



# Online Focus Groups

Marie Hobson: Audience Research and Insight Manager @mchobson

# Urban Nature Project



# Target Audience



**Empower**

Enable people to make informed choices and take action to care for the planet

**Inform**

Share stories of the natural world that help people place themselves in the story of our planet

**Inspire**

Create relevant and memorable experiences that help people connect with nature

**Visitor Charter**

Provide a first-class experience for our global audience

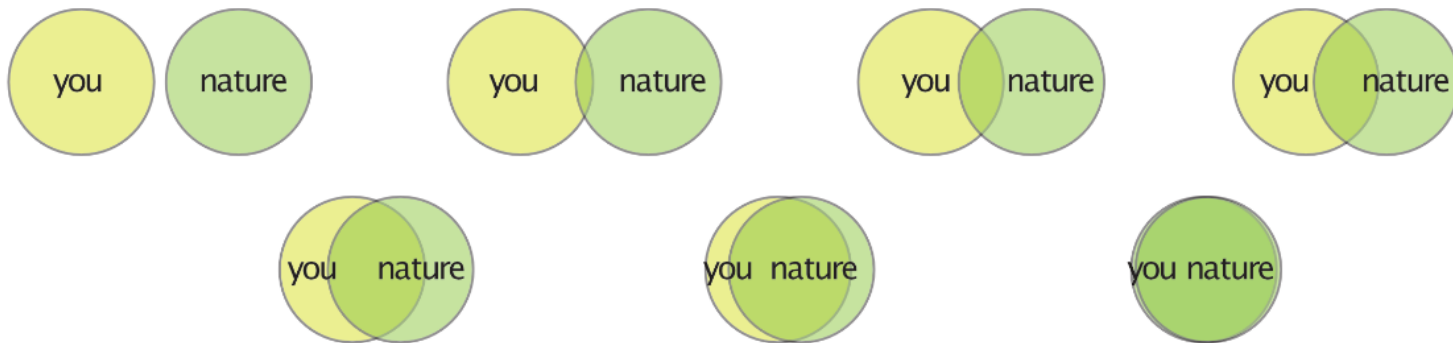
**People act on behalf of nature**

**People understand their role in nature and their impact on it**

**People feel connected to nature**

**Advocate  
for the  
planet**

Inspire	How did families engage with nature – how much time did they spend, what did they do, what prevented them spending more time in nature? How connected to nature did they feel?
Inform	How knowledgeable do they feel about nature? How confident do they feel about discussing nature? What would they like to find out more about? What impact do they think humans are having on the natural world? How concerned are they about the impact that humans are having?
Empower	What do they do to help nature, if anything? What stops them doing more?



# Recruitment

- 3 x focus groups
- On Microsoft Teams
- 15 parents (5 per focus group)
- £40 high street voucher
- Recruited via community gatekeepers with established communication with the Museum.

### Inspire

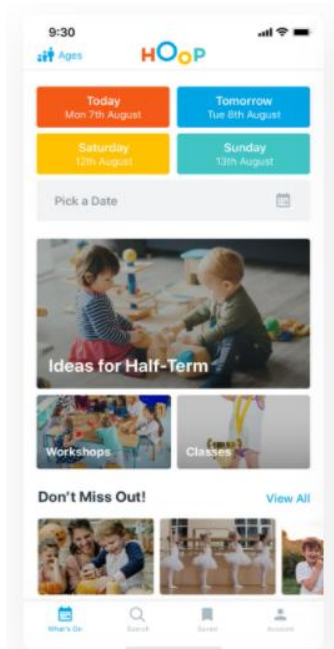
Create relevant and memorable experiences that help people connect with nature



- Families visit green space weekly to get fresh air and space – to play, do sports, run around.
- Families visit local parks regularly because they are free, close by and require little prior planning
- Barriers to spending more time in nature: weather, accessibility, cost, time
- Families do not associate their local park with nature-based activities or education
- Barriers to nature-based activities include lack of awareness and fear of insects!

