, which is why society seeks to organize a life where risk has no place

and where the law increasingly engages the responsibility of the adults around them (parents, teachers, doctors, sports instructors etc.) (Segalen, 2010), even if the sacralisation of childhood led to its segregation.

In industrialized countries the decline of children's independent mobility has been replaced by adult controlled institutional activities (Valentine, 1997; O'Brien, 2003). As a result, children's play, which once took place in the street, is now increasingly being spatially contained within child segregated private spaces. (Valentine, 1997). Private home space, traditionally the domain of adults, has become a child space and outdoor activities have invaded the home space (Karsten, 2005). Even the courtyard which used to be the place most used by children for play and permitted the acquisition of greater autonomy (Prezza et al., 2001) as a first step before the conquest of small errands in the neighborhoods have also been lost as less than 40% of the italian kids now can experiment with the courtyard (Borgogni, 2020).

It has become difficult for parents to accept any risk for their children that this autonomy is well and truly disappearing, as revealed by the first indicator of children's autonomy, which is the journey to school. In England, Hillman's famous study, *One false move* (1990) has shown that between 1971 and 1990 there was a sharp decline in children's independent mobility: in 1971, 80% of seven and eight-year-old English children surveyed were allowed to go to school without adult supervision by 1990, the figure had fallen to 9%. In Italy, in 2002, the percentage of primary school children who traveled home independently was 11%, whereas in 2010, it dropped to 7% (Renzi, 2014) compared to 40% in France and 76% in Germany (WHO Europe, 2018).

At the end of the 1990s, attempts were made to remedy this situation (Tonucci, 2005) but it must be noted that since the early 2000s nothing structured has emerged (Borgogni, 2017). After the journey to school, movement around the neighbourhood and unsupervised outdoor play are also indicative of the autonomy granted to children. In Italy, it is difficult to meet an elementary school child without an attendant, but as Prezza (2007) demonstrates, also an increasing number of children never play outside even under adult supervision. Rules prohibiting play in the courtyards of buildings, a crucial element for learning autonomy according to Monica Vercesi (2008), amplify this situation where the city has gradually become "forbidden" for minors (Forni, 2002).

In France, the autonomy of children aged 6 to 11 remains very low in public space (Legendre, 2005) and Thierry Paquot (2015) believes that children are "the forgotten ones in the manufacture of territories". In Italy, Elisabetta Forni speaks of the "structural violence of the city" which, in the name of security, has led to the segregation of childhood, or, as Ward (1978) aptly puts it, "children are under arrest." According to Coulomb (1993), it is the notion of creating car-free or secluded zones away from urban activities to allow children to "roam freely" that has led to this outcome. However, the author argues that children do not seek this kind of freedom;

what they enjoy is being at the heart of urban life, an idea also echoed by Jane Jacobs several decades earlier.

It's important to note that the gradual disappearance of children from urban spaces has significant consequences, negatively affecting children's cognitive development (Rissotto, 2006), their social development (Prezza et al., 2001), their sense of community and loneliness (Prezza & Pacilli, 2007), and their physical health because of the related decrease in exercise (Prezza et al., 2009). And this new trend has long-term consequences. A recent study demonstrated that adolescents who felt lonelier and who were more fearful about going out at night and had weaker ties to their community had been less autonomous during early childhood (Prezza and Pacilli 2007; Alparone, 2012).
Moreover, the lack of opportunities for children to do things away from parental/adult control in these crucial years, between the ages of five and eleven, is likely to have adverse effects upon children's social and emotional development as well as their quality of life in the here and now (O'Brien, 2003). The Russian developmental psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1967/2013), argued eloquently that a major value of children's play lies in the practice of self-control and serves to train young mammals in how to deal with the unexpected. Reduced ability to regulate emotions stemming from play deprivation, may well contribute to the high rates of psychopathology among young people today (Gray, 2011; Senda, 2015).

In this context, where the goal is the absence of risk, how is it possible to promote children's independent mobility? In France as in Italy, as Clément Rivière (2014) points out in the comparison he makes between families in Paris and Milan, the fears that influence decisions concerning the CIM are substantially identical: fear of traffic and fear of strangers are in first place. In both countries, the child's travel always has a purpose, he or she should not "hang around" (Depeau, 2013), independent mobility is therefore very frequently, if not exclusively, linked to the social and family network. This is part of the new social norm of marginalising those who continue to stay in public spaces (Valentine, 1996).

Similarities therefore exist, however, initiatives such as the pedestrian permit in Paris (Rivière, 2014) aimed at encouraging parents to grant greater CIM and, conversely, the existence of laws aimed at legitimizing parents' fears about children's inability to get around certainly have their importance in the way parents view public space. As with French parents, having several children also makes it more difficult to accompany each of them, a practical constraint that tends to favor the autonomous mobility of older children (Rivière, 2014) whereas, one of the consequences of the denatality in Italy is that today "the kid is alone" (Tonucci, 2005), without intermediate models and subject to too much attention from parents and grandparents, it is difficult for him to conquer his autonomy.

Finally, a notable aspect that warrants attention is the discrepancy in CIM concerning gender. Numerous studies have demonstrated that boys are afforded a broader scope of independent mobility compared to girls (Hart, 1979; Valentine &

McKendrick, 1997; Karsten, 2003), primarily due to heightened parental apprehension regarding potential risks of aggression when it comes to girls. Is this disparity still evident during the preadolescent age, or do boys and girls receive comparable treatment? Are there discernible differences between France and Italy in this regard? These are additional aspects that this study aims to explore in depth.

2.2 The social construction and evolution of the concept of parenting

A we have seen before, many reasons can explain the actual lack of children's possibilities to play outdoor independently. But while the causes of this decline related to the urban context have been extensively studied in many studies (O'Brien, 2003; Karsten, 2005; Tonucci, 2014; Ward, 1978; Jacobs, 1961/1992), what is less clear is the extent to which parenting practices influence this independent mobility.

Parents today recognize the importance of granting children autonomy and empowerment, yet contemporary parenting is characterized by the delicate balancing act between fostering independence and ensuring protection. This balancing act entails navigating the tension between allowing children the freedom to explore and develop autonomously, while also safeguarding their well-being within a structured environment (Franklin, 2009). In addition, as pointed out in Valentine and McKendrick's research (1997), it can be not so much the presence, or not, of adequate spaces in the vicinity that affects children's ability to play outside, but rather parental concerns about children's safety. What has happened is that recent decades have witnessed a growth in the idea that a good parent is one who gives greater importance to the protection, rather than to the independence, of his/her child (Rissotto, 2006) as a "helicopter" or a "curling" parent (Segalen, 2010).

Moreover, Valentine (1997) found out that "middle class" mothers experienced pressure and guilt from each other to impose strict restrictions on their children's play and to chaperone their children to and from social activities. In contrast, mothers from "working class" neighbourhoods argued that they encounter peer group pressure to grant their children relative independence. At the end, "middle class" children who are usually perceived to have the better play opportunities, it is the children from lone parent households whose play is more independent and 'public'-focused (Valentine, 1997). Indeed, some parents hesitate to leave their children outside alone because they are concerned that they might be judged as incompetent caregivers and that the child could be perceived to be an abandoned child or a "street child" (Depeau, 2001)

In Italy, most Italian primary schools cannot let children free at the end of the school unless an adult is waiting for them, good parents are expected to accompany their children to school and – implicitly – to overprotect them (Alparone, 2012; Borgogni, 2020). It should be emphasized that it is not clear from studies whether, for

parents, the lack of autonomy of their children represents a real problem or whether it is more of an accepted reality that forces them simply to organize their schedule according to these activities that they now consider indispensable to their child's development.

Parenting practices are also often the result of unconscious or unthought-out ideas directly linked to the parenting style to which they are attached, so it is appropriate first to define more precisely the different types of parenting style and its French and Italian particularities.

2.2.1 From the concept of family to the concept of parenting

Parenting is not constituted as a uniform block where all parents follow the same path and where values and priorities are identical everywhere. On the contrary, in terms of children's independent mobility in public spaces great disparities emerge between countries in parenting and it is not always clear why in some countries certain factors are predominant. Why, for example, is the risk factor perceived differently in Sweden (Cele, 2006) than in England? As mentioned in the introduction, the very notion of *parentalité* as a subject of study only emerged very recently in France (Martin et al., 2017) just as the term *genitorialità* only appeared late in Italy. In France, it was in the 1990s that the term became commonplace in family and social policies, which led to the introduction of measures to support parenthood[1]. Because of its late emergence, studies concerning parenting in general are still very few in France and Italy.

However, it is important to note that, as De Singly (2017) argues, the emergence of the term “parenting” is intimately linked to the evolution of the contemporary family, so it is important to understand how the latter has evolved in recent decades.

In the past, ties were derived from things and not from people, as Durkheim explained as early as 1892. To survive as a family it was above all a question of maintaining domestic goods, and all personal considerations seemed secondary to these[2]. The contemporary family has become “relational” (De Singly, 2017), with a greater appreciation of being together, with family members generally paying attention to the quality of their relationships. What De Singly also emphasises is that the modern family has gradually been defined as a “private” space, gradually separating itself from the public space, and is “individualistic”: each of its members

[1] Circulars of 9 March 1999 on networks for listening to, supporting and accompanying parents, and of 30 March 2001 on their development, Ministry of Employment and Solidarity

[2] La famille conjugale, 1892 lecture, Revue philosophique, 1921

acquires greater importance, thus increasing the weight of the affective in family relationships. Thus, as Ariès (1993) asserts, the place of the child has changed, the fall in infant mortality and contraception allow parents to satisfy this need to personalise their relationship with their child(ren). The personality of each member of the family asserts itself and it is the relationships between the parents, the parents and the children, that keep the family spirit alive.

However, it is this rise of individualism that is often criticised. In France, Louis Roussel (2001), for example, actually speaks of an “adultocentrism” resulting from the cultural revolution of May 1968. According to him, men and women have deliberately chosen to privilege their own fulfillment at the expense of the family and the child. In particular women, who would henceforth refuse the obligation of devotion to the well-being of others (husband and children) with the consequence of a declining birth rate. Moreover, the increase in the number of divorces weakens the marital bond, but what about the parental bond? In France, media often talk of families resigning from their responsibilities as parents, but F. de Singly (2010) refutes this thesis of the so-called selfishness of adults, as the many examples proving the great concern and ever greater investment on the part of parents in their children show the opposite; the irrepressible rise of the style of parenting known as "intensive parenting", to which I will return in more detail later, also demonstrates this. For him, there is no more adult-king than child-king in the contemporary family. Indeed, parenthood emerges as a contemporary concern, intertwined with a sense of disconnection from traditional family models and their associated networks (Latchoumanin et al., 2007).

Yet, if the contemporary family can withdraw into itself, it is at the same time subject to the control of the State which, in the name of the child's interest, has the right, and the duty, to interfere in the private sphere. Health and educational concerns legitimise this right to monitor the conduct of parents. In France the creation in 2002 of a high independent authority, "Le Défenseur des enfants" (attached since 2011 to the "Défenseur des droits"), allows any child to denounce directly to a representative of the State what he or she considers to be ill-treatment by his or her parents. Thus, the modern family has only a relative autonomy, the constraints on it formerly resulting from "interference" by the lineage or the community, are today imposed by the State. The modern family is under close surveillance. In industrialised countries, the state wants to prevent all the dangers that threaten the child, so advices are given for everything that used to be a private matter: from the contents of baby food, to the number of hours that should be spent outdoors or in front of a screen, to the hours that should be spent sleeping, to the way in which the child is put to bed, transported, spoken to... Never has the public gaze been so present, which, in the name of its protection, controls the day-to-day life of the child. (Segalen, 2010).

Furthermore, parents are not only expected to adhere to these rules established by the state, but if they genuinely seek their child's well-being, they must also cultivate effective parenting skills. To assist them in acquiring these new skills, there are now various "experts" available. The legitimacy of the latter "*is based to a large extent on this questioning of the work of parents*" (Martin, 2003, p.43). For, as Françoise Dolto said: "*One is not born a parent, one becomes one*". This implies a duty to train through books, magazines or even coaching designed to help parents in their educational task and feeding the idea that parents can no longer be satisfied with knowledge passed on by their own parents, but rather acquire new knowledge that is renewed in an almost continuous flow. As Furedi (2002) explains, parents are bombarded with advice because they are now labeled incompetent, and are the problem in 97% of the 1025 parenting articles published in the United States (Furedi, 2002, p.17). "*Traditionally, good parenting was linked to nurturing, stimulating and socializing children. Today, it is associated with monitoring their activities*" (Furedi, 2002, p.5). It is now considered that a child should never be left alone and should instead always be within sight of his parents. "*Today, allowing a child to play outside on his own is seen as an act of neglect*" (Furedi, 2002, p.5). And parents are not simply 'advised' to supervise their children, they are 'required' to do so if they do not want to incur legal sanctions. Parents, educators and legislators are so preoccupied with what could go wrong that they forget what children could learn if they had access to the world of experience that is now being denied them. Today, it seems that the more you chaperone your children, the better parent you will be. As the philosopher Alain Renaut says: "*the only solution left to parents is basically to have talent, to be "good parents"* (2001, p.200).

Incompetent or outdated? As Segalen (2010, p. 45) perfectly sums up: "*within a century, we have gone from cruel parents, insensitive to their children's pain, even going so far as to enslave them, to parents whose authority makes them incapable of instilling rules of conduct in their offspring*." In fact, what has really changed is that the child now knows that he or she is a precious asset to his or her parents. And like everything else that is precious, it must be protected. But how to guarantee this protection and at the same time teach autonomy to the child? This is a question that is far from being resolved, as even the experts are confused. In reality, the balance is extremely difficult to find and whatever they do, parents' decisions on autonomy can be criticised.

Thus, without a clear benchmark, each family tries to invent its own rules, seeking to reconcile security, academic success, personal development and autonomy. The stakes are high, especially since today's parents do not wish to reproduce their parents' style, which is considered too authoritarian, and now emphasise listening and autonomy as recommended by psychology and medicine (Lemieux, 1996). As advocated by Françoise Dolto, a French pediatrician and psychoanalyst who contributed most to the dissemination of these norms in France in the 1970s, it is no longer the rule or discipline that must be respected but the child

and his or her nature. An individual's conduct is no longer dictated by morality, religious or secular, but a more psychological norm has been established. Here, there is no commandment; its complexity lies in the avoidance of extremes: the “ni-ni” (neither-nor) principle (De Singly, 2010). The child must be loved, neither too much nor too little, and the autonomy left to him must also be calculated: too much autonomy would betray too much indifference, not enough castrating love. This is a time for negotiation: parents negotiate what is negotiable, such as outings, and impose what is not, such as school (De Singly, 2003).

In this context, where does autonomy of movement fit in? Is it part of the negotiable values or is it considered as non-negotiable in the name of the new security norms? These new parenting practices depend largely on the socio-cultural context in which they are integrated, so it is important to describe these different contexts in order to understand them.

2.2.2 Be a parent in France versus be a parent in Italy

Public policies directed at the family will also have a direct influence on the way in which parents approach their role as parents. Over the years, France and Italy have developed very different family policies and the main consequence of which is a birth rate that is for France one of the highest in Europe and that has, on the other hand, made Italy one of the "oldest countries in the world" (Istat, 2018).

In France, in the 1970s, a new family model was born, influenced by psychoanalysts such as Françoise Dolto and the feminist movement of the 1970s, as women refused more and more the “domestic prison”. It was not a question of abandoning the idea of motherhood but of setting up a new model of family more "democratic" and "anti-authoritarian" where the baby is also "a person" (Martino, 1985). What is put forward is the autonomy of the person and his or her capacity for self-determination (Neyrand, 1995). The works of Françoise Dolto (1978), which are at the origin of the creation of the *Maisons vertes*[3]; an inclusive space for infants and toddlers up to the age of four, offering support and attentive care in the presence of their parents or primary caregivers. They have played an important role from this point of view and have promoted places of welcome with a view to facilitating and accompanying the parent-child relationship.

At the end of the 1990s, thanks to a welfare system that places it among the European countries that provide the most resources for families and children: 12% of social spending, compared to less than 4 % in Italy (Stranges, 2008), France

[3] https://www.lamaisonverte.asso.fr/

experienced a "mini-baby boom". These policies on early childhood care helped women to escape from the alternative of having children without a professional career, or having a career without having children. These measures, although they do not of course resolve all situations, promote the necessary reconciliation of work and family life (Martin, 2003). For the French, and especially for French women, children are a good thing, but not at any price. Thus, the existence of an important system of social services allows young couples to emancipate themselves from the family network (Manceron and Segalen, 2012), which is not the case in Italy, where the family continue to plays a central role in family organization (Ghezzi, 2012).

In Italy, the emancipation of women in the twentieth century has certainly destabilized the traditional family model, and although the number of separations and divorces has increased significantly, this model has resisted much more than elsewhere. One of the reasons for this resistance is undoubtedly the presence of the Church, physically based in the country, its vision of the family and the role of women in society (Zanatta, 2011). This ideal and the lack of implementation of a family support policy has resulted in a drastic drop in the birth rate, as women prefer not to give up work and economic independence.

Still in Italy, great importance is placed on the family as an institution (Stranges, 2008). Family ties remain strong and children seek to build their lives in such a way that they can remain in close contact with their parents. But do they really have a choice? Indeed, Italy ranks among the least generous countries, with only 4.1% of social spending going to families, compared to an average of 8.9% in Europe (Stranges, 2008). As Marina Piazza, former President of the National Commission for Parallel Opportunities in Italy, reminds us: "*Italy is not an accommodating society in the face of women and children. In the companies the mentality is this: How beautiful women are, how lovely it would be if they were men.*" (Mori, 2009, p.31). In the world of work, being a mother in Italy is considered a fault, and between the ages of thirty and forty mothers account for 86% of cases of professional discrimination, mobbing on return of maternity leave, demotion, debasement of professionalism, and even dismissal presented as "voluntary resignation", for which a pre-filled letter may have been signed at the time of hiring. According to a Eurochambres-EU survey (Mori, 2009), among a thousand Italian women entrepreneurs, 82% think that motherhood is one of the main obstacles to a professional career. In fact, although the theme of family and motherhood is one on which many italian politicians base their ideas, their implicit assumption is that women do not fundamentally require social services, since they should simply stay at home to look after the house and raise their children. This is how without the help of grandparents, parents, and in particular mothers, find it extremely difficult to reconcile work and family life. It is the family that plays the role of "social shock absorber", producing services that are "better provided in other countries by the public sector" (Carta et al., 2022). The result of this lack of family policy is that Italy

has one of the lowest birth rates in Europe, Italians are becoming parents later and many will have only one child (Istat, 2018).

The perception of the role of the parent is also very different from one country to another. The French have the feeling that they are very “cool” parents, but a comparative European survey shows that France is the country that most values obedience and a return to authority (Segalen, 2010); here again, it was the incompetence and irresponsibility of parents that were strongly emphasised during the 2005 “banlieues” crisis. Even the left party then spoke of the need to restore republican order and the authority of parents. In Italy, on the other hand, traditional Italian familism has moved from a system of support and solidarity for a large number of children to a model where family solidarity is still expressed, but only for an ever smaller circle due to the sharp drop in the birth rate. Thus, the family in the broad sense is now concentrated on a small number of members, protecting and extending its support to grown-up children and delaying their exit from the family nest. One of the consequences is that the step to independence and self-reliance are delayed, the time of decisions is postponed; plans and expectations concerning childbearing are revised downward (Livi-Bacci, 2001).

However, it is not only the policies put in place in each country to favour or not families that influence parental involvement. It is indeed a complex construct and each culture has unique socialization patterns and traditions to achieve the childrearing goals of that society. For example, some cultures uphold the use of physical punishment whereas other cultures morally object to that practice. At what time is it appropriate to put children to bed, what degree of freedom to explore should be given to children, what practices parents will insist on most to achieve the educational goals of the society in which they live.

Although France and Italy are close in geographical, linguistic and even cultural terms, they are both contexts with their own social and political particularities that play an important role in the way parenthood is viewed. Whatever techniques are adopted, taking these particularities into account has therefore been a central point throughout this research.

Parenting practices are therefore influenced by the context in which they evolve on the one hand, and on the other hand are directly linked to the so-called parental style, the specific characteristics of which differ from one style to another. Since the 1970s, a distinction has been made between different parental styles, and I will attempt to clarify the basis of these differences here.

2.2.3 How to define the parental style?

To understand the extent to which the parental style will influence CIM, it is first necessary to define precisely what is meant by parental style.

According to Bornstein (2008) parental style is: "*several elements that combine to create the emotional climate in which parents communicate their attitudes about their child. Style is conveyed through body language, temper, tone of voice, emotional displays, and quality of attention*". In 1983, Maccoby and Martin conceptualized that parental styles (Maccoby, 1992), as elaborated by Baumrind (1971), can be assessed along two distinct dimensions: responsiveness and demandingness. Demandingness is the extent to which parents exert control, power, and supervision over their children, as well as set limits on their children. Responsiveness is the extent to which parents show their children affective warmth and acceptance, give support, and reason with them.
Applying these two dimensions yields four parental styles**:** authoritative parenting, which involves high levels of responsiveness and high levels of demandingness; authoritarian parenting, which involves low levels of responsiveness and high levels of demandingness; permissive parenting, which involves high responsiveness combined with low demandingness; and disengaged parenting, which involves low levels of both components

	Demandingness		
		High	Low
Responsiveness	High	Authoritative	Permissive
	Low	Authoritarian	Indifferent

- **A:** authoritarian

They are obedience and status-oriented, and they expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation. They provide an orderly environment, and a clear set of regulations, and monitor their children's activities carefully. Not all directive or traditional parents are authoritarian.

- **B:** authoritative

They monitor and impact clear standards for their children's conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive or restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are supportive rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially

responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative. Children from authoritative homes have consistently been found to be more instrumentally competent - agentic, communal, and cognitively competent - than other children

- **C:** permissive

They are nontraditional and lenient, do not require mature behavior, allow considerable self-regulation, and avoid confrontation.

- **D**: indifferent

They do not structure and monitor, and are not supportive, but may be actively rejecting or else neglect their child rearing responsibilities altogether.

Authoritative parenting is often cited (Baumrind, 1991; Kellerhals, 2004; Merlin, 2013; Grolnick et al., 2021) as the ideal parental style for promoting optimal social competence and psychological adjustment for European American children. This parental style is believed to represent the best mix of practices: clear expectations, firm (and developmentally reasonable) limits, and high levels of warmth and support to foster children's development. Authoritative parents tend to rear children who are socially responsible, competent, self-assured, adaptive, creative, curious, independent, assertive, successful in school, friendly, cooperative with peers and parents, and generally happy (Bornstein, 2008).

It is important to note that parental styles can change over time and in response to various circumstances but it also can change during the life course. For example, parents who start out with an authoritative style, being warm, affectionate, and sensitive when the child is an infant could alter their parental style as the child ages and becomes more of a challenge for the parents as a result of an increasing behavioral repertoire or striving for autonomy (Bornstein, 2008). Moreover, a parent may exhibit different styles with different children. Everyone who has siblings has experienced, at one time or another, the differences in treatment of children according to their place in the sibling group, and during the interviews I was able to conduct, the parents often referred to this to justify certain decisions, which will not be the same depending on whether the child is the eldest or the youngest. As parents often learn at the same time as their children, the experience acquired with the eldest will then serve as a reference for the next ones. In this respect, children, who know perfectly well where, when and how these experiences took place, will claim the same treatment as an unquestionable right, often taking their parents to task, evoking an imperative of equal treatment between the two in the event of shortcomings or a feeling of injustice.

Parental style is therefore not immutable; it can evolve according to the age of the child, his or her place in the sibling group, the demands of the children themselves and the parents' experiences within and outside the family. In this research however, it was not possible to take into account the observation criteria of

parent–child interactions, parental body language, tone of voice, emotional displays, this is why we focus on certain parental practices which have been evaluated here.

Parenting practices are specific actions or techniques that parents employ to protect, support, and manage their children and to shape their long-term development. Practices include such behaviors as praise, showing physical and verbal affection, providing material rewards, monitoring, supervision, and diverse disciplinary techniques such as spanking, withdrawal of privileges, shaming, and guilt-induction. The way in which parenting practices have been operationalized for this research will be defined more precisely in chapter 5. Parenting practices can therefore be said to be related to one of the parental styles defined above without defining it in its entirety.

It is only once the style and practices of each parent have empirically been identified that it will be possible to establish possible links between the style and CIM and to understand whether there is a parenting style that is more likely to promote CIM. While it seems that the new authoritative parenting style, which is more "democratic" in the parent-child relationship, encourages the child's autonomy in general, his or her self-confidence or autonomous decision-making (Du Bois-Reymond et al, 1993), it should be added that, as Clément Rivière (2014) argues, there is no French or Italian research to date that attempts to establish any link between autonomy of movement and the role played by parents.

While it's widely acknowledged that children under authoritative parenting styles often feel supported in various aspects of their lives, independent mobility appears to fall into a distinct category. In this domain, the principles of independent decision-making, typically encouraged, seem to no longer apply. Instead, the parenting style often leans towards authoritarianism, with parents occasionally making decisions contrary to the child's wishes and aspirations. Why does CIM deviate from this trend? Why are different rules applied to this particular competence? How do parents view their children's achievement of autonomy? There seems to be a real tension between conceding independent mobility, which will have long-term repercussions but is not very palpable at the moment, and parents' real fears (Shaw et al., 2015). However, for Prezza (2001), few Italian parents seem to be aware that their children's lack of autonomy is a problem that may have long-term repercussions. What about French parents? How do French and Italian parents view learning autonomy of movement? What are the main differences between the French and the Italian approach? This research aims to explore the French and Italian perspectives on children's autonomy, particularly in relation to independent mobility, as there is currently limited fieldwork on this topic.

2.3 The emplaced knowledge

Emplaced knowledge refers to informal knowledge acquired unconsciously by children within a specific context or environment (Christensen, 2003). It is shaped by the physical, social, and cultural characteristics of a place. Despite parental concerns about urban experiences, such as traffic and strangers, neighborhoods offer opportunities for children to interact with diverse people and experiences. This diversity contributes to the richness of children's emplaced knowledge (Proshansky,1987). This research aims to explore how the frequency and autonomy of children's interactions with their urban environment influence their emplaced knowledge.

2.3.1 The emplaced knowledge related to the CIM

According to Deleuze (1993), our subjectivity is constituted in the displacements, the encounters and the relations that we weave with the beings, the things, the places around us. For Deleuze, "*the analysis of the unconscious should be a geography rather than a history*".

Unsupervised play in the streets (Camstra 1997; Tillberg, 2002) can be stimulating places for children (Christensen, 2003) and if institutional play prepare the young for the corporate work with skills, attitude and experience that will be useful for them, they also reproduce social inequalities (Adler and Adler 1994) and denies children the possibility to develop self reliance, co-operation, problem solving and interpersonal skills which more spontaneous and unplanned play (Hart, 1979) or unsupervised “secret places” (Jack, 2010), cherish by children, will provide. As Piaget (1977) demonstrated in his studies, independent mobility is essential for the development of cognitive representations of the environment. The role of exploratory activities is especially important for children under 9-years-old before they reach a coordinated system of reference (Kytta, 1997) and also because the relationships children create with places is a factor of well-being (Jack, 2010) and will remain within us for the rest of our lives (Cele, 2006).

As Vercesi (2008) emphasises, the child's relationship with its urban environment is also a playful experience essential for the development of identity, because the path to be followed to reach a destination is a moment of playful opportunity that establishes a profound relationship with the environment: "*moving independently therefore facilitates not only the elaboration of the cognitive representation of the environment, but also acts positively on the construction of*

one's identity (being able to say "I am here, this is my neighbourhood, the place where I live" is a fundamental premise for being able to say "I am") and the development of feelings of affection. It represents the possibility of having a secure anchorage from which to explore the world, a solid knowledge of one's position in the order of things, a meaningful psychological and spiritual bond to a particular place."

A significant aspect of their personal identity construction occurs through their attachment to place (Jack, 2010). This place-identity is made up of memories, experiences, favourite places and relationships that the child has with all these places that are his daily life (Proshansky, 1987).

As I wrote earlier, school has become the place where a child is supposed to be, but in what way has it altered the nature of childhood? This is not a question that will be answered here, but it is nevertheless useful to understand the importance of the relationship that the child has, or should have, with its environment because if it seems that today all learning should take place in school, but what about the knowledge that comes from parents, the community and peer relationships? The school as a "secondary socialisation", as Durkheim calls it, is an extension of the primary socialisation of the family circle. For if the education given by parents continues to influence him or her, the outside world, friends and peer groups, will become more important and contribute to the young person's well-being (Darmon, 2018). What about the relationship with the neighbourhood? Does it still exist? This is the question that we are entitled to ask ourselves in view of the drastic decrease in the CIM over the last few decades. As we have seen, children are no longer allowed to move around their neighbourhood as they please, “wander” has become an almost illegal activity and traditional street games have been replaced by organised junior leagues (Hendrick, 2015).

What consequences does this have on the development of a child's personality? There are few studies on this issue and it is not easy to say, but what we can say is that today's city is, as Colin Ward defines it, an “attenuated environment”. Each of the spaces that make up the city has a precise function, it is compartmentalized, the use that the inhabitants must make of these predefined places is separated from one another; the fences of the parks or the schools are there to remind us of this physical separation. However, this was not always the case, and not so long ago children, before being immobilised in schools or in organised leisure, were still the real *padroni della strada* (masters of the street), and they assimilated a great deal of information and knowledge voluntarily and not by force. Because, whatever way it is presented, the city is, whether we like it or not, an “educational environment”. It is an opportunity for learning, it has the capacity to influence the behaviour, positive or negative, of its inhabitants and, as Jacobs (1961/1992) states, to be a truly useful tool for children's development, it must provide them with a variety of spaces in which to play and learn, where they can wander around, non-specialised outdoor spaces, without any specific function and which give free rein to play and imagination. As they grow up, children gradually

expand their field of action, which is no longer limited to their own home but extends to the school and the neighbourhood. Their cognitive task outside the home is a difficult one, it is a very important in the socialization process, they must assimilate the tremendous complexity of the neighborhood setting and learn to make choices (Rapoport, 1977), it is the acquisition of the ability to discern the dangers and possibilities of their environment that is at stake here.

2.3.2 Social skills and the environment

According to Tonucci (et.al, 2002), when they have the possibility to get to school independently, their level of autonomous mobility in the neighbourhood also increases. Do they then develop the ability to find their way around on their own, to cope with the unexpected, not to panic or to know how to ask for help from strangers? (Rivière, 2017). In a word, do they acquire enough self-confidence to feel able to master their environment? To what extent do cultural contexts influence these experiences and the age at which parents feel their children are capable of dealing with their environment independently?

Little is known about children's social networks, their views of their neighbourhoods, their levels of trust and community identity, and the implications of these for quality of life or well-being. Malone's assertion (2006) is the understanding that the neighbourhood is the fundamental unit of everyday experience for most children and plays a vital role in their well-being. What then are the "neighbourhood effects" referred to by Authier (2007), which are not the harmful effects that can be encountered in poor neighbourhoods but those that take into account the socialisation processes.

Analysing the differences in children's behaviour, their social life and not only their activities, according to their environment and not their social or gender difference is the subject of little work, as Authier (2019) indicates. According to Piaget (1977), our knowledge of reality is not known through the representation we have of it but through the interactions we have with it. Thus, children construct their knowledge of their environment through active involvement in it, and their worldview will be the result of daily experiences, actions and reactions with everything in their environment, whether animate or inanimate. This research therefore proposes to adopt this constructivist model of the child as an active participant in appropriating social knowledge, looking at children not as dominated by their environment but as actors who interact and also play a role in the evolution of both that environment and parental practices.

2.4 Analyzing CIM and understanding its underlying causes

With limited independent mobility, as described above, what learning opportunities can the city provide for children today? Do they have sufficient opportunity to develop their own abilities by confronting reality if they are constantly accompanied by an adult? Opinion polls on adults' views of the relationship that children are supposed to have with the city say a lot about this. Indeed, according to a study published by the Children's Society (Jack, 2010), half of adults believe that children under 14 should not be allowed to go out with their friends without adult supervision. Furthermore, a study conducted by Play England (Jack, 2010) found that many activities considered “normal” in childhood, such as climbing trees, going to play in the local park, cycling to a friend's house, were not allowed by parents unless they were supervised by an adult.

Understanding the reasons why parents restrict or encourage CIM and how its effects the building of emplaced knowledge are the central topic of this research.

In the context of promoting children's independent mobility, particularly in France and Italy, there is a notable absence of literature addressing the specific challenges and nuances associated with this aspect of parenting. Despite the similarities in fears and concerns regarding children's safety, there is a lack of exploration into how parents navigate the balance between promoting autonomy and ensuring safety. The tension between fostering autonomy and succumbing to fears highlights the complexities of contemporary parenting. While authoritative parenting styles often support various aspects of children's lives, independent mobility seems to be treated differently, which is what this research aims to study.

Exploring the relationship between children's autonomy, cultural contexts, and parental perceptions is crucial for understanding the multifaceted nature of this issue. What does CIM look like, does parental parenting style play a role in children’s independent mobility and does it have an influence on children's emplaced knowledge? How can we relate these different issues and establish a causal link between them? This research aims to address these gaps in the literature and shed light on the intricacies of children's autonomy within the French and Italian contexts.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND OPERATIONALISATION

As indicated by the conceptual model in Figure 3.2, the aim of this research was to understand the relationships between the main independent variable, parental style, and the dependent variables, namely Children's Independent Mobility and emplaced knowledge. This is what guided the methodological choices explained in the following chapter. In order to answer each subquestions, a method and tools must be used which, while being interrelated, aim to collect different types of data, the decoding of which will shed particular light on each question. It allows for a holistic approach to each particular situation. Thus, a mixed method research to carry out these analyses has been used here, choosing the most appropriate one for each of the different subquestions.

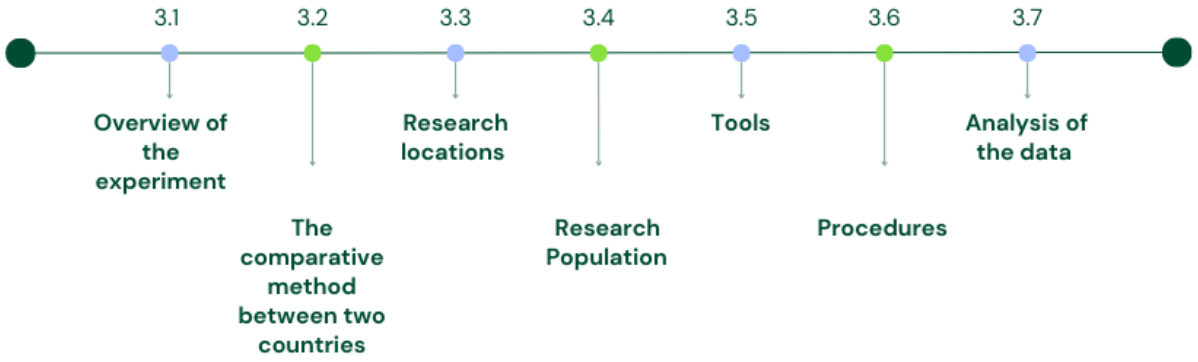


Figure 3.1 Methodology chapter structure

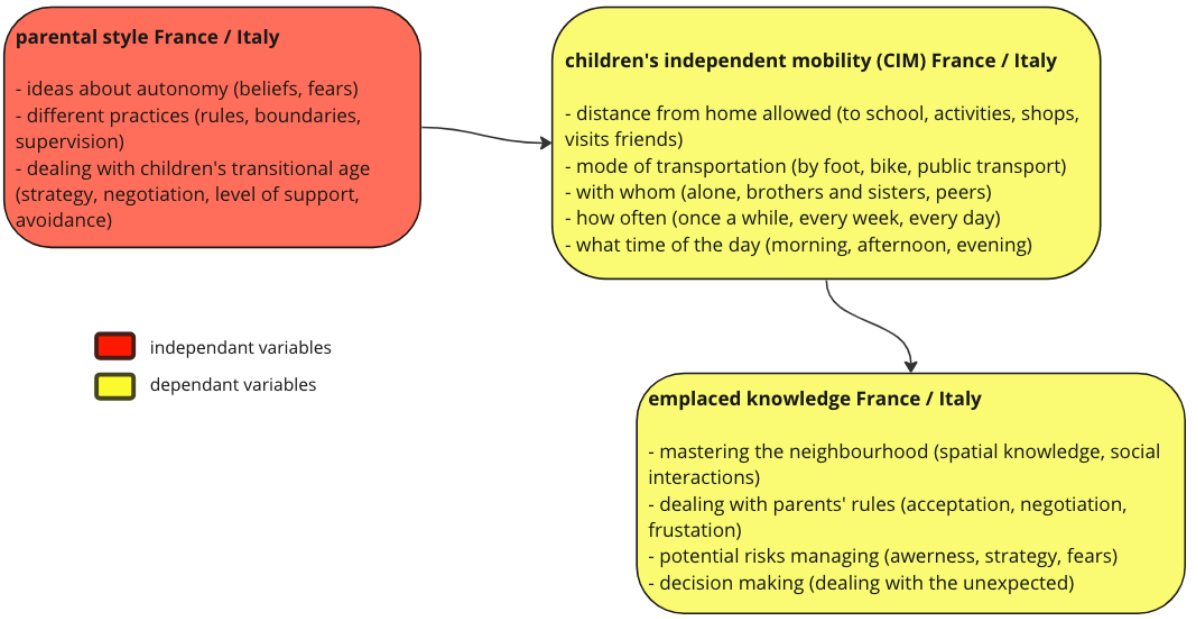


Figure 3.2 Conceptual model

3.1 Overview of the experiment

To answer the first subquestion, which concerns the characteristics of CIM in terms of time and space, I chose a quantitative method, as the children were asked to fill in a diary of all their movements for 7 days. Here, the aim was to get insight into the children's daily lives beyond parental narratives that may not always correspond to reality or omit important details. In order to obtain a representation that corresponds as closely as possible to reality, it was necessary to have precise details of all children's activities and travels, including both school days and weekend days, a full week of 7 days in total.

For the second subquestion, which is whether there is a link between parenting style and CIM, a qualitative method via interview was chosen. Initially, qualitative research gave me more flexibility and subjectivity to be able to understand the phenomenon, to define and redefine it according to the evolution of the research and according to the cases encountered (Silverman, 2008). Qualitative research also gave me the opportunity to dedicate more importance to context, to identify it in the practices and orientations of the participants. Thus, it is by starting to ask "how" that I could try to understand the "whys" that dictate the behaviours of the parents I interviewed. The parents' practices can sometimes seem irrational or completely unconscious, which is why the interview was the best way to try to understand the evolution of their thinking. The reasons why parents act in one way rather than

another are linked to a multitude of factors, starting with their own childhood experiences in a specific national context, their current living conditions, their level of education, the image they have of their neighbourhood, their educational priorities and so on. Asking them these questions in a face-to-face interview allows us to open up a conversation with each of them, to understand how they think about the CIM and if they have reflected about it at all. I also expected that some parents hadn't thought about it at all, seeing it as a secondary or matter of course issue in their day-to-day lives.

Finally, for the last subquestion, whose aim was to analyse the children's emplaced knowledge, I chose to use walking interviews, and thus again a qualitative method. Walking interviews with the children allowed me to let them comment on the filled in diary, indicate specific places in their neighbourhood and give both positive and negative comments on their everyday live. Literature reveals that it is much more appropriate to engage conversation with children during a walk rather than during an one-to-one interview, that may be experienced as intimidating. With the method of walking interview children had the opportunity to explain to me what they know about the neighbourhood, how they experience it and how they feel about it.

The number and nature of the methods used has required time which does not allow me to carry out the idyll of an additional quantitative study on a large number of subjects. In fact, as Corbetta (2003) points out, according to the constructivist approach, the interview is not only a data collection, it is also and above all the construction of a relationship, the result of which depends above all on the level of empathy that has been established between the two interlocutors. In this research, the interlocutors are both parents and children, so in order to take the time to establish a constructive relationship with these two categories of people, their number is limited.

3.2 The comparative method between two countries

More and more cities are being ranked or labelled, leading to greater competition between them. However, the criteria used to compare them are, in most cases, standardised quantitative criteria (Authier et al., 2019). My comparison of Bologna and Lyon is not part of this hierarchical approach, which would aim to award a prize to the best-ranked city, but rather to understand and highlight what influences parenting practices, positively or negatively. Comparing these practices is also a way of exploring contemporary transformations in cities and identifying trends, similarities and dissimilarities between them and their explanatory variables.

According to Durkheim: "*We have only one way of demonstrating that one phenomenon is caused by another, and that is to compare the cases in which they are simultaneously present or absent, and to investigate whether the variations they*

represent in these different combinations of circumstances show that one depends on the other" (Déchaux, 2011). In a globalised and interconnected world, international comparison provides an opportunity to observe the spread of urban behaviour adopted by most inhabitants, but it also makes it possible to distinguish what differentiates these urban practices. It is therefore a question of "distinguishing the effects of the homogenising forces of an increasingly globalised world" from those of the "factors of heterogeneity resulting from the diversity of local urban societies" (Authier et al., 2019). Are social norms similar in the two countries? Are they challenged or simply internalised and accepted? How do they differ from one territory to another, and does this have an impact on parental education? By making a comparison, the idea is also to try to identify the many variables in common but also the factors explaining the divergences between the areas studied. Because it is this knowledge of common contextual variables that enables us to isolate the independent variable that causes cases to vary.

The comparison between France and Italy gave me the opportunity to explore whether there are significant differences, which I will describe as cultural, in parental educational approaches on the two sides of the Alps or whether, on the contrary, we are faced with decisions on CIM taken for similar reasons, such as fear of danger in the city, for example. Obviously, in order to control for variables, and compare what is comparable, I decided to base the research at the neighborhood level. In fact, when one wishes to study CIM, what is important is the radius of action within which children have the possibility of moving, which is a progressive learning process that is initially limited to the neighborhood and then, as they grow up, becomes increasingly wider (Ward, 1978; Prezza, 2001). Here, it is this dimension of the neighborhood that interests me since it represents the domain that the children considered in this research are supposed to master.

3.2.1 The French and Italian education systems: similarities and differences

In France, decisions regarding the organization of the education system are made at the national level. Therefore, all primary schools in the country must adhere to the same number of annual study hours, set at 864 hours. School begins at 8:30 a.m. and finishes at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday is usually a day without school, schools can choose between a 4 days or 5 days week, with no classes on Wednesday, and postponing the summer holidays. So, the children are at school 36 hours per week. Even recreation times are regulated at national level, 15 minutes per half day.

In Italy, on the other hand, the administrative organization of education is decentralized. While the Ministry of Education determines the fundamental

principles, it delegates the organization to the regions, and even to lower-level authorities and individual schools. However, the number of school days or hours of classes per year is defined at the national level: at least 200 school days corresponding to 891 hours per year in primary education.

In primary education, the standard is 27 hours of school attendance per week. Parents can request that their children benefit from an additional three hours of optional activities per week (such as music, cinema, computer workshops, etc.). They can also opt for a weekly schedule of 40 hours, which includes lunch at school. The choice between 30 hours or 40 hours is subject to the availability of necessary staff and facilities, with parents being informed at the time of enrollment. Classes are formed homogeneously based on parental preferences.
Regarding the specific school chosen for this research, it offers a school time ranging from 28 to 30 hours per week.

As the total number of school hours and the number of holidays are very similar, the differences between the two systems lie mainly in the organisation of school days and the distribution of holidays during the school year.

In Italy, as decisions on school hours and organisation are taken at regional or even local level, which leads to significant disparities at national level. Indeed, less than 40% of primary schools on the peninsula operate on a full-time basis. (See Appendix 3.1)

It can be seen on this graph (Appendix 3.1) that the highest levels are reached in 4 regions: Lazio, Lombardy, Piedmont and Tuscany. Here, more than half the primary classes are organised with a 40-hour timetable. Emilia Romagna, Liguria and Basilicata are also just under the 50% threshold. Bologna is in Emilia Romagna and the percentage of full-time schools is 68%. The school where this research was carried out, despite having a canteen, which is often one of the reasons why lessons cannot be held all day, is not full-time, which means that twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, students leave at 12 noon if they do not eat, or at 2.30 p.m. if they eat at school. The schools in Bologna also offer a before and after school programme for children with both parents working.

Full-time schooling is a subject of debate in Italy, the number of full-time schools is often compared to the number of school drop-outs, which is much lower where there is the possibility of full-time primary schooling.

As shown in a chart from 2021 by Save the Children (Appendix 3.2), there is a clear correlation between the availability of services in the school, such as canteen, gymnasium or the possibility of having full-time education, and school drop-out, which is actually much lower when these services are present. In the school where my research took place the problem of drop-out is almost absent, however the parents know that they cannot count on full time and have to organise themselves to fill two afternoons without school. In Bologna, schools generally offer paid afternoon

activities for children, such as the Ercolani school which, having a canteen, offers afternoon laboratories two days a week.

3.2.2 Meynis primary school organisation in Lyon

Each school has a headmaster who is responsible for one school. The headmaster is usually a teacher who has been selected by the academic inspection after an interview. He or she has many responsibilities and as the headmaster of the Meynis school admitted during an interview I had with him, he is "over-solicited for everything". He even added that a study was done on this subject and it was found that a primary school headmaster was "disturbed" about every 7 minutes. This is plausible since he is the one who answers both the phone and the intercom when someone wants to enter the school.

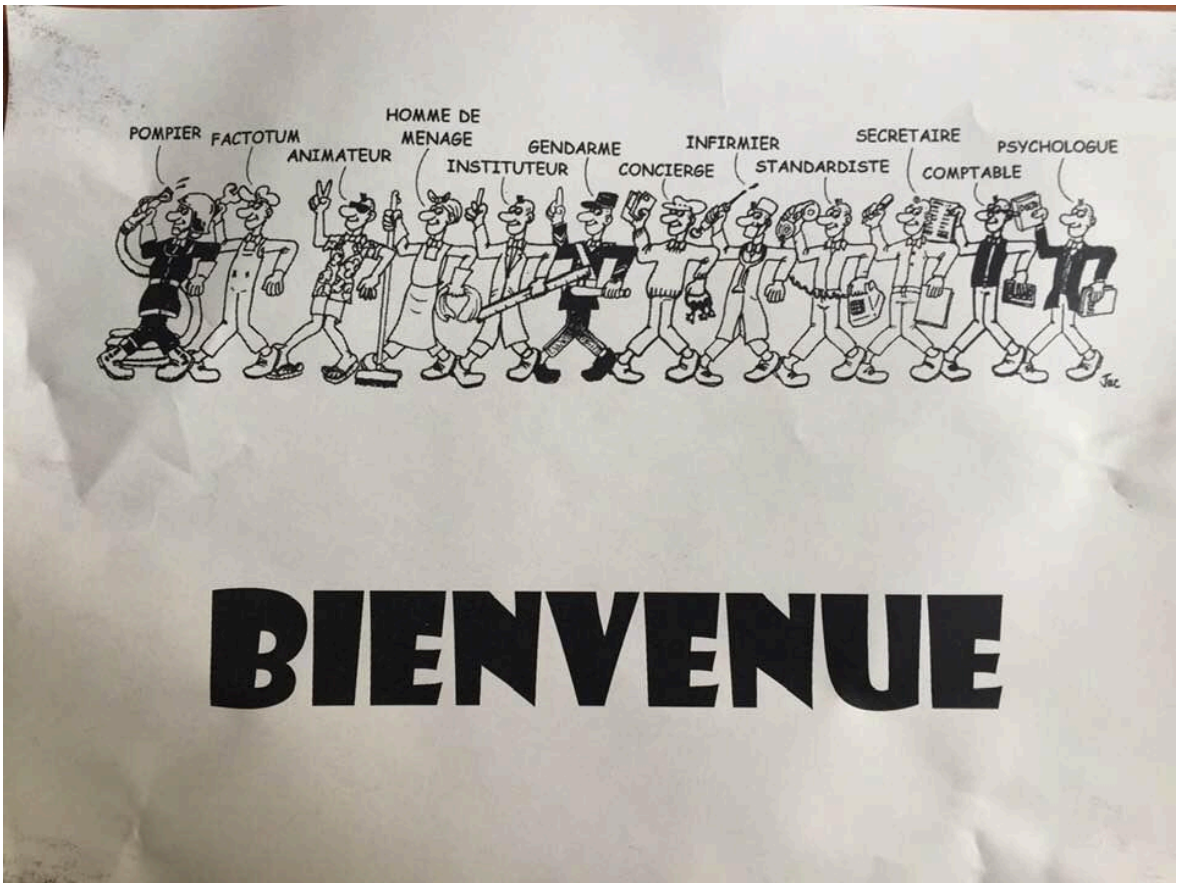


Figure 3.3 Headmaster multitasking job. *Fireman, factotum, animator, cleaner, teacher, gendarme, caretaker, nurse, switchboard operator, secretary, accountant, psychologist. WELCOME*

Headmasters are multi-taskers! This drawing was on display in the office of the headmaster of Meynis School, and he told me to take a photo of it because he thought it was a perfect illustration of the job of a primary school headmaster, in an ironic but realistic way.

However, the headmaster does not have authority over the other teachers, he/she is not their superior but a colleague. He/she can only object to projects decided by teachers if they represent a safety hazard. School teachers have a large autonomy on the pedagogical projects they wish to undertake during the school year, only the most important projects will be validated by the academic inspection.

Yet, as I have already mentioned, schools have little autonomy in managing timetables or holidays, even the time and duration of recreation is regulated by ministerial decrees. This decree is called the "*Decree on the organisation of the school week in nursery and elementary schools*"[4] and was introduced in 2013. Under this decree, pupils in nursery and elementary schools must have at least 3 hours of break time, spread over the day. This includes mealtimes and breaks. The decree also stipulates that pupils must have a break of at least 30 minutes in the morning and another break of at least 30 minutes in the afternoon. The schools also offer a before and after school time, called study or garderie, which allows parents to drop off their children before 8.00 am and pick them up at 6.30 pm.

The covid epidemic caused many changes in these habits, as all classes could no longer have recreation at the same time, and the bell indicating the time of recreation stopped ringing and has not been rung since. The same thing happened with the different entrance doors between the classes, everyone having agreed that this allowed the children to be less numerous in front of the school, the situation being less dangerous than before, the main entrance door being situated on a road with a lot of traffic, it was therefore decided that these temporary changes would become permanent.

3.2.3 Ercolani primary school organisation in Bologna

In Italy, schools are grouped into Istituti Comprensivi (IC), which usually include a middle school, two primary schools and two nursery schools. The head of the IC is a single director, sometimes responsible for two ICs. This is why it may be very difficult to get in direct contact with them. They are also responsible for security in the schools and can be criminally charged in case of incidents:
"*In addition to the managerial and management responsibilities of the administrative structure he is in charge of, the school head also bears criminal and civil*

[4] https://juridique.defenseurdesdroits.fr/index.php?lvl=notice_display&id=6947&opac_view=-1

responsibilities. For accidents occurring in school buildings, in addition to the person in charge of the school's prevention and protection service, the headmaster is also criminally liable for violation of accident prevention regulations. According to the Court of Cassation" (Sezione IV Penale, Sentenza 12 settembre 2019, n. 37766). This last point is important because administrative and pedagogical staff constantly refer to it to justify the impossibility of carrying out a particular activity.

So, given the significant differences in the way education systems are organised; whose main one is the possibility for children in France to return home alone; I expect the CIM to be greater in France than in Italy.

However, institutional organisation is not the only factor that needs to be taken into account, the historical, geographical, social context in which parents and children from two different countries live is also very important to understand their behaviour.

3.3 Research locations

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the chosen dimension for this study is that of the neighborhood. It allows for better control over various variables such as: the population density, the housing style, the economic situation of its inhabitants, the presence of green spaces and nursery and primary schools. The presence of schools and parks serves to increase the likelihood of encountering children walking unaccompanied by an adult in their neighborhood (Lehman-Frish et al., 2012). Here, it is this dimension of the neighborhood that interests me since it represents the domain that the children considered in this research are supposed to master.

