



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 4, 2012

Contact: Michelle Halstead, Commerce City
Office: 303-289-3719 Mobile: 720-454-9680
Email: mhalstead@c3gov.com

Mike Vietti, KaBOOM!
Office: 785-320-2137, Mobile: 352-278-0522
Email: mvietti@kaboom.org

KaBOOM! names Commerce City among 213 “Playful Cities USA”
ONE OF SIX COLORADO COMMUNITIES RECOGNIZED BY NATIONAL NON-PROFIT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today’s children spend less time playing outside than any previous generation, but 213 cities and towns, including Commerce City, earned recognition from national non-profit KaBOOM! as 2012 Playful City USA communities for their efforts to increase play opportunities for children.

“The Commerce City community continues to demonstrate its commitment in creating play spaces as well as active living and healthy lifestyle opportunities whenever and wherever possible, for people of all ages. It takes a whole community to exemplify the true spirit of a playful city,” said Carolyn Keith, director of parks, recreation and golf. “We are proud to be recognized for the fourth consecutive year!”

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, play is critical to healthy brain development. It allows children to use their creativity while simultaneously developing imagination, dexterity and physical, cognitive and emotional strength. Yet today’s children spend less time playing outside than any previous generation in part because only 1-in-5 live within walking distance of a park or playground. The resulting play deficit is having profound consequences for kids physically, socially and academically.

-MORE-

Quality Community for a Lifetime

Presented by The Humana Foundation, Playful City USA is a national program – now in its sixth year – advocating for local policies that increase play opportunities for children and is a key platform in combating the play deficit.

KaBOOM!, the national non-profit organization dedicated to saving play, created Playful City USA in 2007 to help local governments address the play deficit and it is through mayors, city council members, parks and recreation departments, school districts and community leaders that the program succeeds in benefitting children.

Hailing from 41 states, the 213 Playful City USA honorees range in size from six-time honorees such as Orlando to first-time recipient Independence, Oregon (population: 9,607). These Playful City USA communities are making a commitment to play and physical activity by developing unique local action plans to increase the quantity and quality of play in their community.

“Some of the most innovative concepts and cost-effective programs are being developed in Playful City USA communities,” says Darell Hammond, Founder and CEO of KaBOOM! and author of *The New York Times* Best Seller [*KaBOOM!: How One Man Built a Movement to Save Play*](#). “Cities like Commerce City are key allies in the fight to combat the play deficit and serve as outstanding role models for government and community leaders across the country.”

Each of the 2012 Playful City USA communities demonstrated creative commitments to addressing the play deficit. Playful City USA celebrates and highlights these unique initiatives developed by communities across the country. KaBOOM! selected Commerce City for its outstanding dedication to play by providing opportunities for citizens to enjoy the city's parks and all of its programs.

The 213 Playful City USA communities are now eligible for \$15,000, \$20,000 and \$30,000 grants via Let's Play, a community partnership led by Dr Pepper Snapple Group, to get kids and families active nationwide. Grant recipients will be announced on June 4, 2012. More information is available at www.playfulcityusa.org.

###

Quality Community for a Lifetime