### Inform

Share stories of the natural world that help people place themselves in the story of our planet



- Families tend to have little knowledge about the nature on their doorstep.
- They are more interested in finding information about what they can do in their local area, rather than about the species within their area
- Lack of interest and self-confessed laziness prevent parents from learning more about species in their local area



### **Empower**

Enable people to make informed choices and take action to care for the planet



- While some participants recognise the impact humans are having on the natural world, it is not something most are overly concerned about
- While the majority of parents do act in ways to help protect the natural world, these tend to be quite small, individual actions that do not impact upon lifestyle
- Feeling overwhelmed by the issue, feelings of laziness and needing action to fit into personal lifestyles are the main barriers which prevent participants from taking more action to protect the natural world

# Implementation

## **Repackage local urban nature:**

How can the Urban Nature Project help

- families appreciate the biodiversity of their local green space?
- families identify their local green space as an area which can offer unexpected educational and enjoyable benefits?
- reverse the negative stigma around insects and encourage more interaction with minibeasts?



If you are reading this then our plan is working!



Laila Yasmine Sophia Hanaa

We are a group of families who came to the Museum Gardens to do a workshop on minibeasts (another word for small creatures like insects, slugs and spiders).



Meriem Youcef Sara Mebarka

We had to sit on muddy picnic blankets and pick up insects! Suddenly, the whole group turned into minibeasts!



Adam Aya Djida



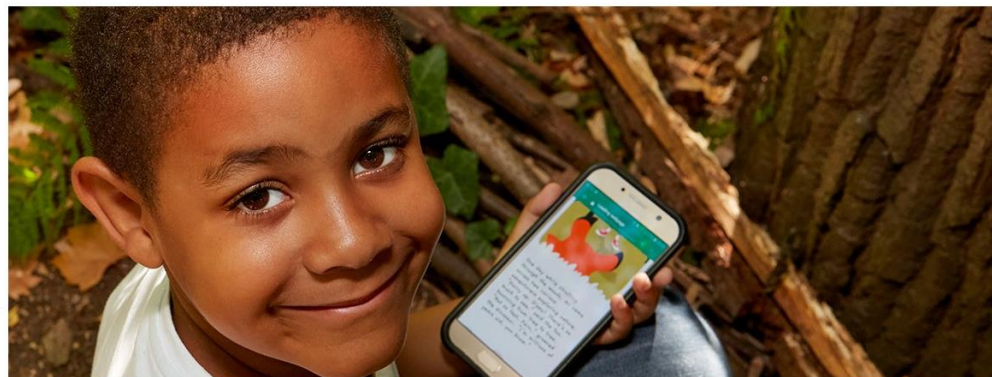
Woah, what's that? There's something moving near Number 2 on the map... let's go see...

# Implementation

## **Reframe nature-based activities**

How can the Urban Nature Project:

- help shift perceptions that nature-based activities are exclusively for educational organisations?
- parents engage their children in nature-based activities in their local green space and make families aware of these activities?
- increase parent confidence in discussing local biodiversity with their children?



## What games can I play?

### Tree safari

How many types of tree can you find? Build up a digital scrapbook of tree rubbings and explore their differences.



### Plant quest

Do you have a passion for plants? Use our handy guide to identify plants that you find along your way.



### Colour hunt

Wonder at the colours of nature. Red ladybirds, yellow buttercups - can you match the colour on your screen to your discoveries?



### Feathered friends

Keep your ears open! Track down birds in the wild, then identify them by matching their songs to the way they look.



# Implementation

- **Consider how environmental-related topics could be integrated into nature-based activities:** Families seem to think that positive action toward the natural world either requires a dramatic change of lifestyle and effort or is beyond the help of individual action.
- **How can the Urban Nature Project help families engage more with sustainable action and environmental-related topics and show any action as positive and beneficial, both for people and wildlife?**



ANTHROPOCENE

## What you can do to help the planet: an illustrated guide



# Prior to the focus group

- Assign two different facilitators with clearly defined roles.
- Practise!
- Create a focused, streamlined topic guide
- Keep it short
- Help your participants prepare
  - Remind them on the day!
  - Ask them to join 5 mins early



# Safeguarding

- Tell participants to log in using an avatar or pseudonym
- Camera optional
- Screenshots
- If wanting to record the session, make it clear what you are recording (i.e. video, voice, chat) and how it will be used, stored and disposed of
- Be aware what is in your background

# At the start

- Introduce the platform as well as the focus group
  - Use Speaker View where possible to reduce fatigue
  - Look at the camera
  - Mute their microphones when not speaking
  - Use the chat to post comments and thoughts
  - Can turn off their video if connection poor or it would make them feel more comfortable
  - Blur or change their background
  - Use reaction buttons
  - Any access functions of the platform e.g. closed captions in Teams