3.3.1 Differences and similarities between the city of Lyon and the city of Bologna

Lyon and Bologna are both medium-sized cities, Lyon, with 522,969 inhabitants, covers an area of 48 km², while Bologna has slightly less, 388,232, on 140 km². They are all regional capitals, Rhône-Alpes for one, Emilia-Romagna for the other. They both have the image of bourgeois cities, of a left-wing conservatism, industrious and epicurean. Lyon is known as the gastronomic capital of France, Bologna is nicknamed "la grassa", “the fat”, city of good food. Both are cities on a human scale, with well-functioning public services, and both have received awards for their quality of life; in 2022, *Time Out* magazine ranked Lyon as the best city in France for quality of life, and in the same year, the Italian newspaper *Sole 24 Ore*

named Bologna as the best city to live in on the peninsula. The inhabitants of both cities also express a strong sense of satisfaction, with over 70% of them praising the quality of life in their respective cities (Ville de Lyon, 73%, IPSOS, 2023; Comune di Bologna, 78,1%, BVA/DOXA, 2022)

They are also cities that are changing, not very touristy until about twenty years ago, considered as cities of passage because of their strategic geographical position, they are now experiencing a craze on the part of tourists who wish to discover cities that were previously not included in the itineraries of tour operators. In 1998, Lyon was included on the Unesco World Heritage list, and with 427 hectares, the area is one of the largest listed by Unesco (Bologna, which also has one of the largest historic centres in Italy, has had its 38 km of arcades inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List in 2021[5]. These changes allow the people of Lyon and Bologna themselves to rediscover their own cultural and architectural heritage.

Bologna is the city of arcades, their origin is attributed to the presence of the university and the strong demand for housing from students who came to live in the city. The arcades made it possible to build an extra floor for each house. Today, however, housing tensions are still high and have only increased since the explosion of tourism and the use of the Airbnb platform by many flat owners, encouraging short-term rentals for tourists to the detriment of local populations, families and students. The arcades are very representative of the city of Bologna, apart from the fact that they allow pedestrians to be sheltered from rain, snow and sun, they have also allowed them to benefit from a "right to the city", these spaces being the only ones that cannot be colonised by cars and also guaranteeing a certain safety for the most fragile people, such as children, to move around on foot.

The Haussmannisation of the 19th century is at the origin of the creation of Edouard Herriot and Republic streets in Lyon and of via Indipendenza and Ugo Bassi in Bologna, they break with the tradition of narrow streets which are still present in several districts of the two city centers. Also today, "Lyon is changing and wants people to know about it", stated Olivier Bertrand in the editorial of the french newspaper Libération[6]. Entire districts are being restructured or built, public spaces are being transformed everywhere and are inviting new uses. But Lyon "still wants to be bourgeois Catholic, still eats quenelles and continues to display its values like family jewels" (Géraud, 2006).

The Bolognese are also very attached to their city, whose historic center they frequent assiduously, and they tend to want to preserve what they have obtained in terms of diffuse wealth or quality of life, and are therefore particularly sensitive to anything that could constitute an element of disturbance: an increase in the rate of microcrime, traffic jams or the deterioration of environmental conditions (CENSIS, 2003). This idea of keeping things as they are in order to preserve the heritage is not

[5] https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1650

[6] supplement "Libé-villes", 17 November 2006

without consequences when it comes to adopting a different vision of the city and the use that can be made of the public space. For example, the “sharing” of the street with cyclists and the construction of cycle lanes does not go smoothly and without strong opposition from some sections of the population. The same applies to the creation of school streets, which allow children to reclaim public space, but which require an effort on the part of motorists, for whom the number of parking spaces is decreasing and who are forced to make detours. The fear that the peace and public order to which these communities are attached will be undermined by urban development projects aimed at children is often an obstacle to their development.

3.3.2 University cities

Bologna is the university city par excellence, founded in 1088, the city has developed around its university which today hosts 93,753 students (a.o. 2021/22). It also has a higher number of graduates than the Italian media. The presence of such a prestigious university certainly has a positive economic impact on the city. The university attracts a large number of national and international students, and while on the one hand this stimulates the local economy, on the other it exacerbates the never-ending problem of accommodation in the city for both students and the families who live there.

In Lyon, even with 125,000 students, it does not have the profile of a university town. It was, in fact, a city without a university tradition: on the eve of the French Revolution (in 1789), Lyon still did not have a university, although there were twenty-two in France. The reasons for this are well known: the Lyon bourgeoisie saw education from an essentially practical and professional point of view, and were wary of a university likely to “turn young people away from trade and industry” (Authier et al., 2010). Moreover, until the mid-1980s, the municipality distrusted the university, whose costs it perceived to be much greater than its economic potential, and decentralised higher education activities to the edge of the city**.**

3.3.3 Cities for children?

A simple stroll through Lyon's city center reveals the large number of play facilities that have recently been built: skate parks, football pitch, pedestrianised riverside paths, cycle tracks, etc., all of which allow families to enjoy the city to the full. In this respect Lyon reflects the international trends of (family) gentrification and the rise of new urban middle class facilities and shops. In addition, in 2021, the mayor, Grégory Doucet, signed the "Child Friendly City" UNICEF agreement.

Through this label, the City of Lyon wishes to increase its commitment to the defence of children's rights and to make Lyon a safe and fulfilling city at the level of the child. Streets for children (pedestrianisation of the street in front of the school, as is the case at the Meynis school, the school chosen for this research) have already been created and many others are planned.

It also intends to encourage children's participation in local projects via the Children's Borough Councils with the aim of making them full citizens. Several of the children from the Meynis school class are part of the children's council of the 3rd arrondissement and I will have the opportunity to say more about this Children's Borough Councils in chapter 6. The exhibition "Villeurbanne à hauteur d'enfants" (Villeurbanne at the level of children) which took place at the Rize museum in 2021 and 2022, also testifies to a growing interest on the part of town halls in the place of children in the city; Villeurbanne being situated at the limit of the Villette - Paul Bert district.

opposite: La vague des remparts, Parc Blandan, Lyon

below left: toboggans, Berges du Rhône, Lyon
below right: exhibition Villeurbanne à hauteur d'enfants, Villeurbanne

Figure 3.4 Lyon play facilities (photos, Agathe Gillet)

As for Bologna, it has increased the number of cycle paths, pedestrianised the two main arteries at weekends, called the “Tdays”, and restricts access to the town center for non-resident cars, with the help of a major video surveillance network. However, Bologna is still at the stage of experimentation as regards school streets, and added very few innovations in the not so many playgrounds. The 30km/h city limit should be achieved before the end of 2023, but this limit, which already exists in many streets, is not respected at all, and the presence of the car remains predominant in the city. There are still very few projects aimed at children, and as the education councillor, Daniele Ara, has pointed out on several occasions, it is difficult to take decisions in favour of children when a third of the population is over 80 years old and opposes any project that might disturb their peace and quiet. In the end, it is thanks to its ancient network of arcades and squares that the city remains child-friendly.

opposite: temporary piazza scolastica Proccaccini (photo Enrica Papa)

below left: permanent piazza scolastica Tambroni (photo Margherita Caprili)

below right: typical Bologna’s playground (photo Agathe Gillet)

Figure 3.5 Bologna play facilities

3.3.4 The Irnerio and Villette - Paul Bert neighbourhoods

Due to the unforeseen location constraint posed by the Irnerio district in the city center, necessitating a deviation from the initially selected area, the research project underwent revision to identify a district in Lyon sharing similar characteristics. Nonetheless, the need for substantial project overhaul was mitigated by the fact that the demographic composition and lifestyle patterns of residents in this central area of Bologna closely paralleled those of the initially chosen district. Notably, inhabitants of both locales reside in areas situated at a distance from the bustling tourist center of the city, with a propensity towards pragmatic residential choices, as evidenced by their proximity to the railway station. This adjustment facilitated continuity in research objectives and minimized the need for extensive project restructuring.

Figure 3.6 Bologna selected neighbourhood

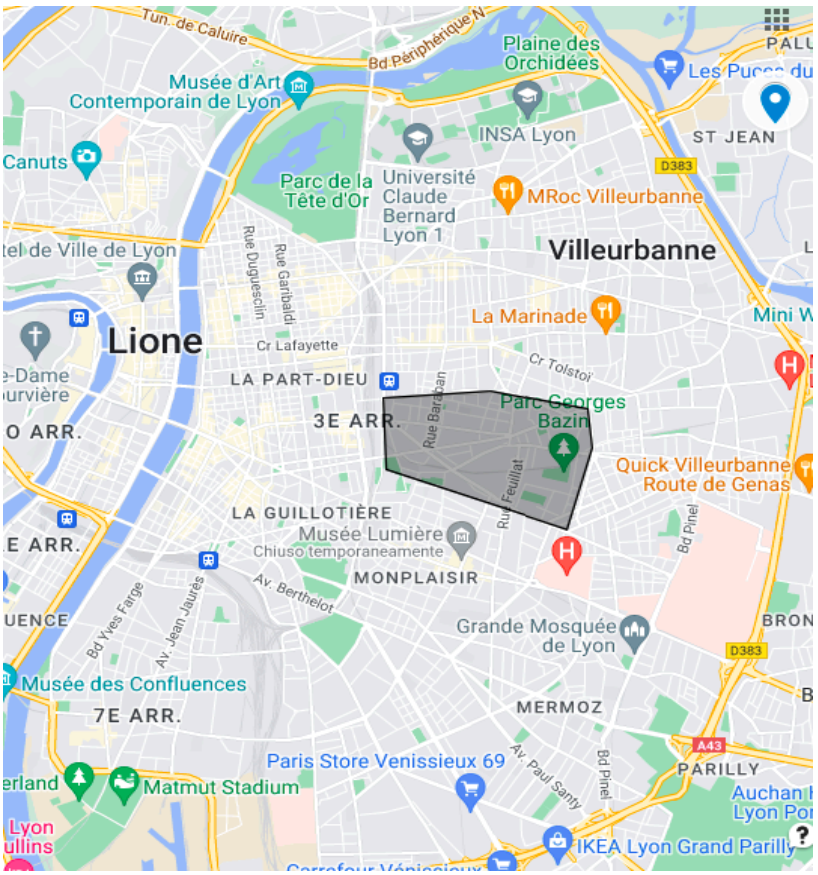


Figure 3.7 Lyon selected neighbourhood - Villette-Paul Bert

- **The Irnerio neighbourhood in Bologna**

The area under consideration straddles the Irnerio district, which is part of the Santo Stefano district, one of the six districts that make up the city of Bologna, and the Bolognina district, which is part of the Navile district. It is an area of about one km2, cut in two by the viale and the railway lines, so the Stalingrado bridge or the railway station bridge have to be crossed to get to the Bolognina district where many children attending the Ercolani school live and others go for sports activities.

Located close to the railway and bus station, it is often chosen by its inhabitants for its strategic position, which combines the possibility of enjoying the city center with easy access to other cities where they work. It is not a particularly "green" area, with only one park, the Montagnola, of 6 hectares with no facilities for children over 6 years old, such as a football or basketball field. The nearest sports center is located next to the Montagnola, the Sferisterio. Another one, very popular with the children of the district, is located after the bridge over the railway lines, is called the DLF (Dopo Lavoro Ferroviario). In this area, which has been selected, there is a nursery school and a kindergarten located in the Montagnola park (as is often the case in Italy, kindergartens and primary schools are built in parks), a primary school and a secondary school in Via Finelli near the boulevard that

surrounds the city. Very close to the university district, this area has many students among its residents, which causes some tension between the lifestyles of the two. Many bars, cafés, restaurants (especially fast food) and shops, such as small supermarkets, hairdressers or a bookshop are also present in this area. Most of the residents of this part of the city live in buildings of around 5 or 6 storeys, some of which have courtyards where children can play.

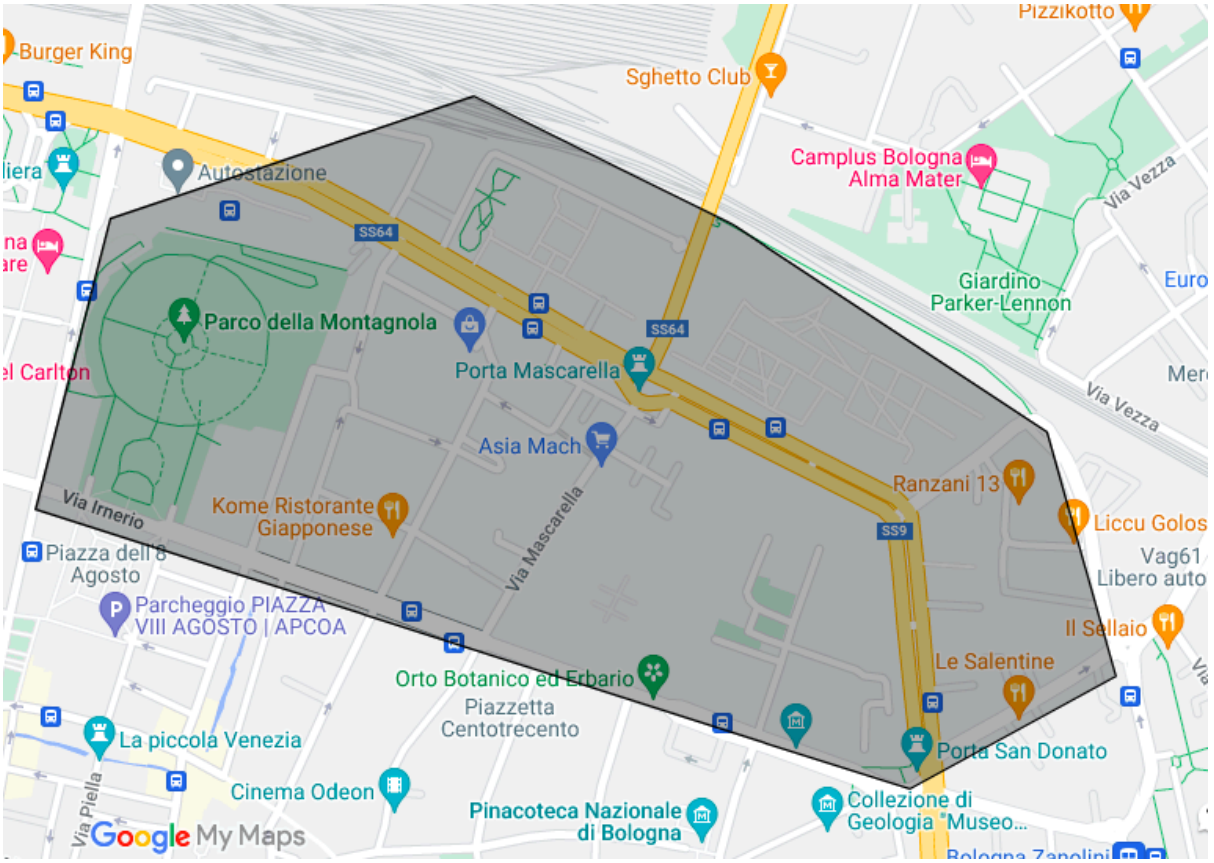


Figure 3.8 Bologna selected neighbourhood - Irnerio

- **The Villette - Paul Bert neighbourhood in Lyon**

As with the Irnerio district, the district called Villette - Paul Bert is not exactly the one that corresponds to the definition given by the Lyon municipality, which is part of the 3rd arrondissement. In fact, the delimitation was done according to the places where the parents and children of the Meynis school class, the subject of my study, live and frequent. The zone therefore goes as far as the railway line on one side and Villeurbanne on the other, so as to take into account the park of the Sacré Coeur church to the north and the Bazin park to the south.

Here too, the fact of being in the city centre while being close to the railway station are reasons for its inhabitants to choose this district. Green spaces are not

the most characteristic feature of this district either, as the children of the district mainly visit the Bazin Park and the Sacré Coeur Church Park; the largest being the Bazin Park, which covers 3 hectares. Both of these parks have facilities that are of interest to children of this age group, with the "city stade" (a fenced area with an artificial floor that can be used for football or basketball) being the most popular, although the Sacré Coeur football/basketball field is not very popular, and the town hall of the 3rd arrondissement has plans to convert it into a city stade. There are numerous grocery shops, bakeries, small supermarkets, bars and restaurants in the area, which are mainly frequented by local residents. Here too, the housing consists mainly of 5 or 6 storey buildings, some with courtyards that can be used for play.

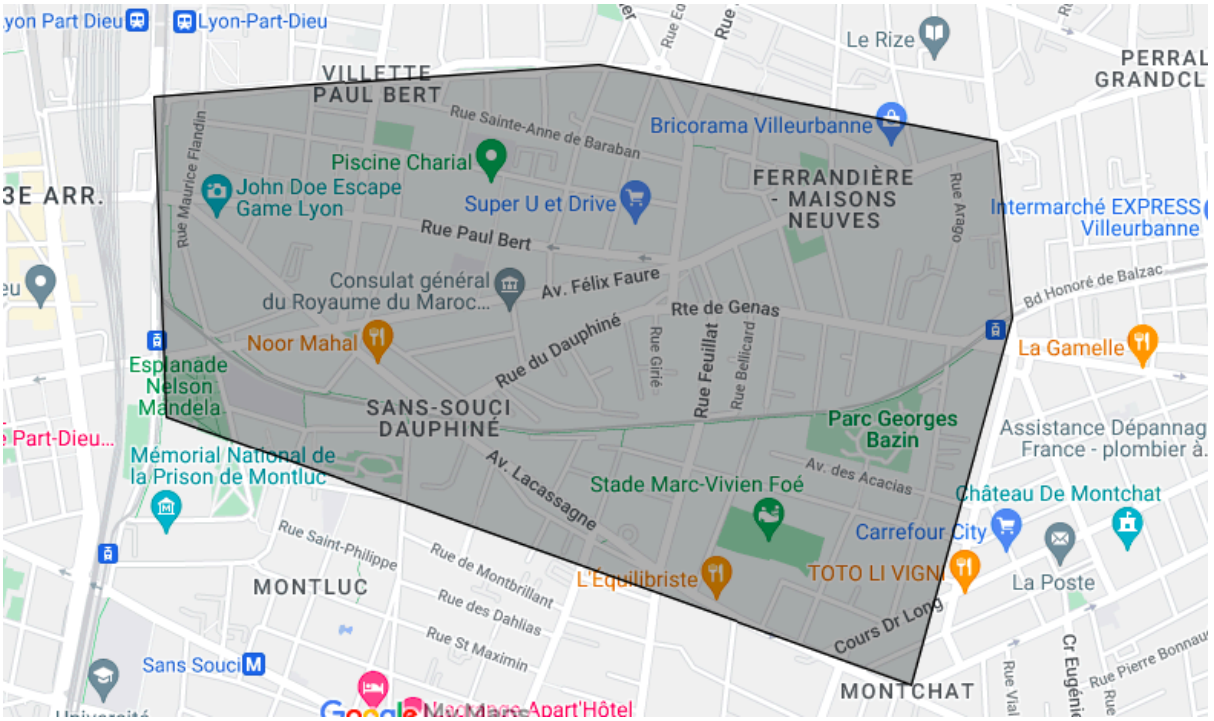


Figure 3.9 The Villette - Paul Bert neighbourhood

	density ab./km²	**area** km²	**average income** €	**degree univ** %	**parc** ha	**retired** %	**unemployed** %
1. Bologna Irnerio district	10 123	1	24 546	41	Montagnola 6	34	5
2. Lyon Villette-Paul Bert district	12 757	1	26 050	36	Bazin 3	17	10

Figure 3.10 The two districts demographic numbers
http://inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/quartieri/reddito-et%C3%A0
http://inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/sites/inumeridibolognametropolitana.it/files/altri_temi/fragilita_ottobre_2020.pdf
https://www.labo-cites.org/system/files/import/Lyon3-donnees_sexuees_3.pdf
Source : Insee, recensement de la population 2010
https://www.city-facts.com/villette-paul-bert-lyon/population

3.3.5 Neighbourhood sociability

In this research, the study of the neighborhood and neighborhood life holds significant importance. On one hand, it is because the environment plays a significant role in shaping the emplaced knowledge of children. On the other hand, as affirmed by a number of studies, there exists a connection between the role of parents' social lives and neighborhood relations and CIM (Johansson, 2003; Alparone, 2012). Thus, it appears that the more opportunities for social interaction there are, the more people will venture out of their homes and frequent their streets, reducing fear and increasing opportunities for children to navigate them.

As François de Singly explains in his book "*Les uns avec les autres*" (2010), some associations and local authorities are now seeking to recreate the conviviality of a village by reviving community links at neighbourhood level through initiatives such as these:

- social street via del borgo, via mascarella, chiosco Montagnola
- initiatives by the town hall, neighbours' day, neighbourhood party, dance evening, etc.
- flowering the streets: in Lyon with the MIF: Micro Flower Installations, in Bologna with: Mascabella (which recalls the

name of via Mascarella), on the initiative of the inhabitants with the support of the town hall

The mayor of Lyon is part of the ecologist party, Europe Ecologie les Verts, and the 2020 election campaign was the object of an overkill of promises of planted trees or the greening of schoolyards. The street gardens are part of this policy of greening the city; there are now 3,000 of them, representing a length of more than 12 km. It is a matter of cutting a few centimeters of pavement by the municipal services to create a plant pit at the foot of a building and allow a group of residents to carry out and maintain a floral micro-plantation. "*The project must be supported by a group of residents with a minimum of five co-owners. They sign a charter and undertake to keep these street gardens alive. If it doesn't work, the city sends a formal notice and, if it isn't taken into account, we fill in the space so that it doesn't look dirty*." (Nicolas Husson, Lyon's deputy for biodiversity and nature in the city, (Nouveau Lyon. Le magazine, #59, July 2022, p.42). Alain Giordano, elected representative of the 9th arrondissement, adds: "*We need to create links so that everyone can take ownership of the floral micro-plots. It is a vector of local democracy."* (Nouveau Lyon. Le magazine, #59, July 2022, p.36).

The *Bonjour, Bonjour!* association and the other initiatives proposed by the various associations in the neighbourhood all aim to recreate social links between the inhabitants.

Neighbours' Day
(24/06/22)

Temporary pedestrianization
(21/05/22)

MIF- Micro-implantations fleuries ou jardins de rue / Micro flower beds or street gardens

Bonjour Bonjour social, fight against exclusion, recreate social links between inhabitants

Dance party organised by the local shopkeepers' association (11/06/2022)

Figure 3.11 Villette - Paul Bert neighbourhood sociality (photos Agathe Gillet)

In Bologna, there are similar projects for the joint management of public space, with instruments such as the "patto di collaborazione" (cooperation pact): in 2014, the Municipality of Bologna approved the regulation on forms of collaboration between citizens and the administration for the care and regeneration of urban commons; it covers all proposals that envisage the spontaneous, voluntary and free provision of energy, resources and skills for the benefit of the community. In via Mascarella, the pact relies on a group called "social street". Set up by a resident of Bologna in 2013, there are now 450 social streets in Italy and around the world, whose aim is to socialise with people in the neighbourhood to meet individual daily needs, concrete help, sharing activities, exchanging opinions… These are no-profit groups that start out on Facebook and then organise meetings in the neighbourhood.

Lastly, in the Irnerio neighbourhood, we should mention the "*Frida nel parco*" kiosk, which was often mentioned by the parents I interviewed and which has become an important place for them to socialise. The kiosk is run in a rather unusual way, as in 2019 it will be taken over by 5 families who used to frequent the park and wanted to create a place whose presence would serve both as an opportunity for sociability and as a deterrent for the (many) drug dealers usually present in the park.

In a short space of time, the kiosk became the most popular meeting place for the children attending the crèche, the nursery school and the Ercolani school, where they could have an aperitif with adults or listen to a concert while the children played in the park. A meeting place for many associations of the city, it has also become the rallying point for all the opponents to a construction project in the park wanted by the city council.

Meeting via Mascarella
(01/04/23)

Planters, via Mascarella

Planter installation, via del Borgo di San Pietro
(28/03/22)

Cleaning of arcades, via Mascarella
(01/04/2023)

“Convinced that culture and sociability are a common good, like the century-old trees and flowering plants in the park, they decided to take over the activity so that it would not die and sadly close a space of sociality that had been conquered. *Frida is a kiosk that wants to be welcoming to people of all ages and backgrounds, that offers hospitality, is open to collaborations with many subjects in the area and beyond, and intends to be a breeding ground for new energies and proposals.”*[7]	

Figure 3.12 Irnerio neighbourhood sociality (photos Agathe Gillet)

3.3.6 Search for a collaboration with a school in Italy

The initial intent was to select a school located in a peripheral area, approximately ten minutes by car from the city center, characterized by Grafmeyer (1991) as "territories without quality" - non-touristic regions lacking distinct boundaries or identity, yet primarily inhabited by families with children. However, the operational realities of the Italian school system quickly underscored the inverse dynamic: rather than the researcher choosing the school, it was the school that ultimately determined selection. As previously elucidated, Italian school directors oversee multiple institutions, complicating direct contact. Despite numerous attempts to establish communication via phone calls and emails, direct engagement with headmasters proved elusive, with responses rarely forthcoming. Furthermore, while teacher enthusiasm for participation was encountered, ultimate approval rested with

[7] https://www.fridanelparco.com/chi-siamo/

the school director. In instances where directorial consent was withheld without rationale, as exemplified by the "thanking you for the training proposal, we inform you that we are not interested in it," ("ringraziandoLa della proposta formativa, s'informa di non essere interessati alla stessa" email response dated April 30, 2022, IC. N. 16), project execution was precluded.

Notably, access to schools was facilitated only through the intermediary intervention of an acquaintance with direct rapport with the director of a centrally located institution. Informal approval was secured from the director, who subsequently disseminated a press release to parents detailing the project. Despite concerted efforts to establish direct contact, communication with the director remained limited to email correspondence, with queries regarding document modifications for privacy reasons left unanswered.

It must be added that the period chosen for field research was certainly not the best time, as school in Italy finishes around the 7th of June, the month of May is subject to various pressures, class trips usually take place at this time of year, and finally, as they have few breaks during the year, teachers are simply very tired when the last month arrives and often do not have the strength to launch a new project. In addition to this, there are the special conditions imposed by the covid pandemic, the masks that are still in force in primary schools, the increased permissions for non-staff members to enter the school grounds.

3.3.7 Search for a collaboration with a school in France

The selection of a school in Lyon was contingent upon identifying a comparable district in Bologna, with the objective of aligning population demographics and urban development. Following statistical analysis and field research, the 3rd arrondissement of Lyon was chosen. Securing collaboration from a school for this research proved relatively straightforward and expedient. Initial contact was made with two schools, with direct communication established with the school directors on both occasions.

Upon contacting the first school, Paul Bert, the director requested a formal email outlining the research project and indicated the necessity of obtaining authorization from the DSDEN (Direction des services départementaux de l'Education nationale du Rhône). Subsequently, the academic services mandated the completion of forms to obtain approval from the academic inspector. However, concurrently, the school principal communicated that the remaining timeframe was insufficient and expressed disinterest on the part of the teaching staff regarding the project (email dated 12 May 2022).

Subsequently, contact was made with Meynis School, situated in the same neighborhood. Notably, the proximity of Paul Bert and Meynis Schools is

emphasized, with Paul Bert having originated as an offshoot of Meynis due to burgeoning student enrollment. The director of Meynis School also responded directly, acknowledging that the timing was not ideal but expressing willingness to discuss the project with fellow teachers, who ultimately hold sway over participation decisions. Three days later, confirmation was received that one of the teachers had agreed to support the project.

The month of June, during which the research took place, is as busy as the month of May in Italy, since it is also the last month of school here, there are school trips planned, the projects carried out during the year must be completed and those for next year planned. So the teachers have a very full day. By chance, the teacher who gave her availability for my project, being of Italian origin, was interested in the theme and the parallel between these two countries which she also knows well. The covid did not require any particular precautions, and entering the school proved to be quite simple, giving a first impression of a greater openness to the outside world.

3.4 Research population

The parents I wanted to consider are the ones living in the neighbourhoods that have been selected and who have children of 9/10 years old.
As highlighted above, the neighbourhood was chosen on the basis of the average income of the families living there. With an average income of around €26,000/year (see figure 3.11), the parents I expect to meet are part of what is known as the urban middle class. Parents with the same level of education tend to make similar decisions about parenting (Valentine, 1997), here, the rate of university graduates is around 40% (36% in France, 41% in Italy). As the literature on working-class neighbourhoods is much richer and the populations studied are mainly adolescents, rarely children, with the exception of the very specific case of “street children”, the aim here was not to study families in great economic difficulty or, on the contrary, those who are too well off. What's more, the type of housing in the two neighbourhoods is essentially made up of blocks of flats, so my assumption was that the lifestyle of the inhabitants would no doubt be comparable, with the absence of a private garden forcing children to go and play in the surrounding parks, for example.

The children to be considered in this study are aged 10 or 11. This choice was made considering that the conquest of autonomy in children should take place between the ages of 7 and 11 (Piaget, 1977; Valentine, & McKendrick, 1997). However, given the small number of children in Italy who move independently (Prezza, 2001; Borgogni, 2020) and in order to increase the possibility of finding children who enjoy a certain autonomy, 9/10 years old seems to be the minimum age required. Additionally, the age group 10-14 years old and, thus, the transition from childhood to adolescence receives only little empirical research attention, because this age in particular is seen as a transitory stage with little significance of its own. However, I think it is very interesting to analyse this moment, which corresponds to the moment of the physical separation of children from parental control, their first steps as an independent person who can exercise their own will (Du Bois Reymond et al., 1993). As the rules regarding freedom of movement are less strict in France, children can go home alone after school, and the number of siblings is higher (Rivière, 2014), I expected to find a greater number of children with greater autonomy.

Given that encountering children randomly on the street or in parks could introduce bias into the research, it was decided to collaborate with a school. While it would have been possible to approach families directly in the neighborhood, this method would have been more time-consuming and challenging to ensure a homogeneous age group of children. Nonetheless, this option was contemplated when collaboration with a school, particularly an Italian one, appeared uncertain.
(Appendix 3.3 Overview interviews, diaries and walks)

3.5 Tools

I used three tools for this research: the diary, the interview and the walking interview plus additional observations in the neighbourhood and at school. I started with the diary so as to have reliable data to refer to when interviewing the parents. The parental interview was also used to gather information about the child's social relationships within the neighbourhood. Finally, the walk allows me to collect the children's experiences and knowledge about their social life in their neighbourhood in a direct way, without an intermediary, also allowing me to make them participate actively in the research and to build together the definitions of the world around them.

3.5.2 The diary

In order to get an idea of what the reality (in time and space) of the CIM is like and to be able to collect data on the daily movements of the children, with whom, where and how, various techniques can be used, I choose the diary in order to have precious clues on the real autonomy of the children, which could be compared with the autonomy imagined by their parents and by themselves. Usually used to obtain information on how children travel to school, it has been used here to describe all types of daily travel, alone or accompanied and the type of mobility (walking, cycling, car, public transport). See an example figure 3.14 of the dairy used in Italy.

In Italy, however, the first and last names were not indicated because, for privacy reasons, the school director would have needed an authorisation signed by each parent to allow me to do so, which we did not have time to do. The pupils simply had to indicate a number corresponding to their place in the alphabetical list of the class. After requesting permission from the other parents, the parent representative then provided me with this list so that I could find their child's corresponding diary when I spoke to the parents. This was not a problem in France and the children wrote their first names on each sheet.

As I explained earlier, once I had obtained the school's agreement, I organised with the teacher of the CM2 class in France and the quinta class in Italy, the modality of distribution of the diaries to the children in the class.

In order to control the variables as much as possible, it was important to proceed in the same way in Italy and in France. In agreement with the teachers, I arrived on Monday morning to explain the purpose of my research to the children, why I needed their help and to answer their questions. I also explained the meaning of anonymity and volunteering. It was important that they understood that nothing I asked them was compulsory and that there was no wrong answer. However, given the school context they were in, none of them dared to refuse to participate. So, I

came five mornings in Italy and four in France (the school is closed on Wednesdays) to have them fill in the diary and to be able to collect the sheets immediately. On Friday I left them two sheets corresponding to Saturday and Sunday which I collected the following Monday.

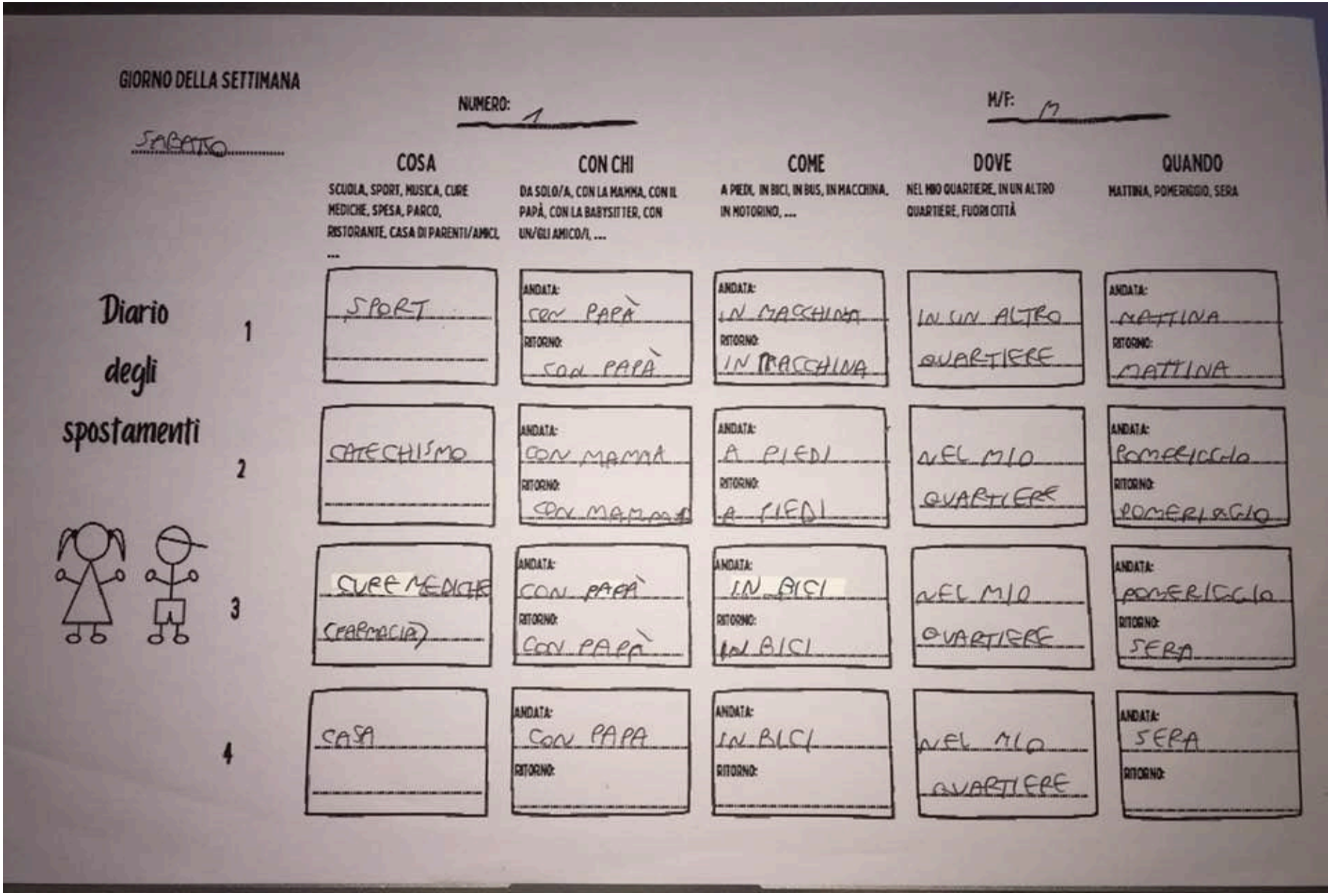


Figure 3.13 Diary example

3.5.1 The interview

As the reasons why parents prefer to adopt one attitude or another are not well known (Rivière, 2014), the aim here is to understand the importance given to independent mobility, where the limitations come from and how they are experienced by those who impose them and those who endure them. A semi-structured interview allowed me to enter into the details of the processes that dictate urban practices by seeking to explore those that are implemented in a way that is not very well thought out because they simply correspond to the norms of “good parenting” and to which parents submit in a more or less conscious manner (Nelson, 2010). The interview aims at identifying their parenting style and assessing the degree of autonomy they grant to their children, in-depth conversation to better understand their opinions, which the brevity of the questionnaire responses does not allow. Interviews also help to analyze, identify the parenting style and understand the feelings and perceptions of the parents and their children about the world around them.

As we were still facing a pandemic situation, I immediately took into consideration the possibility to not carry out the interviews in an indoor place but instead give the parents the possibility to answer my questions outdoor, at the park. But, it was actually unnecessary because almost all the interviews I have done in presence were done indoors, except one in the park.

It is important to stress at this point that, despite these definitions, what emerges from recent studies on parenting (Furedi, 2002; Féres-Carneiro, 2016) is that most parents today are actually confused regarding parental roles: hesitation, uncertainty, lack of confidence and anxiety appear in the definition of every parental style. It is possible that this confusion leads parents to change their style depending on the circumstances or context, as the style may be different inside the home and outside, like in a bar. The limits of the interview are also that it brings into play the legitimacy of the parents as educators, who risk undervaluing practices that they perceive as being the least legitimate (Smith et al., 2009).

The important thing for me was that they did not see me as an expert who would judge their parenting skills. So I always stressed at the beginning of the interview that I was only a student interested in observing and understanding but not in making judgements or giving advice. At the beginning of the interview I informed them that they would be recorded but that their words would be anonymous because their first names would be changed. I wanted the interviews to take place mostly at their homes, but when this was not possible, we met in cafés. One interview was conducted outdoors, at the *Frida nel parco* kiosk in Bologna, and two were conducted by telephone, one in Italy and one in France.

Therefore, to address this subquestion, the interview was divided according to these themes:

- opinions on the city/neighbourhood as a place to raise children
- parental practices: rules / trust / punishment / negotiation / priorities

- social contacts of the parents and child: friends/ playmates/ class mates in the neighbourhood

3.5.3 The walking interview

As Prezza (2007) suggests, the greater the autonomy of children, the greater the number of social interactions, so at first, the idea was also to explore this hypothesis by seeking to understand whether there is a link between the CIM and certain informal skills, including social skills. As it was mentioned before, emplaced knowledge is not only referring to human beings but also to the relationship with places, it may be stronger in children with more independent mobility (Lynch, 1984). It is all part of the construction of their identity. It is important to focus on language and their conceptual meanings to capture their worldview (Cele, 2006). And the methods used to document children's everyday lives are considered valid for understanding childhood issues (Hart, 1979).

The walks with the children permitted me to explore their relationships with their parents and their neighborhoods. Understanding how children perceive the world is not an easy task for an adult, as Cele (2006) points out, the fact that we were once children ourselves does not make us experts on childhood, but children should be considered competent and capable of expressing their perceptions even if they express them in a different way from adults (Rinaldi, 2009). Parents are not the only ones who make decisions regarding CIM, children also have a say (Mitra et al., 2014), so it was interesting to understand their perceptions of their environment, how much they have internalised their parents' fears, for example, or how safe they feel walking around independently in their neighbourhood.

In order to understand how children experience their neighbourhood and what knowledge they gain from it, it was necessary to be actively involved with children (Cele, 2006) because while strongly affecting children's place experience and attachment these interactions with place can be almost invisible to the adult eye and walking can be a way to get as close as possible to this knowledge (Cele, 2006) by trying to understand what a child's “world outside” is made of, how they represent it, what streets they may cross, what roads, what shops, what sounds, what smells they have come to know.

3.5.4 Observations: additional data

Observation is fundamental for qualitative researchers, as it enables them to understand the culture of others in greater depth. As I have already mentioned, I myself am French and have lived in Italy for over 20 years where I became a mother of two children. While this personal background can be seen as a risk, as it can lead to a loss of critical reading of the facts observed (Corbetta, 2003), I think that it has actually given me an advantage in understanding the behaviours I have had the opportunity to observe. To do this, I also had to be careful not to identify too much with the parents, the subject of my research, but rather to adopt the fresh perspective of an enlightened outsider (Lisle, 1985).

For this research, it was mainly possible to observe the children as they entered the school, in the morning at 8.30am and when they left at 4.30pm in the afternoon. I went there as often as possible during the month and a half I spent at each school. My first objective was to make contact with the parents who were waiting for their children at the exit or accompanying them to the entrance in order to obtain their agreement to an interview. I quickly realised that these moments of formal and informal interaction between the various players - parents, children and teaching staff - were very significant and could be used in the interviews with the parents or during the walking interviews and form an integral part of the data that would be analysed later. I often arrived early, therefore, to be able to observe everyone's habits; as the children went home alone very quickly and were sometimes distracted by a conversation with one of the parents, I had to return several times, sometimes choosing precisely which group I wanted to observe.

The aim being to observe and analyse children's informal learning as accurately as possible, it seems essential to be able to observe them in the urban context in which they live on a daily basis and where they have the opportunity to exercise their independent mobility. While questionnaires could have shed light on more specific aspects of their habits, observation allows us to decipher behaviours of which children may be unaware and which would be difficult to uncover with simple questionnaires. The walking interviews were therefore also an opportunity to observe the children's behaviour during their walks, their body language and the way they moved around the city, in order to get as accurate an idea as possible of their relationship with the city. This was a method that combined observation and interaction, the aim not being to be as neutral and distant as possible but, on the contrary, to create, in the manner of the constructivists, a relationship of trust with the children that was more conducive to confidences, to be able to "see the world through the eyes of the subjects studied" (Corbetta, 2014).

3.5.5 Limitations of the research

Given the reality of the way the education system works in Italy, as I explained earlier, it was not possible for me to carry out my research in the district I had selected in a first place. It's very difficult to get in touch with the school directors, who are responsible for not one but for 4 or 5 schools, and when they can, they are usually too busy to agree to a last-minute collaboration.
I would add that the period chosen for this fieldwork was certainly not the best one, as May in Italy and June in France are respectively the last month of the school year in these two countries, with all that this implies in terms of bureaucracy, annual reports, class councils, preparation of projects for the following year, etc. and pedagogy, projects to be completed and end-of-year trips.
Added to this is the very special period caused by the restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic. There are very strict rules, especially in Italy, which mean new administrative constraints for access to schools. I also thought that I would be confronted with reticence on the part of my parents, who might have used this as a pretext to refuse me access to their home, for example, but this was not the case, at least not explicitly. The quarantines imposed on people who had contracted the virus were still in force at the time of the fieldwork, but although they may have slowed the pace of the meetings, they did not constitute a major obstacle.

As far as the walking interviews were concerned, it was not easy to organise this time with the children, with parents often citing scheduling problems. However, it is clear that the issue of trust in a stranger played an important role in the parents' decision whether or not to agree to what ended up being a walk around the neighbourhood with someone they hardly knew. The reluctance didn't come from the parents alone, since on several occasions the parents gave their consent, but it was the children who refused, quite simply putting into practice the precepts of parental education that have been repeated to them ever since they were old enough to understand: "never talk to strangers" and above all never follow them! I became clearly aware of this when, after seeing me leaving school, some of them not only didn't become more confident, but on the contrary attributed less than praiseworthy intentions to me. This was said in jest, but I sensed that deep down the mistrust was very real.

3.5.6 Ethical issues

As has been established by the numerous works carried out by the Reggio Childhood Foundation that "the child is competent" (Rinaldi, 2009), that’s why great importance has been given to the explanations they gave in response to the questions they have been asked and the analysis they themselves drawn from them.

This involvement of the subject being observed and the consideration of his or her point of view are intended to establish a collaboration between the researcher and the subject being observed (Hill, 2006).

Their consent is obtained following the *Measures for the protection of children within scientific research projects of the university of modena and Reggio Emilia*[8].It involves being able to ask questions about the research and giving time to make the decision to participate or not. Once consent is obtained, pseudonyms will be chosen to ensure confidentiality of the data collected.

In the school context, it's extremely difficult for them to object to what the teacher is asking them to do, so none of them refused to fill in the diary. As far as the walking interviews are concerned, some children are so used to simply obeying their parents that, even if you ask them, it's sometimes difficult to know whether they really agree to do it. This was the case with Ilian, whose mother had arranged the day of the meeting with me without asking for his consent. I therefore asked her to obtain his agreement before confirming the appointment. By regularly asking them during the walk where they wanted to go, what place they wanted to show me, I always made sure that they understood that they could say "home" to me and that they could end the walk whenever they wanted.

3.6 Procedures

3.6.1 Cronoprogramma

Surveys carried out:

Italy: from 03/05/2022 to 09/05/2022
France: from 07/05/2022 to 13/06/2022

May 2022 Italy, Ercolani Primary School, via Finelli 2, Bologna
23 children

- first week: for 7 days: distribution of diaries dei movimenti to the children
- second and third weeks: interviews with parents
- fourth and fifth week: walking interviews with children

June 2022 France, Meynis primary school, 8 rue Meynis, Lyon
27 children

[8] https://www.ricerca.unimore.it/site/home/ricerca-internazionale/child-protection-policy.html

- first week: for 7 days: distribution of diaries dei movimenti to the children
- second and third weeks: interviews with parents
- fourth and fifth week: walking interviews with the children

3.6.2 Parents interview research at the Irnerio School

In Italy, I first managed to find parents for the interviews via the class whatsapp group. The parent representative took care of sending a message to the class asking for volunteers, and then the first parents interviewed sent messages about their experiences and asked for more volunteers. Most of the contacts were taken after school when the parents were waiting for their children at 4.30 pm and in the morning at the entrance.

One of the mothers asked me specific questions about privacy and said that she would not have much to say about autonomy anyway, as her daughter did not have any yet.

3.6.3 Parents interview research at the at the Meynis school

I have to admit that I was quite surprised to find that there was no whatsapp group in the classroom in France. In Italy, it is so widespread that it has become almost compulsory. Moreover, it is complicated to intercept parents when they leave the school, as few of them come to pick them up. One of the mums in the class, Samira, helps me by creating a WhatsApp group with the mums she knows. This is how several mothers would contact me but most of the agreements for interviews were made by going every day in the morning and in the evening directly to the school exit, which remains the most effective technique in France as well as in Italy, because some parents come sometimes only once or twice a week to pick them up, so I had to go there as much as possible for this reason.

	
School entrance Ercolani (11/05/2022, photo Agathe Gillet)	School entrance Meynis (07/06/2022, photo Agathe Gillet)

Figure 3.14 Schools entrances

The two photos above were taken in the morning as the children entered the school, the first in front of the Ercolani school and the second in front of the Meynis school. What is immediately striking is the difference between the number of adults present and the impression that the children of the Meynis school are not accompanied by adults. The reality is however to be qualified, as some French parents are used to accompanying their children to a certain point, at the end of the street leading to the school for example, so as to give them the possibility to finish the journey alone, as they explained to me during the interviews, or simply to stand aside from the group of children who are preparing to enter the school.

3.6.4 The selection of children for the walking interviews

The children with whom I was able to carry out the walking interview were the children of the parents I interviewed and who gave me permission to do so. They usually asked their child if he or she was willing to do it and then we agreed on a date to go for a walk in the neighbourhood for about twenty minutes. I would inform the parents that, as I could not take notes while walking, I would record the conversation. I often noted a kind of reticence about this proposal to walk around the neighbourhood. It is not easy for some parents to let their child go wandering with a stranger! However, in Bologna I was not a complete stranger because, living in the neighbourhood, some parents had already had the opportunity to see me and they were quite confident when it came to letting me take their child for a walk.

Nevertheless, this was much more difficult, if not impossible, with those who didn't know me, as they preferred to claim a lack of time.

In France, although I was completely unknown to all the parents, some of them immediately agreed to have their child do this walking interview, one of them even wanting to arrange the appointment before talking about it with his child, which I refused because for me, the child's will and agreement came first.

3.7 Analysis of the data from the diary, interviews and walks

The data collection for this study involved three main methods: diaries and interviews and walks.

For the diary method, data was collected over seven days, including both school days and weekends, and transferred to an Excel spreadsheet (Appendix 4.1) for analysis. The spreadsheet contained ten categories of information, including details on children's movements and activities.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with parents from selected classes in France and Italy. Thirteen parents in Italy and twelve parents in France participated in the interviews, which were analyzed using Atlas.ti software. Thematic analysis was employed to identify common themes and experiences related to parenting practices, social contacts, and opinions about the living environment.

Additionally, walking interviews were conducted with children, allowing them to guide the researcher through their neighborhoods and share their perspectives. These interviews were also recorded and analyzed using Atlas.ti software. This methods provided comprehensive insights into children's movements, parental practices, and perceptions of their living environments in both France and Italy.

CHAPTER 4

How Children's Independent Mobility looks like in term of frequencies, activity and company

This chapter seeks an answer to the first sub-question of this study: how Children's Independent Mobility looks like in term of frequencies, activity and company. Using a quantitative method, I analysed the data collected from the diaries filled in by the children over the course of a week. The aim of this study was to obtain precise data on their comings and goings in their daily lives, so that this information could then be discussed in interviews with their parents. The second objective was to gather figures in an area where few exist, both in France and in Italy.

As Sandrine Depeau (2013) points out, although urban planners have only recently begun to take an interest in the pedestrian city, most national surveys tend not to take into account pedestrian journeys of less than ten minutes, which makes children's mobility invisible. It was important to enrich with information coming directly from the person concerned, and of providing more precise information in the field of CIM that could be useful for those towns that lack it.

In independent mobility, I have also included journeys made with siblings or peers because, since they take place without adult supervision, they also represent a form of autonomy, as Rivière (2014) suggests. As far as journeys with siblings are concerned, only siblings of the same age in the case of twins (2 in France and 2 in Italy) or younger siblings were counted. This choice was made to avoid including journeys with brothers and sisters who may be much older, or even of age, and who are responsible for their younger brother or sister, behaving more like companions than peers. So in this study, alone means also with peers and siblings.

The activities represented in this study are those that occupy most of children's time and have been divided into the following subcategories: institutional activities, outdoor activities, children's sociability, commercial outings. The institutional activities category covers all activities in which children take part, such as sport, music, catechism, indoor sport, cultural activities, etc. In other words, these are activities, whether paid for or not, organised by adults for them. They are thus distinct from the outdoor activities category, which are activities that are not programmed by a restrictive timetable but can be decided on the spur of the moment according to availability and desire. They mainly take place in a public park or in the courtyard of a building, in the company of peers, siblings or adults. The purpose of the children's sociability category is to count the number of times a child is invited to a friend's or a relative's house or courtyard, because even if these invitations alone do not define the child's sociablity, they are an aspect that makes it possible to

measure the intensity of their social relationships. The commercial outings category represents outings to shops, bars or restaurants in the neighbourhood or town, which by definition are chargeable and can take place independently or accompanied by an adult.

This chapter will therefore begin by analysing children's mobility as a whole, before looking in more detail at the specific features of mobility linked to gender and the different types of activity: mobility to school, to institutional activities, to outdoor activities and to conclude, the mobility linked to the children's sociability.

