

Community volunteers to upgrade Williwaw Park

Thursday, June 22, 2006 - by Megan Baldino

Anchorage, Alaska - Just blocks from where a fatal shooting took place Tuesday, an effort is underway today to build a safe place for local children to play. Williwaw Park has a brand new playground, built in one day with hundreds of volunteers.

It's a great example of how it takes a community, nowhere could that be more true than right here. Over 200 volunteers placed 160 cubic feet of this mulch in the play area. They mixed over 15,000 pounds of concrete and though no one knows the exact amount, they say a lot of bricks were laid to make a path.



Jason Kohler/KTUU-TV

The project began early this morning when volunteers began laying the foundation. Then came the actual playground including a climbing wall. Within six hours, organizers say the playground was pretty much done.



Jason Kohler/KTUU-TV

The project is part of the Weed and Seed Program which works with at-risk neighborhoods to weed out crime and seed new opportunities. Kaboom and Home Depot are the major partners on the project. Kaboom works to build playgrounds for children across the country.

It's a park people who live here and even those who don't know is extremely important.

"So I see this as a positive. Quite a few of those people have actually come, taken time off, participating in it and that makes them invested in the process for actually being involved in it," said Kathleen Plunkett, Russian Jack Community Council (above left).

"These are the kind of parks we love designed by kids, for kids they understand the value of them they take ownership in them, they take responsibility for them, because they have been part of the development of the park," said Mayor Mark Begich (right).

And organizers say this is the beginning of improvements at the park. They are also hoping to build some paths and a nature trail.



Jason Kohler/KTUU-TV

The money for the project came from Home Depot along with several other local companies. Several grants assisted with the project, also.

Channel 2 Broadcasting Inc.
<http://www.ktuu.com/>