



News Release

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Rowlett named one of 118 “Playful City USA” communities in country

ROWLETT, TX –Let’s Go Play! - the non-profit organization called **KaBOOM!** has selected Rowlett as one of only 118 cities across the nation, and one of only six Texas cities, to be named a **Playful City USA** for its outstanding dedication to play and notable aspect of its commitment to children. The award recognizes Rowlett for engaging its citizens to promote neighborhood park locations and play space amenities through the creation of a new program called “**Come Out & Play**”.

“I’m proud to say that Rowlett is doing something to prioritize play and ensure that children are healthy by providing the time and space for play,” said Mayor John Harper. “Through the Playful Rowlett USA program, other communities across the country will look to Rowlett as a role model. These cities and towns will examine our Come Out & Play program and replicate it in their communities. I take a tremendous amount of pride in knowing that what we’re doing here in Rowlett will improve the lives of not only our children, but children elsewhere as well.”

Rowlett’s “**Come Out & Play**” is a program that reintroduces youth to nutrition, physical activity, arts and outdoor education. One of the primary focuses of program is encouraging youth to take a two-hour “recess” from couch potato activities and eating habits that have contributed to the obesity epidemic attacking our families and spend a morning in one of the City’s parks. Hundreds of children and adults participated in the summer line-up at Springfield and Community Park(s) and the program is scheduled to be back next summer. This year, **Come Out & Play** culminated with an end of the summer “Play Day” at the parks that provided a day for the entire family a to participate in a host of activities such as volleyball, fishing, bounce houses, sack races and soccer.

KaBOOM! strives to make children happier and healthier by inspiring communities to build great places to play in conjunction with its vision of a great place to play within walking distance of every child. Playful City USA communities like Rowlett create best practices to reach a similar goal. They serve as role models for other communities and prove that enhancing children's well-being by increasing the opportunity for play is an attainable goal for every community.

Hailing from 36 states and ranging in size from San Francisco and Atlanta, to Ottawa, Kan. and Shirley, Mass., 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. In doing so, some of the most innovative ideas and cost-effective programs are being developed in Playful City USA communities – proving that parks and play are more important than ever.

Each of the 2010 Playful City USA communities demonstrated creative commitments to the cause of play. Playful City USA celebrates and highlights these unique initiatives developed by communities across the country. A primary goal of Playful City USA is to encourage cities and towns to share creative ideas, concepts and programs in an effort to increase play opportunities for children. City initiatives include:

- Casa Grande, AZ – offers Positive Lunch Activities for Youth (P.L.A.Y.) program benefiting 6th-8th grade students who no longer have access to play equipment.
- Dothan, AL – uses a “community build” process for all playground construction, which builds community cohesion and spirit, but also saves 20-25% on overall cost.
- Indianapolis, IN – launched “Get Fit Indy” challenge this summer designed to encourage children to be active for 60 minutes per day, while eating nutritiously.
- Orlando, FL – increased quantity of play spaces by developing joint-use agreements with the local school district to open school recreation facilities to the public during non-school hours.
- Takoma Park, MD – created Traveling Playgroups to meet and provide residents with recreational information at different facilities throughout the city, while collecting citizen feedback on improvement needs

About KaBOOM!

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., KaBOOM! is a national non-profit organization dedicated to saving play. Through community building, the organization is focused on giving every child in America a great place to play within walking distance. Since 1996, KaBOOM! has used its innovative community-build model to bring together business and community interests to construct more than 1,800 new playgrounds, skate parks, sports fields and ice rinks across North America. KaBOOM! also offers a variety of resources, including an online community, free online trainings, grants, publications and the KaBOOM! National Campaign for Play, which includes Playful City USA and Playmakers – a national network of individual advocates for play. KaBOOM! also has offices in Chicago and San Mateo, Calif. For more information, visit www.kaboom.org. For a list of the designated cities or more information on the KaBOOM! Playful City USA program, visit www.kaboom.org/playfulcityusa.