4.1 Overview of the diary analisis

As detailed in chapter 3, the method chosen to gather the most accurate information possible on children's movements is the diary method. This is a quantitative method based on the analysis of data for each of the seven days, including both school days and weekend days. The data was then transferred to an Excel spreadsheet (see Appendix 4.1) so that the most relevant data could be extracted for this analysis. The table contains 10 different categories: name, gender, country, day of the week, to or from school, what, with whom, how, where, when, with sub-categories based on what the children wrote in their diaries.

name	- children’s name
gender	- girl - boy
country	- France - Italy
day	- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday
go/back	- go - back
what	- institutional activities (sport, music, catechism, indoor sport, cultural activity…) - outdoor activities (parc, courtyard, orchard) - friend’s house (including friend’s courtyard) - commercial outings (food venues, shops, administrative errands) also include care (hairdresser, medical care)

with whom	- independent (alone, brother/sister: same age or smaller or with friends, in one case cousins) - mum - dad (including step-father) - family (a group that can include mum, dad, grandparents, brother, sister, granny/grandpa…) - other adult (usually a friend parent, babysitter)
how	- foot (include kids scooter) - own bike - bus - car (include moto)
where	- my neighbourhood - other neighbourhood - other city
when	- morning - afternoon - evening

Figure 4.1 Diaries analysis subcategories

4.2 Children's mobility over a week

4.2.1 Total number of weekly activities per child

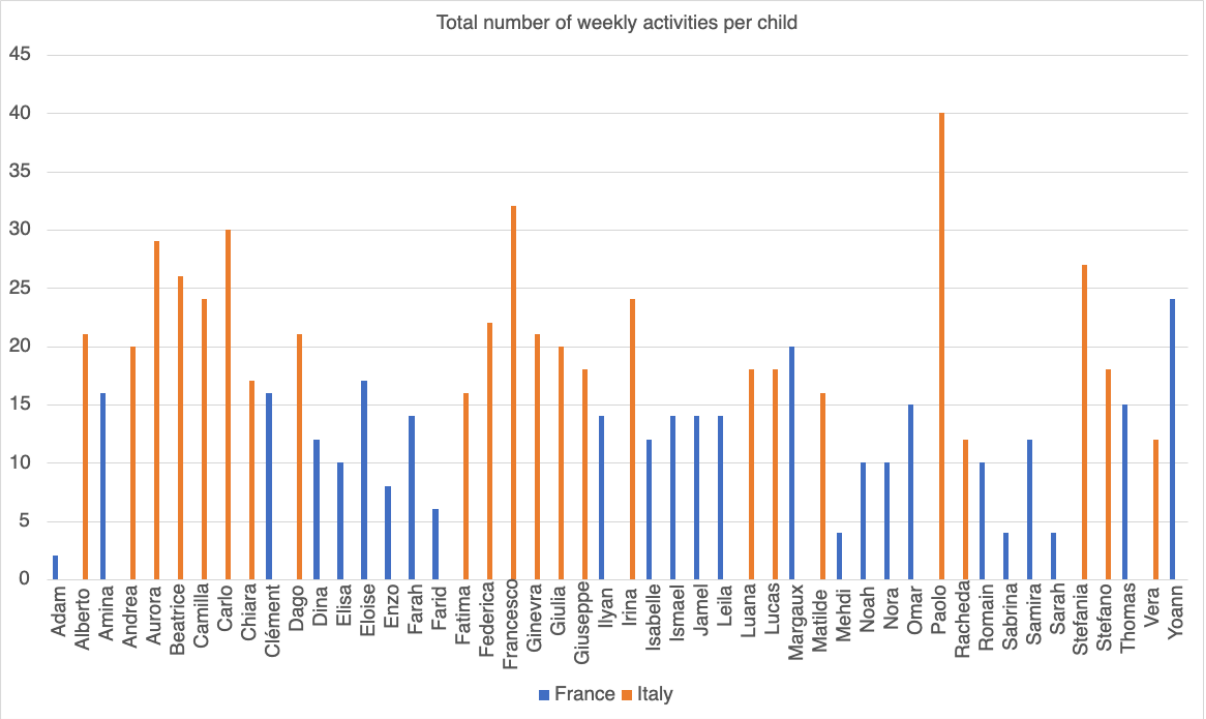


Figure 4.2 Number of times French and Italian children (N=48) go out in a week

The graphic above shows all outings done by these 25 French and 23 Italian children during a week, including both school days and week end. Two of the children in the class in France did not complete the diario, and only one in Italy. These activities include school, institutional activities, outdoor activities, the children's sociability and the commercial outings.

The total number of outings is 297 in France and 502 in Italy. During the week of data collection, the French children did not have classes on Wednesdays because primary schools are closed in France on that day, but also on Mondays, which were public holidays, so there may have been differences in the number of outings. However, these days without school were also an opportunity to observe how the children used this free time, whether it was exceptional, on Mondays, or regular, on Wednesdays.

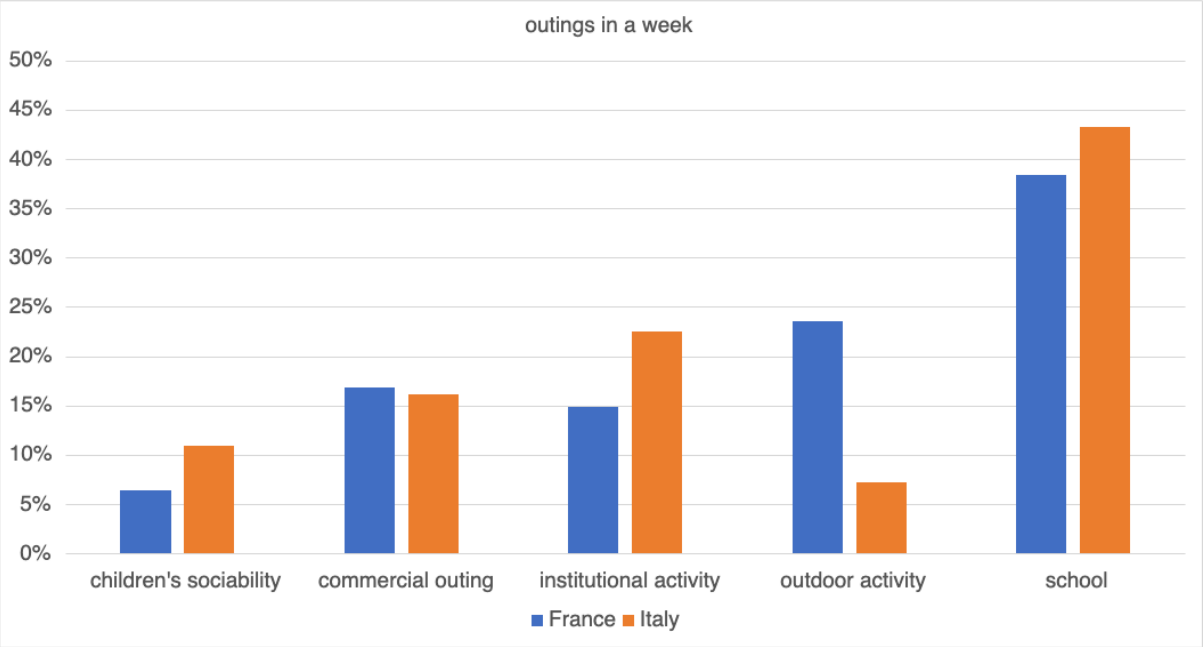


Figure 4.3 Proportion of different outings made by all the French and Italian children in a week

This figure (n°4.3) above illustrates the number of times and for what reason children leave home in a week. School and institutional activities are the most common in Italy. I also find that in Italy going to the shops is a more popular activity to do on your own or with peers than playing in the park, whereas in France outdoor activities are cited more often than the shop as places where they are allowed to go independently.

4.2.2 Children spending their time outside the house

This graph (Figure n°4.3) also shows a great disparity in the way French and Italian children spend their free time, because although the French apparently do far fewer institutional activities than the Italians, this seems to give them the opportunity to use this free time for outings. These graphs also illustrate the fact that the busier children are with institutionalised activities, the less time they have for free outdoor play. As Zeiher (2002) observed, the lives of many children in the western world are increasingly institutionalized and insularized, relying on adult orchestration of their mobility.

I would add that, during this week, only 11 out of 24 children in the Italian class mentioned an outdoor activity, whereas in France it was 17 out of 27. So, during this week, for more than half of the children in the Italian class, the only opportunity for outdoor play was the schoolyard. This figure is a far cry from the

results of the study conducted by Newson and Newson in 1976, which described 60% of the children as outdoor children, and we are not talking about outdoor play without adult supervision, but simply outdoor play opportunities. We are closer to Prezza's findings in Italy in 2007, that a high number haven't had the possibility to play outdoors, even under adult supervision, during the week studied.

4.2.3 Number of times French and Italian children go out independently in a week

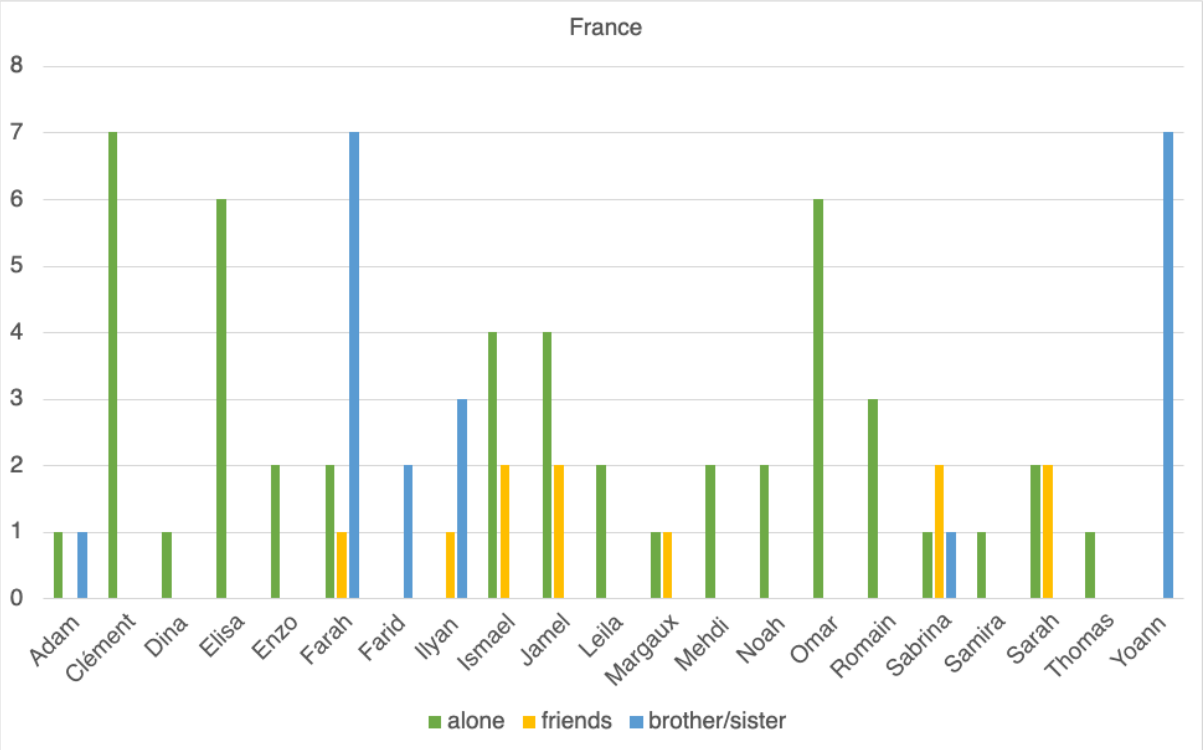


Figure 4.4 Number of times French children go (N=21) out independently in a week

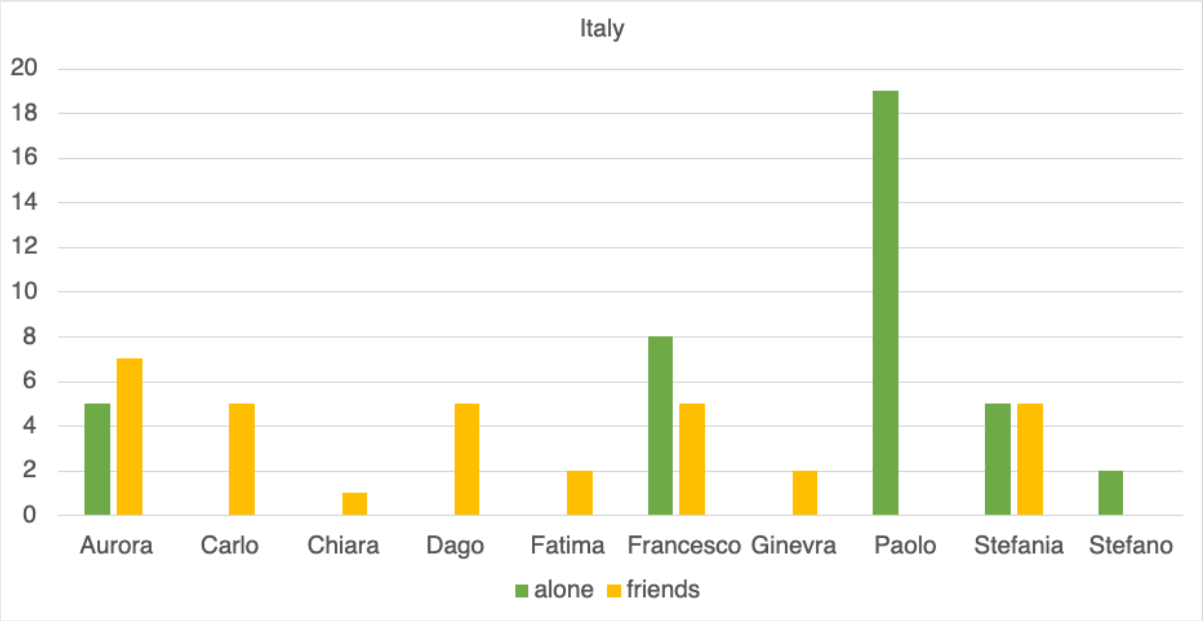


Figure 4.5 Number of times Italian children go (N=10) out independently in a week

Independent mobility has different levels of analysis, and although in this chapter, as explained in the introduction, trips made alone as well as with friends or siblings of the same age are considered independent, distinguishing between the latter allows us to shed further light on independent mobility.

When looking at these two tables what is immediately noticeable is the big difference in the number of children with independent mobility, 21 out of the 25 children in the class in France and only 10 out of the 23 children in the class in Italy. Friends appear to be a resource for the Italian children, since most of the journeys were made in their company, whereas siblings were completely absent in Italy. This does not mean that they are all only children, but simply that their brothers and sisters may be older or much younger and therefore do not appear in this graph. Nonetheless, as families in Italy are generally smaller than in France, the absence of younger siblings is not surprising.

Most of the children who travelled independently did so several times a week, with only 4 in France and 1 in Italy travelling just once. Those who travelled the most were Farah in France, 10 times in one week, and Paolo, 18 times. Paolo's case is interesting in that he far outstrips all his Italian colleagues, but also outstrips the French.

The total number of independent outings in the two countries remains quite low. In France, there were a total of 297 outings, out of which 80 were independent, constituting 26% of outings made independently. In Italy, there were a total of 502 outings, with 71 of them being independent, accounting for only 14% of independent outings. I would point out that it is possible that some children forgot to record trips and that some sheets were missing, especially among the French children. However, it is unlikely that even adding this information would change the result significantly.

Finally, these graphs also highlight the fact that 6 children in France and 14 in Italy had no independent mobility at all during this week.

4.2.4 Indoor children

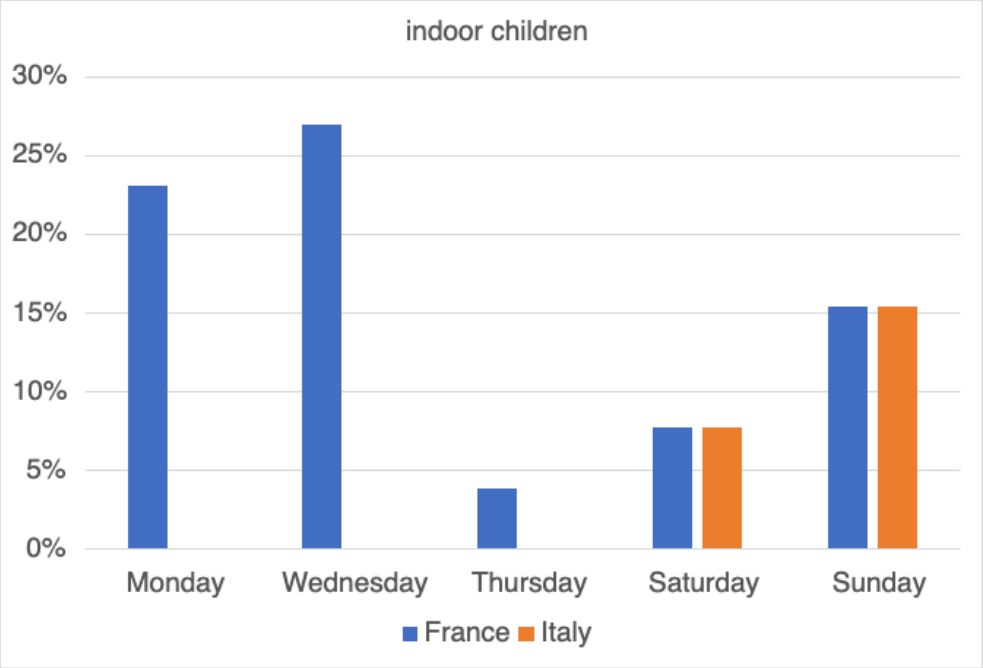


Figure 4.6 Day of the week showing the proportion of French and Italian indoor children

It should be noted from this table that the Monday of the week in which the diaries were completed was a public holiday in France, hence the high proportion of children who did not leave their homes on that day. Also in France, Wednesday is a day when there is no primary school, which is why a high proportion of children stay at home. However, during this week, Italians had school every day, so they went out of their homes at least once.

As far as weekends are concerned, the proportions of children staying at home are absolutely identical in France and Italy. In both countries, there is one child who does not go out on either Saturday or Sunday. What this table shows is the increase in the proportion of children who do not leave their homes when their parents are unable to take them out, as is probably the case for Whit Monday, which is a public holiday for children but not for all parents, since it is up to the employer to decide whether staff should come to work or not. The same applies to Wednesdays, when the children are small many parents, especially mothers, don't work on that day, but when the children grow up they go back to work full-time, and it's very likely

that many of them feel that at 11 years old their child is fit to stay at home on their own.

So while almost a quarter of children remain confined to their homes on certain days of the week, this is not the case at weekends, when the majority spend them in the company of their parent(s), going shopping, taking part in an activity or outing to the park or out on the town.

Finally, I would like to add that, as has already been written, it is possible that some children do not indicate when they are playing in the courtyard of their building, perhaps considering that this does not correspond to the image they have of an outing, such as those they might go on with their parents, for example, since, while they are outside, they are in fact staying at home.

4.3 Gender differences

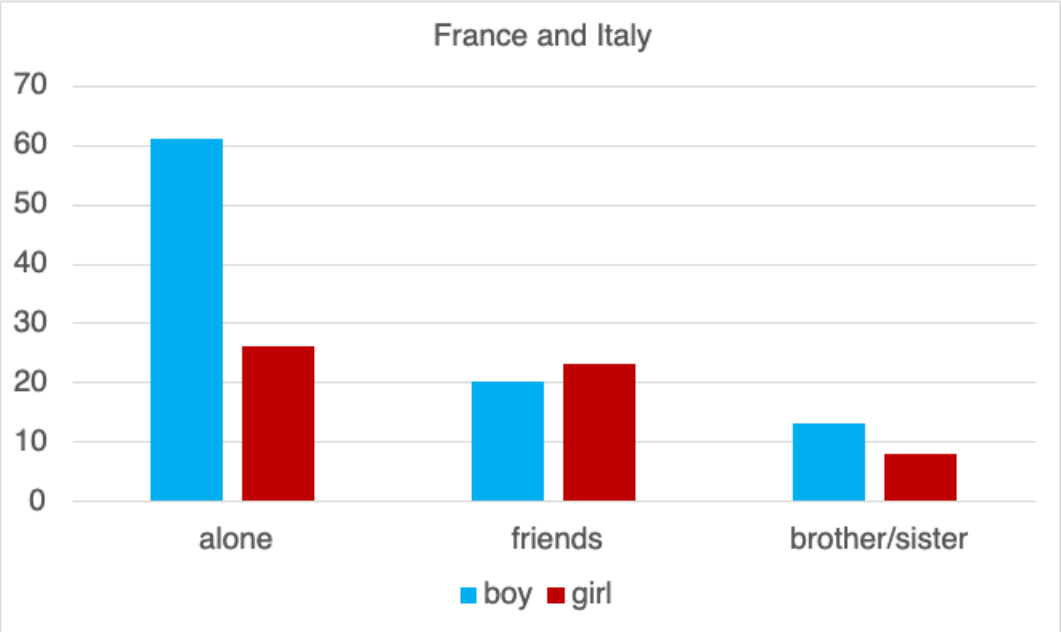


Figure 4.7 Total number of times boys (N=22) or girls (N=26) travel alone or with peers in France and Italy

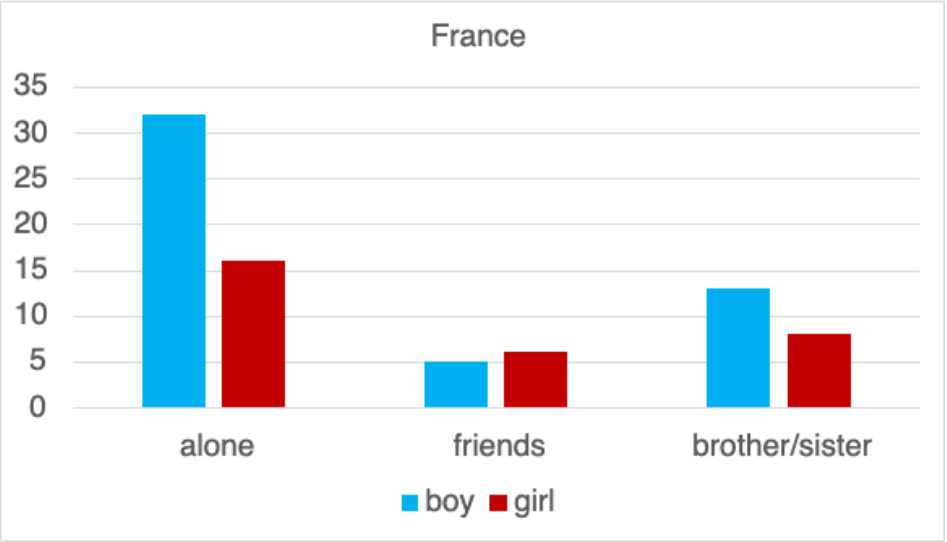


Figure 4.8 Number of times boys or girls travel alone or with peers in France

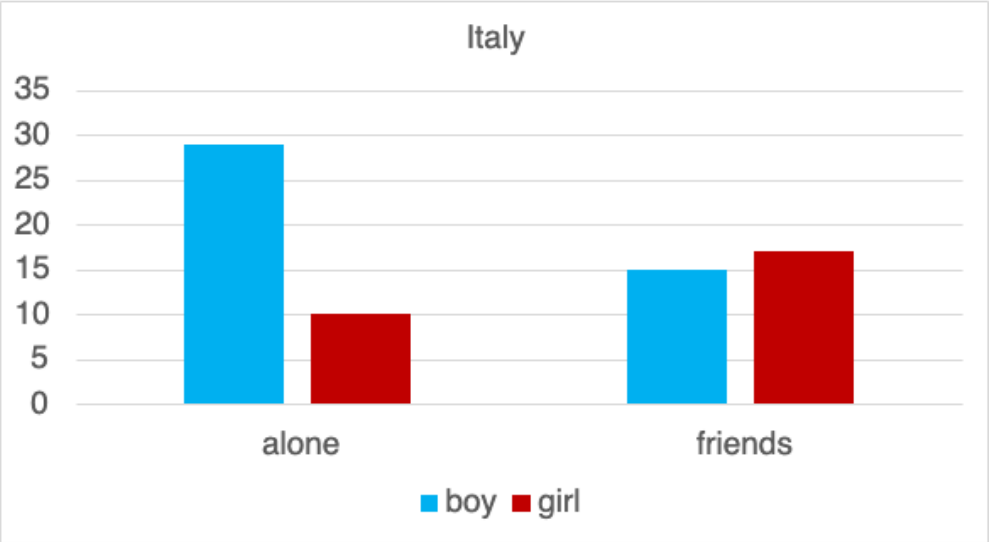


Figure 4.9 Number of times boys or girls travel alone or with peers in Italy

Unsurprisingly, as is the case in most CIM studies (Prezza et al., 2001, Tonucci et al. 2002; Danic et al, 2010), there is a clear difference between the number of journeys made independently by girls and boys. The data are fairly similar in France and Italy, especially where boys are concerned, as there is a clearer difference between French and Italian girls, the former apparently having greater independent mobility.

Taking the data for the two countries together, 64% of boys and 35% of girls travel to school independently, for institutional activities, 72% of boys and 27% of girls, and for outdoor activities, 60% of boys and 40% of girls move independently.

We note, however, that more girls than boys travel with peers in both France and Italy, whether this is the result of their own will or that of their parents, and it seems that greater mobility is granted to them when they are in the company of their friend(s). This confirms the findings of Rivière (2014) showing that parents are more inclined to let their children travel in groups, believing them to be better protected from outside dangers. What's more, as Depeau (2008) states, this peer group also has "a function of reassurance and regulation of the parents' emotions and vigilance". In Italy, these peers are generally friends, because families are smaller overall, and the possibility of being accompanied by a brother or sister is also diminishing. In fact, it is non-existent here, whereas it is very present among French children.

4.4 The mobility to school

Children's journeys to school are the most widely studied in the literature. However, as mentioned above, in France and Italy, very few surveys have been carried out to analyse children's mobility per se. Schools and public authorities are generally interested in this data to know more about how they travel in order to implement new strategies aimed at reducing car traffic in the streets around their schools. The aim here is to shed a different light by taking a closer look at the many ways in which the children in these two classes get to school.

It should be remembered that these data were collected at the very end of the primary school cycle, class 5 in May for Italy and class CM2 in June for France, the last month of the school year in both countries. This is a special time in the lives of both children and parents, with some of them approaching it as a phase of preparation for Junior High. This is why the last few months of primary school can be an opportunity for them to anticipate this transition and to already be implementing discrete independent mobility processes (Lehman-Frisch et.al, 2014).

4.4.1 Mode of transport

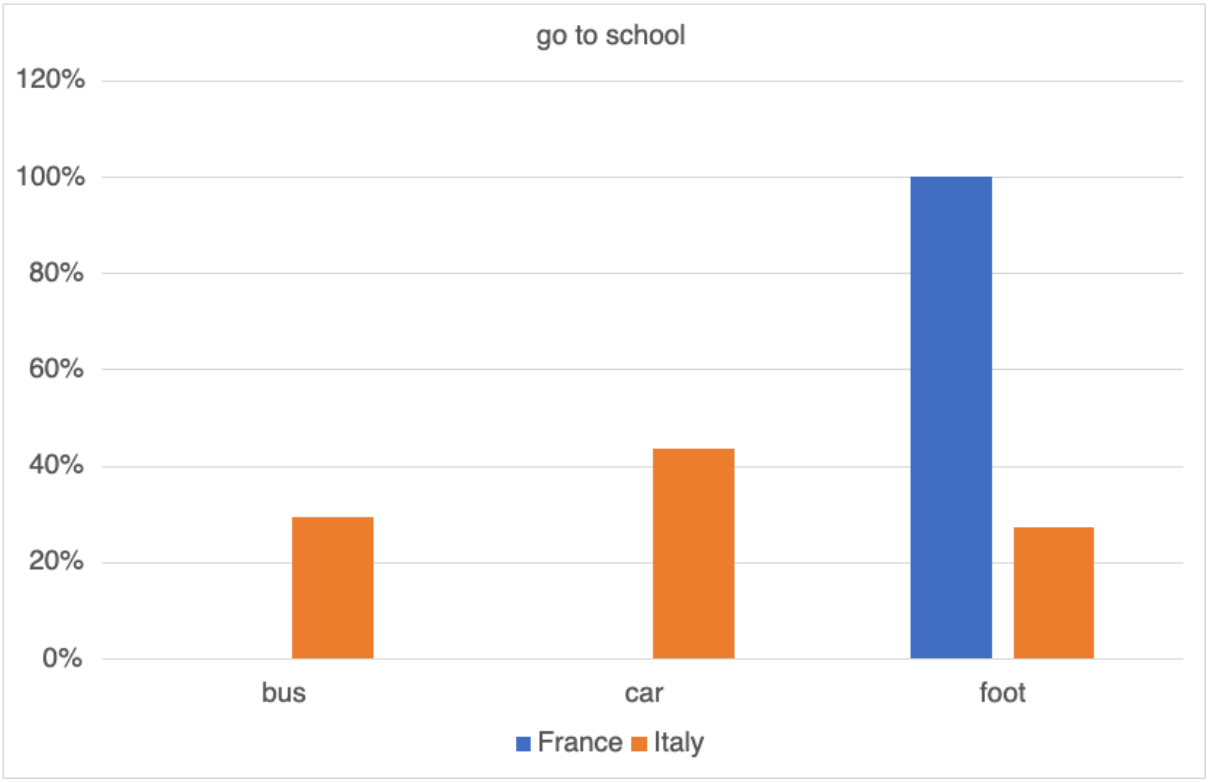


Figure 4.10 How French and Italian children travel to school

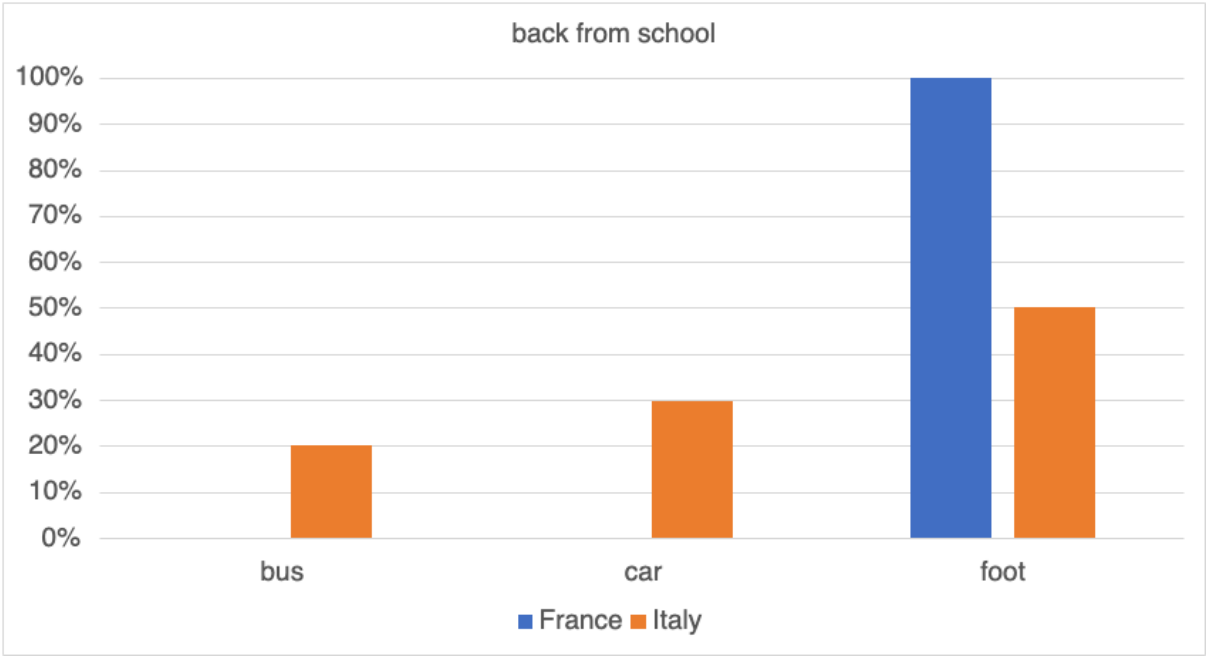


Figure 4.11 How French and Italian children come back from school

As we can see, the French children all go by foot, while the Italian also use cars and buses. How can we explain the big difference between the travel patterns of French and Italian children? One of the explanations probably lies in the number of schools available in each of the two neighbourhoods studied. As the two maps in the appendices (Appendices 4.2 and 4.3) show, in the French Villette - Paul Bert district there are up to 6 public and private primary schools (10 if you widen the diameter a little), whereas in the Italian Irnerio district there are only 2 (4 if you widen the diameter a little). Children therefore probably have to cover longer distances and their parents are more inclined to accompany them, distance being a significant obstacle to the granting of independent mobility (Valentine et.al, 1997).

The fact that some children come to school by bus shows that their place of residence is quite far away; the use of the car can sometimes be explained by the parents' simple need to accompany their child and then continue on to their place of work, even if they live next door to the school. In this district of Bologna, however, the proportion of children accompanied by car or motorbike remains a minority compared to other modes of travel, 35% on the outward journey and 29% on the return, whereas 41% on the outward journey and 50% on the return are travelling on foot or by bus. This proportion of Italian children actively travelling to school is therefore much higher than the 26,9% reported by Okkio, the Italian health observatory (Ministero della Salute, CCM, ISS, 2018). On the French side, the children at this school in Lyon also far surpass the 40% recorded by Who Europe in 2018.

4.4.2 The journey to school accompanied or independently

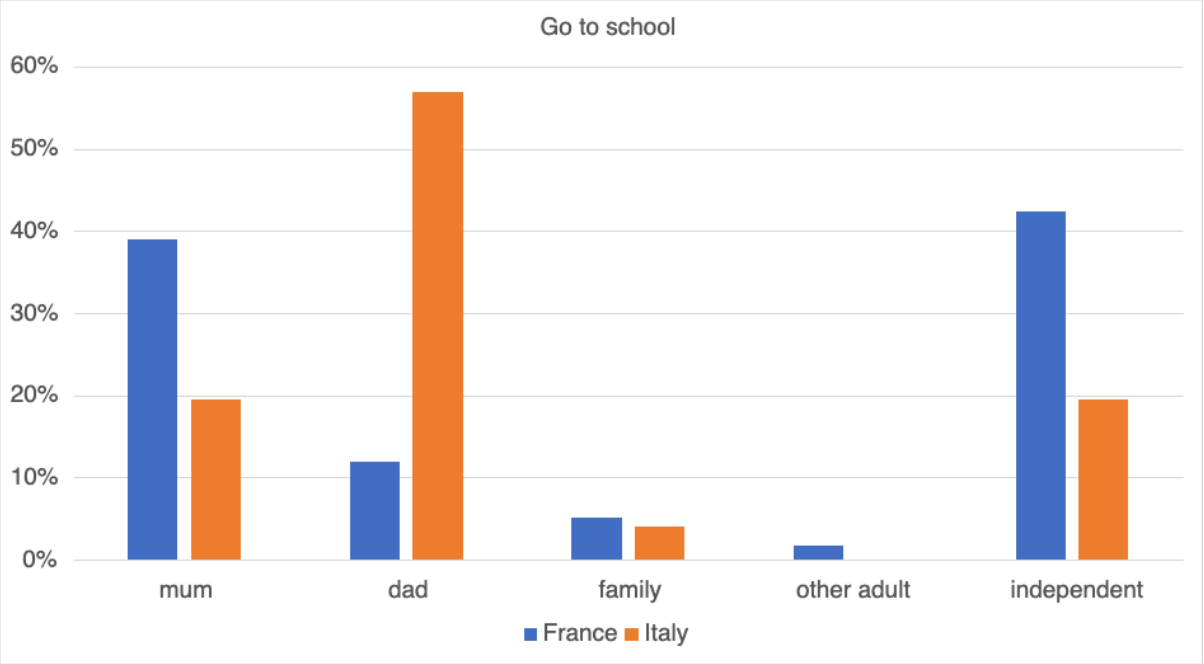


Figure 4.12 Proportion of French and Italian children travelling to school accompanied or not

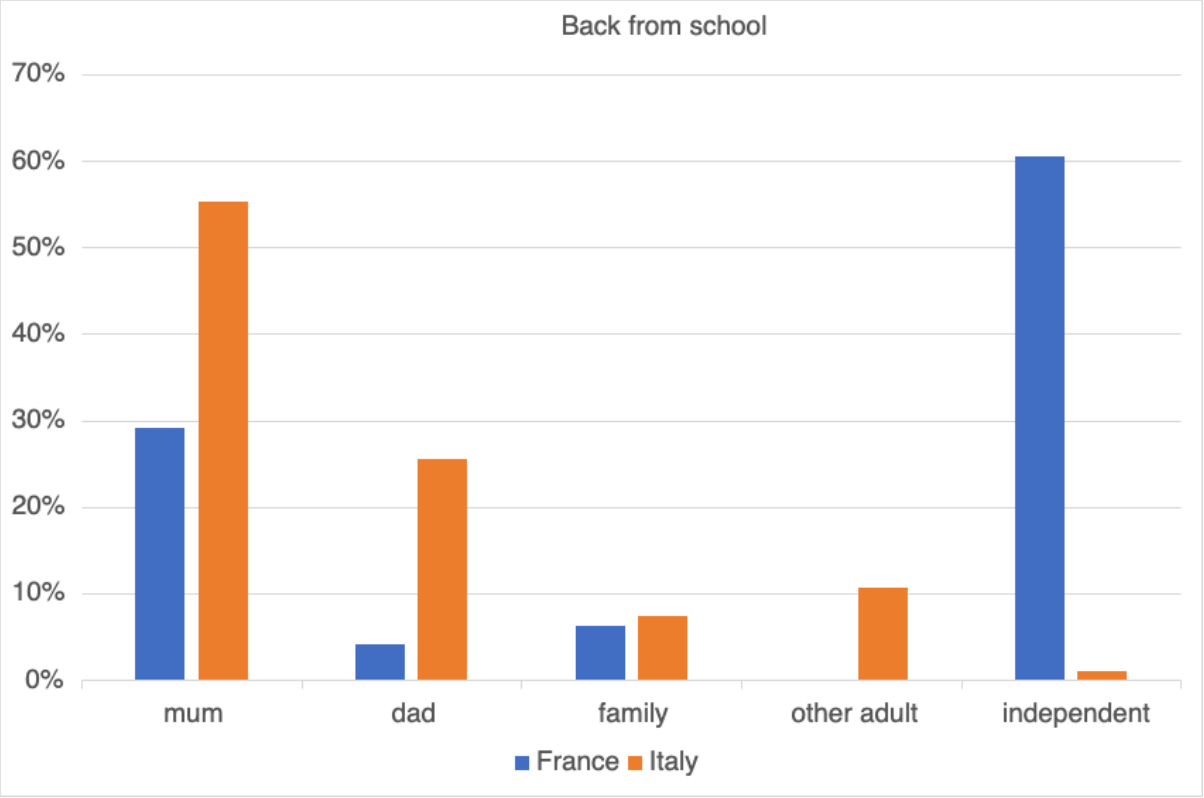


Figure 4.13 Proportion of French and Italian children travelling back from school accompanied or not

What stands out at first glance is the great difference between French and Italian children who go and return to school independently. On the outward journey 42% of journeys made by children in a week in France are made independently whereas they are 19% in Italy (N=5). The return is also very different, with 60% of journeys of the French children coming back from school independently, compared with just 1% of Italian children. The very low proportion of Italian children returning home independently from school can easily be explained simply by the fact that they are forbidden to leave school alone; the 1% is due to the fact that Francesco was simply “collected” by a trusted parent when he left school and then continued on his way home alone, as his mother explained me during the interview. Italy is the only European country to have adopted such a ban (Borgogni, 2020); it is not a law but a provision that schools may or may not include in their school rules, which means that if the school rules do not say so, parents can, in theory, sign a form making them liable in the event of an accident on the way home from school. However, very few parents are aware of this possibility and I am not aware of any school in Bologna that has such a form.

This 19% of Italian children able to go to school independently is above the national average of 8% (Borgogni, 2020), which is very low compared with other European countries, the children from the Bologna school outnumbered those from three primary schools in Rome, who accounted for 11,7% of all children going to school unaccompanied by an adult (study carried out in 2010 on children aged 8 to 11; Prezza et al., 2010). It should be noted, however, that while Italian children do not go to school alone, more of them go with friends than French children. The group of children represented here is what we might call an independent walking bus, which the children in this class set up at the very end of the school year, and which we will discuss in chapters 5 and 6. In France, when they come back, more of them go home in the company of their friends than in Italy for the same reason as mentioned above.

The percentage of French children going to school independently is very similar (41%) to the results obtained by Depeau (2008) in Paris and the Paris region.

4.4.3 Involving parents or other adults

There is also a significant difference between the time schedule Italian and French parents devote to taking their children to school. More than half of Italian fathers take their children to school in the morning, while only 11% of French fathers do so. On the return journey, even more Italians parents take their children from school, 25% compared with 4% of French parents.

It should be noted, however, that in both countries, mothers are much more present than fathers when their children leave school. As we saw in chapter 2, this is undoubtedly largely due to the choice of an occupation that allows them to be available at the end of the day. In Italy, this responsibility is shared almost equally between the two parents, with 54% of Italian mothers taking on this task when the child returns home. The proportion of French mothers accompanying or collecting their child from school is: 38% on the outward journey and 29% on the return. It seems that French mothers take advantage of the possibility of letting their offspring return home independently, whereas Italian parents have to rely on forms of family solidarity or friendship represented by grandparents, older brothers or sisters or friends: a total of 12% in Italy compared with 4% in France. On the other hand, from this small number of Italian and French parents represented in this research, very little rely on people they pay to pick up their child: babysitters only account for 1% of those accompanying their child in France on the outward journey and are absent on the return journey, while in Italy they are only present on the return journey (5%).

4.5 Children's mobility to and from institutional activities

4.5.1 Mode of transport

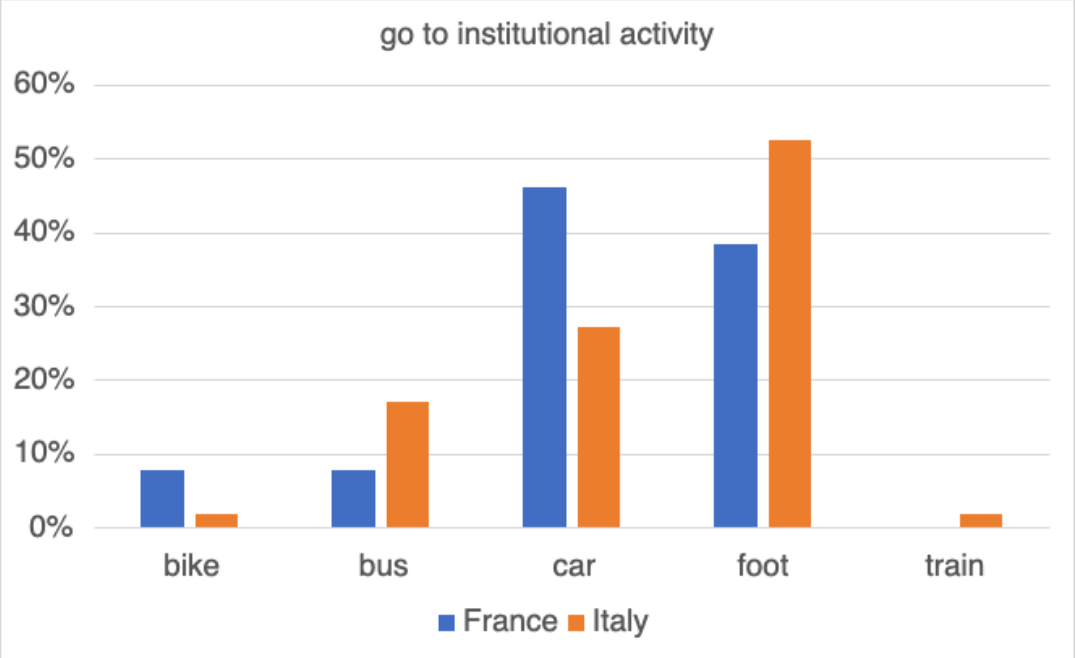


Figure 4.14 How French and Italian children go to institutional activities

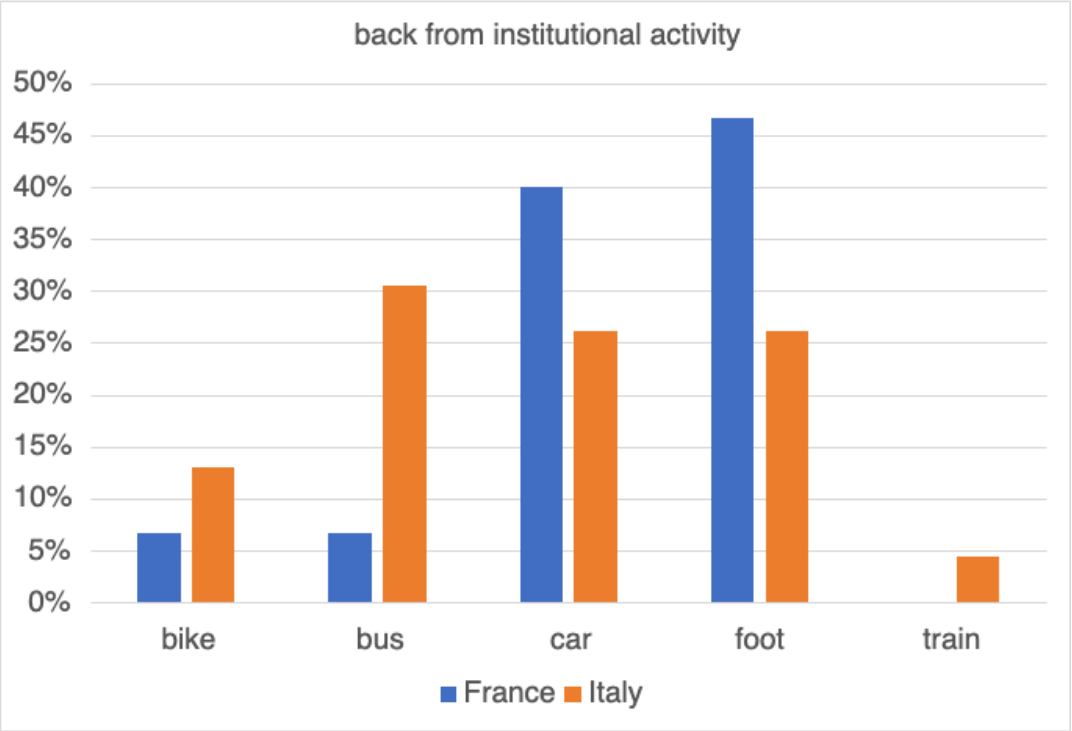


Figure 4.15 How French and Italian children come back from institutional activities

The fact that for institutional activities more than 50% in Italy go by foot demonstrates the proximity of the places, generally in their neighbourhood, where these activities take place. It should be noted, however, that many return journeys are made by car in France, and it is likely that fathers, who are mainly responsible for this journey, pick up their children on their way home from work.

4.5.2 The journey to institutional activities accompanied or independently

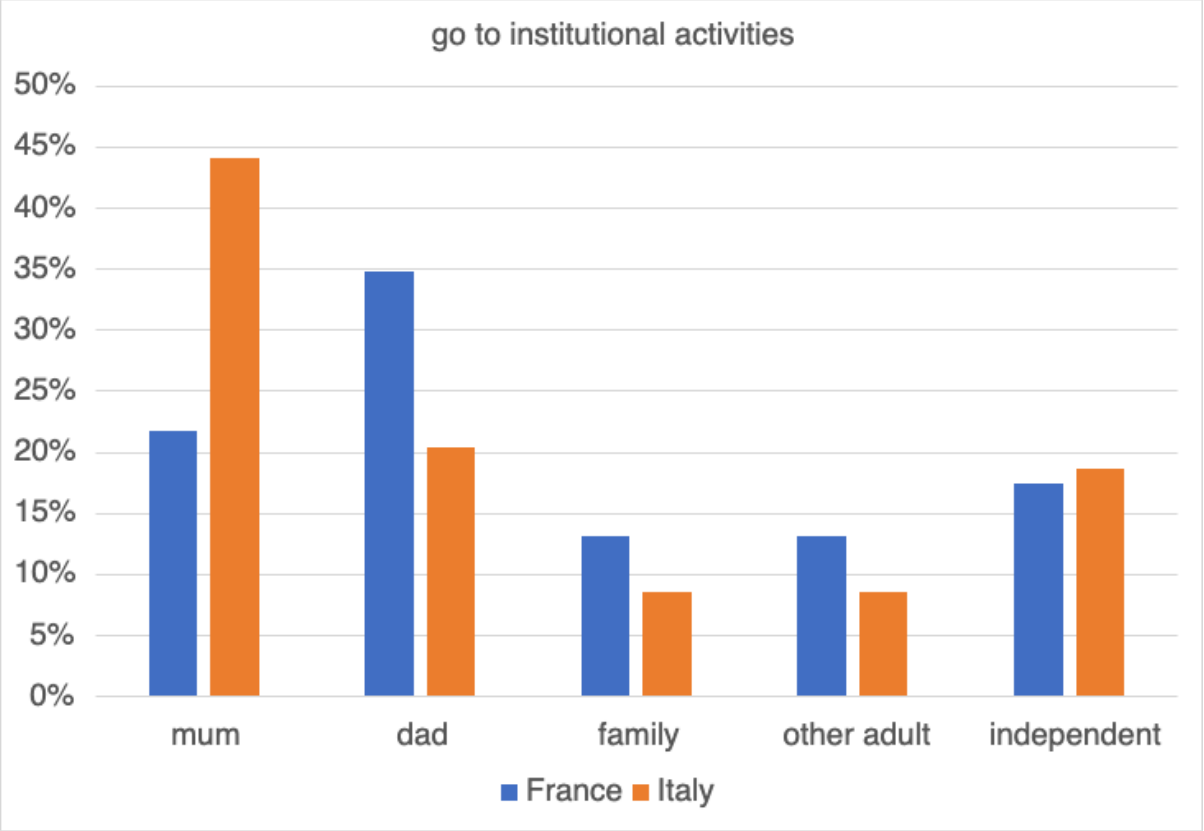


Figure 4.16 Proportion of French and Italian children travelling to institutional activities accompanied by different types of carer

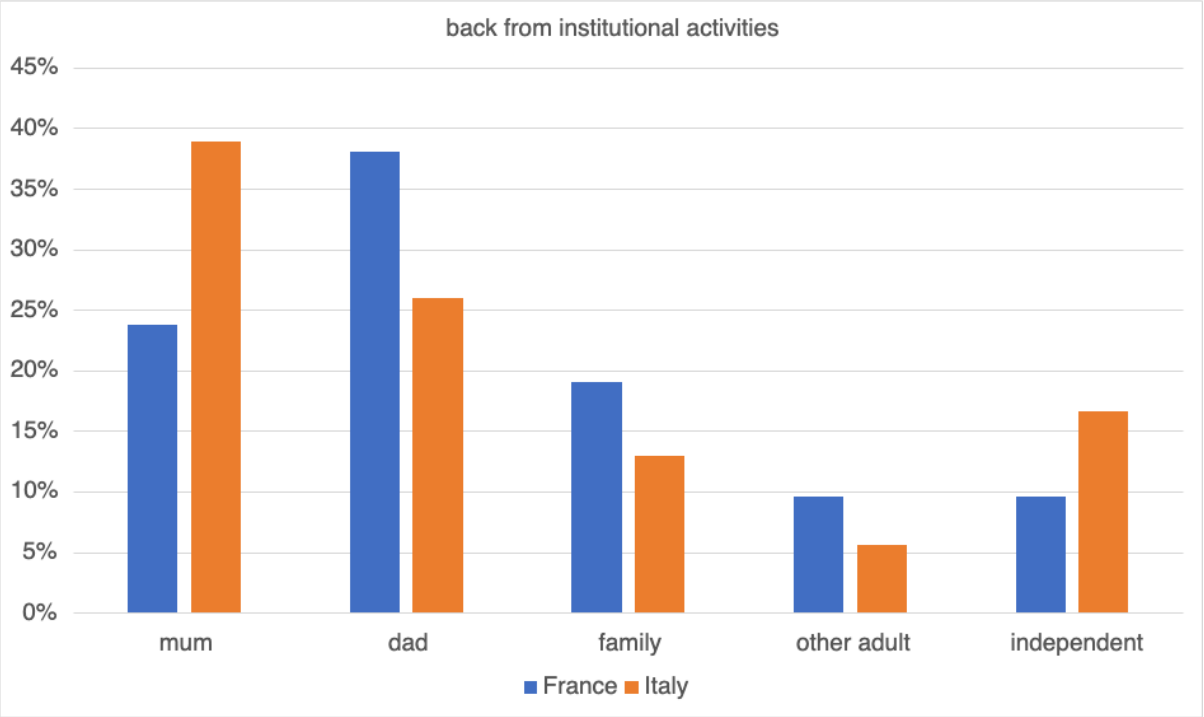


Figure 4.17 Proportion of French and Italian children travelling from institutional activities accompanied by different types of carer

It is very interesting to note the big difference between the proportion of Italian children who are allowed to return from school independently, 1%, and the proportion of those who are allowed to come back from an institutional activity independently, which here is 18%. These figures are very similar to those obtained in research carried out in Cassino (Borgogni, 2018), which found a clear difference between being able to go to school alone and being allowed to go to friends' houses or to institutional activities.

