



TORONTO'S MOSS PARK COMMUNITY RECLAIMS ITS OUTDOOR SPACE

Coca-Cola, ParticipACTION, Parks Canada, Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds and Toronto Community Housing partner to rejuvenate outdoor space

Toronto, ON (June 15, 2012) — Hundreds of volunteers and five diverse partners united today to roll up their sleeves and build a one-of-a-kind urban green space that marries the best elements of Canada's national parks with interactive features that encourage active living.

Residents of Toronto Community Housing's Moss Park community and over 200 volunteers joined together to completely rejuvenate the outdoor grounds of the Moss Park apartment complex. The build includes a new soccer pitch, a large community-managed vegetable garden, natural rock and fauna diversions, as well as more outdoor seating.

"Parks are the anchors of our communities. Today, we came together to build a sustainable playground to provide kids with a safe, place to have fun and be active," said Nicola Kettlitz, President of Coca-Cola Canada Ltd. "Coca-Cola Canada and the Coca-Cola Foundation have contributed over \$125,000 to this project as part of our effort to make positive difference in the communities where we operate."

Over the years, the grounds of the Moss Park apartment complex lost their utility as an inviting and usable outdoor space. The philosophy of the partners and inspiration of the rejuvenation project is the proven influence a diverse natural playground has on increasing the physical activity of its users. This transformation incorporates elements inspired by Georgian Bay Islands National Park in order to create an outdoor sanctuary in a downtown urban community. With only seven per cent of Canada's children and youth meeting the recommended guidelines for daily activity, communities need access to engaging outdoor spaces that encourage movement.

"We are proud to be a part of this collaboration to build an outdoor space where residents can be active and connect with nature," said Kelly Murumets, President and CEO of ParticipACTION. "Research consistently shows that children and youth who spend time outdoors are more physically active, which leads to improved health, better mood, increased attention, overall well-being—and fun!"

"The Moss Park Rejuvenation is providing the community with an outdoor space that connects them to the spirit of our national parks in an urban setting," says the Honourable Peter Kent, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada. "As part of this collaboration, residents of Moss Park will be able to build a deeper connection with our natural and historic heritage, especially those families and youth who Parks Canada will host at Georgian Bay Islands National Park of Canada this summer."

"This is an exciting partnership for Toronto Community Housing and the residents of Moss Park apartments. Aside from hours of active fun for children of all ages, rejuvenating the outdoor space will help build a safe and healthy community by providing several new focal points where residents can interact with and get to know their neighbours," said Deborah Simon, Chief Operating Officer of Toronto Community Housing. "We worked closely with residents to get their insight into what they would like to see in the reclaimed outdoor space. It's great to see them rolling up their sleeves to help make it happen."

The build was led by Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds, who trained the volunteer group on how to bring the park to life. Throughout this project there was a collaborative effort to ensure residents were included in the process, from the design concept to the build. "I'm pleased to have been able to bring these partners together and create gardens, gathering spaces and natural playgrounds with the community," said Adam Bienenstock, CEO of Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds. "These spaces will serve the community well and will connect children to nature in downtown Toronto."

The Moss Park rejuvenation project exemplifies true collaborative spirit, where multiple partners with different objectives work together to achieve one common goal. The partners hope this initiative will serve as an example for other organizations to see the positive outcomes that can be created with these types of partnerships.

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