

# AllofUs.com

<http://www.carlosmarin.net/allofus/home.html>

## **Target Group**

Being a parent is an expensive, demanding, and absolutely wonderful experience. To lower the expense many parents share resources such as clothes, toys, and equipment. This is possible because children rarely wear any of these items down before they outgrow or lose interest in them. Many parents also share advice and learn from collective experience to ease the burden on each individual parent. This is especially true for first time parents. They usually begin their parenthood with limited resources and experience and are therefore eager to build a community with other parents in which they can share these.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of AllofUs.com is to connect parents in specific geographic areas with other parents and allow them to form a community in which they can share experiences and resources for raising children.

## **Research Methods and Findings**

### ***Interviews***

One of the research methods used to gather data for the design of the site was a series of interviews of parents. We interviewed five participants whose input helped us define some central ideas in our design. A main concern expressed by the parents was regarding sharing personal information. All the participants felt strongly that none of their children's personal information, including pictures, should be shared on the site.

When asked if whether they would use an online tool for sharing baby clothes, the parents in this study generally expressed support for the concept. For example, one of the participants' reasons to use a site like AllofUs.com was that she already is sharing baby clothes with friends and relatives and that she would enjoy the practicality and community aspect of it.

Many of the participants think that creating a site where parents can share experiences in an open forum would be very helpful to build community. As a result, the main focus in AllofUs.com is to connect parents in specific geographic areas with other parents and allow them to form a community in which they can share experiences and resources for raising children.

### ***Competitive Analysis***

A comparative study of three prominent websites which allow its users to share clothes and other items was done with the aim of understanding their unique attributes

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whilst understanding their key metrics. The websites Zwaggle.com, Thredup.com and closetswap.co.uk provide a platform and process which enable their users to share used items. Each of these three websites approaches the task in different ways. While Zwaggle.com aims at being a one stop shop for sharing a lot of different used baby items, Thredup.com focused primarily on sharing baby clothes, toys, and books. Closetswap is a website dedicated to sharing just used clothes among close friends.

A common theme which we found in all three websites was that they embraced social networking, albeit in different ways. The metrics used for comparison included metrics covering usage, discover-ability, work flow and user interface. We studied each of the three websites as a registered user on the following 9 metrics:

### *1. User Registration*

Thredup and Zwaggle websites require user registration; however Thredup has a more simplified registration. Closetswap uses Facebook as its sign in mechanism. This seemed a good idea in their context, since it gave their website instant access to the user's social circle while satisfying the requirements of user authentication and identification. Thredup.com also allowed login to their website using Facebook credentials.

### *2. Registration Process*

Thredup and Zwaggle need users addresses for exchanging clothes, while ClosetSwap doesn't because it aims at clothes swapping amongst known friends in Facebook. Thredup needs users addresses for its concierge's services which are used for shipping used clothes. Zwaggle on the other hand needs users' addresses for printing prepaid shipping labels.

### *3. Social Appeal:*

All three websites use social networking in different ways. Closet swap is more tightly integrated with Facebook because of their login mechanism. Thredup however seems to be very popular amongst Facebook users with 35, 658 'likes.' Thredup also have their own Facebook page, which also serves as a platform for letting users interact.

### *4. How it works – Where and how does the website explain its process?*

Explaining how the website works in a simple and straight forward manner is important for encouraging new users' registration. While all websites have dedicated pages explaining their process in detail, closet swap and Thredup explain their process in the landing page in simple language with illustrations. Zwaggle however has two dedicated links: One for a video explaining their process and other for a page with detailed explanation.

### *5. Number of sharing categories*

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Thredup provides three primary categories – baby clothes, toys and books, while allowing sharing of other items. While closetswap allows sharing of used clothes, Zwaggle offers a large number of categories for users to classify the product they want to share or sell.

### 6. “Why?” Does the website explain their cause?

Thredup offers a three concise points to explain their cause. While Zwaggle cites research data to convince the user, closetswap elaborates that their aim is sustainable fashion.

### 7. Community engagement – How does the website bring its community together?

All websites try to engage their users in some way. Facebook is the preferred platform for Thredup and closetswap. Thredup has a ‘daily debate’ where its users engage in discussions on Facebook groups. Zwaggle allows its users to join Zwaggle groups for discussions.

### 8. How do members trade their stuff?

In Thredup members sell and buy in terms of boxes. Each box can contain up to 10 items. Boxes can be shipped directly to participating caregivers or can be sent using Thredup concierge service. The amount of money associated with a box that is sold is dependent on the rating it gets. The amount is limited to \$10 for boxes sent directly and \$5 for boxes sent using concierge service.