Why is there such a difference? The main explanation is undoubtedly that Italian children's institutional activities take place in their neighbourhood, since over 50% can get there by foot (Figure 4.14) and, as I mentioned earlier, distance is an important incentive for parents to grant them autonomy. As these activities are closer to home than school, parents are more likely to give permission. I would add that as the school does not allow children to go out on their own, the message that reaches parents is that they do not have to give their children more independent mobility, quite the contrary, so they tend to conform to the behaviour of other parents by accompanying their child, fearing otherwise that they might be “illegal”. As far as institutional activities are concerned, the relationship with the educators and the structure where these activities take place is not uniform; some will allow children to go home on their own, others not, which is why for some parents, it is the very existence of this permission that legitimises the autonomy granted to their child and they may therefore “jump the gun” by letting them go home on their own.

However, in both France and Italy, it is not always the same children who travel independently to school and to institutional activities. For example, Carlo and Dago go every morning to school independently, but they are always accompanied to the institutional activities. Whereas, Stefania goes independently 4 times in the week to her activity but never to school. We also observe differences in France, with only 3 children going independently to the institutional activity.

So, the reasons why parents allow or do not allow their children to travel alone to places close to home can be of various kinds, which I will come back to in the next chapter.

4.5.2 Involving parents and other adults

In France, only 9% of children return home independently from the institutional activities. This may be due to the time being too late for parents to let their children go home alone, or it may be due to the fact that some parents, having finished their day's work, are then available to pick up their children, as seems to be the case for many fathers in France, 40% of whom pick up their children from after-school activities. This result is quite different from what Brachet and Salles wrote in 2011, when they considered that fathers were "not very physically present (...) not very involved in daily tasks".

What is also noticeable is the strong involvement of Italian mothers in accompanying their children to and from activities and we observe un gender division of the tasks between Italian fathers and Italian mothers. As for the school, where fathers are more present to bring their children to school, more fathers pick up their children from institutional activities. This may be explained by the working hours of fathers, who generally finish later than mothers. However, even if they do not change occupations or apply for a part-time job, as is the case for many women after the birth of their first child, and still wish to participate in the management of the children, they cope with their schedules by assigning themselves tasks that are compatible with their timetable, going in the morning and returning late from an activity.

In both countries, the family and other adults are also involved; these are often friends whose children take part in the same activity, or a sports centre teacher who picks up the children directly from school and is indicated by the term "other adult" in the diary. Finally, in a very small minority (2%), grandparents and older siblings (4%) are also called upon in Italy. So it cannot really be said that the family here has the role of “social shock absorber” often referred to in Italy (Lazar, 2009; Ghezzi, 2012) as a “decentralisation” by the government of family care to family members, in particular grandparents, because it is essentially the parents, and in particular the mothers, who provide the support. This can be explained by the attractiveness of the University of Bologna and the economic vitality of a region like

Emilia Romagna, which are driving a whole population from the south of the peninsula to come and settle in Bologna. So, as they move, the links with the family of origin, and especially with the grandparents, become weaker, and the help traditionally provided by the grandparents is often lacking for all these newly settled families.

4.6 The mobility to and from outdoor activities

4.6.1 Mode of transport

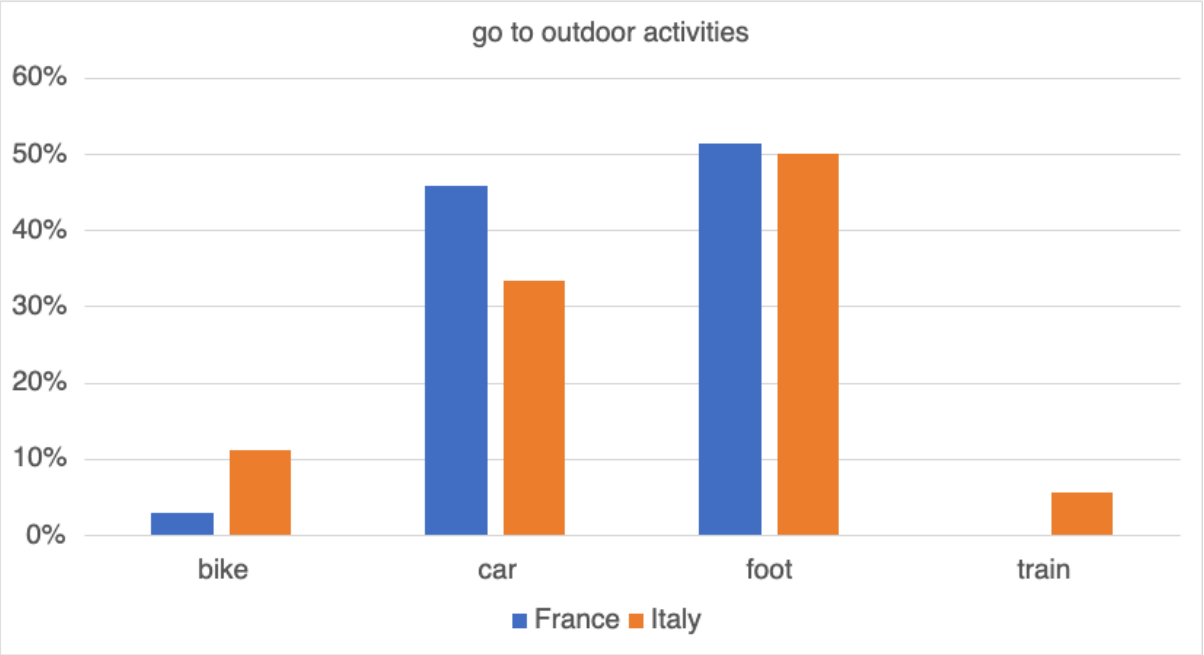


Figure 4.18 How French and Italian children travel to outdoor activities

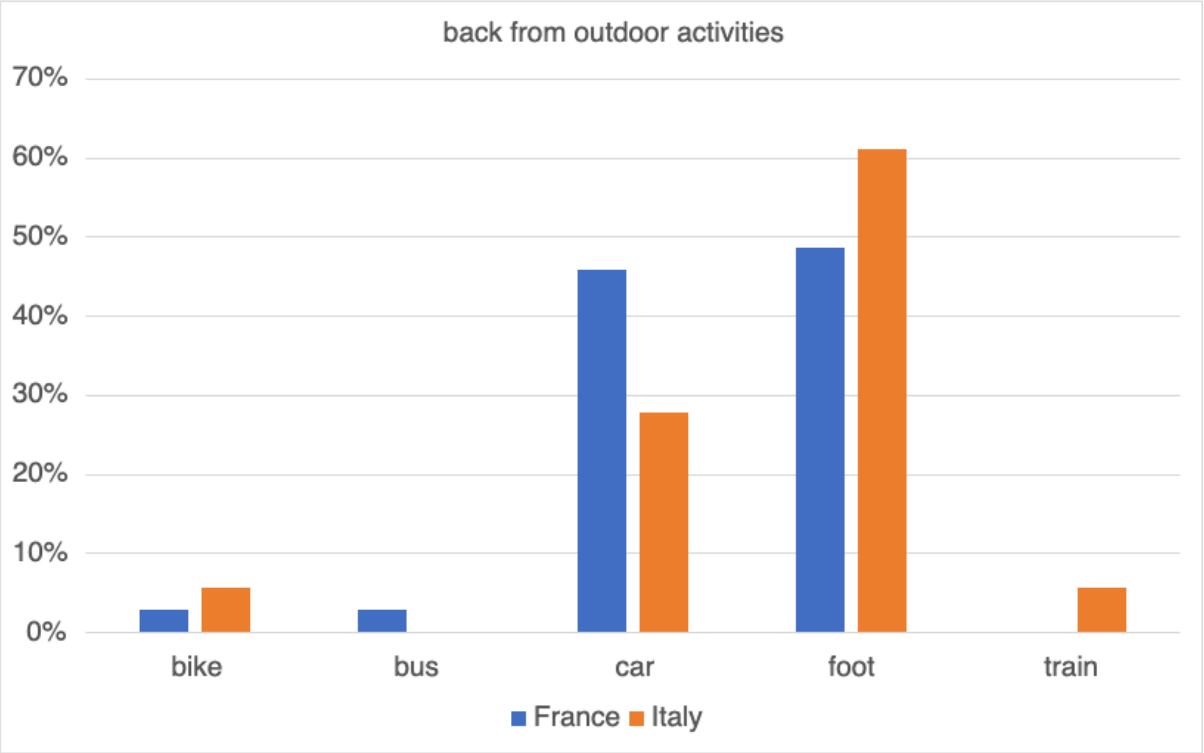


Figure 4.19 How French and Italian children travel from outdoor activities

The tables illustrating modes of transport for institutional activities and outdoor activities show that cycling is used here more to get to activities than as a simple recreational activity, as suggested by Hillman (1990) in his study. This can no doubt be explained by the fact that 30 years have passed since that study and policies in favor of soft mobility, such as cycling, have evolved considerably in Bologna and Lyon. In both cities, the number of cycle paths has increased significantly, enabling parents with young children to opt for this means of transport, which is now considered to be less dangerous than before.

When it comes to outdoor activities, what we also notice is a greater use of the car compared with all other forms of travel. In fact, 55% of families in France choose to travel to another town at the weekend, or on a public holiday, by car or bus. In Italy, if we add together those using the car and the train, we get 40% of families who go out of town at the weekend. On the one hand, these figures may reflect parents' desire to give their children the opportunity to experience other types of space (Rivière, 2014) and to get out of an area that is often considered too polluted. This phenomenon is also in line with the idea put forward by Grafmeyer (1991) that the fact of living in one neighbourhood rather than another is of little importance, as their activities, professional relationships and friendships, and family networks, are ultimately largely relocated.

However, the equally high number of families walking on these outings suggests that a large number of children do indeed have the opportunity to develop a knowledge of and social skills in the neighbourhood.

4.6.2 The journey to outdoor activities accompanied or independently

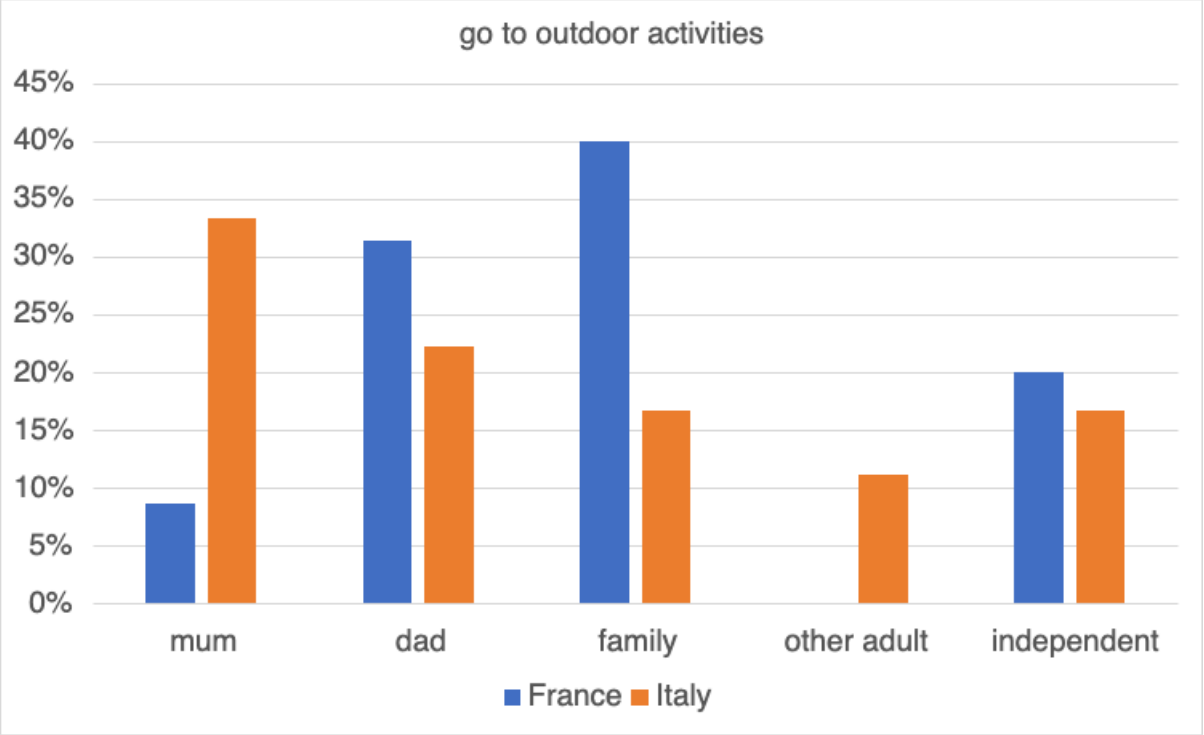


Figure 4.20 Proportion of French and Italian children accompanied on their way to outdoor activities, by type of accompaniment

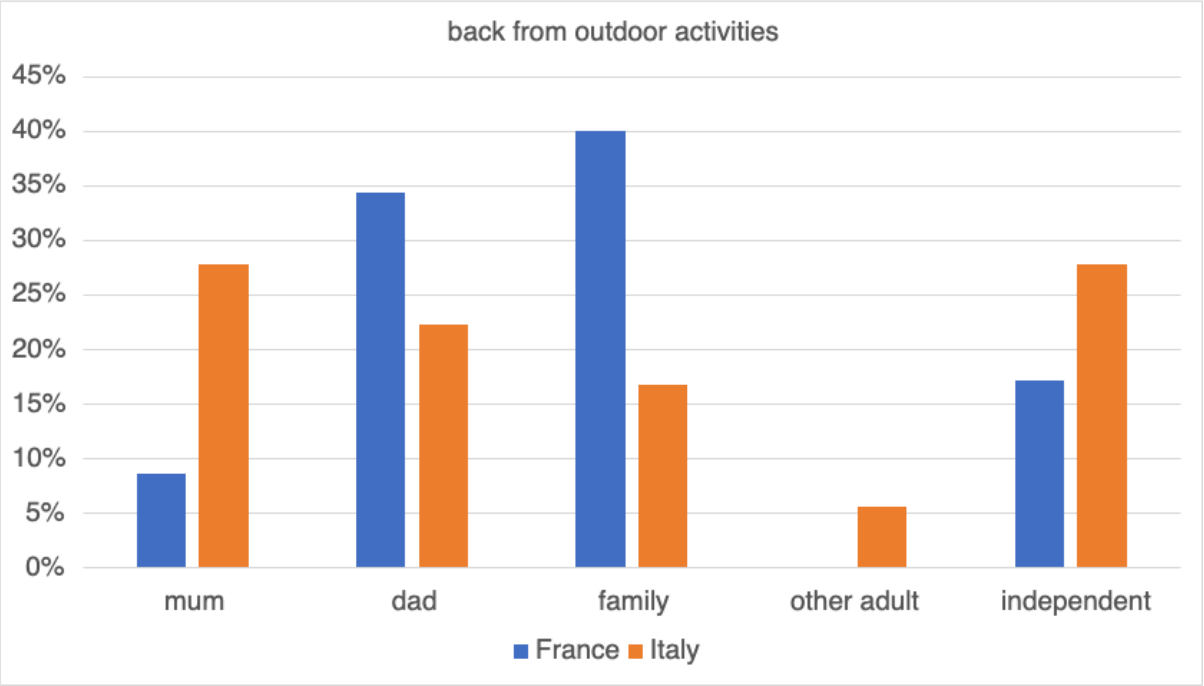


Figure 4.21 Proportion of French and Italian children accompanied on their way back from outdoor activities, by type of accompaniment

Outdoor activities can take place in the courtyards of buildings, in parks in or outside the neighbourhood, or on outings outside the city. They may play during the week after school or at the weekend. None of the children mentioned the street, pavements or even squares as the place where they played.

What is also noticeable here is the much higher proportion of Italian children travelling independently to an outdoor activity than to school. In total, more than 16% of them do so, a figure that is close to the 20% for the French.

4.6.2 Involving parents and other adults

Fathers in France and mothers in Italy were once again the most involved in accompanying the children on outdoor activities, and here too what we can observe is that in Italy grandparents, friends, older brothers and sisters and babysitters were called in to help the parents “cover” all the trips. The involvement of several family members may indicate a desire to do activities together when the opportunity arises. Nevertheless, as Risotto and Giuliani (2006) suggested, the park, where most outdoor activities take place, no longer seems to be considered by parents as a safe place where children can go alone or with friends, since only 5 French and Italian children had the opportunity to do so during this week.

4.7 The children's sociability

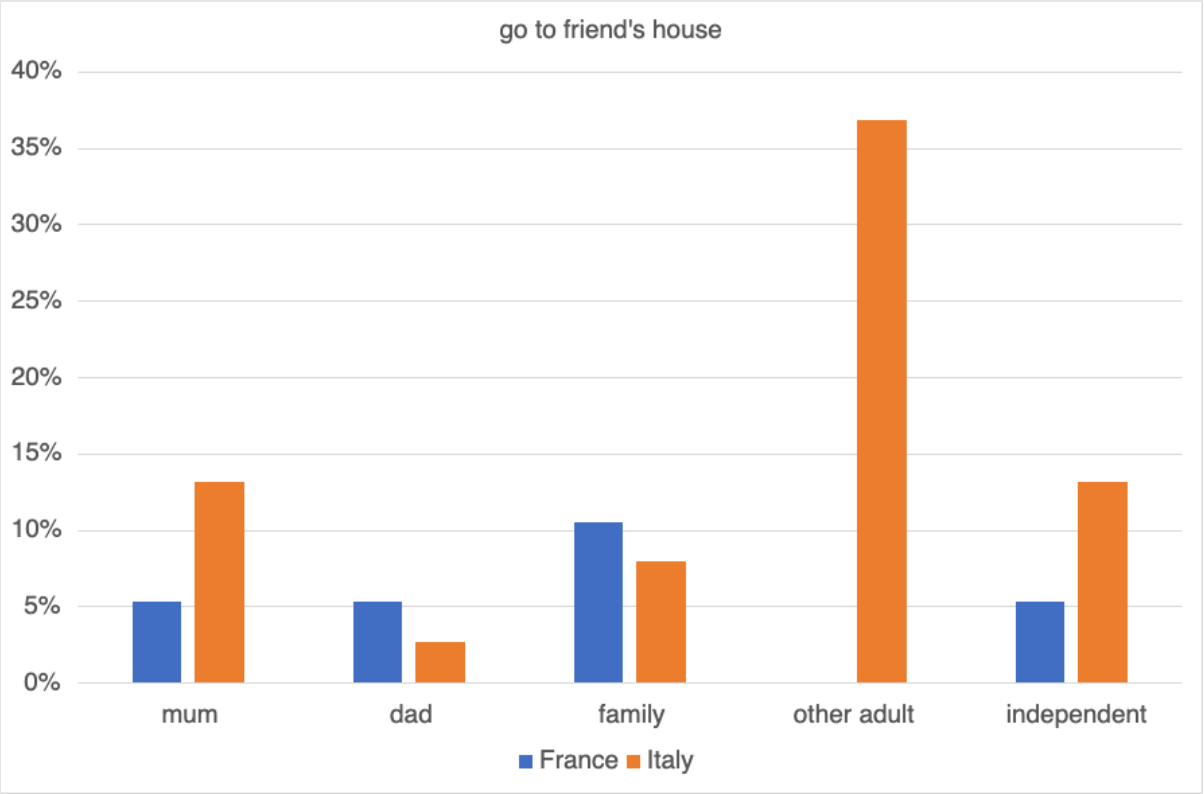


Figure 4.22 Proportion of French and Italian children travelling to their friend's house accompanied by different types of carer

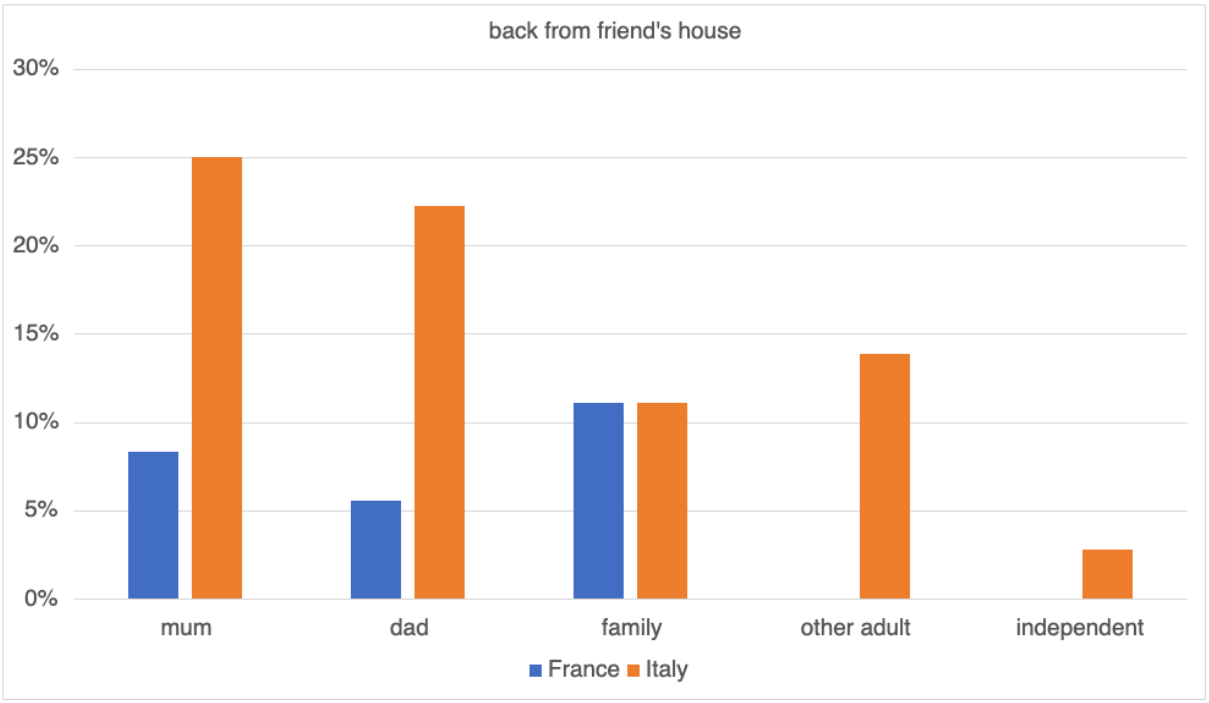


Figure 4.23 Proportion of French and Italian children travelling from their friend's house accompanied by different types of carer

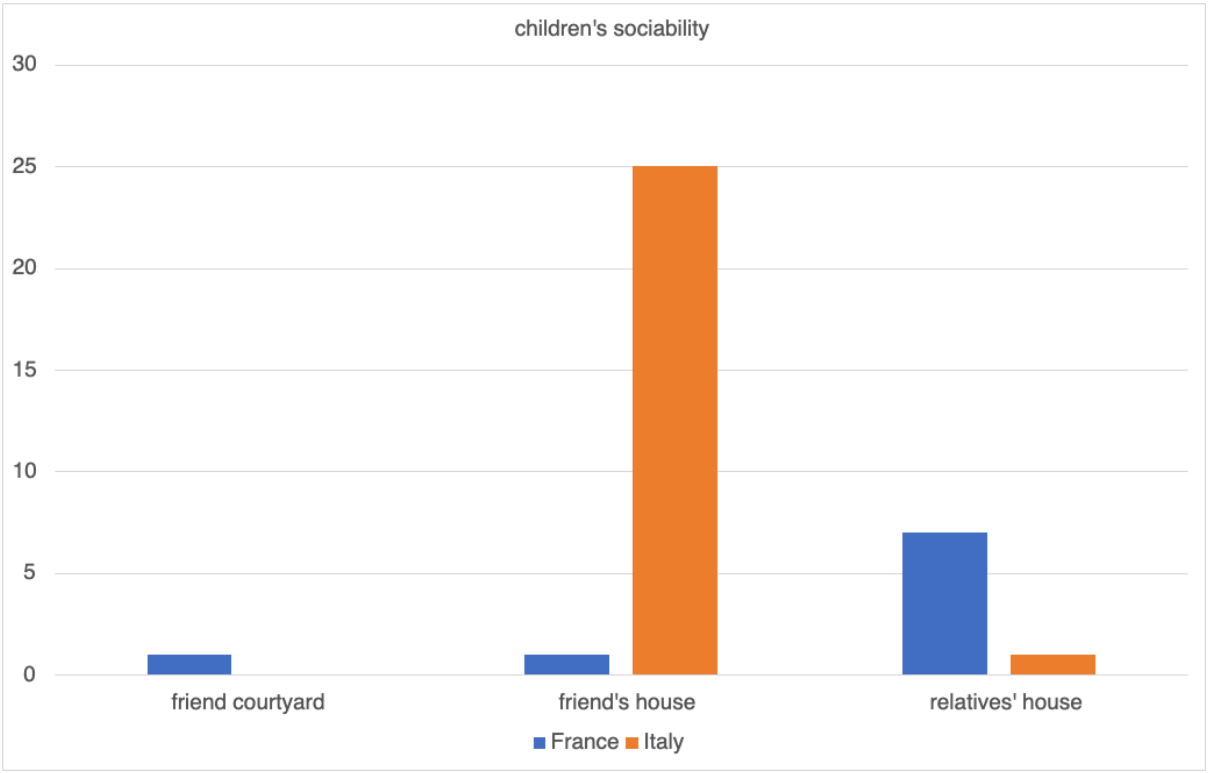


Figure 4.24 Number of times French and Italian children visit a friend's house, a friend's courtyard or a relative's house in a week

Apart from the fact that, here too, Italian parents seem to be the most involved when it comes to accompanying children to friends' houses, what is most striking is the difference between the number of invitations to friends' houses that Italian children receive compared to French children. The low number of invitations to the latter may be due to the fact that the children are subject to the very common practice in France of reshuffling the class every year in order to prevent too strong a group dynamic from taking hold and to stimulate the children's ability to adapt, which makes it more complicated for both parents and children to create strong bonds of friendship that allow certain barriers to be broken down. This trust, as the table (Figure 4.24) shows, seems to be very much in evidence among Italian parents who, in almost half the cases, let another parent (“other adult”) pick up their child for them, usually straight from school. This may be possible because, unlike their French counterparts, most of these parents have known each other for 5 years and generally belong to the class Whatsapp group, which gives them all the telephone numbers of the parents in the class.

In short, while these changes in the classroom may have beneficial effects on children's ability to adapt, they also seem to have a tendency to reduce the number of social interactions that children can have, as parents know each other very little and therefore lack the trust needed to create stronger bonds. However, there is a lack of research on this subject and it would be interesting to study it in greater depth.

The reasons sometimes given (Rivière, 2014) to justify not inviting friends to their homes, such as the poor state of the accommodation or a feeling of unease about receiving more privileged person, do not seem relevant here, as we are talking about a middle-class population and, as I will describe in more detail in the next chapter, having myself had the opportunity to visit the homes of the parents interviewed, none of the homes visited was in a state of disrepair or even simply in a poor state of repair. It should be noted, however, that the lower number of invitations does not mean that French children have fewer friends, but simply that they may have to meet them elsewhere than at home.

As far as the courtyard is concerned, although it is only mentioned by one child, it is possible that the "I didn't do anything" or "I didn't go out" written on the diaries could also mean that they played in the courtyard. This was the case with Dina, for example, whose mother I was able to interview and whom I myself was able to observe playing in the playground when I arrived for the interview, but who never writes this in the diary.

4.8 Conclusions

What I have tried to do in this chapter is to use the diaries completed by French and Italian children over the course of a week to illustrate what their relatively independent mobility looks like.

In France, there were a total of 297 outings, with 80 of them being independent, making up 26% of outings done independently. In Italy, out of 502 outings, only 71 were independent, accounting for just 14% of independent outings. The higher number of outings in Italy can be explained, on one hand, by the greater number of school days during the week considered for this study, and on the other hand, because Italian children are more likely to be enrolled in institutional activities that are easier to account for than a simple outing in the courtyard of a building, which may not always be recorded, as we have seen.

In Italy, school and institutional activities are the most common among children and going to shops is the more popular independent activity, whereas in France, outdoor activities are more frequently mentioned as places where children are allowed to go independently. In these two countries, the disparity in the number of children with independent mobility is evident, with 21 out of the 25 children in the class in France having independent mobility, compared to only 10 out of the 23 children in the class in Italy. There's also a distinct difference between French and Italian girls when it comes to independent mobility, with the former seemingly having greater independence. It appears that friends play a more significant role in facilitating independence among Italian children.

During the studied week, only 11 out of 23 children in the Italian class mentioned participating in outdoor activities, while in France, it was 17 out of 25. The daily lives of these children reflect the concept of "indoor children" developed by Karsten (2005), who spend the majority of their time indoors. For more than half of the children in the Italian class during that week, the only opportunity for outdoor play was in the schoolyard. As Karsten argues, this may restrict children's opportunities for exploration, potentially impeding their physical, cognitive, and social development. In Italy, the lives of the vast majority of these middle-class children therefore resemble what Kearns and Collins (2006) describe as children confined to the “semi-fortified space of home” and ferried between organised activities, which they engage in to a greater extent than in France.

It's worth noting that 6 children in France and 14 in Italy had no independent mobility whatsoever during this week, meaning they don't leave their homes when their parents are unable to accompany them.

Another aspect to consider is the division of responsibilities between Italian fathers and mothers, where fathers may also cover for the absence of grandparents, usually acting as a "social shock absorber". Even more, the large proportion of

families who venture out of town during the weekends could reflect parents' desire to provide their children with opportunities to explore different spaces and escape areas often considered too polluted. It also suggests that their activities, professional relationships, friendships, and family networks have largely relocated.

However, the fact that many families engage in outdoor activities in the park implies that children have opportunities to develop local knowledge and social skills, even though parks are no longer considered safe places by parents for children to visit independently or with friends.

Nonetheless we can add there is no backseat generation (Karsten, 2005) here, as most journeys are made on foot rather than by car. So, even if they are accompanied by an adult, we can say that most of them still have the opportunity to get to know the streets of their neighbourhood in the way that is most instructive for them, i.e. by walking. But by losing their independent mobility, aren't these children losing what for adults could be called a basic right (Hillman, 1990)?

Moreover, walking is the only activity they do in the street, as none of the children designate it as a place for an outdoor activity. The street, once considered to be the kingdom of children (Matthews, 2003; Karsten, 2005), is for them simply a place where they pass from one place to another, where they do not stop. In Italy, the time devoted to institutionalised activities in which children participate has clearly replaced informal play, which is not without consequences for the employment of parents, particularly mothers, who are responsible for “chauffeuring” them from one place to another. In France, although there are fewer institutionalised activities, parents are no less involved in accompanying their children, even for a simple outing to the local park, which the vast majority of them are unable to do on their own.

What we also need to remember from this study is that, on the one hand, independent mobility is not only represented by the journeys that a child can make on his own, but must also take into account those he makes with his peers because, even when there are several of them, it is the absence of adult supervision that is decisive in learning to be independent. On the other hand, reducing the study of children's mobility to their mobility school gives a very distorted picture of what children's mobility is. If we take into account only the journeys that Italian children make alone to get to school, we can quickly conclude that children have no independent mobility. What this analysis shows is that, even if they are few in number, the lives of children in these neighbourhoods are made up of a variety of short trips to an activity, a shop or a friend's house, alone, with friends or siblings. These trips exist and are more numerous when an institution such as the school, which is at the centre of their daily lives, encourages autonomy. This can be done directly, by allowing children to leave the school on their own, as is the case in France, or indirectly, by strengthening the bonds of friendship that develop between children and parents over the course of their primary school years, thereby building mutual trust and creating more frequent opportunities for children to socialise and go out.

In the next chapter, based on interviews with the parents of these children, the reasons given by the parents to justify the degree of autonomy granted to their child will be analyzed in greater depth.

CHAPTER 5

What is the role of parental style on CIM (Children's Independent Mobility)? Are there any significant differences between France and Italy?

As we have observed in Chapter 4, the motivations that drive parents to grant, or not, a certain level of independent mobility to their child remain unclear. The purpose of this chapter is to shed further light on the potential links between parental style and CIM.

In Chapter 2, we noted how the decline of CIM in all industrialized countries is an established fact. The causes of this decline have thus far been explained by several factors, including the lack of public provision of play facilities and neighbourhood traffic. However, the extent to which parents' educational practices influence independent mobility has been scarcely studied. These practices are undoubtedly linked to the socio-cultural context but are also often the result of unspoken ideas directly associated with parental style. Therefore, in order to understand whether there is a connection between CIM and parental style, the initial step will be to define the latter through practices, taking into account the differences and similarities between France and Italy. Subsequently, the aim will be to relate these practices to CIM

To address the second sub-question of this study, I utilized a qualitative method: semi-structured interviews conducted with parents from the two selected classes for the diaries in France and Italy. The number of parents who agreed to participate in an interview was 13 in Italy (9 mothers and 4 fathers) and 12 in France (10 mothers and 2 fathers) (Appendix 3.3). For clarity, the quotations are accompanied by a "B." for parents from Bologna and an "L." for parents from Lyon. These interviews were analyzed using the software Atlas.ti. Thematic analysis was considered the most appropriate method to identify commonalities between participants' experiences and perceptions regarding a shared phenomenon. Moreover, considering the relatively low number of interviews to analyze, thematic analysis provided a qualitative framework, focusing on immersing in the data and drawing out themes (Corbetta, 2014).

Therefore, after becoming acquainted with all the acquired data by transcribing the interviews, I conducted an initial phase of coding the raw data. Then, from the numerous emerged codes, the analysis was refined by grouping them into themes.

The aim was to focus on the relevant thematic aspects to address this second sub-question, discarding themes due to insufficient data.
Furthermore, since these were semi-structured interviews, the topics to be addressed had already been defined. The prepared questions, identical in both neighborhoods, corresponded to the following themes: opinions about the living environment as a place to raise children (from the city to neighborhood and building), parental practices (home rules, trust, punishment, negotiation, priorities, independent mobility), and social contacts of the parents and child: friends/playmates/classmates in the neighborhood. It's these themes, subdivided into sub-themes for depth and relevance, that will be analyzed in this Chapter 5.

5.1 The Integration of families into their city and neighborhood

As explained in Chapter 2, numerous factors influence how parents perceive CIM, with the environmental context being one of the determinants of certain parental practices (Alparone and Pacilli, 2012; Lehman-Frisch, 2016). Hence, it is important to start by analyzing how parents experience their city and neighborhood before reaching the building courtyard. What opinions do they hold, what social relationships have they developed, both for themselves and their child, and finally, what are the main fears they encounter in this environment.

5.1.1 Parents'opinions about the city and the neighbourhood

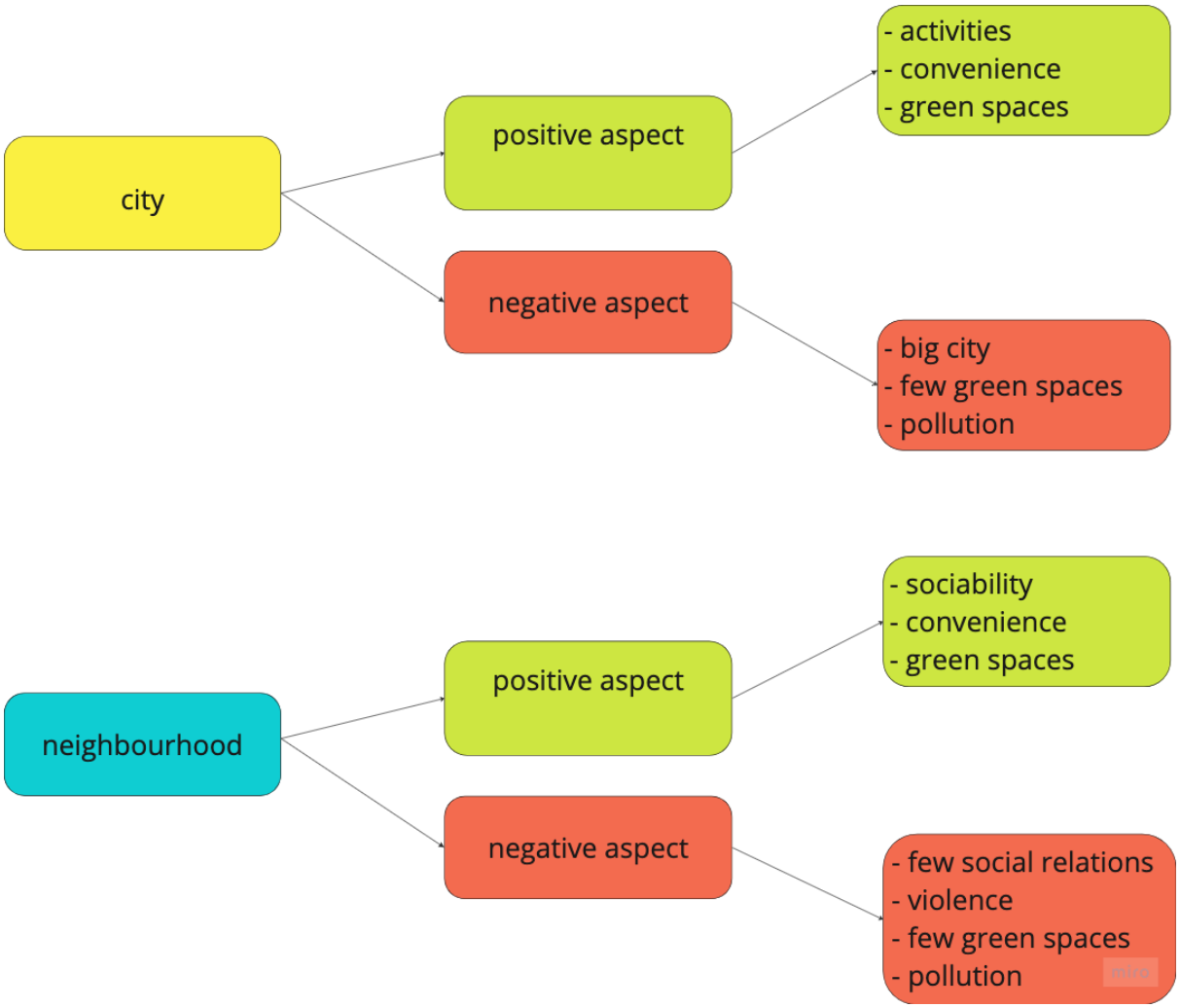


Figure 5.1 Parents' opinions on the city and the neighbourhood

During the interviews, parents were asked to identify the positive and negative aspects of their city and then their neighborhood. The graph above was developed by considering the responses obtained initially from Italian parents and then from French parents. As the obtained sub-themes were very similar, a single graph was created, with differences primarily found in the order of importance of the sub-themes. It is this perception that parents have, from one country to another, of their city or neighborhood that we will now be able to detail.

As suggested by this graph, the positive aspects of the city are represented by the cultural offerings with numerous activities for children, "there are many events for the kids so I consider it to be at the top" (Marta, B.), "it's a city that offers a tremendous amount of activities, whether sports or cultural, for children" (Céline, L.).

The conveniences, most commonly related to the public transport network, the size of the city, and the presence of all necessary services and shops, are also cited: “It's well-organized for commuting, for work” (Marcello, B.), “In my opinion, Bologna is the ideal city for children. Full of services and the quality of life, the size of the city is ideal” (Francesca, B.), “It's a city from which you can also quickly get out, you find yourself quickly in the mountains, you can also quickly reach the sea” (Céline, L.). Parents also mention the presence of parks as positive elements of the city, sometimes expressing contradictory views, such as in this testimony where a mother, while affirming that the city has few green spaces, also notes numerous parks suitable for children:

“Even though it's a city with little greenery in reality, there are many parks suitable for children. In the center, there are 5, 6, some are more appealing, some less, but wherever you turn, there are parks, there are activities for children. For teenagers, I don't know, I'll find out (laughs)”.[9] (Lucia, B. 11:1 ¶ 16)

What's interesting to note in this response is also the fact that the parks have equipment suitable for young children, but she doesn't know if the same applies to teenagers. This is also observed by one of the mothers in Lyon, noting a decrease in park usage as they grow older, “not much lately, when they were little, yes” (Florence, L.). Furthermore, the same neighborhood can be judged negatively for the lack of green spaces by some and positively for their presence. This subjectivity depends, of course, on perceptions and past experiences in neighborhoods with more or fewer green spaces. Therefore, the theme of green spaces, due to their inadequacy, is also considered one of the negative aspects of the city for many parents.

When it comes to other negative aspects of the city, parents abundantly cite the city's size. Indeed, most parents have a negative perception of the “big city” and hold it responsible for the limitations they face. This can range from the simple feeling of there being “a lot of people”, not “knowing the entire city”, to struggling to access services or secure a spot in childcare, for example. In Bologna, the fact that the city has become increasingly touristy in recent years is seen by some parents as negative. They perceive that from being a big village, it has transformed into a metropolis, which, according to them, correlates with an increase in crime and assaults. The urban lifestyle also entails a trust issue towards others, a “we don't know each other” sentiment, which, coupled with the fast-paced life, hinders the development of more serene and supportive relationships with other parents, who are “all super stressed, in a rush, or have nannies”. This image seems particularly linked to living conditions in the city center, with some parents imagining that life in the suburbs is certainly calmer and more reassuring:

[9] "Nonostante sia una città con poco verde in realtà, ci sono molti parchi adatti ai bambini, in centro ce ne sono 5, 6, qualcuno piace di più, qualcuno può piacere di meno però dove ti giri, ti giri, ci sono parchi, ci sono attività per i bambini. Per i ragazzini non lo so, lo scoprirò (ride).”

“Maybe in the suburbs, you could send the child to buy milk; the suburbs are quieter, less dangerous during the day.”[10] (Lucia, B. 11:17 ¶ 155-160)

The judgment parents make about their residential neighborhood closely mirrors their assessment of the city in general. Regarding the positive aspects, we find conveniences and the presence of green spaces, with the differing factor being the emphasis on social relationships, which happens to be the most frequently cited positive criterion in both neighborhoods. Parents in the Villette-Paul Bert neighborhood tend to mention more superficial relationships, such as the reassuring presence of commercial activities, shops, or bars, or simply knowing that other parents, whom they just recognize by sight, will be present in the streets around the school. This might encourage them to allow their child to go there alone, imagining that in case of trouble, he/she could seek help from one of them. Meanwhile, parents in the Irnerio neighborhood tend to discuss more meaningful relationships, mutual aid, and friendships with their neighbors or with parents of students in the same class. These positive relationships with the neighborhood are among the reasons cited why some families, while acknowledging feeling cramped in their accommodation, do not wish to change neighborhoods.

The conveniences of a neighborhood, which are the second most commonly cited positive aspect, mean having “everything” nearby. “Everything” implies being able to walk to the train station, school, high school, supermarket, other useful stores, sports facilities, the park, or even to the dentist. These conveniences have allowed several families to stop using the car, except for rare occasions such as weekend outings, or in some cases, not using it at all.

Finally, the last aspect frequently mentioned in both neighborhoods is the presence of green spaces. Even though these neighborhoods are rarely chosen specifically for this reason (in Irnerio, only Camilla found the park's presence decisive), it remains a factor that makes the neighborhood enjoyable, even if the parks within it are discovered after moving in.

Regarding the negative aspects of the neighborhood, there are some disparities between Irnerio and Villette-Paul Bert. In the Italian neighborhood, the first and foremost concern is the various forms of violence:

“Now it's not just about candies anymore, it's about potential episodes of aggression and violence from people experiencing social issues, so they have nothing to lose, you know? Therefore, no need for any specific trigger, they can do anything.”[11] (Alessia, B. 2:7 ¶ 34)

[10] “Magari in periferia mandi il bambino a comprare il latte, la periferia è più tranquilla, meno pericolosa insomma di giorno”

[11] “Adesso non si tratta più di caramelle ma si tratta proprio di possibili episodi di aggressioni e di violenza dati da persone che hanno dei disagi sociali loro, quindi non hanno niente da perdere per intenderci e quindi anche non serve qualcosa, un fattore scatenante loro possono fare qualsiasi cosa.”

Next comes the lack of green spaces and pollution, followed by insufficient social relationships. In the French neighbourhood, however, the latter appears first in the list of negative aspects of the area, ahead of violence and pollution. Given that parents in Villette-Paul Bert often have only superficial relationships with their neighbors, it's not surprising that even though these relationships may contribute to a positive image of the neighbourhood, and this situation is perceived as normal in the city, there remains a feeling that they are not sufficient, and the neighbourhood is, in a way, responsible for this:

“It's every man for himself and God for everyone, I don't get the impression that there's much solidarity, no, frankly, if you don't go out and meet people to try and create a bond, there's no bond, there's nothing that makes it easy to create a bond in the neighbourhood, after all, I come from big cities so it doesn't shock me, I'm used to it, I say to myself, if I want to make friends, I'm very sociable, if I want to make friends with two or three school mums, I'll do it, but I absolutely don't have the time, I've got three children, a full-time job that's nowhere near here, I don't have the time to make friends, I'm done with friends".[12] (Marion, L. 14:22 ¶ 187-194)

Summarily, in both countries, although parents may feel they live in a city that they find too large and not entirely within their control, they still consider life in their neighbourhood as pleasant and peaceful, and its issues remain acceptable.

As emphasized, sociability is one of the aspects that residents prioritize most when assessing their quality of life. Therefore, I will now delve into analyzing in more detail the sociability of their children.

5.1.2 The positive and negative influence of built environment in the neighborhood on children’s sociability

In chapter 4 graph 4.23 suggested a significant difference in the frequency of social interactions between French and Italian children, with the former seemingly having much fewer than the latter. The aim here is to understand if, through their testimonies, parents substantiate or contradict this idea. Through interviews, it was possible to understand where and how often children usually meet their friend(s). The data was therefore grouped according to the four main meeting places:

[12] “C’est chacun pour soi et Dieu pour tous, j’ai pas l’impression qu’il y ait une grande solidarité, non, franchement, si tu vas pas toi au devant des gens pour essayer de créer du lien, y’a pas de lien, y’a rien qui permet de créer du lien facilement dans le quartier quoi, après moi je viens de grandes villes donc ça m’choque pas, j’ai l’habitude hein, moi j’me dis si j’ai envie de me faire des copines moi j’suis très sociable, si j’ai envie de copiner avec deux, trois mamans d’école je le ferai mais moi j’ai absolument pas le temps, j’ai trois enfants, un travail à temps plein qui est pas du tout dans ce coin j’ai pas le temps moi de me faire des copines, c’est fini pour moi les copines”

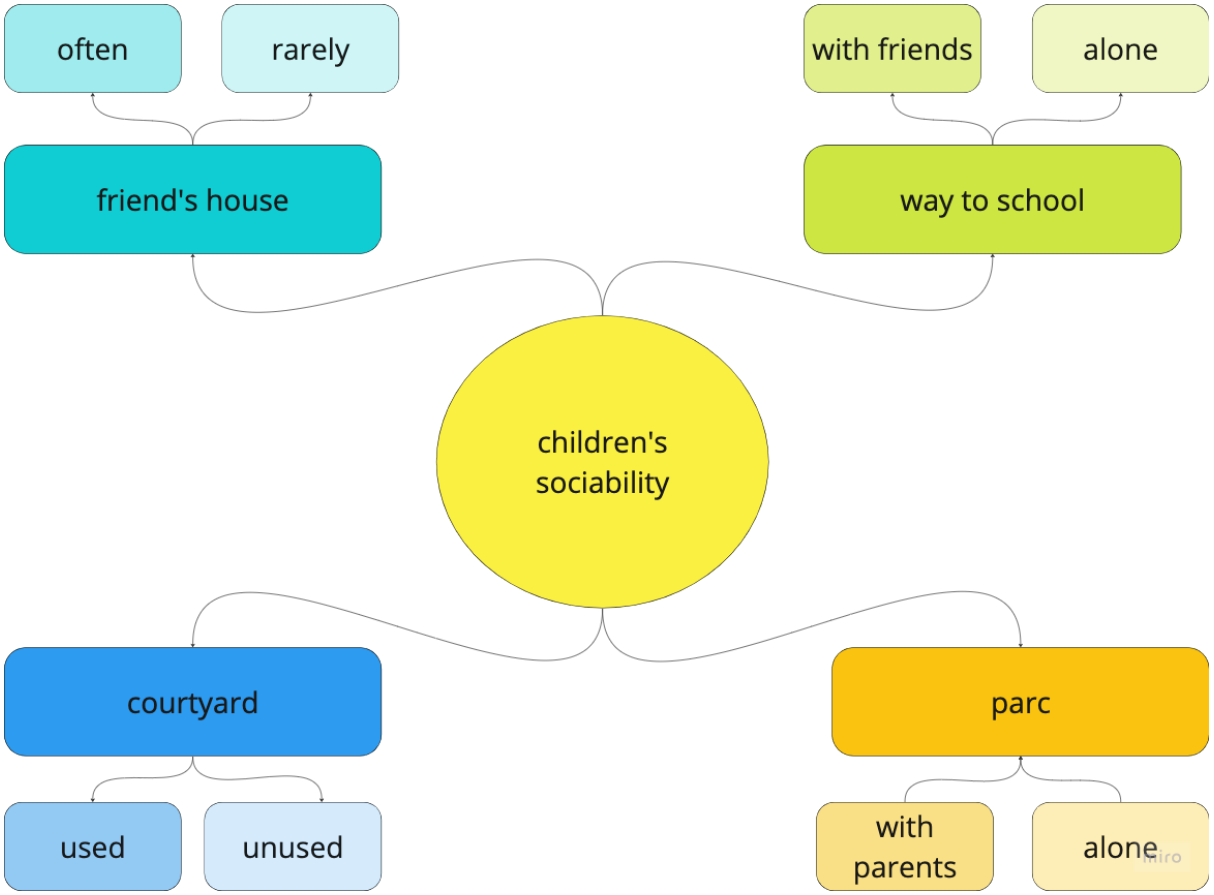


Figure 5.2 Children's sociability

According to this data, it appears that indeed, Italian children from the Irnerio neighborhood have more opportunities to visit their friends or host friends at their homes more frequently. Among the testimonies I gathered from parents, many mentioned one to two meetings per week with their friend(s), partly due to parents picking up their children from school to take them to play or do homework together, as well as having "sleepovers". This is not the case among French parents, who only mentioned relatively formal invitations for birthday parties occurring four or five times a year. In both countries, it now seems very rare for children to take the initiative to visit a friend's home without having been invited beforehand; "it's become the norm". Another rule is that for permission to visit a friend, the parents must know each other:

"He can go because of all Omar's friends we know all the parents very well, a friend we don't know we're not necessarily going to allow him to go, we need to know the

parents, to know a bit about their state of mind, without judging them but if we're around them, we know them well."[13] (Yasmina, L. 25:42 ¶ 326-327)

Less restrictive appears to be the organization of an outdoor meeting. Whether it's playing in the building's courtyard, at the park, or walking to school together. On these occasions, an invitation is not necessary, and some children fortunate enough to live either in the same building or very close to each other might simply go and knock on their friend's door to invite them to play "downstairs":

"Doesn't he have friends here in the palace?
- yes, he has this Paolo we were talking about
- who lives right here
- he lives right here, they ring each other, go downstairs and play and then there are 2 or 3 other children with whom they sometimes play together... I see that he looks for this especially
- how often does this happen?
- like once a week, once, twice a week
- and they play here?
- they play here above all back there, behind that there is an area less... there is a place where they can play football well in short"[14]. (Fabrizio, B. 7:15 ¶ 161-168)

The same simplicity in organizing spontaneous games is found in the Villette-Paul Bert neighborhood, where children have access to a sufficiently large building courtyard and can meet friends who share this courtyard or live in a neighboring building. In line with the the literature: safe place to play nearby the house increase children's meeting/playing outdoors (Prezza, 2001; Vercesi, 2008)

"She has friends who live next door
- and she goes to their house, she rings the doorbell?
- no, no, no, they meet in the courtyard. As soon as she sees that her friends are in the courtyard, she says to me: "OK, can I come down? I tell her: "go ahead"[15] (Nadia, L. 21:22 ¶ 315-318)

---

[13] "Il peut y aller parce que tous les copains de Omar on connaît très bien tous les parents, un copain qu'on connaît pas on va pas forcément l'autoriser à y aller, faut qu'on connaisse les parents, savoir un peu dans quel état d'esprit ils sont, sans les juger mais si on les côtoie, on les connaît bien"

[14] "Qua nel palazzo lui no ha amici?
- si, si ha questo Paolo di cui parlavamo
- che vive proprio qua
- vive proprio qua, si suonano e scendono, si trovano un po' giù a giocare poi ci sono altri 2, 3 bambini con cui a volte giocano tutti insieme insomma io vedo che lui cerca questo soprattutto
- quanto spesso succede questo?
- tipo una volta a settimana, una, due volte a settimana
- e giocano qua?
- si giocano qua soprattutto là dietro, dietro che c'è una zona meno… là c'è un posto dove possono giocare bene a calcio insomma".

