



The Playground Project

An All-Abilities Playground for Missoula.

PRESS RELEASE

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Adaptive Baseball Game Gives All Children A Chance To Shine Under The Lights At Osprey Stadium

Missoula Osprey Baseball is teaming up with the All-Abilities Playground Project to host Missoula's first-ever adaptive baseball game for children with disabilities on Thursday, July 26, from 4:00 to 7:30 p.m. at Ogren Park Allegiance Field. An adaptive baseball format will make it possible for children of all abilities to "play ball!" All Missoula children and their families are invited to this fun community event.

In addition to the game, the event features live music from Missoula's Li'l Smokies and The Whizpops, an inflatable bouncy house and kids games, a meet and greet with Missoula Osprey players and Missoula sports mascots, a photo booth and baseball stadium concessions. "Celebrity coaches" including members of the Missoula Police Dept., U.S. Postal Service and Allied Waste will assist kids during the game. This event will provide an amazing opportunity for children with disabilities to enjoy America's pastime, and will be a fun ballpark experience for all kids and families.

Proceeds from the game benefit the All-Abilities Playground Project, a universally-accessible playground slated to be built in McCormick Park in 2013. Admission to the game is free; however there is suggested donation of \$5 per person. The young baseball players are collecting game pledges from friends and family at www.allabilitiesplayground.org to support the new playground.

Ten-year-old Melina Peck of Missoula is one of the kids who are fundraising for the new playground. Her pledge page on the All-Abilities Playground website explains why she's so excited about the project. "Kids like me who have mobility challenges have trouble getting through wood chips and sand, and sometimes I can't use the swings or find play equipment that suits me and my mobility devices. Often times I just get to watch as my friends play. This playground will be a place where I can play...with kids with and without disabilities. I can't wait to run in my walker on the smooth, accessible surfacing at the new playground and fly to the sky in the adaptive swings," Melina writes. She'll be playing in the July 26 game with the help of her best friend and 11-year-old cousin Paul Dennis, a Little Leaguer who'll be helping Melina hit, round the bases and score.

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Melina, who uses a walker due to cerebral palsy, is looking forward to the All-Abilities Playground because it will be a play environment specifically designed to be accessible to all children, including those with disabilities. It will feature more physically challenging routes of travel and activities alongside ramp-accessible routes enabling children of all abilities to play side-by-side. In addition, because disabilities go beyond physical limitations, the universally-accessible design of the All-Abilities Playground will help meet the needs of children with mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments.

For more information on the All Abilities Baseball Night please visit:

<http://playgroundproject.allabilitiesbaseball.dojiggy.com/>. For more information on The All Abilities Playground Project's effort to build a universally-accessible playground at McCormick Park visit:

<http://www.allabilitiesplayground.org/>

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