In Zwaggle, Members post their products on a board where they associate a ‘Zoints’ value. This is a virtual currency used in the website. Zoints can be earned (by joining, referring and purchasing using money). Items are exchanged for Zoints. Members have options of DO (drop off), PU (Pick up) or RP (recipient pays) for delivery.

Members are Facebook friends in closetswap. No trading or bartering involved. Members upload picture and share their closet. Also members can look at friend’s closets to checkout clothes.

### 9. How are members recognized?

In Thredup members are peer rated and earn points for sharing clothes. They can also be favorites by others. Zwaggle does not have a peer recognition system. In closetswap, members are recognized in friend’s circles through Kudos, ‘most loved’ and ‘most swapped’ recognitions.

## **Academic Research**

The academic research was performed by all members of the project group covering three specific focus areas:

- Privacy Issues in the SNS Realm
- Online Community Building

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- Social Context in Recommender Systems

The research consisted of identifying and reviewing academic, peer-reviewed papers and conference proceedings pertaining to each focus area so that the group could incorporate the latest research findings into the design of AllOfUs.com. A minimum of eight sources were identified and reviewed for each focus area, however, some sources were given more weight than others based on relevancy.

### *Privacy Issues in the SNS Realm*

Two grounding publications guided most of our decisions: on the one hand, Barnes [0] argues that the boundaries between what is private and public in SNS are becoming fuzzy and proposes solutions such as posting safety adds and giving members tighter visibility controls. This last solution, however, conflicts with other studies [1] because of the competing pressures for disclosure. Burt [2], on the other hand, concludes that, as a matter of fact, distrust is more likely within weak relationships, and trust is more likely within strong, positive relationships; which lead us to the creation of spaces allowing for such differentiations.

### *Online Community Building*

The author Lijun Tang [9] explores the relationship between online friendship and the social spaces where they are formed. The study focus on the Home of Chinese Seafarers (HCS), a community of seafarer-wives and seafarers' girlfriends, and their interactions in a discussion website, instant messaging (QQ) and offline space. The author finds that the progression of friendships from online, to QQ and offline is related to the advancement and complexity of friendship amongst the seafarers' partners. Also, the progression results in spatial expansion where the friendship covers more social spaces.

In the context of our research for "hand me down clothes," building trust amongst our online community is important to facilitate sharing. Trust is established as friendships progress from relative simple online experience to more complicated messaging and offline experience. Thus our community will benefit if our platform provides a channel for the participants to engage in online, messaging and offline friendships progressively.

The authors Sorin Matei and Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach [10] study online and offline social ties in seven Los Angeles ethnically marked residential areas. The study includes a wide array of ethnic groups living in an urban setting. A belonging index score is derived from interaction in real communities to test the above assertion. They obtain multilingual data from a telephone survey of urban residents, which include a large number of ethnic minorities and new immigrants. The results of the survey suggest that for every unit increase in belonging index, the chances of making friend online are augmented by 7%. They thus reason that the

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people's basic community orientation is equally strong both online and offline. The results also indicate that the greater the number of neighbors with whom one can talk about a personal problem, the greater the likelihood of making friends online. For each extra person made known this way, there is a 32% increase in chance for making friends online. Our project's target audience inherently belongs to the "parents" community. Thus we can infer that their sense of belonging will in turn help them to interact and make new online friends, thereby facilitating offline events like play dates, parents get-together.

As mentioned earlier, one of the objectives of AllOfUs.com is to form a community where parents can share resources and experiences when raising children. We thought that in order to promote online community building we should incorporate a Computer Supported Collaborative Work system in our design such as an online "café forum" where parents can socialize with each other. Logging into the forum would grant parents to post and answer questions regarding any type of concerns related to their children. We thought that allowing parents to post not only questions related to sharing clothes but family and child oriented questions would increase the engagement with the site. As a result, parents would visit the site for socializing and gaining parenthood knowledge rather than just for trading clothes.

Through our research we discovered a new concept called "*Network Community*." According to the article *Network Communities: Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed* [5], these communities are characterized by the use of technology and social networks to work together. Some of the characteristics of these *Network Communities* consist of being dynamic and always under development, "they require constant processes of production, reproduction, and evolution." We thought that building a forum will help engage parents into a dynamic pattern of socialization where the diversity of topics of the forum might derive into future feature additions in the site such as chat rooms. Again the CSCW would help to keep users coming back to the site.

### *Social Context in Recommender Systems*

A key component of AllOfUs.com is the ability to search for and have items recommended that are of interest to the user and available within the user's network. Much academic research has this focus, which enabled us to discover various aspects that have become central to the design of the site and its functionality.