[15] "Elle a des copines qui sont voisines

In this Lyon neighbourhood, the possibility of spontaneous play also exists within residential areas. Residential areas refer to residential complexes that may include sports facilities such as sports fields (like football fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, etc.), gyms, or spaces dedicated to sports or leisure activities. This kind of controlled environment with controlled access and security measures, provides parents with peace of mind to allow children to play outdoors more freely (Woolley, 2015).

However, they also constitute a sort of neighbourhood within the neighbourhood, privatizing the streets, fostering a sense of exclusivity by organizing around a principle of social homogeneity (Roulleau-Berger, 2004). With its green spaces deemed secure by parents, children are allowed to move freely within these areas because there are no cars circulating, and as they know each other, they are aware that there will always be someone around to supervise the children.

In Italy, these complexes do exist but are generally located in tourist areas where families spend their vacations; they are less common within city settings. Italian parents who have experienced them during the summer mention the same sense of security when allowing their children to move around in such places. In the Villette-Paul Bert neighbourhood alone, one parent talks about several complexes of this kind, one where they lived and another where a friend of their daughter resides, which has a swimming pool:

> “And there were lots of families there?
> - there were 2 or 3 in this alley, so it's true that it was quite often that, well, the kids knew each other, so they were together, the parents were talking to each other or there was always someone looking at their son or daughter who was looking at the other one
> - when they were playing in the residence?
> - or even in the street on the way home from school, it's true that sometimes the kids tended to keep to themselves, well I know that I was less careful because I knew that others
> - and in the residence they could play too?
> - yes, they were obliged to come back every…, which was never respected, but well, at the height of what happened they were a gang of 8 or 10 kids, it's hard

---

- et elle va chez elles, elle va sonner chez elles?
- non, non, non, elles se voient dans la cour. Dès qu’elle voit c’est ses copines qui sont dans la cour elle me dit: “voilà, je peux descendre?” je lui dis: “ben vas-y”

to respect the rule of regularly coming to see us”[16]. (Guillaume, L. 22:26 ¶ 290-296)

This testimony clearly indicates how such a context can foster the development of independent mobility, as even on the streets, children continue to enjoy a certain level of freedom.

In contrast, what also emerges significantly from these interviews is the inability to use existing building courtyards, which are often used as parking spaces or are solely ornamental. This inability is generally not contested by parents who accept it as a matter of fact or accommodate it, not feeling the need to change this status quo.

“Is it suitable for children?

- ... yes, yes, it is suitable, it is very comfortable I must say, the courtyard is not that much they can use it to play let's say
- why?
- because you can't go on the lawn, the lawn has been confiscated by the dog owners (laughs) let's say that we have a bit of an open account with the fact that the lawn is not walkable, so we don't send the children there to play and then people actually bring their dogs there
- why isn't it walkable?
- because it's beautiful, it's ruined, I must say the garden is very nice, have you seen it? it's definitely an added value for the outlook and everything
- so there's never been a request from families to use it for children to play?

[16] “et là y’avait beaucoup de familles?

- y’en avait 2, 3 dans cette allée donc c’est vrai que c’était assez souvent que ben les gamins se connaissant ben ils étaient ensemble, les parents discutaient entre eux où alors y’avait toujours quelqu’un qui en zieutant son fils ou sa fille regardait l’autre
- quand ils jouaient dans la résidence?
- ouais ou même dans la rue en retour d’école, c’est vrai que des fois les gamins ils avaient tendance à rester entre eux, enfin moi je sais que je faisais moins attention parce que je savais que d’autres
- et dans la résidence ils pouvaient jouer aussi?
- oui, elles allaient avec l’obligation de repasser toutes les…, qui n’était jamais respecté mais bon, au plus fort de ce qui y’a pu avoir ils étaient une bande de 8, 10 gamins, c’est dur de respecter la règle de tu passes régulièrement nous voir”

- no, there are very few children here, it's mostly elderly people, a very large majority. Out of 130 families there will be 10 with children”[17]. (Fabrizio papa Dago, B. 7:4 ¶ 52-70)

There's also the case of a building courtyard in Villette Paul-Bert, shared by three families in this survey, each perceiving it differently. For some, it's a safe place, while for others, it's considered dangerous because cars can circulate within it. However, all agree that the presence of “youth” in this courtyard poses a risk to their children, making the area temporarily or permanently inaccessible.

In the absence of a courtyard or when it's not feasible to use it, parents may organize outings to the neighborhood park to let their child play with friends. Rarely allowing their child to go alone to the park, it's mostly the parents who organize these outings. In the Irnerio neighborhood, the Montagnola Park, located right next to the school, is easily accessible after classes, and it's not uncommon for a parent to propose taking several children there.
In Villette-Paul Bert, the preferred park for children is Bazin Park. However, this park is located quite far from the school, requiring parents to make a greater organizational effort to take their child and invite their friends. Moreover, as the park doesn't have a café where parents can linger, they might perceive it more as a “sacrifice” of their time rather than an enjoyable outing during which they could interact with other parents over a drink. Nevertheless, for the vast majority of parents, it's inconceivable to send their child alone to the park without an adult to supervise and take care of them in case of any issues.

Finally, some children have the opportunity to meet their classmates during the journey to or from school. These moments of social interaction are highly valued by children, as we have seen in the previous chapter, especially in France where they have the chance to spend some time with their friends after school. Parents understand the importance of these moments. For instance, Yasmina, Omar's mother, goes as far as taking a detour in her car to allow her son more time with his friends. This group journey also reassures parents, whether it's with a younger sibling, as in Lyon, or participating in a “pedibus” (walking bus) like the one

[17] “E’ adatto per i bambini?
- … si, si, è adatto, è molto comodo devo dire, il cortile non è che lo possono tanto utilizzare per giocare diciamo
- perché?
- perché non si può andare sul prato, c’è il prato è stato sequestrato dai padroni di cani (ride) diciamo che noi abbiamo un po’ un conto aperto con sto fatto che il prato non sarebbe calpestabile quindi non ci mandiamo i bambini a giocare poi in realtà la gente ci porta il cane
- perché non è calpestabile?
- perché è bello, si rovina, devo dire il giardino è molto bello, l’hai visto? è sicuramente un valore aggiunto per l’affaccio e tutto
- quindi non c’è mai stato da parte delle famiglie una richiesta di poterlo usare per far giocare i bambini?
- no, sono pochi i bambini qua, sono tante persone anziane in maggioranza, grandissima maggioranza. Su 130 famiglie ce ne saranno 10 con i bambini”.

spontaneously organized by parents in the Bologna class, which I'll discuss further in the next chapter.

The construction of neighborhood sociability plays a crucial role in how both parents and children perceive their environment. It facilitates direct contact with neighborhood residents and can provide opportunities for learning independent mobility. Even experiences that might seem limited, such as playing in the courtyard or walking to school with friends, constitute essential steps in acquiring independent mobility.

5.1.3 Main parents' fears about CIM

Not surprisingly, the two primary fears parents have regarding Independent Mobility are related to traffic danger and stranger danger.

Traffic danger isn't solely associated with cars. In recent years, the variety of transportation modes has increased concerns about potential accidents on the streets. It now includes worries about scooters, bicycles, electric scooters, trams, buses, motorcycles on sidewalks, and scooters using bike lanes, among others. This diversity of risks gives the impression of multiplying dangers.

In both cities, the situation is seen as unsettling, with the neighbourhood being exposed to these risks because various means of transport are present, mirroring urban settings. The fear predominantly arises from street crossings. Both neighbourhoods have wide roads, such as Viale Masini and Via Irnerio in Bologna, and mainly Avenue Félix Faure in Lyon. Crossing these streets can pose a significant challenge for many parents due to the traffic signals—"all those little red and green figures... pfff." However, not all parents feel the same, as some are reassured by the presence of traffic lights.

In many cases, the fear of traffic is used to justify the absence of Independent Mobility. The explanation given to children is that this prohibition on moving alone in the streets doesn't stem from a lack of trust in their abilities but rather from a lack of confidence in drivers. Children are quite receptive to their parents' fears. The restriction on CIM is sometimes explained by the child's own expressed fear of traffic, with one parent describing their son as "terrified" by vehicular traffic.

Kidnapping, lack of trust, and fear of others are also reasons behind the absence or reluctance of parents to let their child move alone. The “bad guys”, the “dangerous encounters” could involve teenagers hanging around and committing acts of vandalism, drug dealers, or individuals using drugs whose behaviors might be unpredictable, or even child abductors. The fear of kidnapping is solely fueled by the media, as none of the parents personally know a family whose child has

disappeared. However, the following testimony illustrates the impact that this information has on parents' minds:

“Frankly, I should be afraid of them being kidnapped, for example, but it hasn't occurred to me because... we all know each other in the neighbourhood...

- why should you be afraid?
- no because... I read a lot of the news and that sort of thing so (she laughs) no, I'm not too scared because we all know each other in the neighbourhood
- and that reassures you
- yes, there's always a look, even if we don't necessarily talk to the parents, we know that in our street in fact, on the way to school there are people who go to school, they're not alone”[18] (Yasmina, L. 25:9 ¶ 78-86)

The fear of kidnapping seems more like a fantasy than a real probability, as indicated by Furedi (2002) who points out that many parents simply do not believe that the number of children murdered by strangers has changed significantly over the years. Similarly, the fear of children falling victim to assaults by strangers is fueled by the media and the incivilities that parents witness daily. Roulleau-Berger (2004) emphasizes that it's not so much murders or armed attacks that generate the feeling of insecurity but the increase in small offenses and acts of vandalism, which are commonly referred to today as “urban violence”.

However, there is rarely a direct relationship between the fear of assault and actual violence experienced by oneself or one's close ones. Street violence isn't a new phenomenon, but it is more articulated and likely much less tolerated today. Nevertheless, perceptions vary greatly among individuals. Hence, accounts of people living in the same street can be very discordant. Sometimes, the same person may express fear of potential assaults while claiming the neighborhood is peaceful. The presence of bars might render a street dangerous for some, yet others feel it makes it safer due to the liveliness it brings. Thus, it's quite challenging to determine whether a street is dangerous or not.

Nevertheless, these discourses about the neighborhood's danger have consequences in children's minds. They receive these warnings about negative encounters extensively, possibly excessively:

“There are also people who can... mean people like I say to my children (she laughs) who can come and say "come on I'll show you a game” because my children love Switch games, if someone comes and says "come on I'll show you the Switch

[18] “Franchement, je devrais avoir peur qu’on me les kidnappent par exemple mais ça m’a pas effleuré l’esprit parce que… on se connaît tous dans le quartier

- pourquoi vous devriez avoir peur?
- non parce que… je lis beaucoup tout ce qui est fait divers et ce genre de choses donc (elle rit) non, ça j’ai pas trop peur parce qu’on nous connaît dans le quartier
- et ça finalement ça vous rassure
- oui, y’a toujours un regard, même si on parle pas forcément avec les parents on sait notre rue en fait, en allant à l’école y’a du monde qui y va à l’école, il est pas tout seul”

games I've got at home", I've talked to them a lot about that and I talk to them a lot, a lot about pedophiles, people who are really... and I even think I talk about that a lot, Ilyan the day before yesterday, because they did that at school as well

- what did they do at school?

- they did the safety stuff, like if someone comes up to you and says "come with me, I'll show you something", "what are you going to say?" And I think Ilyan gave a good answer, except that he said to me "Mum, it gives me nightmares when we talk about this a lot" and I thought "maybe I'm talking to them so much and they've added another layer at school...".[19] (Leila L., 23:13 ¶ 119-123)

It will be further explored in the next chapter during the walking interviews how some interviews couldn't take place due to the children's fear of moving around with me, precisely following their parents' instructions "never to follow a stranger".

During these conversations, parents also expressed fears they themselves qualify as "irrational". They don't know where these fears come from, and upon reflecting, they realize these fears have little foundation. Additionally, another very real fear concerns girls specifically. Several parents admitted to believing that the risks faced by girls will be greater than those faced by boys. Although their children are pre-adolescents, these parents don't make distinctions yet. However, they believe they might be compelled to do so to prevent their daughters from returning home alone in the evening.

5.1.4 The relationship with the environment and the CIM

What emerges from these interviews regarding parents' relationship with their immediate environment is that while the relationship might not be perfect, it's far from being a place where everyone knows and takes care of one another, if such a place exists at all. Overall, both French and Italian parents feel they live in rather quiet, practical neighborhoods where they don't wish to move away from.

What implications does this have on their relationship with Children's Independent Mobility (CIM)? As I've previously mentioned in Chapter 2, this relationship with the environment is often seen as having a significant impact on

[19] "Y'a aussi les personnes qui peuvent… les personnes méchants comme je dis aux enfants (elle rit) qui peuvent venir et te dire "viens je vais te montrer un jeu parce que mes enfants c'est des enfants qui adorent les jeux de Switch" si quelqu'un vient et lui dit "viens je vais te montrer les jeux de Switch que j'ai à la maison", moi je leur ai parlé beaucoup de ça et je leur en parle beaucoup, beaucoup, des pédophiles, des gens vraiment qui sont… et même je pense que je parle beaucoup de ça, Ilyan avant-hier, parce qu'ils ont fait ça à l'école en plus

- qu'est-ce qu'ils ont fait à l'école?
- ils ont fait les trucs de la sécurité, comme quoi si quelqu'un vient te dire "viens avec moi je vais te montrer quelque chose", "qu'est-ce que tu vas répondre?". Et je trouve que Ilyan il a bien répondu sauf que il m'a dit "maman ça me fait des cauchemars quand on parle beaucoup de ça" et je me suis dit peut-être tellement je leur parle beaucoup en plus ils ont rajouté une couche à l'école…"

CIM. What's observed here is that while this influence exists, the connection isn't automatic.

Firstly, parents may have conflicting opinions about their place of residence. Even if they describe their environment as "fairly peaceful," it's not clear whether it favors or hinders Child Independent Mobility. Furthermore, despite claiming to live in a safe area, their child's independent mobility often remains very restricted.

In addition, I observed the reverse to be equally true; some parents who expressed numerous concerns about the dangers their child might face in their neighborhood still grant them significant independent mobility.

Indeed, considering the data presented in Figure 4.4 (p.78), if a positive relationship with one's immediate environment influences CIM, one might expect that children with the most opportunities for independent movement in their neighborhood would have parents who view their neighborhood positively. However, based on this graph, among the parents I interviewed, those of Clément and Omar grant relatively higher levels of independent mobility to their children. Consequently, one might assume they would have a positive relationship with their neighborhood, but according to the interviews, that isn't quite the case. Clément's mother sums up her concerns as follows:

"What scares me is all the dangers, the street, all the dangers, bad encounters, well after all the road accidents, we were talking about cyclists, scooters sometimes on the cycle path, even cars, that sort of thing... and then muggings because in Lyon... it's not a very peaceful city after all"[20]. (Amélie L. 17:7 ¶ 92-94)

As for the neighbourhood, for her, "it's not necessarily a very pleasant place to live in on a daily basis," and she would very much "like to move elsewhere." Her opinion about the environment is far from being the most positive. Omar's mother also has a mixed opinion about the neighborhood they live in:

"Maybe it's because during my pregnancies I took the time not to work, to observe what was going on in the neighbourhood, there are a lot of young people who are very incivil on two-wheelers and that sort of thing, who don't necessarily respect the highway code, they don't necessarily respect the direction of traffic and I'm always afraid that something will happen"[21]. (Yasmina L. 25:7 ¶ 74-75)

Thus, despite the permanent fear that something might happen in the street, Omar's and Clément's mothers have nevertheless decided to allow their child a certain level of independent mobility, as have the Italian children whose parents,

[20] "moi ce qui me fait peur ben c'est tout les dangers, la rue, tous les dangers, les mauvaises rencontres, bon après tout ce qui est aussi accident de la route hein, on parlait des cyclistes, des scooters parfois qui sont sur la piste cyclable, même des voitures, c'est ce genre de… pis bon les agressions parce qu'à Lyon… c'est quand même pas une ville très tranquille"

[21] "C'est peut-être parce que j'ai pris le temps pendant mes grossesses de pas travailler, d'observer ce qui se passait dans le quartier, y'a beaucoup de jeunes qui font beaucoup d'incivilités en deux-roues ce genre de choses, qui respectent pas forcément le code de la route, ils respectent pas forcément les sens de circulation et j'ai toujours peur qui se passe quelque chose"

Aurora's and Paolo's, while expressing numerous fears about the neighborhood, have still chosen to allow their child to move around alone.

What we can conclude here is that what influences parents regarding CIM is not always related to their relationship with their immediate environment. What I propose to do next is to analyze their parenting style and practices to understand if certain practices derived from the parental style play a role in granting more or less independent mobility to their child.

5.2 Definition of the parental style through the parental practices

5.2.1 Parental practices grid linked to the children independent mobility

The criteria that were taken into account to develop this grid are those that make it possible to define the parenting style defined by Baumrind (1991) and re-developed by Maccoby and Martin in 1983 (Maccoby, 1992) and which were developed during the interview with the parent.
The following were considered: bedtime hours, screen viewing rules, punishments, socialisation of the child, decision making, involvement in schooling and management of free time. Indeed, a parent can be authoritarian on bedtime but permissive on the management of free time, which is why each selected criterion corresponds to a parenting style indicated by a letter (A, B or C), the result taking into account the most represented letter which then allows us to define this style. The second predominant letter will also be taken into account and will allow us to understand if this predominant style tends towards one of the other 3 parenting styles in particular taken from Baumrind (1991).

It was established in Chapter 2 that the recognized parenting styles were four: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and indifferent. It is obvious that a survey of this kind, based on the voluntary participation of parents in interviews, will not provide us with the opportunity to study this indifferent style, so it does not appear in the list of styles taken into consideration here.

The operationalization of parental practices was carried out taking into account the main characteristics of each parenting style, seeking to interpret them as accurately as possible for each of these practices:

Parental styles:

A: authoritarian

B: authoritative
C: permissive

Parental practices linked to the correspondent parental style:

- *bedtime and meals hours:*
  A: no individual menu, strict hours for bedtime and meals
  B: no individual menu, flexible hours
  C: individual menu, very flexible hours

- *participation in household chores* (set/clear the table, storing the dishwasher, tidy up their room):
  A: mandatory
  B: expected
  C: not expected

- *screen viewing rules*
  A: very restricted or no screen at all
  B: control on screen viewing
  C: no control on screen viewing

- *punishments:* screen or favorite activity privation (nobody talked about corporal punishment)
  A: often used
  B: rarely used
  C: no punishment, avoid open parent-child and child-parent confrontation

- *socialisation of the child:*
  A: control the child's peers frequentations and not encourage more social interaction
  B: control the child's peers frequentations, encourage and create opportunities for more social interaction
  C: not control the child's frequentation and not encourage more social interaction

- *decision making*:
  A: decision-making not shared with the child, exercises power to obtain obedience, parents do not give child reasons for their directives or actions
  B: share decision-making power with the child, the child is regarded as competent, solicits child's opinions, gives reasons with directives
  C: parents adjust their own expectations to the child's interests and moods

- *involvement in schooling:*

A: school is considered the most important thing in the child's life, homework must always be done, missing school without a valid reason is out of question, parents often participate to activities promoted by the school, often meet the teacher
B: school is important but as much as other activities, missing school sometimes without a valid reason is ok, meet the teacher sometimes, participate to some school activities
C: missing school often without a valid reason is ok, rarely participate to the school activities

- *management of free time:* structured activities not included
  A: parents decide how it has to be spent without discussing with the child
  B: exert control but offers child alternatives, direct the child's activities but in a rational, issue-oriented manner, recognizes the child's individual interests
  C: allows the child to regulate his own activities as much as possible, as long as he/she stays at home

FRANCE	bedtime/ meals hours	child participation in household chores	screen viewing rules	punishment	socialisation of the child	decision making	parents involvement in schooling	child management of free time	Majority of:
Claire / Farid	A	B	C	A	B	B	B	B	**B**/A
Zahra / Samira	B	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	**A**/B
Guillaume / Eloise	A/C	C	C	B	B	B	A	C	**B**/C
Lynn / Yoann	C	A	B	A	A	B	A	B	**A**/B
Céline / Romain	B	B	A	B	A	B	B	C	**B**/A
Yasmina / Omar	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	A	**A**/B
Leila / Ilyan		A	A	A	B	A		A	**A**/B
Florence / Thomas	A	C	C	A	A	A	B	C	**A**/C
Amir / Jamel		A	B	B	B	B	B	A	**B**/A
Marion / Margaux	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	**A**/B
Nadia / Dina	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	**B**/A
Amélie / Clément	A		B		B	B	B	B	**B**

Figure 5.3 French parental practices grid

ITALY	bedtime /meals hours	child participation in household chores	screen viewing rules	punishment	socialisation of the child	decision making	parents involvement in schooling	child management of free time	Majority of:
Beatrice / Stefano	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	**B**/A
Francesca / Beatrice	A	B	A	B	B	B	A	C	**B**/A
Marta / Federica	A	A		B	B	A	A	C	**A**/B
Martina / Chiara	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	C	**B**/A
Antonio / Aida	C	C	C	C	B	B	B	C	**C**/B
Lucia / Giulia	A	B	C	B	A	A	A	C	**A**/B
Marcello / Giuseppe	C	C	A	A	B	B	A	C	**A**-**C**
Camilla / Aurora	C	B	C	C	B	B	A	B	**B**/C
Pietro / Vera			A		B	C	C	C	**C**
Alessia/Carlo	C	B	A	A	B	B	A	A	**A**/B
Sara / Francesco	B	B	B	C	B	B	B	B	**B**/C
Letizia / Matilde	C	C	B	C	B		A	C	**C**/B
Fabrizio /Dago	B	B		B	B	B	A	B	**B**/A

Figure 5.4 Italian parental practices grid

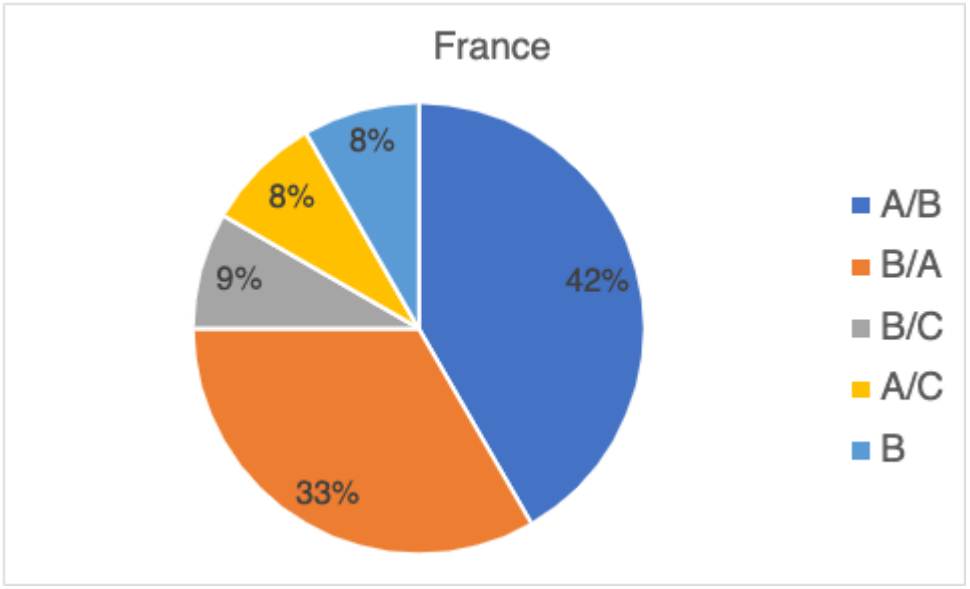


Figure 5.5 Proportion of different styles adopted by French parents

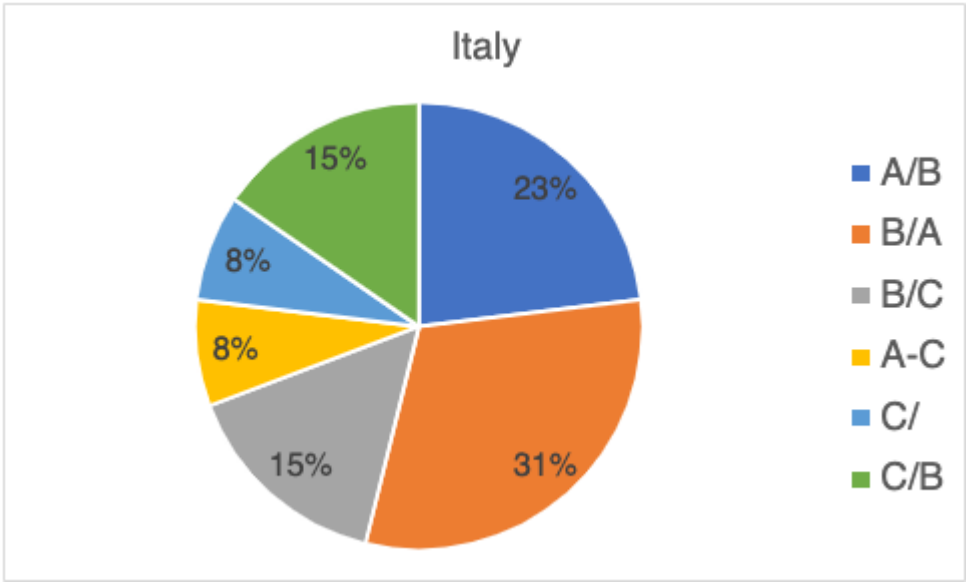


Figure 5.6 Proportion of different styles adopted by Italian parents

These two graphs illustrate the predominance of authoritarian parental practices among French parents, aligning with data from the comparative European survey indicating that France is the country that most values obedience and authority (Segalen, 2010). Additionally, there is also a notable absence of permissive practices among French parents. However, the number of parents adopting authoritative practices is similar in both countries, reflecting this parenting style increasingly mentioned in the literature as the new authoritative parenting style trend (Du Bois-Reymond et al, 1993).

5.2.2 The intensive parenting: a new parental style?

However, looking at the table and its results, there is an important element missing which characterised many of the interviews with parents: the degree of involvement in their practices. In fact, there is a difference between being involved in the life of your child's school and being very, very, very involved, there is a difference between encouraging sociability and spending a great amount of time and energy organising meetings with your child's friends. This high level of involvement reflects what is known as intensive parenting, also known as helicopter parenting (LeMoyne and Buchanan, 2011; Padilla-Walker, 2012), parenting out of control (Nelson, 2010), or overparenting (Segrin, 2013). As LeMoyne and Buchanan (2011) wrote, intensive parenting is: “appropriate parenting characteristics taken to an inappropriate degree”. In short, it's authoritative style but to the power of 1000!

Unfortunately, studies on overparenting for early adolescents are very limited, there is no well-accepted or researched definition of overly effortful parenting or overparenting, if this style of parenting exists, neither are there empirical studies on the impact of excessive parenting on children. We are therefore forced to make do with the definitions that individual researchers give to intensive parenting: “highly supervising, has difficulties with separation from the child, discourages independent behaviors, and is highly controlling” (Power, 2004). For Segrin et al. (2013) there are four distinct characteristics of overparenting: namely anticipatory problem-solving and risk aversion, excessive advice and affective response, dominance over children’s self-direction, and excessive tangible assistance to their children. For Padilla-Walker (2012) helicopter parenting is high on warmth/support, high on control, and low on granting autonomy.

5.2.3 Measuring the parental anxiety

All these definitions resonate particularly with the interviews of parents on both the French and Italian sides, especially when it comes to autonomy, but how do we establish what is excessive and what is not? Where to place the cursor?
As one of the causes of intensive parenting is parental anxiety (Nelson, 2012) and this was particularly cited during the interviews when it came to finding the causes of their child's mobility limitations, I decided to illustrate this degree of anxiety with regard to the CIM in this way:

Anxiety about CIM:
- : no anxiety
+ : some anxiety but let the children go around alone

++ : anxiety but try to fight against and let the children go to school or in some places near from home alone
+++ : can't fight a great anxiety, the children don't go alone anywhere

CIM graduation:

- no independence: 8
- school trip alone or with siblings rarely: 7
- school trip with siblings: 6
- school trip with friends: 5
- school trip alone regularly: 4
- school+stores: 3
- school+stores+friends' houses: 2
- school+stores+friends' houses+parks: 1

FRANCE

Parents	Parental practices	CIM
Claire	**B**/A	1-
Zahra	**A**/B	7++
Guillaume	**B**/C	6++
Lynn	**A**/B	6++
Céline	**B**/A	6++
Yasmina	**A**/B	2++
Leila	**A**/B	2++
Florence	**A/**C	7++
Amir	**B/**A	4++
Marion	**A/**B	1-
Nadia	**B/**A	7++
Amélie	**B**	4++

Figure 5.7 French parents anxiety graduation about CIM

ITALY

Parents	Parental practices	CIM
Beatrice	**B**/A	1+
Francesca	**B**/A	8+++
Marta	**A**/B	8+++
Martina	**B**/A	8+++
Antonio	**C**/B	8-
Lucia	**A**/B	8+++
Marcello	**A**-**C**	8+++
Camilla	**B**/C	1+
Pietro	**C**/	8+++
Alessia	**A/**B	2+
Sara	**B/**C	1-
Letizia	**C**/B	8+++
Fabrizio	**B**/A	2++

Figure 5.8 Italian parents anxiety graduation about CIM

Does this practice have negative effects on the development of children's coping skills? This is what the growing body of research on the subject, that I mentioned before, seems to indicate. In fact, it would seem that intensive parenting is a demonstration of what Grant & Schwartz (2011) call "the inverted-U effect". When positive phenomena reach inflection points at which their effects turn negative. It may be that the authoritative style taken to the extreme becomes an intensive style whose effects on children are no longer positive as has been found in much research on the authoritative style but become negative.

Even though for many researchers the negative effects of intensive parenting on the development of children's coping skills are becoming increasingly evident, the lack of empirical research makes it difficult to conceptualise this style. However, intensive parenting practices do exist and it was essential, in my view, to include it in the illustration of parental practices.

Parental anxiety, which here translates into excessive control of the CIM, is one of the easiest characteristics to observe, as parents very easily cite it as the cause of the restriction of the CIM. Let's now delve deeper into how parents perceive the learning process of independent mobility.

5.3 Parental style linked to the children's independent mobility

The parents who agreed to answer my questions during this interview have a different approach to autonomy. The goal of this subsection is to understand if there is a connection between CIM and parenting style. To achieve this, I'll be using the previous tables (Figure 5.3 and 5.4) defining the style to directly correlate it with practices related to CIM.

5.3.1 Progressive learning: advises and interdiction

The gradual learning of autonomy that parents implement can take various forms, including advice given for managing traffic, strategies for avoiding unexpected encounters, or guidance on seeking help. It may also involve setting prohibitions, such as running, "hanging out", or engaging with strangers. Parents who facilitate this gradual learning may also encourage their child to acquire more autonomy, often, though not exclusively, to prepare for the transition to middle school.

In many cases, advice on managing traffic has been provided since early childhood. Still, there are instances where parents feel the need to give recent recommendations because their child is starting to move independently, as expressed by one mother: "So far there has never been a great need because we are always together" (Letizia B., 10:26 ¶204). The primary advice revolves around how to cross streets safely, paying attention not only to cars but also to bicycles, scooters, police cars, and ambulances, whose speed may pose a risk. To ensure their child follows these guidelines, some parents accompany them to the pedestrian crossing during their initial experiences of autonomy, observing them as they cross alone. Others visually track their child until they exit their field of vision. In some cases, a neighbor monitors compliance with the rules and informs the parents of any breaches. Typically, this monitoring lasts for two or three days.

The most frequently offered advice revolves around "bad encounters". Some parents might simply say, "Don't trust anyone", while others adopt a more moderate approach, advising their child to use the adults around them as a means to solve

problems: seeking help from an adult they know, or if they don't know anyone, approaching a woman as a priority, as suggested by Marion. For some parents, it's crucial for their child to learn how to “manage the neighborhood” and its residents, even if they might sometimes seem a bit unsettling:

“Yeah, honestly, yes, after all I'm aware of the danger from both my job and my husband's job, so I'm quite aware of it, but I don't think that banning and over-protecting children is going to prevent them from facing danger, I prefer to give them a bit more freedom and make them realize that sometimes there are drunk people in the street who can cross your path, (...), the homeless, people like that who can scare children because they'll "arh, arh" all of a sudden they'll be talking to them when in fact they're not talking to them at all, they're talking to the solar system a bit, but uh she's already seen that and I'll tell her: "As long as you go your own way, or answer when someone says hello to you in a strange way, hello, and you go your way" it helps to de... not create conflict, whereas if sometimes you don't answer at all, you're scared and you run away, well at that point you become prey, I find.

- so it's more the idea of her getting used to it
- yeah, now we know all the homeless people in the neighborhood and we say hello to them (...) Some kids change the sidewalk and they're really scare and I don't think that's necessarily a solution”[22] (Marion, L. 14:24 ¶210-214).

Lastly, this growing autonomy might come with certain prohibitions. Some are imposed by parents who understand that they may not necessarily be followed; the ban on running is a prime example. Others, however, leave no room for exceptions—the prohibition on “hanging around”, for instance. This latter rule is much more easily enforceable. Parents have previously estimated the time it takes to cover a distance, down to the minute, from school to home, for instance, or returning from a sports activity. Even in their absence, they can ensure this rule is obeyed by calling their landline phone. At this age, as most don't yet have a mobile phone, it's inconceivable for parents not to know their child's whereabouts. Therefore, this prohibition against wandering is one of the strictest rules imposed on the children.

[22] “Ouais, honnêtement oui, après je suis quand même consciente du danger de part et mon métier et le métier de mon mari hein, je suis quand même assez au fait mais je trouve que ce n’est pas interdire et puis surprotéger l’enfant qui va faire que il va pas être confronté au danger, je préfère lui donner un peu plus de liberté et qu’elle se rende compte que oui des fois y’a des gens un peu saouls dans la rue qui peuvent croiser ton chemin,(...), aux sdf, à des gens comme ça qui peuvent faire peur aux enfants parce que ils vont “arh, arh” parler comme ça tout d’un coup ils vont s’adresser à eux alors qu’en fait ils s’adressent pas du tout à eux, ils s’adressent un peu au système solaire mais euh qu’elle ait déjà vu ça et que j’lui dise: “du moment que tu passes ton chemin, ou que tu réponds quand on te dis bonjour de façon un peu bizarre, bonjour, et tu traces” ça permet de dé… de ne pas créer le conflit alors que si parfois on ne répond pas du tout, qu’on a peur et qu’on s’enfuit ben on devient à ce moment là, une proie, je trouve.

- donc c’est plus l’idée qu’elle s’habitue
- ouais, qu’elle s’acclimate à la vie tout simplement, au quartier à comment ça se passe, maintenant nous on connait tous les sdf du quartier avec mes enfants et on leur dit bonjour (...) Y’a des enfants qui changent de trottoir et qui ont très peur et je trouve que c’est pas forcément une solution”

5.3.2 Mandatory autonomy: prepared or unthought but not an educative priority

The majority of parental narratives indicate that the decision to start allowing more independent mobility comes in the context of preparing for entry into Junior High.

This “normative transition” (Bronfenbrenner, 1986) can be meticulously planned well in advance or still largely unplanned. However, it is universally perceived as an inevitable obligation.

For some parents, their child's independent mobility became a reality well before the final year of primary school. However, in most cases, this was mainly due to logistical constraints rather than a deliberate choice based on educational principles. I note here one of the main differences between the French and Italian neighborhoods: the overwhelming majority of parents who granted this independence one or even two years before the last year of primary school were French.

The reasons given for this early granting of independence, compared to other parents, often stem from constraints faced by single mothers. Unable to be present to accompany or pick up their child and considering the cost of a babysitter too high and unnecessary, they decide to let their child go to or come back from school alone. I refer to this as a constraint because, given the choice, they would have preferred to continue accompanying them. They often express feelings of guilt, of being a "bad mother," while acknowledging that this experience has made their child more "mature" and "responsible." Only two other mothers spoke to me about intentionally teaching autonomy from as early as the fourth or even third grade.

Other than these few cases, for most parents, it's the transition to Junior High that prompts them to prepare their child for more independent mobility. In Italy, this mainly happens toward the very end of the school year, in the last two months, or even the last month. In France, the preparation is more spread out, between the fourth and fifth grades. As the move to secondary school becomes more imminent, it becomes a reality both in the minds of parents and children. It's an opportunity to test the children's independent mobility abilities and, at the same time, allow parents time to get used to letting them be free. For many parents, they also need this period of adaptation to manage their anxiety and learn to trust their child.

For some, this obligation is also felt as a constraint, “no choice”, and they would have preferred to wait until their child was 12 or 13 before allowing them to move independently. However, due to staggered schedules and sometimes having to manage the movements of several children simultaneously, they have no other option but to let them go alone. When possible, some parents decide that the accompaniment will continue at the beginning of the first year of Junior High, or even throughout the year, feeling that this age is too young for independent mobility.

On the other hand, for other parents, this obligation is seen as the moment they were expecting, the opportunity that compels them to “cut the cord”:

“Their mother and I are more or less the same, we tend to be a bit fused and a bit brooding, so it's true that we've never said to ourselves, "We're going to try such and such a thing at such and such age", it's not, it was easier for us to do it when we had to, we did a few tests, it went well, the first day we avoided thinking about it too much, we rushed to find out how it went and then it went well, it went well, that's it.

- but there has to be something that forces you to do it?
- well, that's how it was for the big one, and that's how it's likely to be for the other two”[23] (Guillaume, L. 22:11 ¶ 154-159).

This testimony also reveals the role institutions can play in fostering autonomy. Without this mandatory transition to Junior High, with its schedules that disrupt the existing family organization, it's highly likely that many parents would continue not to question their child's independent mobility. This transition compels them to consider something that wasn't, until now, an educational priority.

However, while some are preparing for this transition, I noticed that when conducting these interviews during this school year, many had not yet given it much thought. Several times during the interviews, when I asked parents why they didn't let their child go to school alone, the response was, “I don't know, I never thought about it”. My questions provided them with an opportunity to consider a matter they admitted they had never dwelled upon. Even a mother who allows her son to come home from school alone, when asked if he had ever gone to the bakery alone, responded with, “No, you know, that's true, we could have him do that, you're giving me ideas!” The same applies in Italy with responses like, “Great, your questions make me happy because they make me reflect” (Antonio, B.).

Hence, for many parents, independent mobility remains largely unconsidered, something they will address when it becomes essential, even mandatory, or when they feel their child is ready:

“And so how will you know that he is ready and can go on his own?

- We'll see, we'll see over time, honestly I've never asked myself the question yet, however, in my opinion we'll be able to figure it out”[24]. (Marcello, B. 5:8 ¶ 88-89)

---

[23] “Leur mère et moi pour le coup on est à peu près pareil on a tendance à être un peu fusionnel et un peu les couver donc c’est vrai on s’est jamais dit “tiens tel âge on va essayer tel truc” c’est pas, ça nous a été plus facile de le faire quand ça a été un peu obligé, on a fait quelques test, ça passe, le premier jour on évite de trop y penser, on se précipite pour savoir comment ça s’est passé et pis bon ça passe, ça passe, voilà

- mais faut qu’il y ait quelque chose qui vous oblige un peu à le faire?
- ben ça s’est passé comme ça pour la grande et ça se passera à priori comme ça pour les deux autres”

[24] “e quindi come saprai che lui è pronto e può andare da solo?

- vedremo, vedremo nel tempo, sinceramente non mi sono mai posto ancora il problema, però secondo me riusciremo a capirlo”

But when does independent mobility become mandatory? Institutions play a crucial role and the different approach between the two countries is quite evident here. In the Villette-Paul Bert neighborhood, due to the existence of permission for students to leave school from the first year of primary school, parents are prompted to consider independent mobility at an earlier stage. Even if they continue to accompany their child, they know that in cases of necessity, such as a canteen strike or an ill parent, they can exceptionally grant this autonomy to their child. Moreover, witnessing other children going to or returning from school alone encourages the most anxious parents to consider independent mobility as something natural.

This is not the case in the Irnerio neighborhood, where a child going to school alone is too exceptional to serve as an example. Furthermore, since children do not enjoy the freedom of returning home alone, parents are prompted to consider these questions about independent mobility only very late, with some not having reflected on it even at the very end of primary school and on the eve of summer vacation.

Nevertheless, it seems that many parents are relatively unaware of aspects concerning independent mobility, which, as Rivière (2014) points out, is less subject to prescriptive discourse than other areas of children's experience. If such guidelines exist, they are generally not aimed at encouraging autonomy; quite the opposite is true, as seen in the prescriptions found on the French Ministry of the Interior's website under “Protect your children against domestic risks”[25], which states:

“Once your child is old enough to understand, teach them the basic rules for safely crossing the street.
Discourage them from playing near the road.
Ensure they are never alone. Have them accompanied by a trusted person."

These recommendations are focused on protection and preventing risks and leave it up to the parents to interpret at what age this applies and aren't meant to encourage independent mobility.

5.3.3 First autonomy experiences: a meticulously planned preparation for middle school or rather very vague

The first experiences of independent mobility can occur here for various reasons: a request from the child, logistical constraints that push parents to grant this autonomy, or because independent mobility is part of the skills a child must gradually

[25] https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Archives/Archives-de-la-rubrique-Ma-securite/Protegez-vos-enfants-contre-les-risques-domestiques

master. But what often motivates parents the most is preparation for the upcoming transition to middle school.

Parents who consider independent mobility an important skill to acquire are those who prepare their child more in advance to do so gradually. In France, the parents most commonly found in this category have a parenting style of type A/B (Marion and Lynn) and B/A (Claire), so more authoritarian/authoritative, while in Italy, the prevailing styles are B/C (Camilla, Sara) and B/A (Beatrice), more authoritative/permissive.

In France, it's officially possible for a child to come home from school alone starting from CP (first year of primary school), but very few children do so at that age, as one of the mothers asserted: “No one does it anymore”, considered too early, too dangerous. At the end of the school day, CP and CE1 (first two primary grades) teachers check if an adult is picking up the child, although they are not obliged by any regulations, this has become a common practice. On the other hand, for CM1 and CM2 (older primary grades), no one claims such control. Thus, what we observe is that in France, children who witness other kids going to school alone are much more likely to demand independent mobility compared to Italy, where this reality practically doesn't exist. Furthermore, as I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, it will also be easier for parents to grant this autonomy having themselves observed many children going to school alone. Moreover, even if they are accompanied, given that a large number of students walk to school, the presence of adults walking alongside them is also reassuring for parents.

The example set by other parents or children seems to be the primary motivator for behaviors. This was evident during the “pedibus” experience in Bologna. Started only two months before the end of the school year, this initiative arose from Francesco's parents' desire to see him gain independence. Quickly, Carlo's parents, upon learning about it, requested that their son join. Then Aurora and Dago were added, mostly after their parents suggested it. It appears that in Italy, children have fully grasped that they will only be allowed independent mobility from middle school onwards and that it's pointless to request it earlier. Hence, most children who can experience it earlier do so, driven by their parents.

For the most anxious parents, allowing their child to walk a few meters ahead of them is already considered a step toward independence, seen in cases like Guillaume and Pietro, who respectively demonstrate styles B/C and C, or letting their child finish the journey to school while monitoring from a distance, as in Florence's case, style A/C. Another first experience shared by Letizia, C/B, because it marked a milestone, was when her daughter managed to open the door to their apartment by herself. The common component among these parents' styles is “C”, representing a permissive style that doesn't seem the most conducive to the development of independent mobility.

However, for the majority of parents, the age at which children can be allowed to move around alone is between 10 and 12 years old. The reasons used to justify this age can sometimes be incongruous—"10 years because it's a round number"—but the idea that they gain this right with entry into middle school constitutes a well-established norm:

"At what age is it right for a child to move around alone?

- In middle school. More than the age, it's the transition phase that matters. In my opinion, the transition to middle school marks a shift from pure childhood to early adolescence, and that's when they start experimenting—not with lengthy activities necessarily, but I believe it's reasonable for them to start moving around on their own in the vicinity during middle school."[26] (Alessia, B. 2:22 ¶ 115-117)

For many, allowing it earlier isn't necessary and might even invite criticism, but there are numerous reasons that parents mention for not granting independent mobility.

5.3.4 Parents reasons for not giving CIM

The reasons why parents don't grant independent mobility to their children are manifold. Apart from the fact, as I just mentioned, that the significance of CIM remains highly subjective for some parents:

"In my opinion it's not so important to know how to move around or at least now it's not important, it will be important when he has a moped when he's 14, 15 years old, for now it's more of our problem"[27] (Marcello, B. 5:21 ¶ 214-218)

For others, it's simply "natural" that a child of this age doesn't move around alone because "clearly she's still at an age where she can't go out on her own" (Letizia, B. 10:6 ¶ 34). For them, the real question is: What's the purpose of independent mobility? Allowing them to "vagare" or "gironzolare" (wander) in the city isn't something beneficial, implying that children of this age have no business being alone in the city.

---

[26] "A quanti anni è giusto che un bambino si sposti da solo?

- in prima media. Più che l'età è proprio il passaggio di fase, secondo me il passaggio scolastico segna un po' il passaggio di fase dall'infanzia pura a una pre adolescenza e lì è il momento in cui comincia a sperimentare, non magari le cose lunghissime però secondo me ci sta che lui in prima media cominci ad andare qui attorno per i fatti suoi, capito."

[27] "secondo me non è tanto importante sapersi muovere in giro o almeno adesso non è importante, sarà importante quando avrà il motorino a 14, 15 anni, per adesso è più che altro un problema nostro"

Other justifications can be categorized into two groups: safety reasons and parenting reasons. Safety reasons are already well-known and encompass fears related to distance, travel at night, and potential encounters. For some parents, it's simply inconceivable to let their child go to the park alone, for instance:

“Do the kids move around on their own?
- Never, never. (laughter)
- Why not?
- It's impossible.
- Why is it impossible?
- Ah, well, no, we can't just let the kids be like that. Parks are... you never know what might happen in a park, so there always needs to be supervision.”[28] (Amir 24:12 ¶ 169 – 190)

For others, their child may have the right to move around the neighborhood but not beyond because “nobody knows them there”. Some parents might also mention different types of concerns, such as the judgment of others that their children may face. This was the case for Chiara's son, who, living almost opposite the church, doesn’t want to go to catechism alone because he would be the only one doing so. Another less obvious concern raised by a mother in Italy is the fear that by giving her daughter too much autonomy, she might “grow up too fast”. In Italy, several parents have also mentioned, albeit with a smile, the possibility of being accused of “abbandono di minore” (child abandonment) if they let their child move around alone. Although said with a smile, this fear is part of a genuine concern about the uncertainty surrounding the age at which children are allowed to move around freely. Abandonment of a minor is also a criminal offense in France, but none of the French parents expressed this concern during the interviews. It would be interesting to explore why in Italy, this fear of being accused of child abandonment is so present in parents' minds.

Then there are reasons I refer to as “parenting reasons”, which are choices parents justify based on their parenting perspective. For them, accompanying their child represents a special bonding time that they know is temporary and something they should cherish before the next phase of entering middle school disrupts these routines:

---

[28] “Ils se déplacent pas tout seuls?
- jamais, jamais (il rit)
- pourquoi?
- impossible
- pourquoi c’est impossible?
- ah ben, non, on peut pas laisser comme ça les gosses. Les parcs c’est… on sait jamais ce qui se passe au parc, il faut toujours de la surveillance”

“I believe that Aida would manage just fine, but there's also my willingness. It's a way for me to see her when she doesn't sleep here; otherwise, I go the whole day without seeing her. For me, it's also an excuse to see her. Next year will be different.”[29] (Antonio, B. 3:7 ¶49-53)

Some parents express being “at the disposal” for their child; it's their role and they are there for that purpose. Others feel the need to monitor their child's social circle, even if it requires sacrificing activities they would have liked to do. For instance, they might give up personal activities to take their child to the park but find this constraint as a moment of bonding with their child. Additionally, for some, the transition to middle school isn't the determining factor for granting independent mobility. They believe a child doesn't suddenly become autonomous just because the institution mandates it; rather, it's the parent's decision.

Finally, one of the last reasons justifying this lack of autonomy is linked to new technologies and its influence on parenting. Many parents now feel the need for their child to have a mobile phone before allowing them to move around alone. This technology serves to reassure them because, for these parents, it's simply inconceivable not to know where their child is.

5.3.5 Parents capacities to “cut the cord” and opinions on child capabilities

For a large majority of parents I interviewed in France and Italy, granting this independent mobility isn't an easy decision, and they can be divided into two groups: those who find it challenging but still grant it and those who, for now, prefer to delay this moment.

The first group speaks of “accepting the risk”, “cutting the cord”, or, as this mom put it, “to authorize myself to have trust and also to gain confidence, telling myself that it was possible for him and for me to let them go independently and find their own way” (Lynn 19:7 ¶ 71–74). For them, it's about learning to manage the anxiety associated with independent mobility. In France, some think they would be less anxious if the school informed them that their child didn't arrive at school – “we are never sure he has arrived”, which doesn't happen in primary school due to a lack of staff but is done in middle school.

For the second category of parents, it's as difficult to “cut the cord” as they feel they need to cut it “with a chainsaw”. Added to this is a certain “lack of confidence” in their child's abilities, or simply justifying their child's lack of autonomy

[29] “io credo che Greta se la caverebbe tranquillamente però c’è anche la volontà mia, è un modo di vederla quando non dorme qua se no sono tutto il giorno senza vederla, per me è anche una scusa per vederla, l’anno prossimo sarà diverso”

because they themselves don't feel ready. They admit their child is ready and capable, but they need more time to come to terms with the idea and learn to control their anxiety.

Granting or not granting this independent mobility can also depend on the idea that parents have about their child's capabilities. These include the ability to handle traffic dangers as well as the ability to react to unforeseen circumstances. The table below summarizes the coding of parents' opinions about their child's capabilities in urban settings, an opinion I've attempted to correlate here with their parenting style, taking into account both French and Italian parents.

child is able and goes	child is able but doesn’t go	child is not able but goes	child is not able and doesn’t go
B/A B B/C A/B B/A B/A	C/B A/B B/A A/C B/A A/B C/B	B/C	B/C A/B C/B

Figure 5.9 Parents' opinions about their child's abilities in relation to their parenting style

What this table allows us to observe is the predominance of style B, authoritative, when it comes to judging one's child capable of facing the dangers of the city, having enough confidence in themselves, and managing their own anxiety to grant them independent mobility. This aligns with what was discussed in Chapter 2: the authoritative style stands out from other styles by being supportive rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative. To achieve this, they implement a mix of practices: clear expectations, firm (and developmentally reasonable) limits, and high levels of warmth and support to foster children’s development.

This is in contrast to the second column, “child is able but doesn’t go”, where the most represented style is the authoritarian style, A. Even if they consider the child capable of navigating the neighborhood alone, it might not be sufficient for granting independent mobility. Parents need to make this decision not based on the child's abilities and individual development, of which they are perfectly aware, but on other criteria. These could include age, physical structure, a personal belief in the benefits of later autonomy, or an inability to confront their own fears and anxieties.

The penultimate column, “child is not able but goes”, illustrates the case of Aurora, whose mother is aware of her poor sense of direction but still allows her to go to certain places alone. The last column, “child is not able and doesn’t go”, does not allow for a clear understanding of the parental style of those who grant the least independent mobility because they consider their child incapable of doing so.

The reasons why parents do not grant independent mobility to their children are numerous. However, it seems that parents whose parenting style aligns more with the authoritative style are more inclined to consider their child capable of navigating the city and therefore allow them to attempt the experience. On the other hand, parents with a more authoritarian or permissive style are less likely to consider their child's capabilities but rather focus more on their general ideas about independent mobility. For them, it seems to be a concept independent of their child's personality.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The establishment of neighborhood sociability holds significant sway over the perceptions of both parents and children toward their surroundings. It fosters direct engagement with fellow residents and provides invaluable opportunities for children to develop independent mobility skills. Even seemingly mundane activities, such as playing in the courtyard or walking to school with friends, serve as crucial steps in nurturing independence.

