



CONTACT:

Marie Ware, Leisure Services Manager
(563) 589-4263
mware@cityofdubuque.org
www.cityofdubuque.org/leisureservices

NEWS RELEASE

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National Kids to Parks Day is May 21

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The Dubuque City Council has joined the National Park Trust and communities across the country in proclaiming May 21, 2011, as the first annual national “Kids to Parks Day.”

“The premise is simple — have adults take a child in their life to a park,” said Marie Ware, leisure services manager for the City of Dubuque. “Hike a trail, play on a playground, have a pickup game of ball, visit a historic site, canoe, fish or just lay on a blanket looking at the sky.”

Opportunities to celebrate Kids to Parks Day are numerous in the Dubuque area. The City of Dubuque offers 47 parks covering 878 acres and features trails, tennis, picnicking, fishing, skateboarding, in line hockey, softball and baseball, playgrounds, disc golf, golf, camping, and much more. The Dubuque County Conservation Board manages 16 parks, preserves and recreation areas encompassing over 2293 acres. The Mines of Spain Recreation Area and E.B. Lyons Interpretive and Nature Center is located on 1,380 acres of wooded and prairie land and is managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

According to the National Park Trust, “once upon a time, kids ran freely outside, played in creeks, caught bugs and enjoyed nature. However, today many children are not connected to the outdoors in the same way.” Attendance at America's parks and forests has declined steadily each year since the late 1980s. The “Buddy Bison” mascot was developed to inspire kids, families, schools and groups to get outside and share their American park experience. Youngsters can, with the help of an adult, visit the National Park Trust website at www.BuddyBison.org to learn about Buddy Bison and take a pledge in advance of Kids to Parks Day. The site also offers additional resources for parents and teachers.

For more information on Dubuque parks, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/parks or call 563-589-4263.

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