One aspect is the use of user profiles and social networks to improve upon the quality of product recommendations presented to the user. Incorporating this social focus into recommendations is intended to bring the recommender system functionality closer to matching the psychology behind human process of advice seeking and decision-making. A central component to this process is trust, which according to Bonhard and Sasse [6] occurs when the advice-seeking user is able to determine profile similarity and taste overlap between themselves and others. To this extent, Bonhard and Sasse [6] emphasize the

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importance of profile similarity visualizations for an advice seeker to judge the validity and appropriateness of a recommendation.

Social ties and their strength is another aspect that research has examined in the context of recommender systems. Social ties by themselves have not been found to be effective in terms of recommendation performance, which exposed a need to incorporate further human behavioral theory. Arazy et al [7] conducted an empirical study in which they examined cognitive homophily, trustworthiness and tie strength in the context of an advice-seeker's willingness to accept a recommendation. When homophily is given as the baseline, the addition of competence and benevolence have the largest impact on an advice seeker's willingness to accept a recommendation. Competence, benevolence, and closeness have been found to positively influence willingness to accept advice but competency more so [7]. Tie strength, in and of itself, does therefore not have substantial impact on an advice seeker's willingness to accept a recommendation.

Another aspect is social context as it pertains to search algorithm performance. In this area it has been hypothesized that the opinion of close friends on similar search topics will result in more accurate results. Shapira and Zabar [8] examined search performance measured in precision and precision-recall as a function of similarity query threshold, friend net, merging method, search engine weight, and topic and found that similarity threshold of users has a significant effect on precision whereas friend net only has a smaller effect, yet still positive. This correlates with the findings of Bonhard and Sasse as well as Azary et al even though their focus was on recommendation vs. search.

Our findings relate to our project in terms of defining how the site should recommend users to connect with other users and allow for search of items to exchange. Whereas existing social ties are important, similarity between users should be emphasized to generate good recommendations. Basically, whether or not the goods presented to a user are of interest depends more on similarity between users than of social connection even though the social connection is of importance as well.

## Design Decisions

### ***Community Building***

The goal for AllOfUs.com is to connect parents to allow them to build a community in which they can share resources and experiences pertaining to raising children. The central tenet is community. A key design decision was therefore to make AllOfUs.com specific to certain urban areas. Upon registration the user will be prompted for his or her zip code, which determines which urban area the user belongs to. The network for a user registering in Chicago will therefore be different from a user in San Francisco. The reasoning behind this is to place AllOfUs.com in a social context that allows for extension offline. This will allow

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the users to physically meet if so desired and it also allows for exchange of goods without shipping, keeping them free of monetary motivation.

Community building assumes trust, which monetary incentives contradict. Instead the transactions are based on kudos points where each transaction involves one point regardless of the item. The user giving the item away receives the point from the other user. This restricts new users to first giving items to their community before they can get items from it. The terminology for giving on the site is sharing and borrowing for receiving to again emphasize the participatory aspect of community membership.

### **Parents Café**

The Parents Café is a forum that is embedded within AllOfUs.com and will for many users serve as the access-point to the community. Where the rest of the site is invitation only, Parents Café is accessible for everyone who wishes to register. This will allow new users that wish to become part of the community an opportunity to connect with existing users and obtain the needed invitation. The Parents Café is an important piece of the community building as this is the part of the site in which users can share experiences and knowledge with one another regarding their lives as parents. Some users might choose to only use this forum component of the site if they do not desire to exchange material resources with the AllOfUs.com community. Several of our interviewees already participate in similar online forums that only have the forum feature.

We decided to use the concept of “*Network Community*” learned from the article *Network Communities: Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed* [5], these communities are characterized by the use of technology and the social to work together. Some of the characteristics of these *Network Communities* consist of being dynamic and always under development. We thought that building the *Parents Café* will help to engage parents into a dynamic pattern of socialization where the diversity of topics of the forum might derive into future feature additions in the site such as chat rooms. Based on Sorai and Sandra study on Real and virtual ties [10], we believe that the more the numbers of issues, the user discusses, the greater there is chance of making friends within our AllOfUs. We hope to facilitate and encourage this sense of belonging within users by helping them to develop more offline meet-ups within their local community.

### **Modes of Communication**

AllOfUs.com contains three modes of computer-mediated communication between its users. One such mode is the Parents Café forum where users can send one-to-many, asynchronous messages containing text, emoticons, and images. Another is personal messages, which can be sent between two users to coordinate meet-ups to exchange items. Personal messages are one-to-one asynchronous messages and limited to text only. Personal messaging is therefore a lean mode of communication as it is intended for use to coordinate and encourage offline meet-ups. The third mode supports the relation between strong ties and trust defined by Burt [2], which we designed through private groups only available to registered users. In this case, users can send one-to-many, asynchronous

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messages targeted to a number of users who have something in common, whether it is a play group, a school, or a neighborhood.