One might assume that a positive relationship with the immediate environment positively influences CIM. However, upon closer examination of the data, it appears that this correlation is not always straightforward. Despite Clément and Omar's parents granting them relatively high levels of independent mobility, their perception of the neighborhood does not necessarily align with positivity, as revealed in the interviews.

This suggests that the factors influencing parents' attitudes toward CIM may not consistently align with their perceptions of the neighborhood. Thus, the relationship between parental perspectives on CIM and their view of the immediate environment appears to be more complex than initially assumed. What can also be highlighted is a form of discourse generalization based on children’s protection, which, as recent studies demonstrate, leads parents belonging to lower middle classes, represented here by families living in social housing and previously considered as those granting the most freedom to their children compared to wealthier classes, to no longer let their child go out, thus becoming indoor children (Karsten and Felder, 2015).

However, in the difference on state level between France and Italy, what seems to play a fundamental role is the school institution. By allowing children to leave school unaccompanied starting from primary school, whether due to logistical constraints or as part of a planned autonomy learning process, schools prompt parents to consider granting independent mobility to their children at an earlier stage. The example set by children moving around independently encourages other kids to follow suit and prompts their parents to grant them the same freedom, having observed these children moving alone in the streets.

Conversely, the absence of the opportunity to observe children arriving or leaving school independently has the opposite effect. When solo-traveling children are rare, it doesn't encourage parents to contemplate independent mobility or significantly delays it, only considering it when it becomes the norm or even an obligation, such as when entering secondary school.

Finally, this study sought to shed light on the potential correlation between parenting styles and CIM. Indeed, the parenting style seems to play a role in independent mobility. Based on this small sample of parents, there appears to be a difference in the prevalent parenting styles between France and Italy. According to the table I compiled, in France, parents with authoritarian-leaning styles are more common, while in Italy, there's a higher prevalence of authoritative styles. Similarly, concerning preparing their children well before entry into middle school, the prevailing parenting style in the two countries also differs. In France, it's predominantly authoritarian/authoritative, whereas in Italy, it tends toward authoritative/permissive.

However, a common ground between parents from both countries emerges when considering their perceptions of their child's capabilities regarding independent mobility. Parents who believe their child is capable of moving around alone and allow them to do so are typically representative of an authoritative style. It's not surprising that a more "democratic" parenting style, fostering autonomy in general, is more likely to support CIM. Hence, similar to numerous other areas of education, the authoritative style seems to facilitate the development of more independent mobility in the represented children.

CHAPTER 6

What are the effects of CIM on emplaced knowledge?

In the previous two chapters, we explored what Children's Independent Mobility (CIM) looks like in France and Italy and how it is linked to parental parenting styles. In this chapter, we will examine the effects of CIM on emplaced knowledge. As I emphasized earlier, not all children have the same degree of mobility in their neighborhoods, and the hypothesis here is to understand if this has repercussions on their emplaced knowledge.

The way children experience their immediate environment is a question that has mainly been studied in neighborhoods considered "problematic," but rarely in those that do not pose particular issues. However, understanding how "ordinary children" experiment with their neighborhood is essential not only to better comprehend the dynamics of the city-child relationship but also to intervene and develop environments that facilitate shared living and growth.

The chosen method to address this question is the walking interview. This approach enables active engagement with children, providing an opportunity to explore in detail their relationships with their parents and neighborhoods. We will delve into the specific results produced by these walking interviews and assess whether a conclusive link between CIM and emplaced knowledge can be established.

I have previously mentioned the difficulties encountered in obtaining parental consent, so I could conduct only a limited number of walking interviews, 5 in Bologna and 4 in Lyon (Appendix 3.3). Most children discussed and planned the walk with their parents, some in a very superficial manner, while others provided more detailed information, as they later recounted to me. Only one of them (Romain) had a very strict restriction on the area we could explore. We were confined to his street and the parallel street, making back-and-forth movements, under the control of his mother who happened to be "coincidentally" on the phone in that same street.

Once parental consent was granted, the same procedure was followed for each of the walking interviews: it involved a walk that I conducted alone with the child (in Farid's case, we were accompanied by his twin sister), starting either from the child's home or from school (in one case in France and one case in Italy). The instruction was simple: I let the children guide me, and they were supposed to show me the places they know in their neighborhood, what they like, and what they dislike. Since the parents also allowed me to record the interview using my phone, I later proceeded to analyze the data using ATLAS.ti, following the same procedure as for

the parent interviews in Chapter 5. The analyzed data were grouped according to the following themes:

- Their experiences of independent mobility: the places they know (shops, friends' houses...)
- What scares them
- What they think about the rules imposed by their parents
- What they think about their neighborhood
- What they would like to change

6.1 Competent children but often limited knowledge of the neighborhood

6.1.1 Movement maps

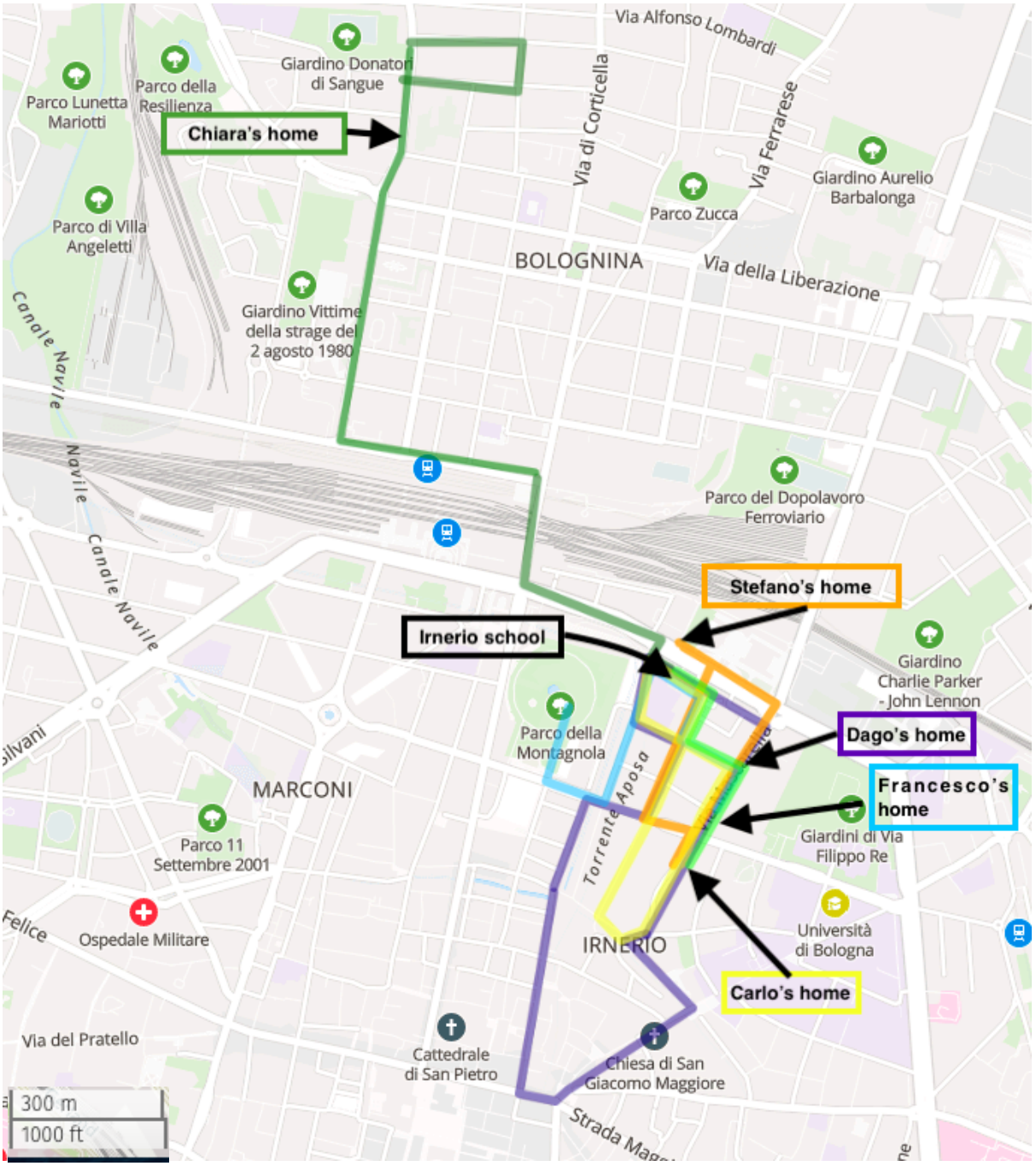


Figure 6.1 Itineraries followed during walking interviews with children in the Irnerio neighbourhood

https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/fr/map/walking-interviews-bologna_1008874#16/44.5008/11.3476

Figure 6.2 *(Same as previously)* Enlargement

Chiara
Francesco
Stefano
Carlo
Dago
Independent walking bus

Chiara lives 2 km from school, Dago took me 1 km from his home, and the others stayed within a range of 300 to 600 meters from their homes.

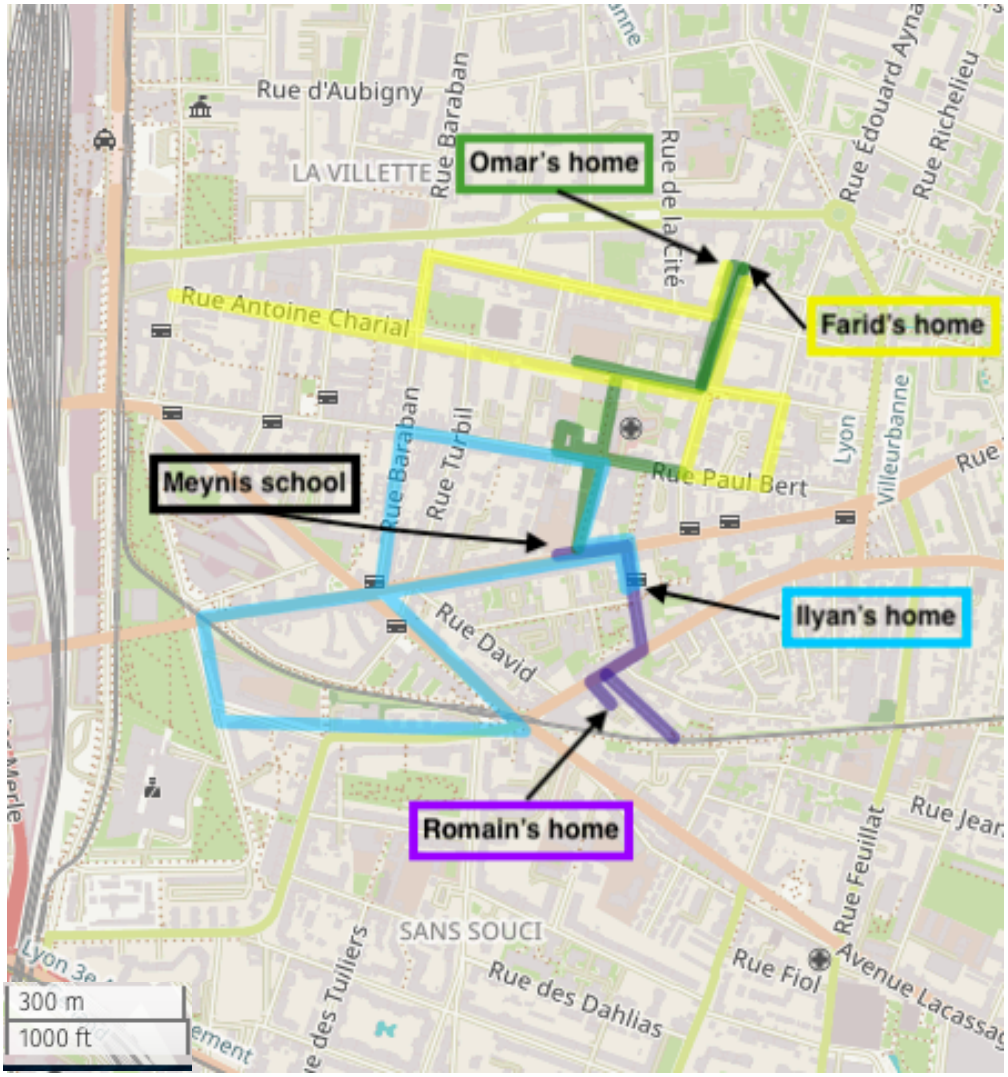


Figure 6.3 Itineraries followed during walking interviews with children in the Villette-Paul Bert neighbourhood
https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/it/map/walking-interviews-lyon_1009918

The perimeter within which the children move ranges from over 800 meters for Farid to 250 meters for Romain.

However, the maps above are not about independent mobility but simple spatial knowledge of their neighborhood that they traverse alone or accompanied.

The maps that only depict routes considered as independent mobility are quite different. To create them, I relied on the children's accounts during the walking interview, explicitly asking them in which places they regularly or occasionally went independently. I cross-referenced their responses with what their parents had told me and with the data in the diaries. The result is as follows in these maps:

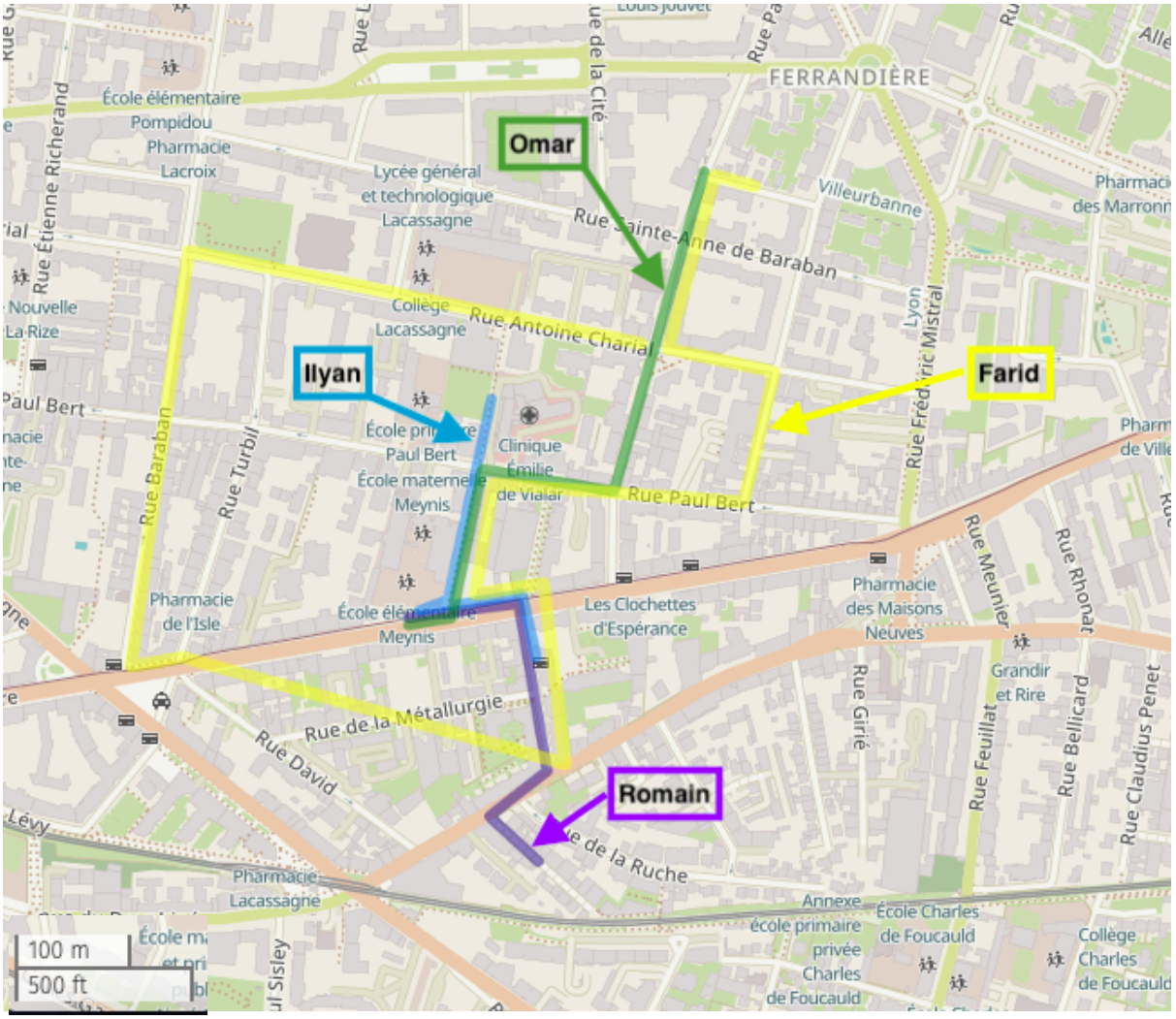


Figure 6.4 CIM Lyon
https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/it/map/cim-lyon_1010798

Distances covered by the children:

Ilyan: 235 m
Romain: 272 m
Omar: 569 m
Farid: 1,6 km

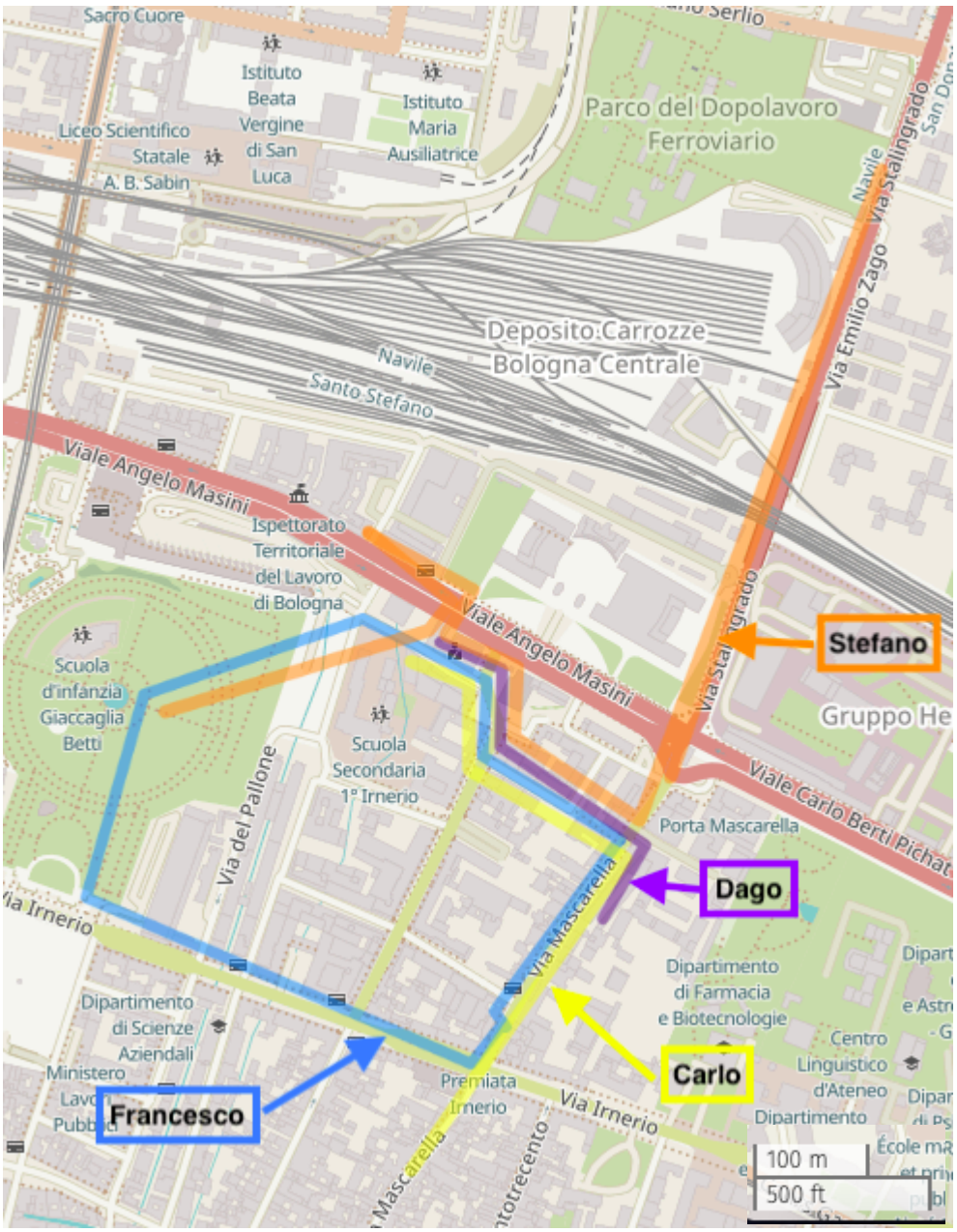


Figure 6.5 CIM Bologna
https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/it/map/cim-bologna_1018379

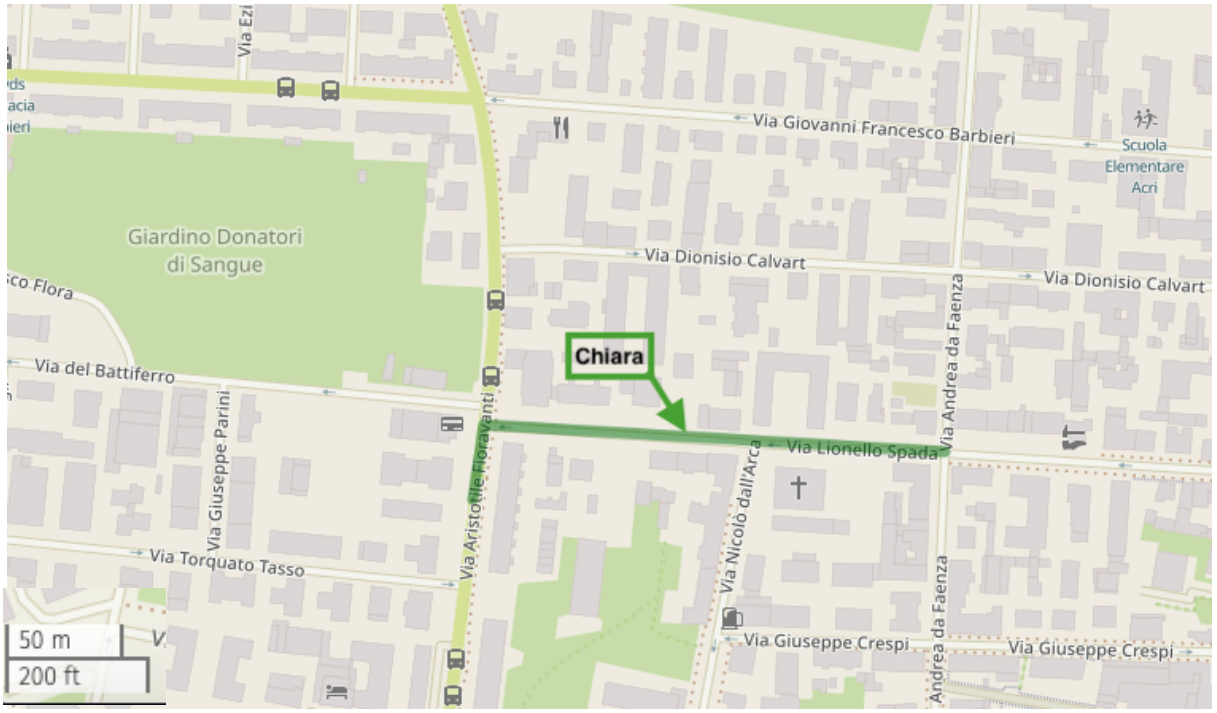


Figure 6.6 CIM Bologna (2)

Distances covered by the children:

Francesco: 660 m
Carlo: 575 m
Dago: 346 m
Stefano: 1 km
Chiara: 282 m

These figures are close to what Derbyshire (2007) lamented in an article where she compared the independent mobility of family members over four generations. She estimated that the right to roam for children was now reduced to 300 yards (about 275 meters), whereas it was 6 miles (9.6 km) for the great-grandfather.

6.1.2 Landmarks and practical/theoretical spatial knowledge

In general, the walking interview started from the children's homes (indicated on maps in Figures 6.1 and 6.3), except in the cases of Romain and Chiara, whom I picked up directly from school. They led me to school or back to their homes if we started from school, then pointed out the places they knew. These were mostly the

homes of their friends, small grocery stores, places where they engaged in extracurricular activities, or parks. Their neighborhood is what they know, and for them, it stops where the streets they don't know begin. Thus, in Bologna, Dago took me to Piazza Maggiore because he wanted to show me that he knew the way and because, according to him, that's where the neighborhood's limit is. On the other hand, for Francesco, who identifies the limit as via Irnerio on one side and the bus station on the other, the walk would not exceed these boundaries. The same thing happened in Lyon; the larger the scope of action, the more the dimension of the neighborhood also increased. So, for these children, a neighborhood is made up of the streets they know. It doesn't necessarily have a name; none of the children mentioned Irnerio or Villette - Paul Bert neighborhoods. They live in the city center, and that's the essential information for them.

As we observed from the maps (Figures 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3), the distances covered are limited and do not exceed a kilometer (except in Farid's case), so the children generally have no difficulty orienting themselves. In case of hesitation, some of them resort to what they call "punti riferimento" (reference points). Punti di riferimento can be of any type: a bench, a giant clock, the display of fruits and vegetables in a grocery store, scaffolding, a pedestrian crossing... The problem with having scaffolding as a punto di riferimento is that it is bound to disappear, as Chiara is well aware, and she worries about having to find another one.

However, there is sometimes a discrepancy between what children think they know and what they actually know. This was the case with Chiara, who lives more than 2 km from school and had to show me the way to her home. In her last year of primary school, she has been making the journey everyday for the past 5 years, however, Chiara hesitated several times along the way to her home. To decide which path to take, she relied on the punti di riferimento mentioned earlier. Because it's a journey she usually takes by car with one of her parents, and even though we eventually reached our destination, it shows that until a route is traveled on foot, it cannot be perfectly integrated into the child's memory, as Chiara aptly expresses: "Because when you go on foot, you cover it with your own feet and understand" (Chiara, B. 7:8 ¶ 138 – 144). I observed a similar gap between what children think they know and what they actually know during the walk with Stefano. He claimed to know the way to Carlo's house, but we only reached it thanks to the directions I provided, realizing that we were on the wrong path.

Similarly, even though they all claim to know the route to the middle school they will attend in a few months, many also admit to never having traveled it independently. Despite a certain level of independent mobility, spatial knowledge can still be extremely limited. This is the case, for example, with Romain, who does come home from school alone, but it is the sole and unique journey allowed for independent travel:

“In that neighborhood, are there things you know or not at all?

- Nothing, I know nothing.

- There are parks…
- Nah, the only thing I do is go home."[30] (Romain, L. 1:2 ¶ 8 – 11)

Thus, Romain, despite his family having lived in the neighborhood for several generations and being born there, claims not to know it at all. As he explained, all his after-school activities take place in Villeurbanne (the municipality starting at the end of the street), and he always travels there by car. Additionally, there is a very limited social life, as contacts with classmates or other friends are very rare.

6.1.3 Social knowledge and peer culture

"It is at the moment they step out of the family and enter the surrounding community that children actively engage in the local cultures of their peers and begin to participate and contribute to their maintenance." As highlighted by Corsaro in his work "Le culture dei bambini" (2003), during preadolescence, children have a strong need to integrate or understand the "cultura dei pari" (peer culture). This is an integral part of their identity construction, and they require numerous opportunities to "weave their webs."

These opportunities can take various forms: visiting a friend, traveling with a friend, regularly attending a local shop and getting to know the employees, going to a healthcare professional located in the neighborhood, and more. However, the desire to be with friends is the strongest at this age, and walking in the street with them without adult supervision is a highly sought-after activity for children. While highly desired, it might not happen often enough. Therefore, some of them implement strategies to extend this moment: for instance, choosing the longest route, asking a mom who picks them up by car after school to pick them up a bit further to have a few more minutes together, or, as shown here, going to pick up a friend at his home to then return together to the church in front of his house:

"Here, I do catechism in this church.
- And do you go there alone, right?
- Yes, I also go to pick up Francesco, who attends catechism with me, and his brother.
- So, you go pick him up, and then you come back here?
- Yes, my brother and I go there, pick up Francesco and Enrico, come back here, and then we go."[31]. (Carlo, B. 10:21 ¶ 210 – 214)

[30] "Dans ce quartier là y'a quand même des trucs que tu connais ou pas du tout?
- rien, je connais rien
- des parcs…
- nan moi le seul truc que je fais c'est que je rentre chez moi"

[31] "Qua faccio catechismo in sta chiesa qui

The desire to be together but in the way chosen by them is a wish that is not always understood by adults, as Chiara testifies here:

“(...) Every now and then, we used to ask if we could go out, if she could come to my house, or if I could go to hers. This year it will be possible, but my dad used to say that we already saw each other every day at the beach, so there was no need. However, in the end, it's not the same thing for me because... how can I say it? Because in the end, it's not... I don't know, because, in the end, at the beach... we're together, but it's not the same as being at home in peace with all our comforts.”[32] (Chiara, B. 7:12 ¶ 174)

This need to see each other under conditions chosen by them is part of what Corsaro (2003) defines as one of the central themes of the early forms of peer culture, which is to acquire greater control over one's life. However, it is not always easy for them to organize themselves to meet and play informally with each other. The reasons are multiple: extracurricular activities that occupy one's free time when the other is free, residence located far from school and therefore far from others, or, as is the case in France, the reshuffling of classes every year, which does not help in the consolidation of childhood friendships.

"There in the parish, is there a place to play as well?

- Yes, on Saturday afternoons, there is always the oratory where we can play.
- Only on Saturday afternoons then?
- Yes, because the other times the priest has to do something, I didn't quite understand what. But usually, Francesco and I are trying to organize it, not next Saturday though. We need to figure it out because we haven't done it yet, and we would like to. I can't do it next Saturday because it's June 4th, and I'm going with my soccer team to a camp in Monghidoro from the 4th to the 11th.
- But you wanted to organize to go play at the parish.
- Yes, usually for table tennis because the parish has table tennis (how complicated it is to organize to go play table tennis!)
- But until now, you haven't succeeded.

- e lì ci vai da solo vero?
- si, vado a prendere anche Francesco che fa catechismo con me e suo fratello
- quindi lo vai a prendere e poi tornate qua
- si, mio fratello andiamo lì, prendiamo Francesco ed Enrico torniamo qui e andiamo”

[32] “Ogni tanto chiedevamo se potevamo andare, se lei poteva venire a casa mia se io potevo venire a casa sua che quest’anno sarà anche possibile però mio papà diceva che tanto ci vedevamo ogni giorno al mare quindi non c’era bisogno. Però alla fine non è la stessa cosa per me perché… come posso dire, perché alla fine non… non lo so, che alla fine al mare… si sta insieme si però non è la stessa cosa di stare a casa tranquille con le nostre comodità.”

- No, among various matches and everything, we haven't managed to."[33]

(Carlo, B. 10:22 ¶ 215 – 222)

What is interesting to note is that a child like Farid, who, according to the table in Figure 5.7, has an independent mobility of 1- (one of the highest), also has very little interest in institutional extracurricular activities:

"I don't remember if your mom told me if you play sports?

- Next year, I stopped this year.
- What did you play before?
- I used to play futsal, but it got a bit boring, so I stopped.
- Why didn't you like it?
- I don't know, I liked soccer at first, but then I found it a bit repetitive."[34]

(Farid, L. 4:2 ¶ 16 – 28)

Zeiher (2002) observed a similar phenomenon in his study on children in Berlin who avoided time-scheduled institutional arrangements. When they were younger, they were enrolled in soccer clubs, but by the age of 9, they refused to go back due to the perception of excessive organization. Zeiher adds that “these children defend their temporal freedom against institutional attempts to restrict it through a common aspiration to temporal self-determination”.

---

[33] “Lì nella parrocchia non c’è un posto per giocare anche?

- si, il sabato pomeriggio c’è sempre l’oratorio dove possiamo giocare
- solo il sabato pomeriggio quindi?
- si, perché le altre volte deve fare qualcosa il prete non ho capito bene cosa. Ma di solito stiamo provando ad organizzare io e Francesco se riusciamo, sabato prossimo no… adesso dobbiamo vedere perché non l’abbiamo ancora fatto e vorremmo farlo, sabato prossimo non riesco perché è il 4 giugno e io vado con la mia squadra di calcio a un camp una settimana a Monghidoro dal 4 all’11
- però volevate organizzare di andare a giocare alla parrocchia
- si, di solito a ping pong perché la parrocchia c’ha il ping pong (quanto è complicato organizzare per andare a giocare a ping pong!)
- però fino a adesso non siete riusciti
- no, tra varie partite e tutto non siamo riusciti.”

[34] “Je me rappelle plus si ta maman m’a dit si tu faisais du sport?

- l’année prochaine, j’ai arrêté cette année
- tu faisais quoi?
- avant je faisais du futsal mais ça m’a un peu saoulé du coup j’ai arrêté
- pourquoi ça t’as pas plu?
- je sais pas, le foot à la base j’aimais bien mais après je trouvais que c’était un peu répétitif”

6.2 Children and the negotiation of their independent mobility

6.2.1 Their first times going to school independently

It's a question I had already asked their parents during the interview with them, but I was also interested in the children's perspective. That's why, during the walking interviews, I asked the children to tell me about the first time they went to school alone. The establishment of this autonomy, whether decided by parents, requested by the child, or a result of a mutual agreement, varies depending on the circumstances. However, even if the children are not the initiators of this decision, they generally adapt well. None of them expressed opposition when the proposal was made; on the contrary, it often served as a triggering factor, encouraging the child to seek more autonomy. This was the case for Romain, for example:

"And usually, you wait for each other to go home alone?
- Yes, we always go home together.
- Okay, and since when has this been happening?
- Since January.
- Yeah, and how did it happen? Did you ask for it?
- No, they told me that they couldn't come to pick me up, so I had to go home alone just for that day. Since then, I wanted to do it alone.
- So, afterward, you wanted to do it alone?
- Yes.
- Why did you want to?
- Because I liked it.
- What do you like about it?
- I go home with my friends, and since they all go home alone too..."[35]

(Romain, L. 1:3 ¶ 16 – 27)

The example set by Romain's friends who have been walking home alone since the previous year also played a significant role and encouraged Romain to continue the

[35] "Et d'habitude vous faites ça, vous vous attendez pour rentrer tout seuls?
- oui, on rentre tous les deux tout le temps
- ok et ça c'est depuis quand?
- depuis janvier
- ouais et comment ça s'est passé, c'est toi qui l'a demandé?
- nan, ils m'avaient dit que ils pourraient pas venir me chercher du coup je devrai rentrer tout seul exceptionnellement et depuis ce jour là ben j'ai voulu le faire tout seul
- après c'est toi qu'a voulu le faire tout seul
- oui
- pourquoi t'as voulu?
- parce que j'aimais bien
- qu'est ce que c'est qui te plais bien dans le…?
- je rentre avec mes copains et puis comme ils rentraient tous tout seuls aussi ben…"

experience even when it was no longer a necessity for his parents. This importance of the example set by other children is also evident in Bologna with the formation of the independent walking bus. The experiment began with Francesco, who had already had the opportunity to experience independent mobility “thanks” to Covid. Indeed, as both of his parents were sick at the time and unable to go to the small neighborhood supermarket, Francesco was sent to do the shopping.

"And when did you start expressing the desire for autonomy, saying, 'I would like to do these things on my own'? Do you remember?

- Yes, I remember because it was since we had Covid, so around May, no, March, March. In March because since we all had Covid and I had already recovered, I was the only one who could go grocery shopping.
- And you were sent because there was no other option?
- Yes (laughs) because otherwise, we wouldn't have had food, we couldn't eat.
- So, you went alone at that time, and you liked it?
- Yes."[36]

(Francesco, B. 9:11 ¶ 174 – 189)

Furthermore, Francesco “was fed up with the pedibus” (walking bus) organized by the school, which did not include his friends. So, he asked his mother if he could go to school alone, and she said yes. Soon, seeing him coming alone to school, Dago asked if he could pick him up at his house to go to school together. Then, Carlo and Aurora joined the group. According to both parents and children, it seems that this independent walking bus was born out of the desire of everyone to experiment with independent mobility in a more reassuring way for all because it takes place in a group.

Here, the official pedibus organized by the school, therefore, had the function of a “repellent” that ultimately pushed the children toward emancipation. It is worth noting that the pedibus in Bologna is organized in a somewhat restrictive manner for both parents, who must take turns accompanying the children from one end of the route to the other, and for the children, who often end up with younger ones and, once they arrive in the schoolyard, they must stay in the group without the opportunity to play with other children while waiting for the teacher. I would like to add that in Bologna, the pedibus is primarily designed for ecological reasons, to

[36] “E tu questa cosa dell’autonomia da quando è che dici io vorrei fare queste cose da solo te lo ricordi?

- si me lo ricordo perché da quando avevamo il covid quindi all’incirca maggio, no marzo, marzo. A marzo perché dato che avevamo preso il covid tutti e io ero già guarito, ero l’unico che poteva andare a fare spesa
- e lì ti hanno mandato perché per forza
- si, (ride) perché se no non avevamo il cibo, non potevamo mangiare
- e quindi lì sei andato da solo e ti è piaciuto
- si”

encourage parents not to drive their children to school, as indicated on the project's website:

"*The project 'Bologna a scuola si muove sostenibile' is born to promote sustainable and safe school mobility and to reduce car use near schools and along home-school routes*."[37] At no point is CIM mentioned.

In Lyon, at the time of this study (June 2022), the pedibus was in an experimental phase. However, during an interview with one of the officials from the town hall of the 3rd arrondissement, it was specified that one of the goals was for children to gain autonomy. For this reason, the pedibus is organized differently from the one in Bologna. The escorts do not have to follow the children throughout the entire journey to school but must be present at intersections to help the children cross safely. The project is only intended for the lower grades because it is assumed that children in CM1 and CM2 (4th and 5th grades) already go to school on their own.

6.2.2 Adherence to rules set by parents

At the age of 11, children are aware of the rules that govern their movements. They have internalized these rules perfectly, and, for the most part, they are well understood and accepted.

"Ah, and Enzo and Clément, they go there by themselves?
- Yes.
- Okay, and would you like to go with them?
- Yes, sometimes.
- But it's not something you ask your parents to do?
- No, I've never asked.
- And why?
- Well, I don't think about it, and then because if I think about it, I tell myself it's not the first thing I have to do. I have plenty of other things, I have toys, I have... that's it."[38]

(Romain, L. 1:25 ¶ 206 – 219)

[37] https://www.comune.bologna.it/servizi-informazioni/pedibus-bologna-scuola-muove-sostenibile

[38] "Ah et Enzo et Clément eux ils y vont tout seuls
- oui
- ok et t'aimerais bien aller avec eux?
- oui des fois
- mais c'est pas quelque chose que tu demandes à tes parents de le faire?
- non, j'ai jamais demandé
- et pourquoi?
- ben j'y pense pas et puis parce que si j'y pense je me dis que c'est pas la première chose que j'ai à faire. J'ai plein d'autres trucs, j'ai des jouets, j'ai… voilà."

Whether in Lyon or Bologna, children, who have been informed about the dangers of the city since they were old enough to understand, generally agree with the restrictions imposed by their parents. These restrictions are often related to the parents' fear of traffic or encounters with malicious individuals, "weird people" who frequent parks, for example.

"So, earlier you were saying that your father trusts you, but not the cars
- not the other drivers because they are very fast
- and you agree with him
- I fully agree with him
- You would like to go alone
- Of course
- But you understand that you can't
- Exactly, also because I'm still little anyway."[39]

(Chiara, B. 6:2 ¶ 12 – 19)

“But can you go to Ilyan's place alone?
- Yes, so I know how to go to Parc Bazin alone, but my mom doesn't want me to.
- She doesn’t want, why?
- She's afraid because it's far, so she doesn't want me to go alone.
- And you think she's right?
- Well, yes, I think so because if something happens to me...
- But do you think it's too far?
- Well, I think that in 2 or 1 year, I'll be able to go there alone."[40]

(Farid, L. 4:22 ¶ 390 – 403)

[39] “Quindi prima mi dicevi che comunque tuo padre ti dice che lui si fida di te però non delle macchine
- però non degli altri guidatori perché sono velocissime
- e tu quindi sei d’accordo con lui
- io sono pienamente d’accordo con lui
- anche se ti piacerebbe andare da sola
- certo mi piacerebbe
- lo capisci che non puoi
- esatto, anche perché sono piccola comunque”

[40] “ Mais tu sais aller tout seul chez Ilyan?
- euh oui du coup je sais aller au parc Bazin tout seul mais ma maman elle veut pas
- elle veut pas pourquoi?
- ben parce que c’est loin du coup elle a peur
- et toi tu trouves qu’elle a raison?
- euh ben oui, je pense que oui parce que si il m’arrive quelque chose…
- mais toi tu trouves que c’est trop loin?
- ben je trouve que dans 2 ou 1 an je pourrai y aller tout seul”

I have also noticed a certain form of resignation in some children who, even if they would like, for example, to go to the park with friends, already thinking they know the answer, don't even ask their parents. The acceptance of rules, sometimes very strict, set by their parents is also due to the fact that they are aware that these are temporary rules. Those with older siblings know that when they enter middle school, the protective framework that still governs their daily movements will gradually give way to greater freedom of movement. This has often been promised to them by their parents, so they eagerly await this moment.

"But I hope that by the end of the first year of middle school, I could go... by myself or with friends because, in the end, to go with friends, we live, with my friend Beatrice who lives... in Piazza dell'Unità, and so I have to pass through Piazza dell'Unità.

- So you could go pick her up.
- Yes, exactly.
- Is that something you want to do?
- Yes.
- Have your parents said by the end of the first year of middle school?
- Yes, they told me that surely the first year of middle school, well, I'll do it with them. It also seems quite fair to me because I still have a year less since I did the "primina." (referring to a preparatory year)[41]

(Chiara, B. 7:11 ¶ 168 – 174)

Here, we understand that what motivates parents to grant or deny independent mobility is not related to the institutional transition to the higher education cycle or their daughter's abilities but rather to age. For them, a child, even if capable, must reach a certain age before being granted independent mobility. Chiara, even though she is the third in the sibling order, will also have to adhere to these rules, leading to a certain frustration on her part.

"Ah, then my father gave me another, yet another recommendation (...)

- so, does he give you a lot of recommendations?
- yes
- do you think it's fair or too much?
- in my opinion, they should relax a bit, but it's also fair

[41] "Però spero che alla fine della prima media io potesse andare… da sola o con gli amici perché alla fine per andare con gli amici abitiamo, con la mia amica che si chiama Eleonora che abita… in piazza dell'Unità e quindi io per percorrerla passo per piazza dell'Unità

- quindi potresti andare a prenderla
- si, esatto
- è una cosa che hai voglia di fare?
- si
- i tuoi hanno detto alla fine della prima media?
- si mi hanno detto che sicuramente la prima media vabbé la farò con loro, mi sembra anche abbastanza giusto perché io comunque ho un anno in meno perché ho fatto la primina."

- you understand it though…
- I understand it, but it's a bit heavy, but I fully understand it, I would be worried too if I had a daughter."[42]

(Chiara, B. 6:14 ¶ 170 – 178)

Thus, being part of a sibling group does not necessarily mean early emancipation; in Bologna, it is even the opposite that is true. Indeed, in several cases, the children made me understand that it would not really make sense for them to go to school or to an extracurricular activity alone since the accompaniment was already organized for their younger brother or sister. In Italy, parents often told me that it would be unfair to burden the older sibling with the responsibility of a younger one. In France, on the other hand, parents are less hesitant about this, believing that together, they will tend to watch over each other better.

6.2.3 Well-accepted adult presence

Most of the children with whom I conducted walking interviews generally tolerate the omnipresence of adults in all their activities very well. As we have seen in the previous chapter, their parents tend to have an authoritative parenting style, where communication plays a central role in decision-making. Therefore, children do not feel like they are "suffering" from the imposed restrictions; they tend to understand and share them. This parenting style also fosters the construction of a strong emotional bond between parents and children, which is why their presence is still very well accepted at the age of 11. They also see it as beneficial, as in the case of Omar, who finds his father's presence in the park very useful and reassuring:

"In fact, I prefer it when my father is there because when there's no one else to play with, he plays with us. And then, when he tells us to leave, we leave. So, he's the one who gives us water, he keeps our scooters. That's why I like it when he comes with us.

- Because you can give him the scooters?
- Yes, we give him the scooters, he keeps them because over there, they can be stolen, it happens.
- So, you like it when your father comes with you?

[42] “ah poi mio padre mi ha fatto un’altra, un'ennesima raccomandazione (...)
- quindi te ne fa tante di raccomandazioni?
- si
- secondo te è giusto o sono troppe?
- secondo me dovrebbero un po’ rilassarsi però è anche giusto
- lo capisci però…
- lo capisco però c’è, un po’ pesante, però lo capisco pienamente, anch’io sarei preoccupata se avesse una figlia.”

- Yeah, I find it more reassuring.
- Otherwise, what are you afraid of?
- Well, that someone might steal from us, that someone might hit us, and that's it.
- Has it ever happened?
- No."[43]

(Omar, L. 2:24 ¶ 324 – 332)

Children, who have constantly been told that the park is a potentially dangerous place, logically prefer to be accompanied there and then enjoy having an adult always available. Why would they deprive themselves of that convenience? It's ultimately very practical.

However, it should not be assumed that parents automatically transmit their fears. Children are generally confident, even when facing a situation where they know the risks described by their parents. If a fear does exist, it is quickly overcome during the first experiences.

"Do you have things that scare you in the city when you come back from school?

- Well, the first few times I was a bit scared, but not anymore.
- What were you scared of?
- Well, the first time, I was scared because I had never been alone in the street, you know, malicious people and all that. But since I started walking alone, my parents told me what to do if it ever happened, and it never did.
- What did they tell you to do if it happens? What did they say?
- They told me that if someone tries to force me to do something, I should say no. And if they really try to force me, I should scream, scream really loud to get people's attention. Besides, we're in neighborhoods where it's not deserted.
- Yeah, there are people.

[43] “En fait je préfère quand il y a mon père comme ça quand il y a plus personne pour jouer et ben c’est lui qui joue avec nous et comme ça dès qu’il nous dit de partir on part comme ça c’est lui qui nous donne l’eau, comme ça c’est lui qui garde nos trottinettes, c’est pour ça j’aime bien quand il vient avec nous

- parce que tu peux lui donner les trottinettes?
- oui on lui donne les trottinettes, il les garde parce que y’en a là-bas ils peuvent voler, ça arrive
- donc t’aime bien que ton père ils viennent avec vous
- ouais, je trouve ça plus rassurant
- sinon t’as peur de quoi?
- ben qu’on nous vole, qu’on nous tape et voilà
- c’est déjà arrivé?
- non”

- Especially there, there, there might be a bit less people, but I know, I know a bit. Many people from my school live around here, and that's it."[44] (Romain, L. 1:15 ¶ 118 – 125)

Children can also fear that their parents will worry about them, and sometimes, they will refrain from venturing further from their usual routes to avoid causing anxiety. For example, Francesco patiently awaits the day when he will have a mobile phone, allowing him to reassure his mother about his location during travels outside the neighborhood. In Chapter 5, we saw that the mobile phone had become, for the majority of parents, a prerequisite for independent mobility, and children have perfectly internalized this aspect as well.

6.2.4 "Third places" and rule transgressions

However, beyond the rules imposed by their parents or those they must respect at school, children must also learn to conform to the rules that govern what is called "third places", including playgrounds. "Third places", according to Caroll's definition (2015): "*these accessible public spaces (e.g. parks, shops and streets) are distinct from the more defined and confined physical and social environments of first place (home) and second place (workplace/school)*".
All the children who took part in this survey live in apartment buildings; however, not all of them have a courtyard they can use to play. In Bologna, only Dago has a place where it is possible for him and his friends to meet and play ball. In contrast, in Lyon, Farid, Ilyan, and Omar have a courtyard, and Romain has a private garden. However, even if the courtyard exists, it does not necessarily mean that playing is allowed, and in reality, in these three places I visited with the children, it is not. Signs are present to remind the children and their parents of the rules.

[44] "Toi y'a des choses qui te font peur dans la ville? quand vous rentrez de l'école
- ben les premières fois j'avais un peu peur mais non autrement non
- t'avais peur de quoi?
- ben, la première fois j'avais peur de… j'avais jamais été tout seul dans la rue, les gens malveillants tout ça mais depuis que je rentre tout seul mes parents ils m'ont dit ce qu'il fallait faire si jamais ça arrivait et puis ça m'est jamais arrivé
- et qu'est-ce qui faut faire si ça arrive alors? c'est quoi qu'ils t'ont dit?
- ils m'ont dit si quelqu'un essaie de me forcer à quelque chose il faut que je dise non et si jamais il me force vraiment je crie, je crie très fort pour prêter l'attention des gens, en plus on est dans des quartiers où c'est pas désert
- ouais, y'a du monde
- surtout là, là, là il peut y avoir un peu moins de monde mais je sais, je connais un peu, y'a beaucoup de personnes de mon école qui habite ici et voilà".

Figure 6.7 Signs prohibiting ball games in building courtyards

The left photo reads "Ball games are prohibited in the residence," residence on Rue Saint-Eusèbe, Lyon 3rd arrondissement. The right photo reads "Ball games forbidden," residence on Rue Carry, Lyon 3rd arrondissement. (Photos Agathe Gillet, June 2022)

But despite these prohibitions, in all three cases, the children still play ball there. Ilyan told me that the sign serves as a goalpost for their soccer game…

"There, the director of the garden lives just on the first floor there, and his child, well, sometimes we play soccer with him.

- So, are you allowed to play soccer here?
- Uh, no.
- Ah.
- Well, yes, but in fact, we're not allowed, but we play.
- And if you play, do people say anything to you or not?
- No, they don't say anything.
- Why do you say you're not allowed, then?

- Well, because it's written 'Ball playing prohibited."[45]

(Omar, L. 2:14 ¶ 143 – 151)

For Farid, Omar, or Ilyan, these prohibitions are entirely breakable simply because adults send them messages that they consider contradictory. It can be a caretaker who sometimes tells them to play elsewhere but most of the time turns a blind eye, or a courtyard where the game was banned due to the danger caused by tree roots, but in the face of neglect that has lasted for two years, the children have finally reappropriated the space. This dynamic of reclaiming available urban space is a consequence of the lack of places to play, pushing children to occupy urban territories potentially accessible in a "wild" manner (Germanos, 1995). In Bologna, Stefano and his siblings have become accustomed to using the access ramp to the parking lot for downhill bike rides. In Lyon, Farid and his twin sister requisition the impasse where they live using abandoned cones found in the park, which they use to delineate their "soccer field."

Children can also divert urban furniture from its official function, like Ilyan using the prohibition sign as a goalpost or Chiara roller-skating in the dry fountain of Montagnola Park. In doing so, they appropriate public spaces by repurposing them, which is a way of reclaiming the street by humanizing it (Roulleau-Berger, 2004).

By transgressing rules through play, children test the limits imposed in these third spaces. Perhaps it's possible to view the transgression of these prohibitions and the appropriation of certain urban spaces as a step towards autonomy. To arrive at this conclusion, more examples would certainly be needed. Nevertheless, what I observe is that Farid, who turned his cul-de-sac into a soccer field, and Stefano, who plays on the parking ramp, both have a greater independent mobility than their peers. They have likely gained a deeper knowledge of the places around them because, as Caroll (2015) emphasizes, "*third places are important sites for children's independent mobility and social interaction, their development of a sense of place and identity.*" Extremely important for children, these places represent opportunities for independent mobility, the development of social relationships, and the construction of their identity. One could argue that it's truly in these places that children's emplaced knowledge is constructed, and that's why these places should occupy a significant role in children's daily lives.

[45] "Là, le directeur du jardin il habite juste au premier étage là et son enfant ben des fois on joue au foot avec lui
- donc vous avez le droit de jouer au foot ici?
- euh, nan
- ah
- 'fin si mais en fait on n'a pas le droit mais on joue
- et si vous jouez, y'a des gens qui vous disent quelque chose ou pas?
- non, ils nous disent rien
- pourquoi tu dis que vous avez pas le droit alors?
- ben parce que c'est écrit "Interdit au ballon."

