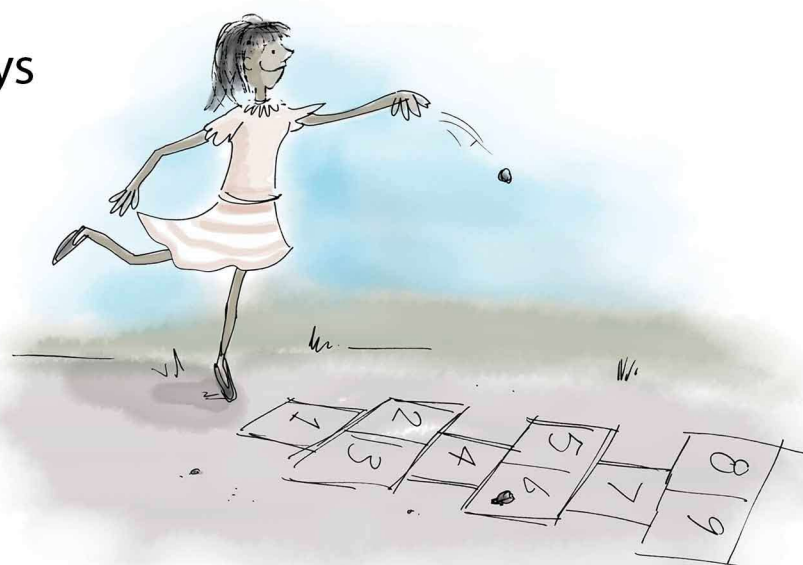


Life as a child Then and now

This activity uses memories of growing up in Cardiff to explore how children made their own fun in the past compared* to today.

You will read people's stories and learn how they made toys and games when they were young.

You will be asked to think about the things we throw away and how they could be reused* to make new things, like toys and games.



Did you know?

Many Victorian children would have been lucky to have toys.

They might have had simple things like skipping ropes and marbles.

Did you know?

Plastic toys were not made until the late Victorian period.

A lot of toys today are made with plastic.

Making toys and games.

Children in the past would use their imagination to make games and turn the things they found into toys.

Read the stories below:

1920s

Edward Kendrick remembers finding items to make his own go-carts:

"One had to obtain* a set of wheels from the local rubbish tip and after, a box in which you sat and steered with rope tied to the front wheels."

1970s

Alyson Hawkins remembers making toys and games:

"We created games all the time, which usually involved the entire main group of friends. We used to make lolly stick boomerangs, weaving different lolly sticks together.

We also made kites, from sticks and brown paper, with paper bows..."

2010s

Eliza, aged 7, tells us about her favourite toy:

"My favourite game is my Nintendo DS, because when you play the games you choose a character and you do stuff with them. You can play on your own or you can play against someone else."

Things from the Museum of Cardiff collection.

Here are some things that have been donated* to the Museum.

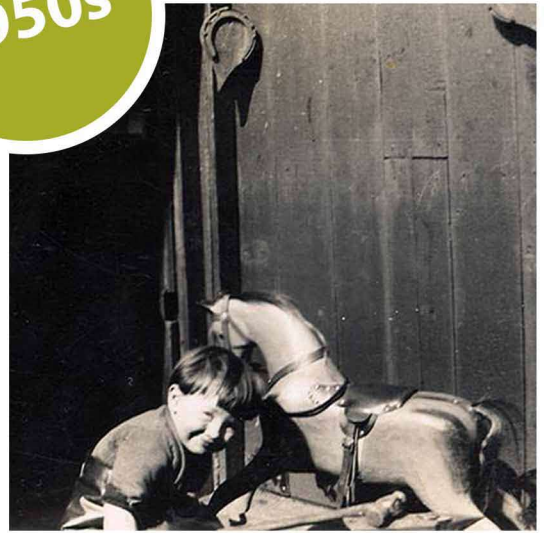
Which one of your toys would you donate and why?

1940s



Marian's father made this wooden marionette puppet in the 1940s.

1950s



Wally's grandfather made him this wooden horse in the 1950s.

1980s



This tricycle belonged to Ivor, who remembers riding it around his garden in the 1980s.

1990s



This SEGA Megadrive games console belonged to Jim. He remembers inviting friends to his house to play in the 1990s.

Make Do and Mend

The idea of 'Make Do and Mend' was first used by the government in the 1940s, to encourage people to repair, reuse and find new uses for their old clothes.

In the past, ready-made things were not easily available for most families to buy.

Families would repair their clothes and pass them down to younger members for them to be reused.



Children making wicker baskets in school.

© Archifau Morgannwg / Glamorgan Archives

Food, clothes and other items were rationed* during the Second World War.

Did you know?

There were no supermarkets in the UK until 1948.

Before that, families would have to go to individual shops, like the butchers and grocers, to get what they needed for their weekly shop.

Life as a child

Then and now

Glossary words*

- **Compared** - To look at more than one thing, to show the differences and the things that are alike about them. For example, this toy is blue compared to this toy, which is red.
- **Reused** - To use something again.
- **Obtain** - To get something.
- **Donated** - Something that is given, usually for free. For example, to a museum or charity.
- **Rationed** - When things that people need are shared out in small amounts. For example, some food and clothes were rationed during the Second World War to make sure that what was available was shared.

Activity: Making new things out of old things.

Ideas of 'Make Do and Mend' continued for a long time after the Second World War ended in 1945.

Some of these ideas can be used today, to reduce the waste we make and help us look after our planet.

Making new things out of old things.

1. Write a list of things you usually throw away.
2. Now think about how you could use these things to make something new, like a toy or game.
3. Draw a picture of it and write about how it will be used.

Things I throw away.

Drawing of my new thing.

How it will be used.

Fun outside.

Cardiff's parks and green spaces have been popular with children for a long time.

© Llyfrgelloedd Caerdydd / Cardiff Libraries



Children paddling in Roath Park brook, c.1900.



Children outside of school, c.1940s.

Philip Bristow remembers how there were seasons for different toys and games:

"We always seemed to be out of doors playing on the pavement or in the road. As the road was mostly empty of traffic there was plenty of room.

We had bat and ball, hoops, tops, marbles and games of hopscotch over chalk marks on the pavement.

There were seasons for most of these and, of course, conkers. These seasons came round almost unnoticed, but it was not done to play the wrong game out of season."

Now that you have explored how children played in the past, what do you think is different now and what is the same?

How do you think children will have fun in the future?