

newsworthy trends

Survey Reveals Safe Playground Deficit

(NAPSA)—According to the first-ever Gallup study on playground use in the United States, children and adolescents still do not have adequate access to playgrounds and skateparks.

The Gallup Organization study, commissioned by KaBOOM! and The Home Depot, surveyed individuals on several topics, including access to playgrounds and their maintenance, as well as the benefits of playground use. Among the findings:

- Less than half of American children have a playground within walking distance of their homes;
- 61 percent of Americans say simply not having access to a playground is a barrier to their children playing on one;
- One in three people feel there are not enough playgrounds in their community to serve the children who live there; and
- Only one in two households believe the nearest playground is in very good condition and is well-maintained.

In response to the survey, Darell Hammond, founder and “chief executive of play” of KaBOOM!, issued a call to action to parents and community leaders alike. “Considering that almost half of the schools in the U. S. have eliminated recess, it is imperative that parents and children have access to playgrounds in their neighborhoods,” said Hammond, who co-founded the national non-profit organization dedicated to the construction and maintenance of safe play spaces for children and adolescents in 1995.

“KaBOOM! will facilitate the construction of 500 more playgrounds and skateparks over the next five years,” Hammond said. “Concerned parents and commu-



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nity leaders can visit the Web site, www.kaboom.org, to download a free Getting Started Kit and get information on how they can improve an existing neighborhood play space, build a new one or learn more about the state of play in their community.”

The study touched upon the importance of playgrounds for community building and neighborhood improvement, a guiding principle in the KaBOOM!-Home Depot relationship.

“Playgrounds are excellent places for neighbors to build vital social networks within their communities. This study reinforces how important it is for all of us to work together to build and maintain these valuable resources,” said John Costello, executive vice president of marketing for The Home Depot.

Fitness expert Mindy Mylrea said, “A playground not only allows a child to enjoy the act of play but it also facilitates family fitness fun. Amazing things happen to relationships when play is added. A well-structured playground comes with only one instruction—come play with me!”