Thus, the fact that most Italian children don't have the opportunity to play in their courtyards, either because it has been transformed into a parking lot or because it doesn't exist, prevents the initiation of the "virtuous circle" described by Prezza (2001). This circle, on the one hand, gives the child greater self-confidence and, on the other hand, provides parents with the opportunity to acquire confidence in their child's abilities. This, in turn, might encourage parents to grant more independence to their children, enabling them to face the world (Jutras, 2003).

6.3 Their vision of their own independent mobility

6.3.1 Identity construction around the neighbourhood

Thus, the purpose of these walking interviews was to understand children's perception of their autonomy and their knowledge of the environment. We observed the importance for them of having a courtyard to play in, and how this influenced not only their social development and their perception of the neighborhood, but also the autonomy granted to them by their parents. These parents, trusting in their children's ability to self-manage, are more inclined to allow them to explore the neighborhood streets alone.

When asked what they liked about their neighborhood, children primarily highlighted social relationships. Of course, they also appreciate the amenities, the ability to find everything they need within walking distance, and the presence of parks. However, what truly makes a difference for them is having friends in the neighborhood whom they can visit.

"What do you think about the neighborhood? Do you like it?

- Yes, I like it. One reason is that I have my friends here, and two, because there are few cars passing by, so I can move around by myself."[46]

(Francesco, B. 9:4 ¶ 83 – 86)

What they enjoy is inventing games where it's not possible to play with a ball, riding their bikes to the park, the artistic elements present in the neighborhood, such

[46] "Cosa pensi del quartiere? Ti piace?

- si, mi piace, uno perché ci sono i miei amici, due perché passano poche macchine quindi posso muovermi anche da solo
- poche macchine, in via Mascarella dici?
- si, in via Mascarella non è che ne passano tantissime".

as the colorful stones decorating a building's facade, although the most beautiful ones have unfortunately "all been stolen." Farid also laments the lack of "beautiful graffiti" in his street. Romain, on the other hand, was part of the Children's District Council, and on their proposal, planters were installed in the neighborhood. They appreciate the tranquility and low traffic. Chiara likes the kiosk in Montagnola because, considering herself now too old (!) for the park's games, she enjoys sitting there to chat with her friends.

The presence of specific infrastructure in their neighborhood significantly influences the daily lifestyle of children. As they are not allowed to "wander," they can only move around for a specific purpose. Besides school or out-of-school activities, the park is one of the few reasons that can justify going out, but it needs to be attractive. Several children have mentioned that the games in the parks near their homes seem to be designed for younger children. In Lyon, what the boys want are "city stades," which are fenced multi-sport courts with synthetic surfaces, deemed more suitable for their activities than the sandy field in Parc Sacré Coeur, for example. In Bologna, the children do not have such facilities, so the place they frequent the most is a semi-private concrete courtyard in a group of buildings in the neighborhood.

What is also noteworthy is that for children, every element of the urban "decor" in which they move is a source of inspiration. Associations of ideas stemming from street names, the presence of a theater sparks curiosity, and the existence of a linguistic high school "for those who want to travel the world" can stimulate aspirations. However, for Carlo, this stimulation offered by his neighborhood remains quite relative. During our walking interview, he mainly mentioned restaurants or gelato shops that he frequents. For him, it seems clear that the pretext for going out is justified because one needs to buy something. Even during a trip to the park, they buy ice cream. If a new street food restaurant opens, they go to try it. It seems that there is no outing without a purchase.

But, even if their judgment is generally positive towards the place where they live, the children also express a number of criticisms. First of all, among the things they like the least, there is the noise, caused by the presence of bars or by the young people in the neighborhood. In Lyon, the children complain about these teenagers who prevent them from sleeping and “who do anything.” Farid uses the term “racailles”, which is very derogatory but widely used in common language in France:

"At 16, 15 years old, most of them are not... well, they're a bit like troublemakers, and so they're not very nice, but most of them are nice.

- Are they nice or not nice?
- A quarter of them are nice, three-quarters are not nice.
- Do you know any of them?
- Well, yes, I know some of them, but they're not really my friends.
- Are you a little scared of them?

- No, it's okay. In fact, I'm kind of used to it, because when I go down from my place to throw out the trash, they're there.
- And do you say hello to them, or do you say nothing?
- If they say hello, I answer; if they don't say hello, I say nothing."[47]

(Farid, L. 4:19 ¶ 326 – 335)

Farid demonstrates here that he knows how to manage what he nevertheless considers as a danger by adapting his behavior to theirs. In Bologna, Carlo, who lives on a street characterized by the presence of many bars, would like them to close at 8 pm or 9 pm so that he can sleep without being awakened by loud voices.

Finally, among the least appreciated elements of the neighborhood, Chiara mentions the name of the park next to her home, "Giardino donatori di sangue" (Blood Donor Garden). For her, the name refers to the type of people who mostly frequent the park, mainly elderly individuals, adding that the name is quite alarming, "as soon as you arrive, I'll put a needle in you, take your blood!"

Ultimately, the one who appreciates his neighborhood the least is Romain, whose extracurricular activities all take place in Villeurbanne, where he goes by car, leading him to say: "in fact, all the places I like are far from this neighborhood." Romain, despite being born in this neighborhood, actually knows it very little, and that's probably why he doesn't have a particular fondness for any place.

6.3.3 Things they would like to change

Even though they maintain a good relationship with their parents, understand the reasons for the limitations on their independent mobility, and don't want to worry their parents by asking for too much freedom, those who have experienced independent mobility describe its advantages timidly and appreciate the positive aspects, which can be of various types: being able to manage their free time, feeling grown-up and responsible, talking with friends, having time to think.
In managing free time, Romain's testimony is significant:

---

[47] "Les 16 ans, 15 ans la plupart ici ils sont pas… ben voilà quoi c'est un peu des racailles et du coup ben ils sont pas très gentils mais la plupart ils sont gentils

- ils sont gentils ou ils sont pas gentils?
- un quart ils sont gentils, trois quarts ils sont pas gentils
- toi t'en connais?
- euh oui j'en connais mais ils sont pas spécialement mes copains
- ils te font peur un peu?
- nan, ça va, en fait j'ai un peu l'habitude vu que quand je descends de chez moi pour aller jeter les poubelles ben ils sont là
- et tu leur dis bonjour où tu leur dis rien?
- si ils me disent bonjour je leur réponds si ils me disent pas bonjour je leur dit rien."

"Ah, okay, so why would you want to go to the park alone?

- Well, to play with my friends for a longer time because after a while, I saw that my mom was starting to get tired, getting bored, and we had to leave."[48]

(Romain, L. 1:23 ¶ 181 – 187)

What parent has never felt a certain boredom having to stay at the park so that the children can play? In the parents' interviews, one of them mentioned sacrificing their own time to accompany the children outside. It wasn't done for pleasure but more out of duty related to various recommendations or injunctions indicating the necessity for children to spend time outdoors (at least one hour per day according to the WHO[49]). It's clear that for other parents, playing with their child at the park can be a source of shared pleasure. However, where children would need more time to play outdoors with their friends, parents don't always have the availability and energy for it.

The possibility for children to simply go and play outside without an adult feeling the need to "take them out," as if they were dogs needing to do their business, is the solution that allows everyone to live according to their own rhythm and needs. This is why the presence of the kiosk at Montagnola Park is highly appreciated by parents and children and illustrates well the importance of facilities in parks (Karsten, 2014), each having a reason to enjoy this time at the park. However, even here, it's difficult for parents to go there daily.

In the previous chapter, I also mentioned the term "roam," which, in the minds of parents, is absolutely inconceivable for a child of this age. Children who have some level of independent mobility only have it to go from one specific place to another. Yet, if we listen to the children, in their speeches, the idea of being able to roam is an activity that, even if they don't have the opportunity, wouldn't displease them:

"So, the places where you like to go?

- I like to go to my friends' places, and... then wander a bit in places on my own.
- Wander? Like where?
- In places nearby, not very far.
- What does wandering mean?
- Just going around, taking a walk, going to my friends, saying hello, coming back home, those kinds of things.
- Just to take a little stroll, you mean?

---

[48] "Ah ok et donc pourquoi tu voudrais aller au parc tout seul?

- ben pour jouer avec mes copains plus longtemps parce que après ma maman j'ai vu qu'elle commençait à être fatiguée, à s'ennuyer et on a dû partir."

[49] WHO. Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2010. 60 p. http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet_recommendations/en/index.html

- Yes, I would like to do that too.
- You'd like to but you don't do it?
- No.
- You'd like to wander.
- Yes.
- When you're alone, walking, you like it because…
- Yes, I can go wherever I want.
- You can go wherever you want, you choose.
- Yes.
- But when there's an adult with you?
- I go where he goes.
- So, it's very different.
- Yes."[50]

(Stefano B., 8:17 ¶ 305 – 324)

Although not questioning the presence of the adult, what Stefano clearly indicates here is that he knows he doesn't have decision-making power when accompanied. He lacks that freedom, which he feels must be quite enjoyable. Chiara also emphasizes that even though she is very aware of the dangers of traffic, it is crucial for her to show her father that she can cross the street on her own and thus gain his trust:

"Then another aspect of this neighborhood, the cars go very fast. In fact, sometimes I want to show my father that I can cross, and he says, 'I trust you, but I don't trust the drivers because you're not very tall, so maybe they won't see you.' So

---

[50] "Quindi i posti dove ti piace andare?
- mi piace andare dai miei amici e… poi girovagare un po' nei posti da soli
- girovagare? e tipo dove?
- nei posti qua vicino, non lontanissimo
- cosa vuol dire girovagare?
- andare un po' così, fare una strada, andare dai miei amici, salutarli tornare a casa queste cose qui
- solo per fare una passeggiatina diciamo
- si, mi piacerebbe fare anche questo
- ti piacerebbe ma non lo fai?
- no
- ti piacerebbe girovagare
- si
- quando sei da solo così a camminare ti piace perché…
- si, posso andare dove voglio
- puoi andare dove vuoi, scegli tu
- si
- invece quando c'è un adulto con voi?
- vado dove va lui
- quindi è molto diverso
- si"

sometimes, when I go back to my grandma's place, if you want, I can take you there. I cross by myself, just to show my dad that I can do it."[51]
(Chiara, B. 7:15 ¶ 212)

Here, we see that being together, being able to walk while talking about things they like or things that concern them, is a way for them to interact with their environment while developing social skills. This is also what Piaget (1977) explains when describing the usefulness of autonomy in the child's acquisition of decision-making abilities based on their own reflection. Dago also wishes to attend English class alone because, even though it is located outside his neighborhood, he would have "more time to think."

These kinds of debriefings on their main concerns with friends or by themselves while walking—talking about soccer, what's happening at school, the homework they had to do or will have to do—are "small talks" that may seem unimportant to adults but are actually very useful for them to face the concerns of their world. As Omar and Carlo say, they would like to have more time and longer journeys to "confide without too many problems of being heard by their parents" (Carlo, B. 10:12 ¶ 126 – 135).

6.3.4 No more adventure?

Caroll (2015) suggests that the adventures children recount today are often related to screen-based activities and computer games. This observation aligns with the interviews I conducted with parents regarding their children's leisure time and how they spend it. As discussed earlier, outdoor activities are infrequently undertaken without adult supervision. Even among parents who fondly remember their own childhood spent playing outdoors or in parks, they constitute a minority in today's context. Free time is also heavily dedicated to institutional activities. Some parents express skepticism about the concept of free time, implying that their children's days are already quite full. When children do have nothing to do, they typically spend their time at home.

At home, the attraction to video games is quite strong. What I observed is that in their definition of free play, parents often exclude video games. They are well aware of the need to limit their usage, and for them, free play involves engaging with three-dimensional games. However, some parents recognize that for their child, this kind of play is "boring" and doesn't last very long:

[51] “Poi un altro aspetto di questo quartiere, le macchine vanno velocissimo, infatti a volte voglio dimostrare a mio padre che sono capace di attraversare e lui mi dice “ma io mi fido di te ma io non mi fido dei guidatori perché tu non sei così alta così magari non ti vedono”. E quindi a volte quando torno a casa di mia nonna di là se vuoi ti ci porto, attraverso da sola, c’è faccio vedere a mio padre che sono capace.”

"Free play is very important to me, but I see that, especially for Giuseppe, it's not that crucial. He prefers to play with electronic devices, something that... it tightens my heart a bit, but I understand that, well, he likes it." (Marcello, B. 5:13 ¶ 113 – 123)

They admit that what they need is to expend their energy, which is difficult to do within four walls:

"They both need a physical outlet, both of my children. There has to be something that involves physical energy expenditure, leading to a kind of mental peace where they can also think about something else."
(Alessia, B. 2:37 ¶ 198 – 199)

However, some parents, like Thomas's mom, compare the freedom their children have on screens with the freedom they had themselves, such as walking alone to school.

"I realize that my children have less freedom than I had for this kind of thing, but when it comes to screens, we're lenient." (Florence, L. 20:16 ¶ 244 – 245)

Thus, what Thomas's mother seems to imply is that video games would be another form of freedom enjoyed by today's children and that it compensates for another form of freedom represented by CIM, to which her son no longer has access. But are they really comparable? Hillman (1990) speaks of claustrophobia where the opportunity to "just go out and play" no longer exists and that this freedom felt in video games is ultimately a "*poor substitute for free social play and other activity outside the physical confines of the home*".

I have observed during the walking interviews that there has been little talk of adventures; only two of the children recounted an anecdote of a misadventure they had to face without the presence of an adult. One is Farid, whose sister once got her foot stuck in a tree while playing hide-and-seek in the courtyard. Farid managed to free her by "pushing with all his strength." The second is Francesco, who told me about losing his parents in Piazza Maggiore one day. He went to the police for help, and they assisted by calling his parents. It is noteworthy that both Farid and Francesco have a score of 1- in the autonomy table (Figure 5.7 and 5.8), which is, as a reminder, the highest CIM score. The episode was not traumatic for them; they recounted it simply, as a positive event that they successfully managed.

6.3.4 Can the city be a teacher if interaction opportunities are limited?

It was in the 1970s that the idea took root that children needed protected places to play, resulting in their isolation and segregation in spaces specially designed for them (Karsten, 2002). We have seen that this policy of isolating children in safe places mainly leads to the difficulty for them and their parents to have simple and quick access to such places often located too far from their homes.

What the street should offer children are "openings to a thought of the possible, the undetermined, improvisation (...). When the street allows for wanderings, strolls in unknown and new places, the lives of city dwellers do not appear closed in on themselves but multidimensional and poetic. (...) But when the streets are increasingly arranged, increasingly smoothed within the framework of urban policies, they can lose their poetic language" (Roulleau-Berger, 2004, p.76).

What children learn when they are alone in the street is mainly how to manage traffic. They know perfectly well the rules they must imperatively follow and adhere to them. Children face "the hegemony of the car by exercising a high degree of self-control" (Fotel, 2002).

But beyond that, what do they really learn during their short trips in the city? If opportunities for interactions are too limited, how can children develop this playful relationship (Vercesi, 2008) with their environment? During our walking interviews, we passed by Dago's school courtyard, and he took the opportunity to tell me about the names he had given to each corner of the courtyard. These names were inspired by The Lord of the Rings, so there was the Middle Earth, the Shire, and even Mordor. Giving names that one has either invented or borrowed from a work of fiction, as seen here, undoubtedly indicates a deeper relationship with the frequented place. Ultimately, what I observe after the walking interviews is that, for many children, the school playground is probably the place they can explore most freely. That's also why, in Lyon, some of them explained wanting to stay at the school daycare after classes to play with their friends, realizing that once they are home, it will be difficult to get permission to go play at a friend's house or convince a tired adult to take them to the park.

Thus, opportunities are lacking at an age situated during what Piaget (1977) calls the "concrete operational period," which is one of the key stages in the development of autonomy in children. The need for children to play has been transferred to indoor spaces, where the home and the bedroom, in particular, have become what adults think is a haven for their child, a place that has taken a considerable place in the lives of children (Karsten, 2002), forgetting that nothing can replace the joy of spontaneously meeting friends to play the game they have chosen themselves.

About the age at which children should start moving around alone in their neighborhood, Francesco gives a less definitive but sensible opinion:

"At what age is it right to do it?
- In my opinion... you have to learn it when you feel ready.
- When one feels ready.
- When one feels ready, they can start with short trips and learn how to go alone.
- Okay, and if they never feel ready? (laughs) It's a shame, maybe.
- (laughs) It's a shame, but when their parents die, they'll have to do it for sure.
- (laughs) Right! So, it's something that one MUST do sooner or later.
- Yes, sooner or later, but by the end of middle school because you have to go alone to high school, even to places much farther away.
- Yes, yes. So, it's something you have to do anyway. Everyone learns slowly, right?
- Yes."[52]

(Francesco, B. 9:12 ¶ 192 – 201)

Francesco suggests that ultimately, children will learn to be autonomous in the city because it is inevitable. What remains to be studied more thoroughly are the effects of what can be considered a delay in this learning during adolescence and adulthood. It is undeniable that what one learns at the age of 7 will have a different influence on how they perceive the world compared to what they may learn at the age of 11. Perhaps learning these skills before one's parents pass away wouldn't be a bad idea!

[52] "A quanti anni è giusto farlo?
- secondo me… bisogna impararlo quando uno se la sente
- quando uno se la sente
- quando uno se la sente, può iniziare con giri corti e imparare come fare per andare da soli
- ok, e se non se la sente mai? (rido) è un peccato magari
- (ride) è un peccato ma quando moriranno i genitori dovrà per forza
- ahah giusto! e quindi è una cosa che uno DEVE fare prima o poi
- si prima o poi si, ma poi anche entro la fine delle medie perché al liceo bisogna andare da soli anche in posti molto più lontani
- si, si, quindi per forza dici comunque, tutti imparano piano piano no?
- si"

6.4 Conclusions

Based on the emplaced knowledge of the children with whom I conducted walking interviews, it can be observed that overall, they have a good understanding of the area in which they move. It is a place they appreciate, and even though they perceive its negative aspects, they do not have particular fears when moving around. They have mastered the constraints related to traffic, and encountering "strange people" is considered part of the landscape, with children having learned to cope with them. Their orientation difficulties generally stem from a lack of experience in independent mobility, even when it involves routes they have traversed many times with adults, and they assume they would have no problem reproducing.

Children love their neighborhood, primarily because their friends also live there, and it is from this need for sociability that their demands for independent mobility arise. Systems like the pedibus are only of interest to them if their friends also participate; otherwise, it is perceived more as a constraint than a gain in autonomy—especially if it is organized in an adult-centric manner, as in Bologna. Moving with friends, even for a very short journey, is a highly positive event in their day, and they have no desire to do without it. Being able to decide the modalities of play, where and for how long, whether in a building's courtyard, at the park, or in a friend's room, is an activity they would like to spend more time on if only it were not so complicated to organize, and if play-related infrastructures were not located too far from their homes, making them inaccessible without adult accompaniment.

The rules they must adhere to are understood and accepted, mainly because they know them to be temporary, so they are only asked to be patient. However, even though differences exist between French children who have experienced independent mobility for 1, 2, or 3 years and Italian children who have been authorized only for the past 2 or 3 months, the presence of adults in both cases is well accepted, and the demands are limited. The disparities between those who already have well-established neighborhood experience in their daily practices and those who have recently started experiencing independent mobility are visible both in their ease of movement, knowledge of the limits of the area in which they can move, and acceptance of these limits, as well as in the narratives they share about their daily lives in the neighborhood, involving more encounters requiring less organization from their parents. These children are the ones who seek to "gain ground" in the urban space, to find a place for themselves, even if it involves transgressing certain rules. Finally, they express less frustration compared to those who are asked to wait until middle school or later.

In conclusion, we can say that in this study, children demonstrated varying degrees of familiarity and autonomy within their neighborhood during walking interviews. Those who regularly navigate the neighborhood independently exhibit a higher level of spatial knowledge, while those who rely on transportation by car possess more theoretical understanding. This highlights the direct influence of daily transportation modes on children's spatial awareness.

Moreover, access to and familiarity with urban spaces play a crucial role in children's sense of belonging and ability to organize themselves autonomously. Those with frequent exposure to their neighborhood demonstrate greater ease in navigating and interacting within it, even challenging certain imposed rules they perceive as inconsistent.

Recognizing and facilitating children's autonomy in navigating urban spaces is essential for their development and integration into the community. Therefore, addressing this disparity in opportunity seems very important for fostering children's capabilities and promoting their active engagement with their environment.

It would be interesting to continue this reflection by following the children further into their middle school years and understand better the potential long-term benefits or challenges that may arise from different levels of independent mobility during primary school years. Additionally, further research would be needed to explore the extended effects of early independent mobility on the overall development and experiences of children as they progress through adolescence and into adulthood.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions and discussion

The idea behind this research stemmed from a simple observation: why have the children of our cities become invisible? Once the "masters of the street," where have all the Gavroches (the street smart kid personification in Victor Hugo's books) who populated the cities gone? What adventures could Pinocchio, Tom Sawyer, Pippi Langstrumpf, the Famous Five, or le petit Nicolas possibly experience today if they had to adhere to the rules imposed by society on children? I believe that if they were written today, this kind of book recounting their adventures would be quite thin... children going camping or playing in an empty lot without any adult supervision, what madness!

In terms of Children's Independent Mobility (CIM), it is evident that things have changed. Today, no one disputes the idea that children born before 1990 had much greater independent mobility than those born after that date. This notion is supported by numerous scientific articles published over the last thirty years confirming the significant decline of CIM in industrialized countries, as discussed in Chapter 2.

However, both in France and Italy, despite the evident changes, this issue is not a primary concern for public authorities or parents themselves. It remains largely invisible to the majority. Nevertheless, the consequences of this decline have been extensively studied, as discussed in Chapter 2, revealing clear negative outcomes. These include adverse effects on children's development, such as decreased exercise, loneliness, and weakened community ties (Prezza et al., 2001; Rissotto, 2006). Additionally, adolescents exhibit less autonomy and increased fearfulness (Prezza 2007; Alparone, 2012), potentially contributing to higher rates of psychopathology among youth (Gray, 2011; Senda, 2015). In summary, limited opportunities for independent activities hinder children's social and emotional growth (O'Brien, 2003; Vygotsky, 1967/2013).

Some public policies have been implemented to encourage children's mobility through the creation of urban infrastructures better suited to their needs. However, it has been observed that these measures alone are not sufficient to bring about a real change in CIM.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis was to focus on a less studied aspect, namely the role of parental style on CIM. Given the limited research on CIM in France and Italy, my objective was also to investigate if there were any significant cultural differences between the two countries. We will now proceed to examine the main findings of the research.

7.1 Recapitulation of purpose and findings

7.1.1 The observation of a highly limited CIM, particularly in Italy

Independent mobility takes into account the trips children make with their peers because it is the absence of adult supervision that is decisive in learning to be independent. What this analysis reveals in the first place is the difference in the number of children with some form of independent mobility in France and Italy: 84% in the neighborhood of Lyon compared to 43% in that of Bologna. This means that 57% of Italian children in this final year of primary school have not yet experienced any form of independent mobility. This figure, for Italy, is not so high since according to Renzi's study in 2014, only 8% of children benefited from this autonomy in the journey from home to school, but it is far from the 76% of German children (Renzi, 2014).

However, this figure poses a problem, especially if we consider that many of these children will go to middle school alone within half a year after the study. Therefore, we can conclude that for these children, there is no gradual learning of independent mobility, but rather it happens by necessity, only when parents are forced to do so.

As Borgogni (2016) emphasizes, these data should concern the Italian educational community, but one can only observe that the awareness or debate on the importance of CIM by educational authorities is almost entirely absent in Italian society and media. Certainly, children have the opportunity to walk around their neighborhood to go here and there with their parents or another adult and thus acquire a certain form of spatial and social knowledge. However, by always being accompanied by an adult, children lose, on one hand, what contributes to their well-being because CIM implies autonomous decision-making (Pacilli et al., 2013), and on the other hand, what should be considered as an essential right (Hillman, 1990).

- **Informal outdoor activities replaced by indoor activities**

Another figure that deserves attention is the one concerning informal outdoor activities. During the studied week, less than half of the children in the Italian class (45%) had the opportunity to play outdoors at least one time, whether in the park or in the courtyard of their building, which are the two main places for informal outdoor play, while they were more than 60% in the French neighborhood. This means that for 55% of the children in this neighborhood of Bologna, the only opportunity for free outdoor play is the schoolyard during school time.

Compared with how it used to be or with other European countries, for both France and Italy the figures of outdoor play are low, but in Italy they are even lower

than in France. One explanation certainly comes from the number of extracurricular activities in which many more Italian children participate compared to French children, as revealed by the figures in chapter 4. We know that the institutionalization of leisure time has led to the end of the golden age of informal play because even if a child is not occupied every day with activities, it becomes very difficult for children and their friends to have free time at the same moment. Knowing this, the spontaneity of informal play as it could take place until the 1980s becomes much more difficult.

Children thus spend much more time in indoor spaces, where the bedroom has become their kingdom, with obvious expansion of space dedicated to them in homes (Karsten, 2001). As we've seen, video games or screen time, in general, are among the main indoor activities, but not exclusively. Some games that traditionally took place outdoors have also shifted indoors, such as football, for example.

However, unsupervised outdoor activities are crucial for children's development; the interaction with other children gives them the opportunity to acquire the social skills they need (Chawla, 1992; Christensen, 2003). This continual erosion of children's freedom in the urban space must therefore be taken very seriously for the major consequences it has on children's identity formation.

7.1.2 The causes of this limitation of the CIM

- The role of parental parental style

What chapter 5 has highlighted are the differences in parental parenting styles in France and Italy when it comes to CIM and how that is related to the educational and juridical system. As I have already pointed out, it seems that the most shared characteristic among the parents in this study is the control they exert over their child's movements. This high degree of control reflects a parenting style that can be described as intensive and can be found in each of the styles defined more academically than the latter, which is not yet among the "official" styles, which are authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglecting.

The intensive tendency is, however, very real and especially visible regarding CIM, which is why I found it important not to ignore it. Indeed, today "good parenting" is defined by constant control over all of children's activities. Parents are bombarded with a large amount of very anxiety-inducing information, even before the child's birth, from the media and public institutions regarding the potential risks at all stages of the child's development. Therefore, it would be considered irresponsible of them not to seek to protect their offspring at all times and in all places they may frequent. Under these conditions, it is extremely difficult to convey the message that it is in the child's interest not to be constantly controlled by their parents, and that greater

independent mobility, which promotes spatial but also, and above all, social skills, may be as beneficial to their development as any institutional activity.

This study shows that the message about the importance of independent mobility is rarely heard and valued by parents. Even though the majority of parents have a parenting style that approaches the authoritative style, which emphasizes dialogue and negotiation between parents and children in decision-making, when it comes to CIM, dialogue seems to be much less acceptable. Indeed, for decisions regarding CIM, a style assuming the characteristics of the authoritarian style prevails. Whether it is to encourage children to travel alone, "it's time for you to learn to go to school alone," or to prevent them, "no, you cannot go to school alone before middle school." Even parents whose style is considered authoritative/permissive adopt behaviors with authoritarian characteristics to make decisions regarding CIM.

We are far from the child-king or the parent-friend often described by those who criticize today's parenting and who indulge in describing a supposed laissez-faire approach that, in fact, does not exist (De Singly, 2010). What does exist, however, is the lack of guidance in the face of the multiplication of often contradictory sources of information or the absence of information on CIM, for example. This is what I observed during interviews with many parents; they have unclear ideas about the most appropriate behavior to have as a parent regarding CIM and have rarely had the opportunity to ask questions about it. Thus, poorly informed about the benefits of CIM, all kinds of fantasies related to child kidnapping or pedophilia fill this informational void.

The fear of potential dangers plays a powerful role here, and without a strong personal conviction about the importance of CIM, if the subject remains invisible or not emphasized by authorities and parents are not encouraged to let their child travel alone by following the example of other children, then it is likely that CIM will not be considered as an educational priority and will only come much later, only when parents are forced to, as is the case in Bologna, meaning not before middle school.

Could this delay be one of the explanations for the "postponement syndrome" described by Livi-Bacci (2001)? This syndrome refers to the late assumption of responsibility, resulting in a person becoming autonomous and independent as an adult, a delay typical of Italian society. One may wonder if, ultimately, the accumulated delay in becoming autonomous as a child has long-term consequences on one's ability to emancipate oneself from their original family to create their own. It is evident that the reasons for late motherhood and fatherhood are multiple and certainly depend on structural decisions related to the availability of social services, among others. However, it is interesting to note that those whom Italian society calls "bamboccioni" (big babies), in a very critical and depreciative tone once they become adults, are precisely those whom society itself has encouraged to remain under parental control for as long as possible.

- **The role of the educational institution**

Furthermore, what seems to play a fundamental role is the educational institution. Indeed, the main difference between French and Italian schools is that the former allow children to go home unaccompanied after classes, theoretically starting from the first year of primary school; the latter does not permit this. In Italy, this prohibition has many consequences on children's independent mobility and in the way parents perceive it. Firstly, as in all areas, regarding autonomy, gradual learning is generally preferable. Here, the institution itself does not allow it, leaving parents alone to face this delicate transition between elementary school and middle school. Children will therefore have to learn, sometimes overnight, everything they need to know when they are alone in public spaces, instead of being given the opportunity to acquire knowledge at their own pace if it were provided to them more gradually. Parents daring to defy this prohibition by allowing their child to go independently to school before middle school often feel like they are breaking the law. Even if they sense that it is important for their child to learn to navigate the neighborhood alone, they never really know if they are doing something illegal since it is not authorized by an institution like the school. They always have in mind the possibility of being charged with "abandonment of minors," as I observed during interviews, a fear certainly fueled by articles regularly published in the Italian press on this subject.

Thus, not having permission from institutions, represented here by the school, it is not surprising that parents are very reluctant to let their child travel alone in their neighborhood, even for very short trips to the local store, for example. Moreover, in parenting, parents tend to influence each other, with the dominant model being intensive parenting. The almost complete absence of examples of other children arriving at school independently does not even allow parents to question the possibility of letting them go without being accompanied by an adult. This is a theme that remains invisible and certainly does not represent a priority education question for most of them. Finally, it can be added that with the decline in birth rates, the number of children present in the building and on the street has also greatly decreased, making it much more difficult for parents to rely on a group of children playing or moving together, which could reassure them.

Another point I wanted to emphasize here concerns the impact of certain decisions made by the school on the social life of children. It seems that reshuffling classes every year, as is done in French schools, does not promote the creation of lasting friendships between children. This has consequences for the sociability of children, who have fewer opportunities to meet with their friends outside of school, and for their parents, who, having to get to know new people every year, will have more difficulty in forming a friendship or even a supportive relationship with them. Because, even though French children have more opportunities for free outdoor play here than Italian children, these opportunities could be more numerous if parents and children didn't have to get to know new people every year, which leads to more

difficulties in forming friendships or even mutual assistance with them, and this has consequences on the sociability of the children and their parents.

- **The role of the environment in parental decisions about CIM**

I wanted to focus on "ordinary" children, without particular physical, psychological, or economic issues, living in "ordinary" neighborhoods, or at least those considered the norm for most people living in medium to large cities. This interested me for several reasons. Firstly, because this pre-adolescent age is rarely studied; research tends to focus more on early childhood or adolescence for all its problematic aspects. Secondly, because this type of neighborhood without a distinct identity, neither touristy nor disadvantaged, represents the typical neighborhood where a great number of families with children live today, under conditions seemingly accepted by all, with little audible demands.

It appears that the environment in which these families live does not play a decisive role in parental motivations regarding CIM because despite similarities in infrastructure, traffic density, and potential for similar dangerous encounters in both neighborhoods, significant differences persist in terms of children's independence in their movements. For instance, it is observed that in Lyon, a greater number of children benefit from some level of independent mobility starting at an earlier age compared to children in Bologna. Therefore, it can be said that differences in how parents approach CIM do not seem to stem only from specific positive or negative characteristics of the environment.

For many families, living in the city center may not be the ideal environment for raising children. This sentiment is echoed in research conducted in other European cities (Heath, 2001; Lilius, 2014). While some may actively seek to improve their immediate surroundings, as demonstrated by initiatives like the Chiosco della Montagnola, which directly aims to make the neighborhood more family-friendly, others take a more passive approach. They may not advocate for access to courtyards for play, for example, and accept the existing urban layout, believing that the city will never cater to children's needs. Instead, they opt to seek out what the city lacks elsewhere, such as enjoying green spaces outside the urban area.

Moreover, by frequently spending their weekends outside of the neighborhood, as indicated by the collected data, it is understood that beyond the practical aspect, residents do not really develop an emotional relationship with their neighborhood, reserving such bonds for family and friends living in other parts of the city. Consequently, lacking a genuine sense of attachment, they reside there but could easily leave it.

7.1.3 The impacts of CIM on children's emplaced knowledge

- **Neighborhood socialization**

After school, Children's Independent Mobility (CIM) also depends heavily on the socialization of children in their neighborhood. Highly organized and controlled by their parents in Italy, it also falls under this form of intensive parenting, as it is often difficult for them to imagine their child going alone to a friend's house, or worse, not knowing exactly where they are, as most of them do not yet have a mobile phone. However, for some children, these opportunities for socialization are beneficial for CIM, as they may be a chance to experiment, even briefly and punctually, with short trips without accompaniment.

For parents, and this is true both in France and Italy, children must have a purpose when they move around; simply wandering around for the pleasure of it is absolutely out of the question. Therefore, the more reasons children have to come and go, the more opportunities they will have for independent outings. The best excuse is to visit a friend. French children have more opportunities to play in the building's courtyard with their friends without being accompanied by an adult. Italian children will have more opportunities to play at their friends' homes, but it is mainly in the neighborhood park where they will experience informal play accompanied most of the time. In fact, French and Italian parents consider the park to be an unsafe place where it is not acceptable to leave children alone. In Bologna, the presence of a kiosk encourages children to go there, where parents can also meet friends and not get too bored.

- **The importance of social interactions in the CIM**

What this study also highlights is the importance of children's social interactions with each other. One of the main reasons they say they love their neighborhood is because their friends also live there. Furthermore, the more friends they have living close to them, the more opportunities they have to experience independent mobility. Indeed, it is always easier for a parent to allow their child to try the experience of going to or coming back from a friend's house alone if the friend lives 100 meters away rather than 1 km. As I described in Chapter 5, Italian parents invest significant time and effort in facilitating their children's socialization, giving them the opportunity to play together at their friends' houses, while French children more easily self-organize to meet outside, in the courtyard for example.

For children, the ideal scenario, as I mentioned earlier, is to gradually emancipate themselves from parental supervision, starting by playing downstairs, for example, hence the importance of having a courtyard where playing is allowed. However, at the age of the children who were part of this study, around 10 or 11

years old, they should already have familiarized themselves with this type of territory and ventured outside of this zone to expand their domain of action, which will soon take on a different dimension with their entry into middle school. The courtyard, therefore, serves a great purpose but should not represent the only space for children's play and sociability; the creation of closed and highly controlled residential areas, such as in the neighborhood of Lyon, aimed at protecting children from the dangers outside, may certainly be useful for younger children but risks having negative effects on preadolescents who experience this physical and social confinement, impoverishing their emplaced knowledge and fueling a fear of the "outside."

- **Children with underestimated skills and lacking opportunities**

Finally, one point I would like to emphasize is the competence of children in urban space. We have seen that societal changes, particularly those concerning parenthood, have led to a new definition of childhood that primarily emphasizes the protection and safety of children. While at this point in its history, humanity likely needed to define childhood in order to differentiate it from adulthood and thereby recognize its own needs and rights, we nevertheless observe that this desire to protect from all dangers, whether in life or simply in taking risks, has also resulted in the segregation of childhood into spaces reserved exclusively for them. Furthermore, it is this need for protection, objectively required by children, that has given rise to the notion of modern childhood based on incompetence (Valentine, 1996).

But children do not become responsible adults overnight; they evolve throughout their entire childhood towards this progressive assumption of responsibility, and thus have specific competencies at each age, which recognizing them precisely is the challenge that parents and educators, in the broadest sense, must face. Considering the child as competent is at the heart of the Reggio Approach theory (Rinaldi, 2009), which acknowledges and values children's innate ability to be active, curious, and competent learners. The Reggio Emilia Approach further asserts that caring for the context of relationships has always been a fruitful channel for transforming the child from an object of education into a conscious subject, co-builder with the community of their learning possibilities. In "Democracy and Education," Dewey (1916/2019) already insisted on the importance of the educating community. Starting from the idea that the more young people participate in the functioning of their environment, the more they learn, it is emphasized that society as a whole has an active role in the education of young people through the totality of social interactions. Dewey thus demonstrated that education is primarily a social process of sharing experience. The child is defined as gifted in social relations, and the society to which they belong has a great interest in benefiting from this innate ability. "This process of shared life educates, broadens, and illuminates experience, stimulates, and enriches imagination" (Dewey, 1916/2019).

Their social responsiveness must be nurtured from the outset through contact with all social realities, both to enrich their worldview as much as possible and to prevent a stiffening of their own ideas in order to understand others' interests and perspectives. This continuous exchange of information, experiences, and emotions allows them to be integrated into a group that shares a large number of common values. All members must have an equal opportunity to give and receive from each other.

The environment in which children develop holistically must therefore inevitably include the urban space, without which it would eliminate an essential part of this learning. A social environment capable of giving meaning to the habits that form in relationships is necessary. The environment unconsciously influences the mind through observations, experiences, and interactions with others that we encounter every day.

What emerges from this study is that during the walking interviews, most children demonstrated a "mastery" of their neighborhood. This means they know the way to school but also how to get to the local store, the park, or their friends' houses. Those who are less familiar with it, or who expressed more fears when moving independently, are those who go to school or their extracurricular activities by car. These children have a more theoretical knowledge since they haven't had the opportunity to practically experience it. The mode of transportation children use daily thus has a direct influence on their spatial knowledge of the neighborhood, confirming what has already been demonstrated in numerous studies (Christensen, 2003; Rissotto, 2006; Vercesi, 2008).

However, for most children in these two neighborhoods, walking is generally preferred. This allows them to have learned to manage traffic perfectly, but not only that. Walking also means having the opportunity to come into close contact with the elements and people present in the urban space. Even though they have been able to read for a few years, they don't rely on street names for orientation; in fact, street names are rarely mentioned. Instead, they tend to memorize "points of reference" which can be of various types, such as a clock, a bench, or a store, on which they know they cannot fully rely, as some of them may be temporarily installed, like scaffolding, for example. They are also accustomed to encountering "strange people" but are not afraid, simply following the avoidance strategies advised by their parents. Thus, to have time to familiarize themselves with all these elements of the urban landscape, walking time is an essential component. It must be daily so that they can take into account any possible changes and acquire the self-confidence necessary when moving alone.

If I take the example of the "pedibus" (walking bus) as organized in Bologna, its purpose is neither to recognize nor to improve the children's skills in navigating the city; it simply aims to reduce car traffic in front of schools and to protect the children who walk there. For 10 or 11-year-old children, perfectly capable of crossing

a street and aware of potential dangers, as I have observed, such a system clearly offers them few advantages but many constraints; they still have to follow an adult and do not have the opportunity to go play with their friends once they arrive in the schoolyard but must stay with their group. Taking into account the children's competencies in this specific case would mean anticipating an evolution in participation in the "pedibus" that would not be the same at 7 years old and at 10 years old.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize the significance for them of being able to share these journeys, even very short ones, with their friends. These friends play an increasingly important role in their daily lives, and being able to decide on the places and modalities of play or meeting with these friends could be enough to make them happy. Recognizing this competence and granting them this responsibility is one of the challenges that their parents should face, as well as the institutions through the spaces they provide. Because what the children in this study express is the difficulty and sometimes the frustration of not being able to organize themselves more simply among themselves. As I observed during the walking interviews, those who have the opportunity to do so are much more at ease in their movements but also in their relationships with others and in managing unexpected events. This knowledge of urban space, this emplaced knowledge, can sometimes even lead to the transgression of rules imposed by adults that they find inconsistent.

Indeed, in order to appropriate urban space, to feel that one is an integral part of the community, that one can take cones found in a park and use them as goals to temporarily turn a dead end into a soccer field, or even to subvert the function of a no-entry sign, one must, logically, have the opportunity to frequent it diligently. And what we observe through this study is that most children do not have this opportunity. Yet, as early as 1968, Hurtwood warned: "We continue to underestimate the capacity of children for taking risks, enjoying the stimulation of danger, and finding out things for themselves." (1968). Therefore, we can only conclude from this research that, today, their capacities are still largely underestimated.

7.2 Limitations of the research

The first criticism that can be made of this research is regarding the number of parents or children involved, which may seem low. However, the goal here was not to conduct a quantitative research but rather a qualitative one in order to understand in-depth the reasons behind their decisions and behavior. For this purpose, it was necessary to take the time to build a deeper relationship with each participant in order to ask them the necessary questions. Furthermore, the detailed analysis of all this data is not suitable for a large quantity. Having a small sample size was

therefore an opportunity that allowed me to delve more deeply into each selected profile.
During the data collection week for the diaries, French children had no classes on Wednesdays due to primary schools being closed on that day, as well as on Mondays due to public holidays. This difference in school schedules may have contributed to variations in the number of outings between France (297 outings) and Italy (502 outings). However, these days off from school provided an opportunity to observe how children utilized their free time, whether it was occasional, as on Mondays, or regular, as on Wednesdays.
Some children may also have forgotten to record their trips, leading to potential gaps in the data. Additionally, there were instances of missing sheets, particularly among the French children. Concerning the use of the courtyard, while only one child explicitly mentioned it, phrases indicating inactivity or staying indoors in the diaries could also imply playing in the courtyard. This was observed with Dina, whose mother I interviewed and whom I personally saw playing in the playground, despite never mentioning it in the diary.

Then, we can regret the underrepresentation of girls in the walking interviews. Indeed, only one girl was allowed by her parents to participate in the research. Reasons related to time and organization can be cited, but it remains that out of the total of 9 children, 8 were boys. One could perhaps interpret this as parental reluctance to allow their daughters to wander with a stranger, as parents generally tend to grant girls less freedom to move around than boys, as we have seen.

Due to time constraints, I was unable to interview the children after they started secondary school. However, it would have been interesting to analyze how their adaptation to this new environment unfolded and how their independent mobility evolved, as it was theoretically now accessible to them.

Finally, the ongoing special conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the continued requirement for masks in primary schools and increased restrictions on non-staff members entering school grounds, did not facilitate this study.

7.3 Recommendations for future research and practical applications

7.3.1 Practical applications for schools

- **To remove the prohibition of independent exit from Italian schools**

What this study has clearly demonstrated are all the negative implications associated with the existence of this ban. This is why the first thing Italian schools

should address is the prohibition of independent exit from school. This prohibition was not created to protect children but rather to protect school principals from potential legal action in case of accidents occurring during a child's journey from school to home. However, the results of this research clearly show how it conditions CIM because if the institution itself encourages parents not to allow any autonomy to their child, by making them understand that to be a good parent they must supervise all the child's movements. How, under these conditions, can parents, who often have little opportunity to reflect on the importance of CIM, be led to think that CIM is positive and that it is good to acquire it gradually?

- **Improving the Pedibus**

While it is always preferable to encourage independent travel for children, if a Pedibus must be organized by the school or public institutions, the model proposed by the Lyon municipality, which allows the group of children to move without being escorted step by step by adults, with adults present only at potentially dangerous pedestrian crossings due to heavy traffic, is a good approach. This way, children have the opportunity to experience independent mobility, feel more responsible because they have their parents' trust, and are likely to feel much less boredom that adult supervision can cause. The Pedibus, as envisaged in Lyon, does not involve students in the last two years of primary school (CM1 and CM2), assuming that they already go there alone. If the schools in Bologna want to involve students of this age group, then it would be good for the Pedibus to include an evolution in their participation, making them responsible for younger or newly enrolled students, for example.

It should be noted that in Bologna, institutions are now organizing Pedibus for middle school students. As shown in the letter sent to parents describing the "One Way" project (Appendix 7.1), the aim is to encourage parents not to accompany their children by car and to give them independent mobility to which apparently many of them still do not have access.

- **The School Courtyard**

If, for many children, the only opportunity for informal outdoor play is in the school courtyard, as seems to be the case for many children in both the French and Italian neighborhoods, then they should be designed to provide the best possible experience so that at least this experience, even if it remains insufficient, is a significant opportunity for personal development for the children, and for that, informal play should be prioritized.

It would also be good for schools to open up to the outside world, for example by attempting to remove the fences around the school, as another Mediterranean country, Albania, proposes to do in a school in Tirana[53]. Removing these fences would mean building a different idea of school, far from one that confines and gives more the idea of a place where one is held prisoner than a place where learning will be a pleasure, and especially in direct and daily communication with its neighborhood in order to truly involve the local community in the education of children.

- **Childhood Sociability**

In France, I suggest considering the usefulness of strengthening children's friendships, thereby developing and consolidating those of the parents among themselves, by not seeking to "break up groups" but rather by preserving them. This way, the entire social network of both children and parents will be strengthened, providing children with more opportunities to venture out of their homes and discover other places.

7.3.3 Practical applications for parents

- **Neighborhood Walks**

To overcome their fears, whatever they may be, inherent to the neighborhood in which they live, parents of children living in cities must engage with it. If adults themselves do not frequent their neighborhood, have no friendships or acquaintances in their own neighborhood, it is not surprising that their children, assimilating and copying their parents' behavior, have only an extremely superficial relationship with it. It is only through daily interaction that fantasies can dissipate because only knowledge of people and places can challenge preconceived ideas that often do not correspond with reality. And this can be done without denying real problems that exist but are often amplified by collective imagination and the media.

- **Adapting to the Context**

Furthermore, I would like to suggest to parents of children living in cities not to seek or wait for the perfect environment to allow their child to move independently. Certainly, the ideal context would be the existence of numerous pedestrian streets,

[53] https://www.qendra-m.org/en/re-play/mihal-grameno-green-schoolyard-retrofit

greatly reduced and controlled automobile speeds, and many opportunities for play near children's residential areas. This "dream" is what suburban neighborhoods offer. However, beyond the ecological impact caused by the urban sprawl of individual residential zones, which is becoming increasingly problematic, many families express a desire to continue living in the city center, as was the case in this study. They align with the concept of YUPPS, Young Urban Professional Parents, conceptualized by Karsten (2014), describing families eager to reduce time spent in transportation and to live in a place offering a wider range of social and cultural opportunities.

However, by choosing to remain living in the city, while adults gain in quality of life, they feel they may not be providing the best for their child, with the lack of green spaces being one of the negative aspects of urban life. But children are able and have the necessity to adapt to the context in which they live. And as we have seen, they also have the capabilities to do so. Therefore, regardless of the neighborhood in which they reside, they must navigate the city as it stands today while continuing to advocate for an urban space more suited to children, sidewalk by sidewalk, courtyard by courtyard, park by park. As Opie (1984) aptly states, "The most precious gift we can give to children is social space: the necessary space in which to become human beings."

- **Understanding the Offense of "Abandonment of a Minor"**

I cannot stress enough the importance for parents to seek legal clarification regarding the offense of "abandonment of a minor." During a conference held by the Consulta Cinnica (for a child and adolescent-friendly city) at the Bologna City Hall on September 21, 2022, a lawyer from the city, Camilla Mancuso, responded to the question of whether children simply have the right to travel alone in the city:

"*Why is the offense of abandonment of a minor sometimes invoked to argue that minors under 14 cannot go out alone? The answer is because Article 591 of the Penal Code regarding the offense of abandonment of a minor explicitly refers to the age limit of 14 years. However, it is precisely Article 591 of the Penal Code that provides useful arguments to demonstrate that it is not true that minors under fourteen cannot go out alone. The main argument is that the abandonment of minors is a DANGER OFFENSE. This means that if there is no danger, there is no offense."* (Full text in annex 7.b)

Therefore, given that this is a very real concern among Italian parents, I believe it would be useful for parents to know that if they allow their child to go to or return from school alone, they cannot be accused of "abandonment of a minor" under any circumstances.

7.3.2 Practical applications for city planners

Some of these recommendations are already well-known to most city planners. For example, it involves limiting the speed of automobiles; both cities in this study have already implemented a 30 km/h speed limit, with Lyon doing so in March 2022 and Bologna in January 2024. Additionally, it involves continuing to develop the network of bicycle lanes to allow children to move more safely, increasing the number of recreational facilities for children over 6 years old in parks, and beyond. Indeed, it is essential to consider the entire urban space as potentially connected to play or socializing. Finally, it would certainly be very useful to increase the quantity of spaces such as the Maison des adolescents in Lyon or the Case di quartiere in Bologna. These are places of encounter where the presence of adults can be discreet and provide many reasons to leave home.

Apart from these recommendations, I also wanted to emphasize two points: the private courtyard and the involvement of children in city planning.

- **The private courtyard**

What this study has highlighted is the importance of courtyards in the acquisition of CIM. They provide opportunities for socialization, creation, and dealing with unforeseen circumstances outside the control of adults. Therefore, it is crucial that when they exist, play is not just permitted but encouraged. As an example, I can mention the positive case of the city of Bologna, which in 2021 accepted the proposal of the Consulta Cinnica and modified the Building Regulations of the Municipality (Regolamento Edilizio del Comune) to affirm and protect children's right to play in courtyards. This amendment includes a broad clause that applies automatically to all condominiums. It states:

"*4 Play Spaces in Private Courtyards*
4.1 The Municipality of Bologna recognizes the right of children to play and engage in recreational activities appropriate for their age, thus implementing Article 31 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, approved by the United Nations General Assembly and incorporated into Italian law by Law No. 176 of May 25, 1991. To this end, play for children must be allowed in courtyards, gardens, and outdoor areas of privately owned residential buildings, subject to time periods for quiet and rest established by condominium regulations, which during daylight hours cannot exceed two hours. Any contrary decisions made at condominium meetings or provisions in condominium regulations do not apply.".[54]

[54] Parte seconda > Titolo III > Capo VI Comune di Bologna > Regolamento Edilizio | 2021 https://sit.comune.bologna.it/alfresco/d/d/workspace/SpacesStore/3615f74b-0055-451f-92ef-b32dbb5d7cf1/RE_TestoCompleto_APPRweb.pdf

The city of Lyon could draw inspiration from this initiative to remove signs prohibiting play from private courtyards, which are often disregarded, as we have seen.

Additionally, organizing neighborhood walks for families could be beneficial. These walks could help families identify places where their children can play, allowing them to assess whether these spaces are sufficient in number and equipped with suitable play facilities. Furthermore, it would raise awareness among families about these play areas, as they may not always be aware of their existence.

- **Involve kids in the urban planification**

To achieve the democratic ideal advocated by Dewey (1916/2019), society must include the child as a person and citizen in every respect, ensuring their participation and interaction with the social and educational environment. Only then will it be possible to foster the blossoming of their talents.

Furthermore, according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), to which France and Italy are signatories, respecting Articles 9, 12, and 23 involves the active participation of children in community life: "to participate in decisions and to express their views" (Article 9), "to freely express their opinion on matters concerning them" (Article 12), "active participation in community life" (Article 23).

The theme of children's competence was dear to Malaguzzi, the founder of the Reggio Emilia pedagogy, who spoke of a "competent child inherently rich in potential, resilient, and capable of meaningful interactions with adults" (Malaguzzi, 1993). This is also what Chapter 6 highlighted: the competence of children in public space when they benefit from sufficient independent mobility, meaning it has been gradually established, allowing parents to trust in their abilities and children to feel more confident. The more numerous and varied the opportunities for independent outings, the more competent the child becomes.

One of these opportunities can also be represented by children's participation in public decision-making, as is the case with the Children's Borough Council (Conseil d'arrondissement des enfants or CAE) at Lyon's City Hall in the 3rd arrondissement. The purpose of this council is to involve children in the development of projects in the municipality's areas of action and, above all, to implement them for the benefit of all. Romain, who was part of the council, was able to participate in several initiatives, the results of which were visible in the streets of his neighborhood. One of them involved the installation of flower beds that Romain proudly showed me during the walking interview because "they are here thanks to us." This is a simple project to implement; the CAE of the 3rd arrondissement has only existed since

2021, moreover, Tristan Debray, municipal councilor responsible for the City of Children, has affirmed to me the city of Lyon's intention to provide children's councils with a budget in order to carry out more ambitious projects.