Based on Lijn Tang[9] Offline friendships are more satisfying because they involve material support and physical companionship. While online social space makes it easier for individuals to identify and make friends, offline settings facilitate friendship development. We have provided these different modes of communication - online forum, private group messaging to engage users in multiple social spaces thereby helping them to develop friendships progressively.

### ***Profile View***

User profiles on AllOfUs.com are only accessible for viewing by users who have joined the community by invitation of another user. However, once a user has joined all user profiles within the community are accessible for viewing. The gesture of inviting indicates trust. The profile itself contains a visualization of the user's family configuration, which is intended to allow for visualization of profile similarity whose importance was emphasized by Bonhard and Sasse [6]. In addition to this, the profile view contains a specification of how long the user has been part of the community, how many kudos points the user currently has, and a high level geographic proximity indicator. These data point exist to indicate trustworthiness whose importance was emphasized by Arazy et al [7].

### ***Timeline***

AllOfUs.com has a feature called timeline, which shows the item that is up for exchange and how it has been used before. By viewing an item in the timeline view, a user can see who has been in possession of the item before and a picture of the item at the time. The timeline feature was designed to help form community as well as support the local, environmentally-friendly focus of many urban parents.

### ***Privacy***

Privacy is a key aspect for many parents, which creates a dichotomy between the open community concept and the safety of their children. With this in mind we designed AllOfUs.com to be zip code focused so no user has to give her address to others unless she chooses to. The zip code of each individual user is not displayed but is used by the site to identify which network a user belongs to and for recommendations. Users can coordinate meet-ups to exchange items wherever they feel comfortable. They can invite other users to their home or choose to meet in a public place. Another privacy feature is the ability to form private groups within one's network for sharing resources. This is intended for users to form smaller groups based on groups already formed offline. We envision this to be used by, for example, an existing Program for Early Parent Support (PEPS) group or similar groups to share resources with a community they already trust.

### **Interaction Model**

Burt's [2] relation of trust and strong ties directed much of our design; the idea was also fostered by interviews that reflected the willingness to share clothes among relatives. In

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order to reflect this relationship we clearly defined spaces based on their public and private visibility such as public forums and private messages. Moreover, we established procedures to ease the transition between public and private spaces with specific designs, such as the possibility to send a private message to the writer of a public post.

Initially, anonymous users can surf the forum and view what items are available, which does not interfere with activities carried out by registered users. However, should they want to get in touch with our users, borrow clothes or lend items, they will have to register. This way, we expect to add legitimacy to the application and increase the sense of belonging [10], not to mention that registered users get a series of advantages such a tag cloud of items available near them.

Our research also pointed out that parents have hubs (preparatory schools, kindergartens, parks, family reunions, etc.) where they get in touch with other parents. These spaces can be recreated online through the use of private groups.

Much of the literature on MySpace and Facebook [0, 3] mentions that their users have low trust expectations, although we consider that our target users have radically different expectations because of being part of a different demographic and because our interviews confirmed the need for trust. Following the essential aspect of privacy and trust in SNS, we took decisions based on signaling theory [4], providing benefits such as inexpensive clothing and opportunities for socializing while requiring as little private information as possible. One of such decisions is the use of the ZIP code instead of the address when it comes make local searches which, we argue, makes the registration process clear and trustworthy.

During the ideation stage, we realized that some users may abuse the system by borrowing several items and never lending them. In order to prevent such behavior we introduced the aforementioned tools to create a sense of community. Additionally, this sense is reinforced by a time line of your current items where you can clearly see that you received items because people shared them. Not to mention the gamification of the sharing process, where users sharing items receive credit in the form of kudos. The number of kudos is visible so that the users can decide whether or not to lend an item to someone based on their sharing behavior.

## Conclusion

Designing AlLOfUs.com has contributed to our understanding of how to follow the user centered design process when creating a CSCW system. Our research methods consisted of interviews, competitive analysis and academic research. Each of the methods provided valuable data to assist the design process. For example, security concerns and suggestions for the design of the application were gathered during the interview process. In addition, a competitive analysis of other sites concluded that the concept of building community is not adequately represented in the existing sites that affords sharing of resources for raising children.

The data obtained through exploring several academic research papers support our concept

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of building a site to promote online community building as a central concept. We now have more clear ideas on how to tackle the underlying complexity in CSCW in specific areas such as privacy, community building, and social context. We believe that AllOfUs.com fulfills user needs that are not being met by competing sites because of the research based process.

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### Appendix

#### Interviews

##### User 1

1. *We are developing a tool for parents to share babies clothes. Would you use a tool like this? Why?*

She totally agreed, reasons included the fact that she's already sharing baby clothes with friends and relatives, she thinks it's practical (saves time & money!), and would enjoy the community part of it.