# During the focus group

- Ensure everyone gets a chance to speak
  - Invite by name
  - Hand up
  - Watching reactions
  - Respond to chat
  - Participants to nominate next person
- Have a break!
- Mix it up
  - Polls
  - Whiteboard
  - Chat
  - Reactions



FOCUS groups are great

How often do you spend in ... in Progress 0:10

Attendees are now viewing questions 0 of 0 (0%) voted

1. How often do you spend in nature?

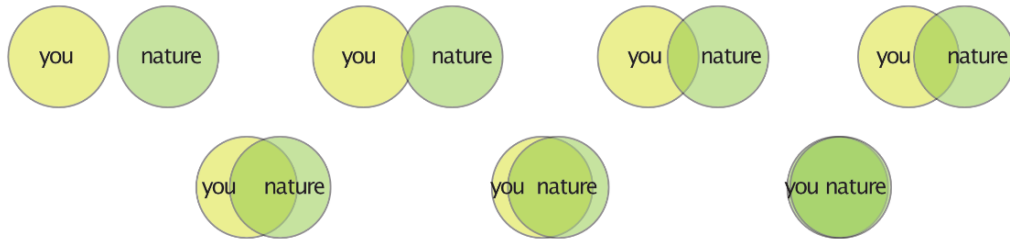
Daily (0) 0%

Weekly (0) 0%

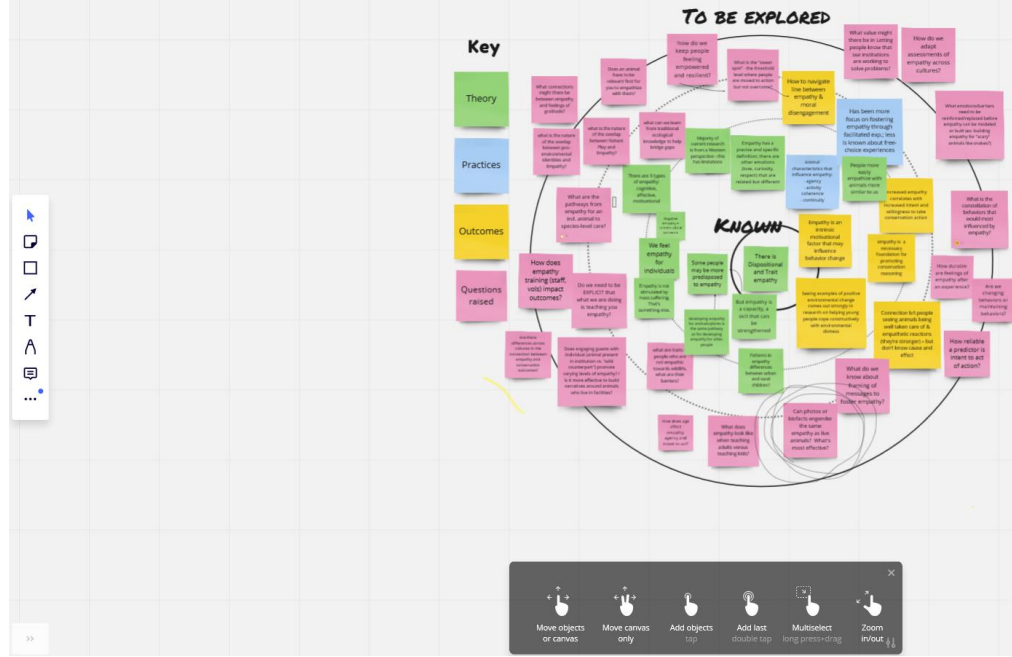
Fortnightly (0) 0%

Monthly (0) 0%

Less frequently (0) 0%



Your browser's zoom level is not set to 100%, which may cause the board to display incorrectly.



# What are the advantages of online focus groups?

- Reach
- Accessibility
- Cost
- Recording
- Ease and speed

# What are the disadvantages of online focus groups?

- Reach
- Depth of information
- Level of experience with the tech
- Range of devices
- Internet stability
- Distractions
- Time
- Rapport
- Safeguarding

# Conclusion

- Online focus groups are not as good as face to face ones
- If possible, conduct in-depth interviews!