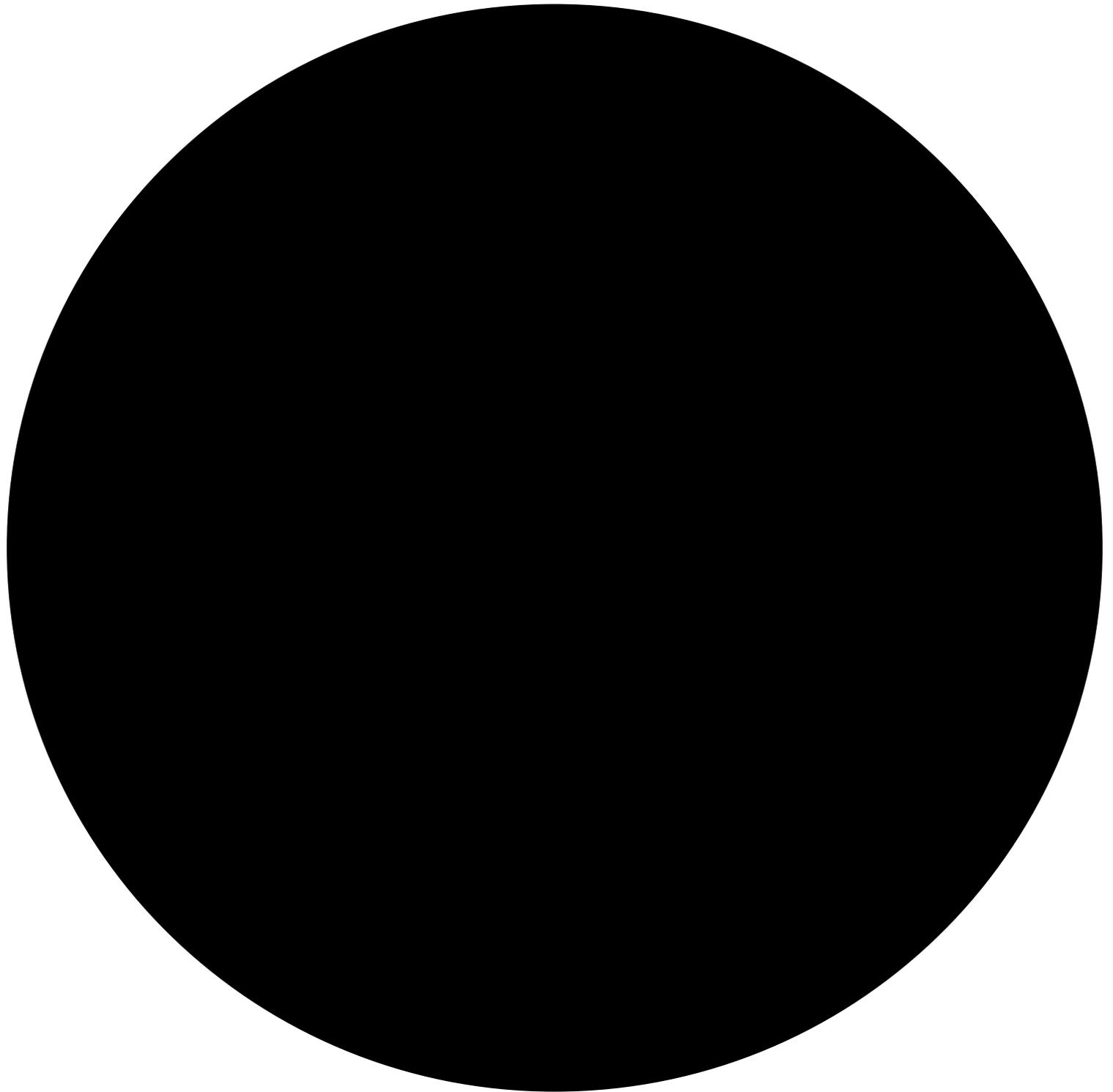


THE CITY OF CHILDREN

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"Children are leaving the center of Madrid" proclaims an [article](#) published this week and which echoes the data that shows how boys and girls are leaving the center of cities. Perhaps this phenomenon is caused by the price of housing in the center, by the transfer of this space to tourists or by the drop in the birth rate. But the reason for the exodus is not limited to the above. The peripheral neighborhoods are not only cheaper, but they are kinder for children to grow up.

In 1991 the term "The City of Children" was coined by Francesco Tonucci (Italian educator and cartoonist) to title his book "The City of Children: A New Way of Thinking the City" (Barcelona 1991). [La Città Dei Bambini](#) is today an international platform that has been calling for the creation of friendly spaces for children since the end of the last century in the cities. But Tonucci goes beyond creating play spaces in the city. It is proposed that they be the ones who create those spaces and design the city. As stated "[The new sociology of childhood](#)" (Satta, 2018), the children are active subjects; with conscience and own values; and with the ability to make decisions. They should not be seen as proto-adults, but rather as competent beings on their own. When planning cities, their voice has not been taken into account, not because they did not have an opinion, but because the needs of adults have been prioritized over theirs.

Urban planning conditions the functioning of the city and its inhabitants. To date, those who have planned cities have been men of productive age thinking about the needs of men of productive age. This has triggered in today's cities, zoned into production areas and rest areas connected by heavily motorized mobility.

The children's city proposes alternatives to this model, where girls and boys can exercise their right to play within the urban framework, without the need to be confined in parks or fenced children's areas. The city has to be planned in such a way that the neighborhoods become villages. That childhood can move and play without fear of being run over. That is why social cohesion and citizen cooperation in the care of children are crucial. That the streets and squares are known environments, where merchants and other frequent users of public space, such as the elderly, get to know their smaller neighbors and take care of them. In short, what is sought is that the city is for children.

There are no comments yet.