2. *For how long would you willing to share clothes (age of children)*

(Laughing) Until her child demands brands, maybe at 7.

3. *What information are you willing to share?*

Depends, she'll be very confident to share almost anything if she can choose who to share it with, but in public she'll only share her user name and, maybe, pictures. Wouldn't mind her post are public too.

##### User 2

1. *We are developing a tool for parents to share babies clothes. Would you use a too like this? Why?*

Not sure, on the one hand she's already in touch with close relatives and she exchanges clothes with them, but in the case one of them lived far away she may be interested. Not so interested in sharing with unknown people.

2. *For how long would you willing to share clothes (age of children)*

Probably just the first 2 years, when they grow faster.

3. *What information are you willing to share?*

None about her children, little about her, she agrees on user name and zip code, but she emphasizes the possibility of entering as little info as possible.

##### User 3

1. *We are developing a tool for parents to share babies clothes. Would you use a too like this? Why?*

I would use a tool like this if I did not already share kids clothes and other kids stuff with my family. If my family was living outside of driving distance or did not have other children this age, then I would definitely look to share resources in my local community.

2. *For how long would you willing to share clothes (age of children)*

Until my kid is old enough to not wanting to wear hand-me-down. I would think 8-9 years old.

3. *What information are you willing to share?*

My approximate location, gender of my child, and clothing sizes. I would also be willing to share experiences and advice in a forum associated with the site. I participate in other forums and greatly enjoy it.

##### User 4

1. *We are developing a tool for parents to share babies clothes. Would you use a too like this? Why?*

Yes, of course. It's a great tool to have. Buying new clothes has always been expensive.

2. *For how long would you willing to share clothes (age of children)?*

Using old clothes will probably be limited till my kid does not realize that he is wearing used clothes. Once he knows it, I might have to ask him before using or sharing . I don't see a limit to sharing old clothes as long as it is hassle free.

3. *What information are you willing to share?*

I would be reluctant to share personally identifiable information like name of my kid or his birthday

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etc. Vague numbers like age in months or years are shareable.

### 4. What other things would you like to share or exchange?

Toys, used books, baby furniture including (also diaper genie, crib mobile, baby monitor etc.), unused baby items (which are new like unused diapers etc.)

### User 5

#### 1. We are developing a tool for parents to share babies clothes. Would you use a tool like this? Why?

Yes, I will use it only if my friends are also there. Basically I won't take clothes from random people. I can take clothes from people I know. Because babies are sensitive.

#### 2. For how long would you willing to share clothes (age of children)?

It depends on the child. Until the child others clothes. Maybe 5 years. Giving is not a problem.

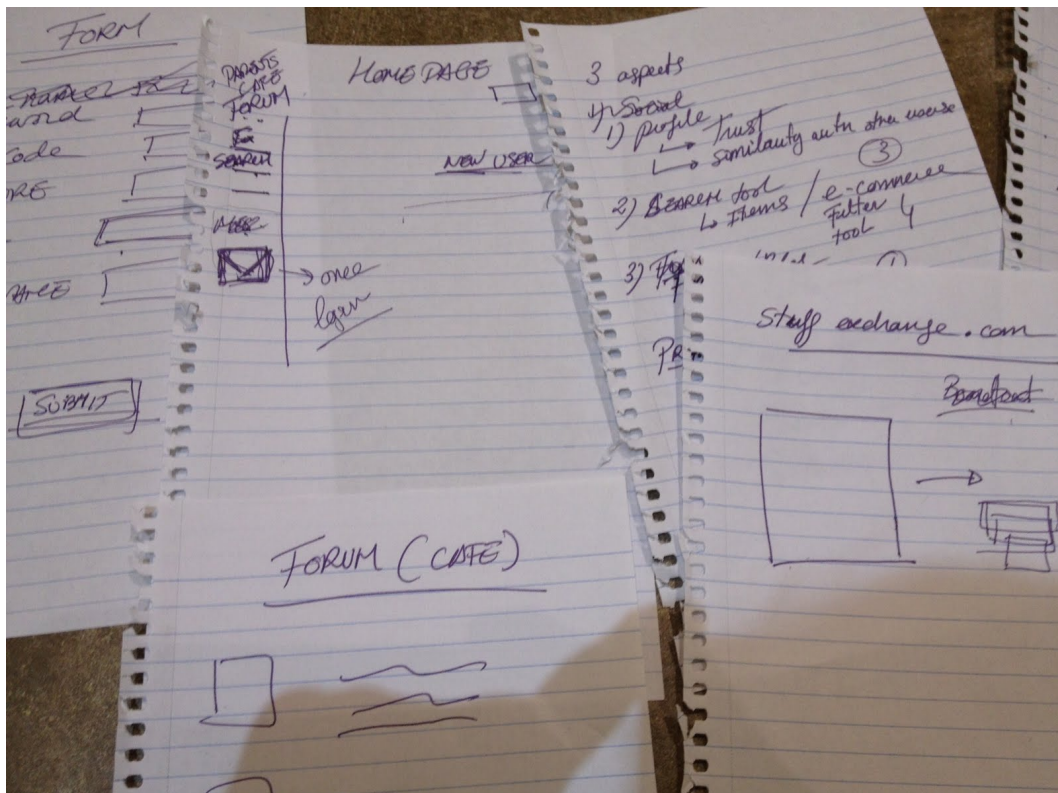
#### 3. What information are you willing to share?