Figure 7.1 Children's Borough Council, Lyon 3ème

https://mairie3.lyon.fr/democratie-locale/conseil-darrondissement-des-enfants-cae/conseil-darrondissement-des-enfants#

In Bologna, there is also a Children's Borough Council (Consiglio di quartiere dei ragazzi e delle ragazze, CQR), only in the Santo Stefano neighborhood (which includes the Irnerio neighborhood). Its purpose is to "promote active participation processes among adolescents by granting them the right to speak and make decisions."[55]. The "One Way" project, a kind of pedibus for middle school children that I mentioned earlier, stems from consultation with the CQR. However, this council is not endowed with a budget, which limits its initiatives.

We should also keep in mind the concept of "the child as a researcher" (Edwards, 2014), as demonstrated by the pedagogy developed in Reggio Emilia, which is

55 https://www.comune.bologna.it/quartieri/san-donato-san-vitale/scopri-il-quartiere/consiglio-quartiere-ragazze-ragazzi

closely linked to the belief that children have the right to actively participate in their own education and contribute to knowledge-building in their educational community. By giving them the opportunity to explore and discover the world around them, we promote the development of skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, which are essential for success in a rapidly changing world.

7.4 Autobiographical Reflection

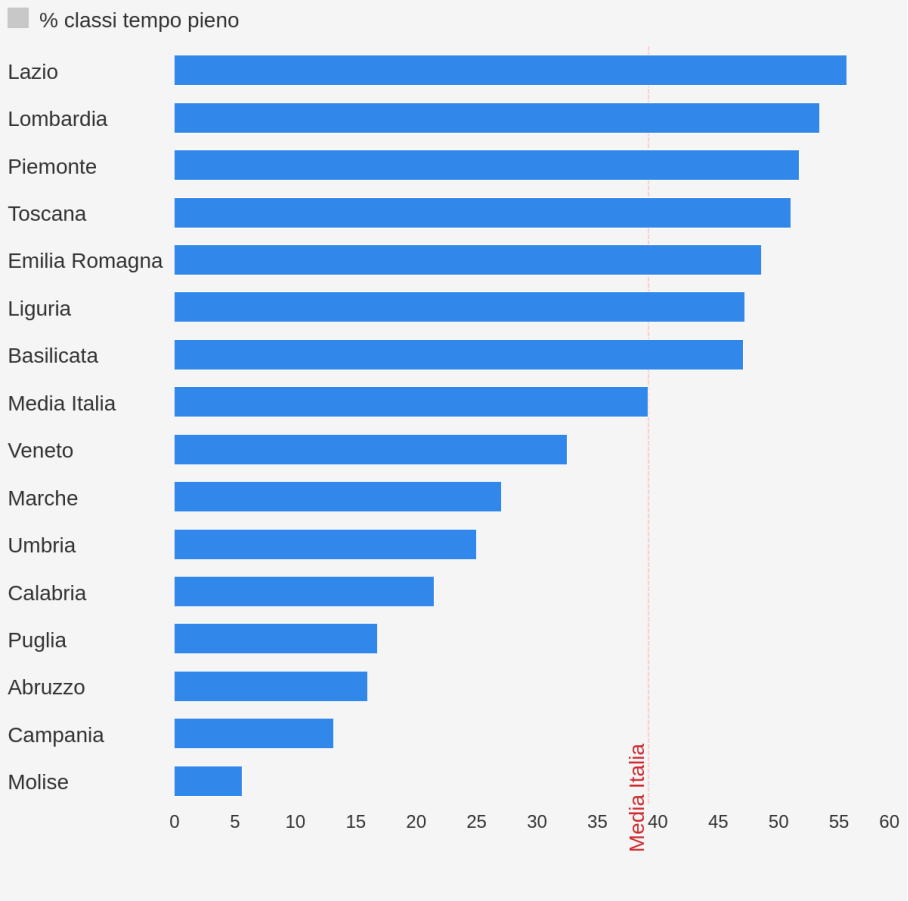
When I began this research, I indeed expected to find a difference in CIM between France and Italy, especially because as a French woman having lived in Italy for over 20 years, I had observed how intensive parenting seemed to have become the norm. However, having also left France long ago, I was unaware of the country's developments since my childhood. After this study, what I found is that while intensive parenting does also exist among French parents, which was different from my childhood experience, the ideas of independent mobility seem to be more deeply rooted. These ideas are also supported by institutions which, even if they may not encourage them enough, do not seek to "terrorize" parents if they allow their children to travel alone.

In conclusion, I would simply say that during this study, I have gained some understanding of the nature of the research process. Therefore, I now see more clearly how children could themselves become researchers, at their level, thus contributing to making cities more adapted to their needs.

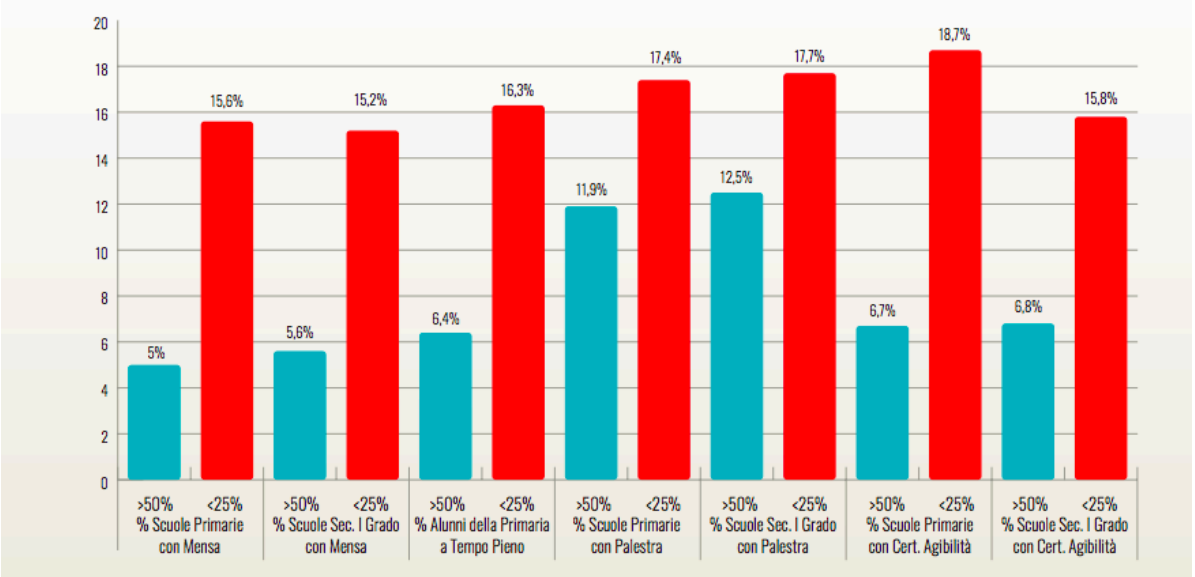
APPENDICES

Chapter 3

Appendix 3.1 % full time classes in each italian region



Appendix 3.2 % of school dropout rate depending on the school offer, Elaborazione Save the Children, su dati INVALSI e Open Data istruzione (as-2020-21)



Appendix 3.3 Overview interviews, diaries and walks

Interviews

Italy

- 13 parents: 9 mothers, 4 fathers

Name	gender	level of education	profession	from	nbr of kids	kid's name	total min of registration
Beatrice	woman	graduate	teacher	Naples	6	Stefano	60
Camilla	woman	graduate	journalist	Rimini	2	Aurora	51
Martina	woman	graduate	manager	Naples	3	Chiara	44
Alessia	woman	graduate	doctor	Bologne	2	Carlo	53
Sara	woman	graduate	architect	Ancona	2	Francesco	45
Letizia	woman	graduate	teacher	Bologna	1	Alice	46
Fabrizio	man	graduate	teacher		3	Dago	47
Antonio	man	high school diploma	teacher	Caserta	2	Aida	51
Francesca	woman	graduate	dietitian	Puglia	2	Beatrice	53
Marta	woman	graduate	employee	Moldavia	2	Federica	51
Marcello	man	high school diploma	manager	Sicily	3	Giuseppe	33
Pietro	man	junior high diploma	entrepreneur	Puglia	2	Vera	32
Lucia	woman	graduate			2	Giulia	29

France

- 12 parents: 10 mothers, 2 fathers

Name	gender	level of education	profession	from	nbr of kids	kid's name	total min of registration
Florence	woman	graduate	teacher		2	Thomas	37
Lynn	woman	graduate			2	Yoann	52
Guillaume	man	high school diploma	baker	Lyon	3	Eloise	55
Yasmina	woman	graduate	manager	Lyon	3	Omar	55
Céline	woman	graduate	teacher	Savoie	2	Romain	67
Amir	man	graduate	manager	Morocco	3	Jamel	34
Zahra	woman	graduate	teleadvisor	Algeria	3	Samira	29
Linda	woman	diploma of higher education	housewife	Algeria	4	Dina	41
Claire	woman	graduate	insurance adjuster	France	3	Farid	45
Marion	woman	graduate	health care manager	France	3	Margaux	52
Amélie	woman	graduate	executive assistant	Lyon	2	Clément	57
Leila	woman	graduate	nurse	Morocco	3	Ilyan	44

- 2 school teachers
- School director
- Responsable du projet de pedibus de la mairie du 3ème arrondissement
- Responsable de la Ville aux enfants de la mairie de Lyon

Diaries 7 days filled at school

Italy
23 children

France
27 children

Walks, promenade commentée

Italy

- 5 children (4 boys, 1 girl)

Name	total min of registration
Carlo	35
Chiara	46
Dago	16 (walk 45, technical problems)
Francesco	25
Stefano	34

France

- 4 children (4 boys)

Name	total min of registration
Ilyan	18
Romain	26
Omar	35
Farid	48

Appendix 4.1 Excel spread sheet Children's mobility data (complete sheet available on request to the author)

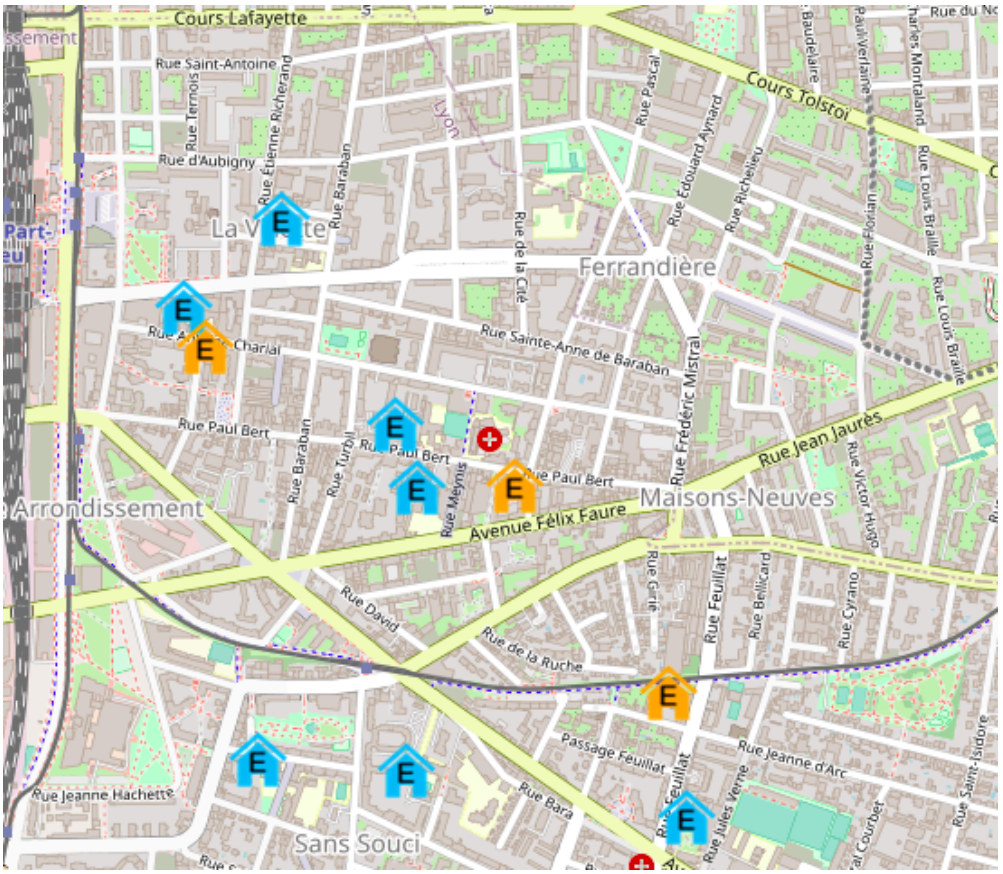
Name	Country	Day	Go/Back	What	With who	How	Where	Gender	When
Giuseppe	Italy	Monday	go	school	dad	car	other	boy	morning
Giuseppe	Italy	Monday	back	school	dad	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Tuesday	go	school	dad	car	other	boy	morning
Giuseppe	Italy	Tuesday	back	school	mum	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Tuesday	go	institutional activity	mum	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Tuesday	back	institutional activity	mum	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Wednesday	go	school	dad	car	other	boy	morning
Giuseppe	Italy	Wednesday	back	school	dad	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Thursday	go	school	dad	car	other	boy	morning
Giuseppe	Italy	Thursday	back	school	dad	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Friday	go	school	dad	car	other	boy	morning
Giuseppe	Italy	Friday	back	school	mum	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Saturday	go	institutional activity	dad	car	other	boy	morning
Giuseppe	Italy	Saturday	back	institutional activity	dad	car	other	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Saturday	go	institutional activity	mum	foot	my	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Saturday	back	institutional activity	mum	foot	my	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Saturday	go	commercial outing	dad	bike	my	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Saturday	back	commercial outing	dad	bike	my	boy	afternoon
Giuseppe	Italy	Sunday						boy	
Beatrice	Italy	Monday	go	school	dad	foot	other	girl	morning
Beatrice	Italy	Monday	back	school	mum	foot	other	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Monday	go	commercial outing	mum	bus	other	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Monday	back	commercial outing	mum	bus	other	girl	morning
Beatrice	Italy	Monday	go	institutional activity	mum	bus	my	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Monday	back	institutional activity	family	foot	my	girl	evening
Beatrice	Italy	Tuesday	go	school	dad	foot	other	girl	morning
Beatrice	Italy	Tuesday	back	school	mum	foot	other	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Tuesday	go	institutional activity	mum	car	my	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Thursday	back	institutional activity	dad	bike	my	girl	evening
Beatrice	Italy	Wednesday	go	school	mum	foot	other	girl	morning
Beatrice	Italy	Wednesday	back	school	other adult	car	other	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Wednesday	go	institutional activity	other adult	car	my	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Wednesday	back	institutional activity	dad	foot	my	girl	evening
Beatrice	Italy	Thursday	go	school	dad	foot	other	girl	morning
Beatrice	Italy	Thursday	back	school	mum	bus	other	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Thursday	go	institutional activity	mum	bus	my	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Thursday	back	institutional activity	mum	bus	my	girl	evening
Beatrice	Italy	Friday	go	school	mum	bus	other	girl	morning
Beatrice	Italy	Friday	back	school	mum	bus	other	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Friday	go	institutional activity	mum	bus	my	girl	afternoon
Beatrice	Italy	Friday	back	institutional activity	mum	bus	my	girl	evening
Beatrice	Italy	saturday	go	children's	family	foot	my	girl	evening
Beatrice	Italy	Saturday	back	children's	family	foot	my	girl	night
Beatrice	Italy	Sunday	go	commercial outing	family	car	outside city	girl	morning
Beatrice	Italy	Sunday	back	commercial outing	family	car	outside city	girl	evening
Camilla	Italy	Monday	go	school	dad	car	other	girl	morning
Camilla	Italy	Monday	back	school	mum	bus	other	girl	afternoon
Camilla	Italy	Monday	go	institutional activity	mum	bus	other	girl	afternoon
Camilla	Italy	Monday	back	institutional activity	mum	bus	other	girl	evening
Camilla	Italy	Tuesday	go	school	dad	car	other	girl	morning
Camilla	Italy	Tuesday	back	school	mum	foot	other	girl	afternoon
Camilla	Italy	Wednesday	go	school	dad	car	other	girl	morning
Camilla	Italy	Wednesday	back	school	dad	car	other	girl	afternoon
Camilla	Italy	Wednesday	go	institutional activity	dad	car	other	girl	afternoon
Camilla	Italy	Wednesday	back	institutional activity	other adult	foot	other	girl	evening
Camilla	Italy	Thursday	go	school	dad	car	other	girl	morning
Camilla	Italy	Thursday	back	school	mum	foot	other	girl	afternoon
Camilla	Italy	Thursday	go	institutional activity	mum	bus	other	girl	afternoon
Camilla	Italy	Thursday	back	institutional activity	other adult	car	other	girl	evening

1

Appendix 4.2 Presence of primary school in the Irnerio neighbourhood

https://opendata.comune.bologna.it/explore/dataset/elenco-delle-scuole/map/?disjunctive.quartiere&disjunctive.servizio&refine.servizio=SCUOLA+PRIMARIA&location=14,44.50452,11.34806&basemap=jawg.streets

Appendix 4.3 Presence of primary school in the Villette - Paul Bert neighbourhood



https://annuaire-education.fr/commune/rhone/lyon-3e-arrondissement/69383.html?tout=oui&statut_public=oui&statut_prive=oui&type_ecole_elem=oui

Appendix 7.1 The "One Way" project

CQRR S. Stefano - Progetto “One Way”
Cari genitori, avete mai pensato se sia davvero necessario accompagnare i vostri figli in macchina fino all’entrata della scuola?
Noi del **CQRR. Santo Stefano** ci siamo posti questa domanda in seguito ad alcune riflessioni sorte dopo aver preso visione di ciò che accade all’entrata e all’uscita di alcune scuole. Ad esempio, provate a pensare ai pericoli che corrono gli altri studenti nel momento in cui vanno a scuola, le macchine durante gli orari di entrata
e di uscita sono molte, talvolta accadono eventi spiacevoli come l'occupazione degli attraversamenti pedonali da parte macchine che di conseguenza costringono le studentesse e gli studenti ad attraversare in strada, questo può provocare un maggior rischio di incidenti. I fattori a cui abbiamo pensato sono sia le infrazioni fatte da alcuni automobilisti, ma non solo: ci vengono in mente anche tutti quei comportamenti che hanno un impatto negativo sull’ambiente, ad esempio tenere il motore delle macchine accese all’uscita della scuola.
Voi ragazzə invece, non preferireste andare a scuola con i vostri amici, cercando anche di migliorare questi aspetti problematici?
“**ONE WAY**” è un’iniziativa ideata proprio per contrastare tutto ciò, diminuendo il traffico attorno alle scuole e incrementando l’autonomia dei ragazzi. Le scuole su cui abbiamo lavorato e che si trovano nel quartiere S. Stefano sono: Guido Reni, Irnerio, Rolandino de Passaggeri e Pepoli.
Abbiamo dunque, individuato dei punti di raccolta per gli studenti, facilmente raggiungibili dalle macchine, in modo da evitare il traffico vicino alle scuole. Vi invitiamo quindi ad aderire a questa iniziativa che comprende il momento sia dell’andata a scuola che quello del ritorno.
Ecco cosa fare:
Voi genitori:

- Sapete che se lasciate i vostri figli in Porta San Vitale, in soli 4 minuti riescono ad arrivare a scuola in maniera sicura e in compagnia delle loro amiche e/o compagni?
- Sapete che se lasciate i vostri figli in Mura di Porta Galliera, in soli 5 minuti riescono ad arrivare a scuola in maniera sicura e in compagnia delle loro amiche e/o compagni?
- Sapete che se lasciate i vostri figli nel parcheggio del Baraccano, in soli 6 minuti riescono ad arrivare a scuola in maniera sicura e in compagnia delle loro amiche e/o compagni?
- Sapete che se lasciate i vostri figli in via Parisio, in soli 8 minuti riescono ad arrivare a scuola in maniera sicura e in compagnia delle loro amiche e/o compagni?

Voi studentə:
Nei punti di raccolta potete organizzarvi con i vostri compagnə, insieme essere lasciatə dai genitori e poi in gruppo andare a scuola!
Guardate il video e tutto sarà più chiaro!
Link youtube dei video:

- GUIDO RENI
- IRNERIO
- ROLANDINO
- PEPOLI

Le ragazze e i ragazzi del CQRR S. Stefano

REFERENCES

Abu-Ghazzeh, T. M. (1998). Children's Use of the Street As a Playground in Abu-Nuseir, Jordan. *Environment and Behavior*, *30*(6), 799–831. https://doi.org/10.1177/001391659803000604

Adler, P. A., & Adler, P. (1994). Social Reproduction and the Corporate Other: The Institutionalization of Afterschool Activities. *The Sociological Quarterly*, *35*(2), 309–328. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1994.tb00412.x

Alparone, F. R., & Pacilli, M. G. (2012). On children's independent mobility: The interplay of demographic, environmental, and psychosocial factors. *Children's Geographies*, *10*(1), 109–122. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2011.638173

Arduini, M., Borgogni, A., & Capelli, G. (2016). *The portable devices as means to promote Children's active lifestyle: The case of a walk to school action in Italy* (pp. 19–25).

Ariès, P. (1993). *L'enfant et la rue, de la ville à l'antiville*. Le Seuil.

Authier, J.-Y. (2007). 16. La question des « effets de quartier » en France. Variations contextuelles et processus de socialisation. In *Le quartier* (pp. 206–216). La Découverte. https://doi.org/10.3917/dec.bacqu.2007.01.0206

Authier, J.-Y., Cousin, B., Fijalkow, Y., Launay, L., & Baggioni, V. (2019). *D'une ville à l'autre: La comparaison internationale en sociologie urbaine*. La Découverte. https://doi.org/10.3917/dec.authi.2019.01

Authier, J.-Y., Mallon, I., Vogel, M., & Grafmeyer, Y. (2010). *Sociologie de Lyon:* La Découverte. https://doi.org/10.3917/dec.authi.2010.01

Barbieri, G. A. (A c. Di). (2018). *Rapporto annuale 2018. La situazione del Paese*. ISTAT. https://doi.org/10.1481/Istat.Rapportoannuale.2018

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology*, *4*(1, Pt.2), 1–103. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0030372

Baumrind, D. (1991). The Influence of Parenting Style on Adolescent Competence and Substance Use. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, *11*(1), 56–95. https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431691111004

Bodenhorn, B., & Lee, E. (2022). What Animates Place for Children? A Comparative Analysis. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *53*(2), 112–129. https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12409

Borgogni, A. (2016). *La mobilità autonoma dei bambini come atto trasformativo della città* (pp. 823–831).

Borgogni, A. (2018). *Borgogni_Il_bambino-e-la-citta.pdf*. https://www.academia.edu/36455882/Borgogni_Il_bambino_e_la_citta_pdf

Borgogni, A., & Bertagna, G. (2020). *L'intenzionalità educativa degli spazi pubblici. Luoghi e tempi delle didattiche del movimento*. Studium.

Bornstein, M. H., & Zlotnik, D. (2008). Parenting Styles and their Effects. In *Encyclopedia of Infant and Early Childhood Development* (pp. 496–509). https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012370877-9.00118-3

Bourassa, C. (2010). La complexité et la pluralité des expériences maternelles en contexte de violence conjugale. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/6511

Bourke, R., O'Neill, J., & Loveridge, J. (2018). Children's conceptions of informal and everyday learning. *Oxford Review of Education*, *44*(6), 771–786. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2018.1450238

Breiner, H., Committee on Supporting the Parents of Young Children, Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, & National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2016). *Parenting Matters: Supporting Parents of Children Ages 0-8* (V. L. Gadsden & M. Ford, A c. Di; p. 21868). National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/21868

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, *22*(6), 723–742. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.22.6.723

Bruner, J. S. (2016). *Il processo educativo. Dopo Dewey* (2° edizione). Armando Editore.

Caillé, P. (2003). Être parent aujourd'hui: Performance d'un rôle ou vécu d'un état ?: Dilemmes et contradictions de la position parentale contemporaine. *Thérapie Familiale*, *24*(2), 129. https://doi.org/10.3917/tf.032.0129

Camstra, R. (A c. Di). (1997). *Growing up in a changing urban landscape*. Van Gorcum.

Carroll, P., Witten, K., Kearns, R., & Donovan, P. (2015). Kids in the City: Children's Use and Experiences of Urban Neighbourhoods in Auckland, New Zealand. *Journal of Urban Design*, *20*(4), 417–436. https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2015.1044504

Carta, F., Zuanna, A. D., Lattanzio, S., & Bello, S. L. (2022). Social shock absorbers in Italy: A comparison with the main European countries. *Questioni Di Economia e Finanza (Occasional Papers)*, Articolo 698. https://ideas.repec.org//p/bdi/opques/qef_698_22.html

Cavagnoud, R. (2010). Les adolescents travailleurs ambulants de lima: Stratégies familiales de survie et métropolisation en amérique latine. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/5978

Cele, S. (2006). *Communicating place: Methods for understanding childrenś experience of place*. Univ.

CENSIS Centro studi investimenti sociali (A c. Di). (2003). *Bologna oltre il benessere: Accompagnare la città nelle sue trasformazioni*. F. Angeli.

Ceppi, G., & Zini, M. (2011). *Bambini, spazi, relazioni. Metaprogetto di ambiente per l'infanzia* (2° edizione). Reggio Children.

Chawla, L. (1992). Childhood Place Attachments. In I. Altman & S. M. Low (A c. Di), *Place Attachment* (pp. 63–86). Springer US. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4684-8753-4_4

Chawla, L., & Malone, K. (2003). Neighbourhood quality in children's eyes. *Children in the City: Home, Neighbourhood and Community*, 118–141.

Christensen, P. M., & O'Brien, M. (A c. Di). (2003). *Children in the city: Home, neighbourhood and community*. RoutledgeFalmer.

Chudacoff, H. P. (2008). *Children at play: An American history* (1. publ. in paperback). New York Univ. Press.

Cloutier, M.-S., & Torres, J. (2010). L'enfant et la ville: Notes introductoires. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/5893

Coggi, C., & Ricchiardi, P. (2005). *Progettare la ricerca empirica in educazione*. Carocci.

Corbetta, P. (2003). *La ricerca sociale: Metodologia e tecniche*. Il Mulino. https://www.pandoracampus.it/store/10.978.8815/324238

Corbetta, P. (2014). *Metodologia e tecniche della ricerca sociale* (2° edizione). Il Mulino.

Corsaro, W. A. (2003). *Le culture dei bambini* (G. Stella, Trad.). Il Mulino.

Coulomb, A. (1993). *L'enfant, la ville, quel quotidien?*

Cunningham, H. (2006). *The Invention of Childhood* (First Edition). BBC Books.

Darmon, M. (2018). Socialisation: Petite histoire d'un manuel. *Idées économiques et sociales*, *N° 191*(1), 6–14. https://doi.org/10.3917/idee.191.0006

Davoli, M. & Reggio Children Srl (A c. Di). (2001). *Reggio Tutta: A guide to the city by the children* (2. print). Reggio Children srl.

Déchaux, J.-H. (2011). La famille à l'heure de l'individualisme. *Revue Projet*, *322*(3), 24–32. https://doi.org/10.3917/pro.322.0024

Deleuze, G. (1993). *Critique et clinique*. Les Édition de Minuit.

Depeau, S. (2001). Urban Identities and Social Interaction: A cross-cultural analysis of young people's spatial mobility in Paris, France, and Frankston, Australia. *Local Environment*, *6*(1), 81–86. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549830120024260

Depeau, S. (2008). Radioscopie des territoires de la mobilité des enfants en milieu urbain. Comparaison entre Paris intra-muros et banlieue parisienne. *Enfances, Familles, Générations*, *8*, 0. https://doi.org/10.7202/018489ar

Depeau, S. (2013). Mobilité des enfants et des jeunes sous conditions d'immobilité ?: Ce que circuler signifie. *e-Migrinter*, *11*, 103–115. https://doi.org/10.4000/e-migrinter.302

Derbyshire, D. (2007). *How children lost the right to roam in four generations | Daily Mail Online*. https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-462091/How-children-lost-right-roam-generations.html

Dewey, J. (2019). *Democracy and Education*. Independently published.

Dolto, F. (1978). *Lorsque l'enfant paraît. 2*. Éditions du Seuil.

Dolto, F. (2000). *Il bambino e la città*. Mondadori.

Du Bois-Reymond, M., Büchner, P., & Krüger, H.-H. (1993). Modern family as everyday negotiation: Continuities and discontinuities in parent-child relationships. *Childhood*, *1*(2), 87–99. https://doi.org/10.1177/090756829300100204

Edwards, C., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (2014). *I cento linguaggi dei bambini. L'approccio di Reggio Emilia all'educazione dell'infanzia*. Edizioni Junior.

Elsley, S. (2004). Children's experience of public space. *Children & Society*, *18*(2), 155–164. https://doi.org/10.1002/chi.822

Farnè, R. (2017). Play and the city. *Ricerche di Pedagogia e Didattica. Journal of Theories and Research in Education*. https://www.academia.edu/105800226/Play_and_the_city

Féres-Carneiro, T., Henriques, C. R., Magalhães, A. S., & Machado, R. N. (2016). Contemporary Parenting: The Construction of Autonomy in the Parent-Child Relationship. *Psychology*, *07*(09), 1185–1194. https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2016.79119

Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, Bibliothèque nationale de France, & François Pinault foundation (A c. Di). (2020). *Henri Cartier-Bresson, Le grand jeu: Exposition, Venise, Palazzo Grassi, 22 mars 2020-10 janvier 2021, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 16 mars-11 juillet 2021*. Marsilio Palazzo Grassi, Punta della Dogana, Pinault Collection Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Forni, E. (2002). *La città di Batman: Bambini, conflitti, sicurezza urbana*. B. Boringhieri.

Fotel, T., & Thomsen, T. U. (2002). The Surveillance of Children's Mobility. *Surveillance & Society*, *1*(4). https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v1i4.3335

Frabboni, F. (1989). *Il sistema formativo integrato: Una nuova frontiera dell'educazione / a cura di Franco Frabboni*. EIT.

Francis, J., Martin, K., Wood, L., & Foster, S. (2017). 'I'll be driving you to school for the rest of your life': A qualitative study of parents' fear of stranger danger. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *53*, 112–120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2017.07.004

Franklin, L., & Richardson, R. (2009). *The Many Forms of Fear, Horror and Terror*. BRILL. https://doi.org/10.1163/9781848880139

Furedi, F. (1998). *Culture of fear: Risk-taking and the morality of low expectation* (Repr. with new preface). Cassell.

Füredi, F. (2002). *Paranoid parenting: Why ignoring the experts may be best for your child*. Chicago Review Press.

Gaster, S. (1991). Urban Children's Access to their Neighborhood: Changes Over Three Generations. *Environment and Behavior*, *23*(1), 70–85. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916591231004

Gauvin-Lepage, J., & Lefebvre, H. (2010). Les perceptions d'adolescents cérébrolésés, de leurs parents et des professionnels impliqués dans leur inclusion sociale. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/6543

Géraud, A., & Zika, A.-S. (2006). *Lyon: Révolutions tranquilles*. Éd. Autrement.

Germanos, D. (1995). *LA RELATION DE L'ENFANT A L'ESPACE URBAIN : PERSPECTIVES EDUCATIVES ET CULTURELLES*.

Ghezzi, S. (2012). Parenthood and the Structuring of Time among Urban Households in Northern Italy. *Ethnologie française*, *42*(1), 37–44. https://doi.org/10.3917/ethn.121.0037

Gill, T. (2007). *No fear: Growing up in a risk averse society*. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation : Distributed by Central Books.

Glauser, B. (2015). Street children: Deconstructing a construct. In *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood* (3ª ed.). Routledge.

Grafmeyer, Y. (1991). *Habiter Lyon*. Presses universitaires de Lyon. https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pul.8660

Grafmeyer, Y. (A c. Di). (1994). *L' école de Chicago* (Repr.). Aubier.

Grafmeyer, Y., & Authier, J.-Y. (2019). *Pour la sociologie urbaine*. Presses universitaires de Lyon. https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pul.28812

Granié, M.-A. (2010). Socialisation au risque et construction sociale des comportements de l'enfant piéton: Éléments de réflexion pour l'éducation routière. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/6492

Grant, A. M., & Schwartz, B. (2011). Too Much of a Good Thing: The Challenge and Opportunity of the Inverted U. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *6*(1), 61–76. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610393523

Gray, P. (2011). The Decline of Play and the Rise of Psychopathology in Children and Adolescents. *American Journal of Play*, *3*.

Grolnick, W. S., Levitt, M. R., Caruso, A. J., & Lerner, R. E. (2021). Effectiveness of a Brief Preventive Parenting Intervention Based in Self-Determination Theory. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *30*(4), 905–920. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-01908-4

Guldberg, H. (2009). *Reclaiming Childhood* (0 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203870419

Haikkola, L., Pacilli, M. G., Horelli, L., & Prezza, M. (2007). Interpretations of Urban Child-Friendliness: A Comparative Study of Two Neighborhoods in Helsinki and Rome. *Children, Youth and Environments*, *17*(4), 319–351. https://doi.org/10.1353/cye.2007.0025

Hart, R. (1979). *Children's Experience of Place*.

Heath, T. (2001). Revitalizing Cities: Attitudes toward City-Center Living in the United Kingdom. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *20*(4), 464–475. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X0102000410

Heft, H., & Chawla, L. (2006). Children as agents in sustainable development: The ecology of competence. In C. Spencer & M. Blades (A c. Di), *Children and their Environments* (1ª ed., pp. 199–216). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511521232.013

Hendrick, H. (2015). Constructions and reconstructions of British childhood: An interpretative survey, 1800 to the present. In *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood* (3ª ed.). Routledge.

Hill, M. (2006). Children's Voices on Ways of Having a Voice: Children's and young people's perspectives on methods used in research and consultation. *Childhood*, *13*(1), 69–89. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568206059972

Hillman, M., Adams, J. G., & Whitelegg, J. (1990). *One false move: A study of children's independent mobility*.

Holloway, S. L., & Valentine, G. (A c. Di). (2004). *Children's Geographies: Playing, Living, Learning* (0 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203017524

Horelli, L. (2001). A comparison of children's autonomous mobility and environmental participation in Northern and Southern Europe—The cases of Finland and Italy. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *11*(6), 451–455. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.644

Huguenin-Richard, F. (2010). La mobilité des enfants à l'épreuve de la rue: Impacts de l'aménagement de zones 30 sur leurs comportements. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/6140

Hurtwood, L. A. of. (1968). *Planning for Play*. Thames and Hudson. https://www.abebooks.it/9780500010471/Planning-Play-Allen-Hurtwood-Lady-0500010471/plp

Jack, G. (2010). Place Matters: The Significance of Place Attachments for Children's Well-Being. *British Journal of Social Work*, *40*(3), 755–771. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcn142

Jacobs, J. (1992). *The death and life of great American cities* (Vintage books ed). Vintage Books.

James, A., & Prout, A. (A c. Di). (2015). *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood* (1ª ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315745008

Johansson, R. (2003). *Case study methodology*. *32*, 22–24.

Jutras, S. (2003). Allez jouer dehors! Contributions de l'environnement urbain au développement et au bien-être des enfants. *Canadian Psychology / Psychologie Canadienne*, *44*(3), 257–266. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0086948

Karsten, L. (2002). Mapping Childhood in Amsterdam: The spatial and social construction of children's domains in the city. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, *93*(3), 231–241. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9663.00199

Karsten, L. (2005). It all used to be better? Different generations on continuity and change in urban children's daily use of space. *Children's Geographies*, *3*(3), 275–290. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733280500352912

Karsten, L. (2014). From Yuppies to Yupps: Family Gentrifiers Consuming Spaces and Re-inventing Cities. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, *105*(2), 175–188. https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12055

Karsten, L., & Felder, N. (2015). Parents and children consuming the city: Geographies of family outings across class. *Annals of Leisure Research*, *18*(2), 205–218. https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2015.1011679

Karsten, L., & Van Vliet, W. (2006). Children in the City: Reclaiming the Street. *Children, Youth and Environments*, *16*(1), 151–167. https://doi.org/10.1353/cye.2006.0030

Kearns, R., & Collins, D. (2006). Children in the intensifying city: Lessons from Auckland's walking school buses. In *Creating Child Friendly Cities*. Routledge.

Kellerhals, J., Widmer, É., & Levy, R. (2004). *Mesure et démesure du couple: Cohésion, crises et résilience dans la vie des couples*. Payot.

Kyttä, M. (1997). Children's independent mobility in urban, small town, and rural environments. In *Growing up in a changing urban landscape* (pp. 41–52). Van Gorcum. https://research.aalto.fi/en/publications/childrens-independent-mobility-in-urban-small-town-and-rural-envi

Kyttä, M., Hirvonen, J., Rudner, J., Pirjola, I., & Laatikainen, T. (2015). The last free-range children? Children's independent mobility in Finland in the 1990s and 2010s. *Journal of Transport Geography*, *47*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2015.07.004

Latchoumanin, M., & Malbert, T. (2007). *Familles et parentalité: Rôles et fonctions entre tradition et modernité actes du colloque international, du 16 au 18 novembre 2005*. l'Harmattan.

Lazar, M. (2009). *L'Italie contemporaine de 1945 à nos jours*. Fayard.

Legendre, A., Enaux, C., & Ferhat, G. (2005). *Développement des pratiques urbaines au cours de l'enfance: L'apport des nouvelles technologies dans l'analyse spatiale de la mobilité et de l'usage des espaces publics.*

Lehman-Frisch, S., Authier, J.-Y., Collet, A., & Mallon, I. (2014). *Une transition invisible: Les apprentissages différenciés de l'autonomie spatiale par les enfants en fin d'école primaire (quartiers bourgeois/quartiers populaires)*.

Lehman-Frisch, S., Authier, J.-Y., Collet, A., & Mallon, I. (2019). 11. Comparer les vies urbaines des enfants à Paris et à San Francisco. In *D'une ville à l'autre* (pp. 209–226). La Découverte. https://doi.org/10.3917/dec.authi.2019.01.0209

Lehman-Frisch, S., Authier, J.-Y., & Dufaux, F. (2012). 'Draw me your neighbourhood': A gentrified Paris neighbourhood through its children's eyes. *Children's Geographies*, *10*(1), 17–34. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2011.638175

Lemieux, D. (1996). *Le lien parent-enfant en mutation: Contextes, rôles parentaux et représentations de l'enfant: Vol. Enfances*. Presses de l'université de Laval.

LeMoyne, T., & Buchanan, T. (2011). DOES "HOVERING" MATTER? HELICOPTER PARENTING AND ITS EFFECT ON WELL-BEING. *Sociological Spectrum*, *31*(4), 399–418. https://doi.org/10.1080/02732173.2011.574038

Lewis, P., & Torres, J. (2010a). Les parents et les déplacements entre la maison et l'école primaire: Quelle place pour l'enfant dans la ville ? *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/5999

Lewis, P., & Torres, J. (2010b). Les parents et les déplacements entre la maison et l'école primaire: Quelle place pour l'enfant dans la ville ? *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/5999

Lilius, J. (2014). Is There Room for Families in the Inner City? Life-Stage Blenders Challenging Planning. *Housing Studies*, *29*(6), 843–861. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2014.905673

Lisle, E. A. (1985). *La Comparaison internationale comme méthode de validation en sciences sociales*. https://policycommons.net/artifacts/10665783/la-comparaison-internationale-comme-methode-de-validation-en-sciences-sociales/11573206/

Livi-Bacci, M. (2001). Too Few Children and Too Much Family. *Daedalus*, *130*(3), 139–155.

Lynch, K. (1984). *Good city form*. MIT Press.

Maccoby, E. E. (1992). The role of parents in the socialization of children: An historical overview. *Developmental Psychology*, *28*(6), 1006–1017. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.28.6.1006

Malaguzzi, L. (1993). For an Education Based on Relationships. *Young Children*, *49*(1), 9–12.

Malone, K. (2006). United Nations: A key player in a global movement for child friendly cities. In *Creating Child Friendly Cities*. Routledge.

Manceron, V., & Martine, S. (2012). Entre solidarité résidentielle, sentiments et soutiens publics. *Ethnologie française*, *42*(1), 23.

Martin, C. (2003). *La parentalité en questions*.

Martin, C., Hammouche, A., Modak, M., Neyrand, G., Sellenet, C., Vandenbroeck, M., Gaudron, C. Z., Dauphin, S., & Moeneclaey, J. (2017). *Accompagner les parents dans leur travail éducatif et de soin*.

Martino, B. (1985). *Le Bébé est une personne*. Balland.

Matthews, H. (2002). The street as a liminal space: The barbed spaces of childhood. In *Children in the City*. Routledge.

Matthews, M. H., Limb, M., & Taylor, M. (2000). The 'street as thirdspace'. In S. L. Holloway, G. Valentine, S. L. Holloway, & G. Valentine (A c. Di), *Children's geographies: Playing, living, learning* (pp. 63–79). Routledge. http://www.mendeley.com/research/street-thirdspace

Merlin, C., Okerson, J. R., & Hess, P. (2013). How Parenting Style Influences Children: A Review of Controlling, Guiding, and Permitting Parenting Styles on Children's Behavior, Risk-Taking, Mental Health, and Academic Achievement. *The William and Mary Educational Review*.

Mitra, R., Faulkner, G. E., Buliung, R. N., & Stone, M. R. (2014). Do parental perceptions of the neighbourhood environment influence children's independent mobility? Evidence from Toronto, Canada. *Urban Studies*, *51*(16), 3401–3419. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098013519140

Mori, A. M. (2009). *Gli specchi*. Marsilio.

Nelson, M. K. (2010). *Parenting out of control: Anxious parents in uncertain times*. New York University press.

Neyrand, G. (1995). *sur les pas de la maison verte*. syros.

Notte, M., & Renzi, D. (2020). *La mobilità autonoma dei bambini e la correlazione con gli stili genitoriali: Una rassegna bibliografica*.

O'Brien, M. (2002). Regenerating children's neighbourhoods: What do children want? In *Children in the City*. Routledge.

O'Brien, M., & Christensen, P. (2003). *Christensen P and O'Brien M (eds) (2003) Children in the City: Home, Neighbourhood and the City. London: The Falmer Press. pp.210 ISBN 0-415-25925-8*.

Oldenburg, R. (A c. Di). (2001). *Celebrating the third place: Inspiring stories about the «great good places» at the heart of our communities*. Marlowe & Co.

Opie, I., & Opie, P. (1984). *Children's games in street and playground: Chasing, catching, seeking, hunting, racing, duelling, exerting, daring, guessing, acting, pretending*. Oxford University Press.

Pacilli, M. G., Giovannelli, I., Prezza, M., & Augimeri, M. L. (2013). Children and the public realm: Antecedents and consequences of independent mobility in a group of 11–13-year-old Italian children. *Children's Geographies*, *11*(4), 377–393. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2013.812277

Padilla-Walker, L. M., & Nelson, L. J. (2012). Black hawk down?: Establishing helicopter parenting as a distinct construct from other forms of parental control during emerging adulthood. *Journal of Adolescence*, *35*(5), 1177–1190. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2012.03.007

Paquot, T. (2015). *La ville récréative: Enfants joueurs et écoles buissonnières*. Infolio.

Piaget, J. (1977). *La rappresentazione del mondo nel fanciullo* (M. Villaroel, Trad.; 2e édition). Bollati Boringhieri.

Pinson, G. (2019). 2. Penser par cas, penser par comparaison. Études urbaines et pratique des monographies comparées. In *D'une ville à l'autre* (pp. 43–66). La Découverte. https://doi.org/10.3917/dec.authi.2019.01.0043

Polenghi, S. (s.d.). *Società Italiana di Pedagogia*.

Power, T. G. (2004). Stress and Coping in Childhood: The Parents' Role. *Parenting*, *4*(4), 271–317. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327922par0404_1

Prezza, M. (2007). Children's Independent Mobility: A Review of Recent Italian Literature. *Children, Youth and Environments*, *17*(4), 293–318.

Prezza, M., Alparone, F. R., Renzi, D., & Pietrobono, A. (2009). Social Participation and Independent Mobility in Children: The Effects of Two Implementations of "We Go to School Alone". *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, *38*(1), 8–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/10852350903393392

Prezza, M., Pilloni, S., Morabito, C., Sersante, C., Alparone, F. R., & Giuliani, M. V. (2001). The influence of psychosocial and environmental factors on children's independent mobility and relationship to peer frequentation. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *11*(6), 435–450. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.643

Proshansky, H. M., & Fabian, A. K. (1987). The Development of Place Identity in the Child. In C. S. Weinstein & T. G. David (A c. Di), *Spaces for Children* (pp. 21–40). Springer US. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4684-5227-3_2

Quel regard portent les Lyonnais sur leur ville ? | Ipsos. (2023, febbraio 1). https://www.ipsos.com/fr-fr/quel-regard-portent-les-lyonnais-sur-leur-ville

Raimondo, R. (2017). The children in the city. An introduction. *Ricerche Di Pedagogia e Didattica. Journal of Theories and Research in Education*, *Vol 12*, 3-15 Pages. https://doi.org/10.6092/ISSN.1970-2221/6706

Rapoport, A. (1977). *Human aspects of urban form: Towards a man-environment approach to urban form and design* (1st ed). Pergamon Press.

Rasmussen, K. (2004). Places for Children – Children's Places. *Childhood*, *11*(2), 155–173. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568204043053

Renaut, A., & Manent, P. (2001). La question de l'autorité: Modernisation du lien familial? *Comprendre*, *2*, 185–206.

Renzi, D., Prisco, A., & Tonucci, F. (2014). *L'autonomia di movimento dei bambini: Una necessità per loro, una risorsa per la scuola e per la città | STUDIUM EDUCATIONIS - Rivista semestrale per le professioni educative*. https://ojs.pensamultimedia.it/index.php/studium/article/view/851

Rinaldi, C. (2009). *In dialogo con Reggio Emilia. Ascoltare, ricercare e apprendere*. Reggio Children. https://www.ibs.it/in-dialogo-con-reggio-emilia-libro-carla-rinaldi/e/9788887960556

Rissotto, A., & Giuliani, M. V. (2006). Learning neighbourhood environments: The loss of experience in a modern world. In C. Spencer & M. Blades (A c. Di), *Children and their Environments* (1ª ed., pp. 75–90). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511521232.006

Rissotto, A., & Tonucci, F. (2002). FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *22*(1–2), 65–77. https://doi.org/10.1006/jevp.2002.0243

Rivière, C. (2014). *Ce que tous les parents disent ? Approche compréhensive de l'encadrement parental des pratiques urbaines des enfants en contexte de mixité sociale (Paris-Milan)*.

Rivière, C. (2017). Du domicile à la ville: Étapes et espaces de l'encadrement parental des pratiques urbaines des enfants: *Espaces et sociétés*, *n° 168-169*(1), 171–188. https://doi.org/10.3917/esp.168.0171

ROULLEAU-BERGER. (2004). *La rue, miroir des peurs et des solidarites—Roulleau-Berger L. - PUF - Grand format—Librairie Gallimard PARIS*. https://www.librairie-gallimard.com/livre/9782130545521-la-rue-miroir-des-peurs-et-des-solidarites-roulleau-berger-l/?provenance=wishlist_list

Roussel, L. (2001). *L'enfance oubliée*. O. Jacob.

Sampson, S. D., & Paloméra, M.-F. de. (2016). *Comment élever un enfant sauvage en ville: L'art et la manière de tomber amoureux de la nature*. les Arènes.

Segalen, M. (2010). *A qui appartiennent les enfants?* Tallandier.

Segalen, M., & Martial, A. (2013). *Sociologie de la famille* (8e éd. entièrement révisée). A. Colin.

Segrin, C., Woszidlo, A., Givertz, M., & Montgomery, N. (2013). Parent and Child Traits Associated with Overparenting. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *32*(6), 569–595. https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2013.32.6.569

Senda, M. (2015). Safety in public spaces for children's play and learning. *IATSS Research*, *38*(2), 103–115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iatssr.2015.02.001

Shaw, B., Bicket, M., Elliott, B., Fagan-Watson, B., Mocca, E., Hillman, M., & Fagan-Watson, B. (2015). *Children's Independent Mobility: An international comparison and recommendations for action* [Project report]. Policy Studies Institute. http://www.psi.org.uk/children_mobility

Shirtcliff, B. A. (2010a). Offrir aux adolescents des banlieues des expériences d'habitat positives dans leur quartier. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/5915

Shirtcliff, B. A. (2010b). Offrir aux adolescents des banlieues des expériences d'habitat positives dans leur quartier. *Enfances Familles Générations. Revue interdisciplinaire sur la famille contemporaine*, *12*, Articolo 12. https://journals.openedition.org/efg/5915

Sibley, D. (1995). *Geographies of exclusion: Society and difference in the West*. New York.

Silverman, D. (2008). *Manuale di ricerca sociale e qualitativa*. Carocci. https://demo.carocci.it/prodotto/manuale-di-ricerca-sociale-e-qualitativa

Singly, F. de. (2003). Les tensions normatives de la modernité. *Éducation et Sociétés*, *11*(1), 11–33. https://doi.org/10.3917/es.011.0011

Singly, F. de. (2010). *Les uns avec les autres: Quand l'individualisme crée du lien*. A. Fayard-Pluriel.

Singly, F. de. (2017). *Sociologie de la famille contemporaine* (6e éd). Armand Colin.

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. SAGE.

Stranges, M. (2008). Évolution des comportements reproductifs et des structures familiales en italie. *Recherches familiales*, *5*(1), 105–123. https://doi.org/10.3917/rf.005.0105

Tillberg Mattsson, K. (2002). Children's (in)dependent mobility and parents' chauffeuring in the town and the countryside. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, *93*(4), 443–453. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9663.00215

Tonucci, F. (2005). *La città dei bambini. Un modo nuovo di pensare la città* (Laterza). Zeroseiup.

Tramma, S. (2009). *Che cos'è l'educazione informale*. Carocci.

Tranter, P. J., & Malone, K. (2004). Geographies of environmental learning: An exploration of children's use of school grounds. *Children's Geographies*, *2*(1), 131–155. https://doi.org/10.1080/1473328032000168813

Tranter, P., & Pawson, E. (2001). Children's Access to Local Environments: A case-study of Christchurch, New Zealand. *Local Environment*, *6*(1), 27–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549830120024233

Tranter, P., & Whitelegg, J. (1994). Children's travel behaviours in Canberra: Car-dependent lifestyles in a low-density city. *Journal of Transport Geography*, *2*(4), 265–273. https://doi.org/10.1016/0966-6923(94)90050-7

Valentine, G. (1996). CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN AND NOT HEARD: THE PRODUCTION AND TRANSGRESSION OF ADULTS' PUBLIC SPACE. *Urban Geography*, *17*(3), 205–220. https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.17.3.205

Valentine, G., & McKendrck, J. (1997). Children's outdoor play: Exploring parental concerns about children's safety and the changing nature of childhood. *Geoforum*, *28*(2), 219–235. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0016-7185(97)00010-9

Vercesi, M. (s.d.). *La mobilità autonoma dei bambini tra ricerca e interventi sul territorio*. FrancoAngeli. Recuperato 5 aprile 2024, da https://www.francoangeli.it/Libro/9788846499509/La-mobilit%C3%A0-autonoma-dei-bambini-tra-ricerca-e-interventi-sul-territorio?id=16466%20%%3E

Vygotsky, L. (2013). *Play And its Role in The Mental Development of The Child* (D. Webb, A c. Di; C. Mulholland, Trad.). www.all-about-psychology.com.

Wales, M., Mårtensson, F., & Jansson, M. (2021). 'You can be outside a lot': Independent mobility and agency among children in a suburban community in Sweden. *Children's Geographies*, *19*(2), 184–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2020.1773401

Ward, C. (1978). *The child in the city*. The architectural Pr.

WHO. (2018). *Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI) Factsheet. Highlights 2015-17*. https://www.who.int/andorra/publications/m/item/childhood-obesity-surveillance-initiative-(cosi)-factsheet.-highlights-2015-17

Woolley, H. E., & Griffin, E. (2015). Decreasing experiences of home range, outdoor spaces, activities and companions: Changes across three generations in Sheffield in north England. *Children's Geographies*, *13*(6), 677–691. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2014.952186

ZANATTA. (2011). *Nuove Madri e Nuovi Padri: Essere Genitori Oggi*. Il Mulino.

Zeiher, H. (2002). Shaping daily life in urban environments. In *Children in the City*. Routledge.