

Abstract for oral presentation at HEALTHFORUM 2014

Health on thin ice – a pilot study of giving voice to youth, adults and elderly in urban planning to promote health

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In the northern, sub-arctic, regions of the world the climate is cold a substantial part of the year. This affect people's health as low temperatures and darkness stress the body as well as hinder outdoor activities. At the same time the cold climate offers opportunities that can be utilized in an innovative manner. There are ways to develop a winter environment which is health promoting, focusing on both technical and aesthetical aspects. The aim of the pilot study was to give voice to youth, adults and elderly to be used in the process of urban planning and design for good health in a cold climate. The qualitative investigations consisted of two workshops to make room for citizen's experiences of health promoting aspects and how professionals can include their ideas in urban planning. A total of 53 citizens aged 16-70 from two cities in the northern part of Sweden participated in two workshops. The preliminary results show a number of opportunities to build and arrange the outdoors to be more physically active, to enjoy good relations as well as to make places to relax. The results are discussed focusing on health promotion with the challenge of architects, urban planners and health care professionals cooperating.