Birthday might not be relevant. I can share details about clothes. Clothes are generally old. Height, weight of baby is fine. In fact size of the dresses that I am looking for or sharing is shareable.

#### 4. What other things would you like to share or exchange?

I think so. We can share toys and furniture. I am ok with receiving toys and furniture.

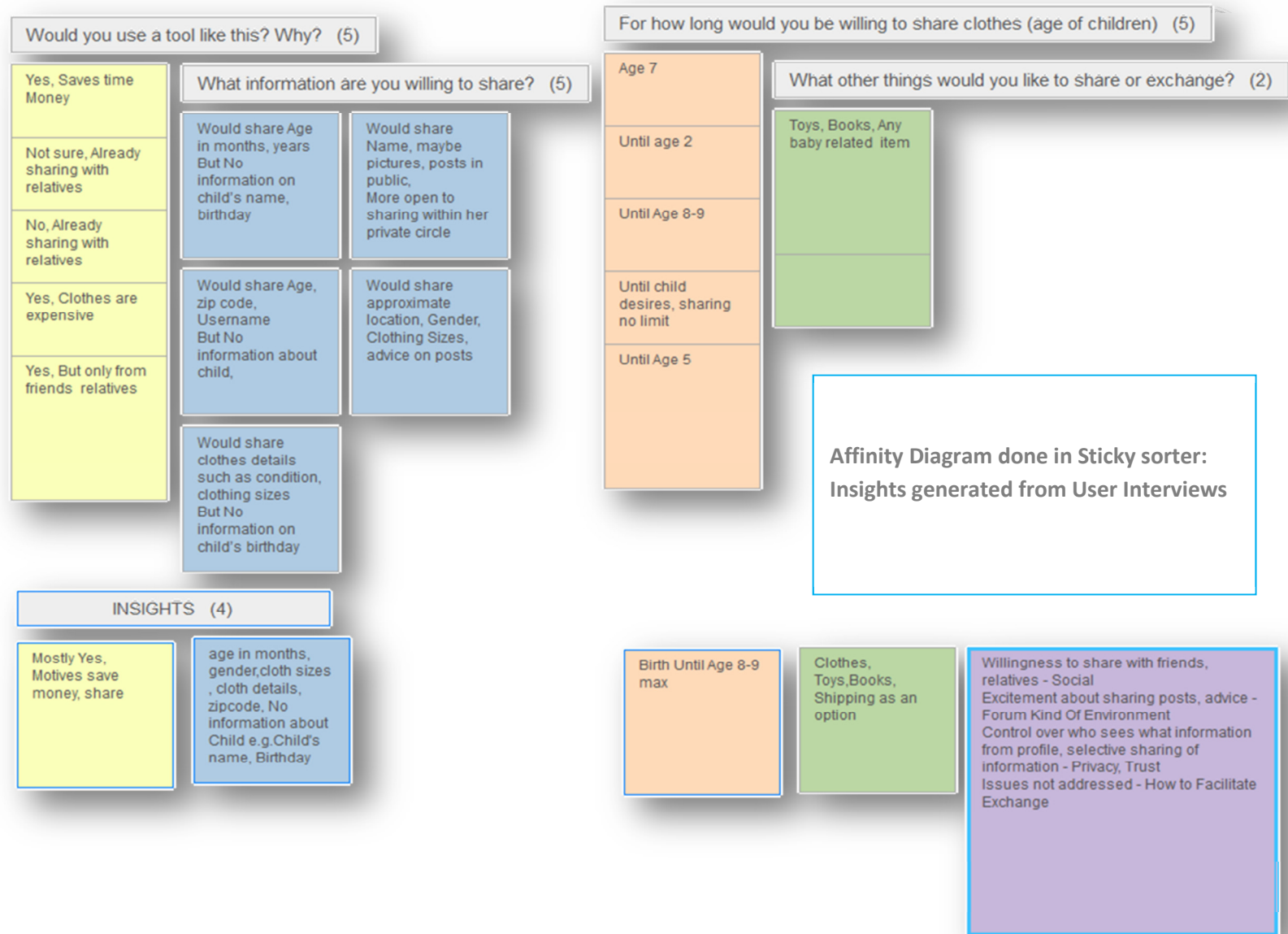
## Paper prototype



## Appendix

Interviews	User A	User B	User C	User D	User E
<b>We are developing a tool for parents to share baby's clothes. Would you use a tool like this? Why?</b>	She totally agreed, reasons included the fact that she's already sharing baby clothes with friends and relatives, she thinks its practical (saves time & money!), and would enjoy the community part of it.	Not sure, on the one hand she's already in touch with close relatives and she exchanges clothes with them, but in the case one of them lived far away she may be interested. Not so interested in sharing with unknown people.	I would use a tool like this if I did not already share kid's clothes and other kids' stuff with my family. If my family was living outside of driving distance or did not have other children this age, then I would definitely look to share resources in my local community.	Yes, of course. It's a great tool to have. Buying new clothes has always been expensive.	Yes, I will use it only if my friends are also there. Basically I won't take clothes from random people. I can take clothes from people I know. Because babies are sensitive.
<b>Insight:</b> Willingness or General excitement about Sharing	<i>Yes, Saves time &amp; Money</i>	<i>Not sure, Already sharing with relatives</i>	<i>No, Already sharing with relatives</i>	<i>Yes, Clothes are expensive</i>	<i>Yes, But only from friends relatives</i>
<b>For how long would you willing to share clothes (age of children)</b>	(Laughing) Until her child demands brands, maybe at 7.	Probably just the first 2 years, when they grow faster.	Until my kid is old enough to not wanting to wear hand-me-down. I would think 8-9 years old.	Using old clothes will probably be limited till my kid does not realize that he is wearing used clothes. Once he knows it, I might have to ask him before using or sharing. I don't see a limit to sharing old clothes as long as it is hassle free.	It depends on the child. Un till the child others clothes. Maybe 5 years. Giving is not a problem.
