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# Playground deserves our support

**I**f the project had a dollar for every time someone says our children are the community's greatest asset, Brooklyn's Playground would have all the funding it needs. But dreams need more than sentiments to be realized. They need financial support.

Brooklyn's Playground, a volunteer project designed to provide an inclusive outdoor activities experience for children of all abilities in Southeast Idaho, is moving closer to realizing the dream. With a commitment to \$216,000 in donations in place, the race to fund the project is in the final lap. Tax deductible donations for the project are being handled by the United Way of Southeast Idaho. It has received the blessings of both the Chubbuck and Pocatello city councils. It just needs a final financial push to the finish line.

If funding efforts are successful, the playground will offer a destination of fun for children with and without disabilities. It will also offer opportunities for parents and grandparents with mobility issues to join in the fun.

Unlike many municipal playgrounds that meet minimum Americans with Disabilities Act access requirements, Brooklyn's Playground will be designed from the ground up to provide equal access and opportunities for all children. Plans include cooperative games, accessible music areas, sensory panels and handrails designed to include those children who may have a disability but are not confined to a wheelchair.

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But the most ambitious effort to bring in the necessary donations is the Brooklyn's Playground "July 300" push. Organizers are trying to secure \$300 donations from 300 different individuals or groups to push the project over the top this month. Donors will be permanently recognized with their names on a special plaque to be placed at the entrance to the facility. They also will receive a framed certificate acknowledging their contributions to the community's children.

Hundreds of volunteers stepped forward when the television show *Extreme Makeover Home Edition* came to the rescue of a Pocatello family last summer. A home fire and limited financial resources had forced the Jane Marshall family to live in their backyard. A two-block area of Pocatello became a beehive of activity as volunteer labor and materials were poured into that project. A new Marshall family home now stands in tribute to community power.

It was a noble effort to help a needy family.

Brooklyn's Playground is a noble effort to help generations of children in the community, especially those who struggle to meet the demands of everyday life. It will give them a place to play just like everyone else.

We know permanent recognition won't be the deciding factor for most donors. Companies and their employees, families and professionals will contribute because they believe in Pocatello and Chubbuck — they believe children are our most valuable asset.

If enough of us believe it, Brooklyn's Playground will be filled with laughter next summer.