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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND THE CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH LAUNCH
PLAYSTREETS 2017**

PlayStreets offers more than 150 events throughout the City, engage children and families in physical activity and play

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) kicked off PlayStreets 2017 today, announcing that the City of Chicago will host more than 150 special PlayStreets events throughout the summer for children and their families to get active.

"I want every child in every neighborhood to get moving this summer," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "PlayStreets provides our children and their families more opportunities to get and stay active while having fun in their community. This will help children develop a healthy lifestyle that they will carry through the rest of their lives."

At a PlayStreets event, the streets are closed off to traffic for three or more hours and transformed into a community-lead, fun-filled day featuring sports, games, bounce houses, dances, fitness classes and more. Last year, more than 24,000 residents participated in more than 150 PlayStreets events.

In its sixth year, PlayStreets continues to expand its reach. This year, more than 150 PlayStreets events are already scheduled in 23 neighborhoods across Chicago Auburn Gresham, Austin, Belmont Cragin, Brighton Park, Chicago Lawn, East and West Garfield Park, Englewood, Gage Park, Grand Boulevard, Humboldt Park, Kenwood, Logan Square, Lower West Side, Near North Side, Near West Side, North Lawndale, Rogers Park, Roseland, South Chicago, South Shore, Uptown, Washington Park and Woodlawn.

Gads Hill Center and World Sport Chicago are coordinating this year's events on behalf of CDPH in partnership with 29 grassroots community partners. The community-driven events empower residents to build new opportunities for fun and fitness in their own neighborhoods.

"Our goal is to create healthy communities that encourage all of our residents to practice healthy lifestyles," said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. "PlayStreets is a part of our citywide strategy to reach our youngest residents, in their communities so that they are able to lead active, healthy lives now and into the future."

PlayStreets is a key component of Healthy Chicago 2.0, the citywide public health agenda first launched by Mayor Emanuel and CDPH in 2011. Healthy Chicago 2.0 outlines more than 200 strategies dedicated to transforming the health of the City through collaborative efforts. The Emanuel Administration has stood strong supporting initiatives that improve youth health, including guaranteed recess for students, improved physical activity guidelines at childcare centers and increased access to healthy food options for families across Chicago.

"Creating opportunities for young people to experience the power of play and fitness in their very own communities is a powerful message. It tells our young people that they matter and so do their communities," said Kam Buckner, Executive Director of World Sport Chicago. "Deepening connections within communities and across communities is critical to the health and well-being of all our young people."

"PlayStreets gives Chicago's children an opportunity to experience and celebrate a healthy lifestyle," said Maricela Garcia, CEO, Gads Hill. "It's also a way for residents to come together to strengthen the fabric of their communities and build on existing assets. It's about celebrating all of the positive resources that already exist in our communities."

PlayStreets community partners organizing this year's events include: Be the Movement Youth Network, Boys and Girls Club, Build, Inc., Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, Carey Tercentenary AME Church, Carole Robertson Center for Learning, Centro Comunitario Juan Diego, Centro Romero, Chicago-Lawndale AMACHI Mentoring Program, Chicago Youth Centers – Sidney Epstein Youth Center, Chicago Youth Programs, Chinese Mutual Aid Association, Claretian Associates, Davis Community Development Group, Demoiselle 2 Femme, Gads Hill Center, Garfield Park Community Council, Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation, Hyde Park Kenwood Legends, IMPACT Family Services, Kells Park Community Council, La Casa Norte, Mary Crane Centers, Northwest Side Housing Center, Project Education Plus, Southwest Organizing Project, The Community Builders, Voice of the People and Woodlawn Public Safety Alliance.

For more information on Healthy Chicago 2.0, visit www.CityofChicago.org/Health. A full schedule of PlayStreets events can be found at www.playstreets.org.

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