<b>Insight:</b> Guidelines for age limit	<i>Age 7</i>	<i>Until age 2</i>	<i>Until Age 8-9</i>	<i>Until child desires, sharing no limit</i>	<i>Until Age 5</i>
<b>What information are you willing to share?</b>	Depends, she'll be very confident to share almost anything if she can choose who to share it with, but in public she'll only share her user name and, maybe, pictures. Wouldn't mind her posts are public too.	None about her children, little about her, she agrees on user name and zip code, but she emphasizes the possibility of entering as little info as possible.	My approximate location, gender of my child, and clothing sizes. I would also be willing to share experiences and advice in a forum associated with the site. I participate in other forums and greatly enjoy it.	I would be reluctant to share personally identifiable information like name of my kid or his birthday etc. Vague numbers like age in months or years are shareable.	Birthday might not be relevant. I can share details about clothes. Clothes are generally old. Height, weight of baby is fine. In fact size of the dresses that I am looking for or sharing is shareable.
<b>Insight:</b> Issues of Privacy Trust	<i>Would share username, maybe pictures, posts in public, More open to sharing within her private circle</i>	<i>Would share Age, zip code, Username <u>But No information about child,</u></i>	<i>Would share approximate location, Gender, Clothing Sizes, advice on posts</i>	<i>Would share Age in months, years <u>But No information on child's name, birthday</u></i>	<i>Would share clothes details such as condition, clothing sizes <u>But No information on child's birthday</u></i>
<b>What other things would you like to share or exchange?</b>				Toys, used books, baby furniture including (also diaper genie, crib mobile, baby monitor etc.), unused baby items (which are new like unused diapers etc.)	I think so. We can share toys and furniture. I am ok with receiving toys and furniture.
<b>Insight:</b> Guidelines for Items to include/exclude				<i>Toys, Books, Any baby related item</i>	<i>Toys, Furniture</i>

