



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 18, 2017

Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Communications Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

City of Riverside Recognized as a Playful City USA 2017 Community

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside has been recognized for the tenth consecutive year as a Playful City USA Community, a recognition program sponsored by the non-profit organization KaBOOM!

The organization honors cities and towns that ensure that children in their communities, particularly children from low-income families, are getting the balanced and active play they need to thrive. Research shows that play is critical to the physical, emotional and cognitive well-being of children.

“Active living is the Riverside Way” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “This community understands the important role of connecting with others – and that begins with play during childhood. We are a Fit Fresh & Fun city, and we are proud to be recognized by KaBOOM! with the Playful City USA award.”

KaBOOM! created the Playful City USA program in 2007 to help local governments address the lack of play opportunities for youth. The group works with mayors, city council members, parks and recreation departments, school districts and community leaders to ensure the program succeeds in benefitting children.

Darell Hammond, Founder and CEO of KaBOOM!, said children spend nearly eight hours a day in front of a screen; almost half of all poor students are deprived of recess; and one in five children live within walking distance of a park.

“Kids need to play actively, every day, at home, in school and in their communities, yet play is disappearing,” Hammond said. “These Playful City USA communities are creating innovative programs and initiatives and deserve recognition because of their efforts to give kids the childhood they deserve and best prepare them for their future.”

Each of the 2017 Playful City USA communities demonstrated their commitment to addressing the lack of play among children. Playful City USA celebrates these unique initiatives developed by communities across the country.

A primary goal of Playful City USA is to encourage cities and towns to share ideas, concepts and programs in an effort to increase play opportunities for children.

“Riverside takes very seriously the need to provide modern, safe and enjoyable places for young people to exercise and enjoy themselves through physical activity,” Mayor Pro Tem Mike Gardner said. “The Playful City USA designation from KaBOOM! shows we are hitting the mark.”