Appendix



## Appendix

Competitive Analysis	Thredup	Zwaggle	Closet swap	Comments
<b>User Registration – Does the website need registration?</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Both Thredup and Zwaggle the websites require user registration; however Thredup has a more simplified registration. Closet swap on the other uses Facebook as its sign in mechanism, which in their context (sharing between friends) seems to be good idea.
<b>Registration Process – How does the registration process look?</b>	Needs address and phone number to send boxes for clothes, toys and books	Zwaggle needs address for print prepaid mailing labels.	None	Both Thredup and Zwaggle needs users address for exchanging clothes, while ClosetSwap doesn't because it encourages swapping amongst known friends in Facebook.
<b>Social Appeal – How does the website integrate with social networking sites?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Closet swap is more tightly integrated with Facebook because of their login mechanism. Thredup however seems to be very popular amongst Facebook users with 35, 658 likes
<b>How it works – Where and how does the website explain their process?</b>	Explained on landing page and also on dedicated sub page	Explained in sub-page whose link is provided in landing page? Landing page also has a link to video explaining how Zwaggle works	Explain in landing page	Both closet swap and Thredup explain their process in the landing page in simple language and illustrations. Zwaggle however has two links. One for a video and other for a page with detailed explanation.
<b>Categories – How many categories does the website provide for users classify their product?</b>	3 (Clothes, Toys, Books)	Many	1	Zwaggle seems to offer a large number of categories for users to classify the product they want to share
<b>“Why “? Does the website explain their cause?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Thredup offers concise to explain their cause. While Zwaggle cites research data to convince the user. Closetswap elaborates that their aim is sustainable fashion.
<b>Community engagement – How does the website bring its community together?</b>	Facebook groups – Daily debate	Zwaggle groups	Facebook friends	All website try to engage their users in some way. Facebook seems to be a preferred platform.
<b>How do members trade their stuff?</b>	Members sell and buy in terms of boxes. Each box can contain up to 10 items. Boxes can be shipped directly to participating Moms or send using Thredup concierge service. The amount of money associate with a box that is sold is dependent on the rating it gets. The amount is limited to \$10 for boxes sent directly and \$5 for boxes sent using concierge service.	Members post their product on a board where they associate a 'Zoints' value. This is a virtual currency used in the website. Zoints can be earned (by joining, referring and purchasing using money). Items are exchange for Zoints. Members have options of DO (drop off), PU (Pick up) or RP (recipient pays) for delivery.	Members are friends in Facebook who exchange clothes. No trading or bartering involved. Members upload picture and share their closet. Also members can look at friend's closets to checkout clothes.	Thredup offers a platform for parents to buy and sell in fixed quantity (\$9 buy/ \$10 sell). They provide a way for the community to do this easily (without the hassle of shipping) through their concierge service. Zwaggle has a Zoints system which is somewhat confusing, Their post page looks more like an excel spreadsheet.
<b>How are members recognized?</b>	Members are peer rated and earn points for sharing clothes.	Does not seem to have a peer recognition system	Recognized in friends circles through Kudos, Most loved and Most swapped	

## Appendix

Decision Decisions from Academic Research	Major Findings	Connection to our Project
Lijun Tang (2010). Development of online friendship in different social spaces, <i>Information, Communication &amp; Society</i> , 13:4, 615-633	Progression of Online Friendship is observed to migrate from Online – Offline social spaces & Simple – Complex friendship	Trust is established progressively from “Simple” to “Complex” friendship
Matei, S., & Ball-Rokeach, S. J. (January 01, 2001). Real and Virtual Social Ties: Connections in the Everyday Lives of Seven Ethnic Neighborhoods. <i>American Behavioral Scientist</i> , 45, 3, 550-564.	Increase in sense of belonging to the community increases the chance of making friends online (> belonging index ~ > chance of online friend)	Belonging sense of online “Parents” community – Key to offline friendship & events
Arazy, O., Kumar, N., & Shapira, B. (2010). A Theory-Driven Design Framework for Social Recommender Systems. <i>Journal Of The Association For Information Systems</i> , 11(9), 455-490.	Competence, Benevolence provides positive influence on willingness to accept advice	Social networks based on competence provides strongest influence than benevolence for willingness to accept advice (Important for Recommendation functionality of project)
Bonhard, P., & Sasse, M. A. (July 01, 2006). ‘Knowing me, knowing you’ — Using profiles and social networking to improve recommender systems. <i>Bt Technology Journal</i> , 24, 3, 84-98.	Similarity Visualizations (profile similarity and rating overlap) has Significant influence on advice seekers	Incorporate Social network to foster - Trust & Community building (Important in Pro bono exchange of child goods)
Shapira, B., & Zabar, B. (January 01, 2011). Personalized search: Integrating collaboration and social networks. <i>Journal of the American Society for Information Science &amp; Technology</i> , 62, 1	Similarity of users – significant effect on precision values – improved search engine - Friend net - smaller, yet positive effect on search engine results	Profile similarity matches user interest better than social connection (Importance of profile similarity for sharing of goods through recommendations)
Barnes, S. B. (2006). A privacy paradox: Social networking in the United States. <i>First Monday</i> , 11(9).	Fuzzy boundaries of Public & Private	SNS provides better visibility controls (Issues of Trust and Privacy)
Burt, R. S. (2001). Bandwidth and Echo: Trust, Information, and Gossip in Social Networks. <i>Networks and Markets</i> , Alessandra Casella and James E . Rauch, eds. Russell Sage Foundation.	Distrust – more likely within weak relationships, Trust – more likely within strong positive relationships	