



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

October 17, 2019

**CONTACT:**

Zach Pruitt or Ashley Anderson

[zach@northfieldhci.org](mailto:zach@northfieldhci.org);

[ashley@northfieldhci.org](mailto:ashley@northfieldhci.org)

507-664-3527

**Northfield Promise Selected for Community-led Playground Project to Give Local Kids More Opportunities to Play**

**Northfield, MN** — Northfield Promise, a member of the StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network, has been selected to lead a playground project with KaBOOM!, the national nonprofit that works to ensure every kid and all communities have equitable access to quality, imaginative playspaces.

Northfield Promise is one of the three StriveTogether communities that will work with KaBOOM! to design a community playground to help close racial and socioeconomic gaps in kids' access to great places to play and build civic infrastructure through a project model that brings diverse residents and organizations together for youth.

The playground will be located on the northern part of Northfield. Northfield Promise and Growing Up Healthy will work with neighborhood youth, parents, and community members to help plan the playground.

“We are excited that the process involves the active engagement of young people and parents in designing the playground,” said Zach Pruitt, Executive Director of Northfield Healthy Community Initiative (HCI), which serves as the backbone organization for Northfield Promise. “We are humbled that Northfield was selected and are incredibly grateful to KaBOOM! and StriveTogether for this amazing opportunity.”

Northfield Promise does much of its community organizing work outdoors in neighborhoods and parks. This ranges from neighborhood meetings to community gatherings to summer enrichment/literacy programs. Having additional play and recreational options in the northern portion of the community will help increase access to these activities.

The KaBoom! project will involve staff and partners of Northfield Promise, the Northfield Healthy Community Initiative, and over 200 community volunteers in the design, planning and installation of the playground before September 2020. The process will



kick off with Design Day, where kids and families will come together to create the design specifications for an innovative, custom play space, and culminate with a day where hundreds of volunteers will build the playground. In between, partners and volunteers will work on a grassroots campaign to raise local matching funds and engage with elected officials and leaders.

"We can all agree that play is an essential part of childhood, and all kids should have opportunities to play as a matter of their human right," said Lysa Ratliff, Vice President of Partnership Development at KaBOOM!. "Research shows — what many parents know — that children learn through play. The more time they have to play outside with their peers, the more likely they are able to grow essential social, physical and cognitive skills that are so important for their future success. We are proud to partner with StriveTogether to bring this vision to life."

In addition to submitting an application, to be considered for this opportunity, StriveTogether communities also engaged in key activities at the Cradle to Career Network Convening, including providing feedback on StriveTogether's new racial equity statement and plan and participating in the #SuccessTogether campaign. #SuccessTogether asks youth across the nation to share what success looks like and creates a positive conversation about the impact of the Cradle to Career Network.

"StriveTogether shares the belief with KaBOOM! that the well-being of communities starts with the well-being of kids," StriveTogether President and CEO Jennifer Blatz said. "Creating shared spaces fosters community pride and helps close the racial and socioeconomic gaps that deny many children great places to play. Local change is possible when the community unites around a common vision for families and kids."

###

### **About Northfield Promise**

Northfield Promise is a community movement to enable all Northfield area children to thrive, from cradle to career. This work is accomplished by connecting and aligning resources, programs and community members to collaborate toward measurable results on 10 benchmarks throughout every child's life. By aligning all major community institutions around this shared set of measurable benchmarks, we will achieve community-level change for children and youth growing up in Northfield, Minnesota.

### **About StriveTogether**

[StriveTogether](#) partners with nearly 70 communities across the country, providing coaching, resources and rigorous approaches to create opportunities and close gaps in education, housing and so much more. Together, the StriveTogether Cradle to Career



Network impacts the lives of 13.7 million youth — including 8.6 million children of color — across 29 states and Washington, D.C.

### **About KaBOOM!**

KaBOOM! is the national nonprofit dedicated to giving all kids — especially those living in poverty — the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play. KaBOOM! inspires communities to make play the easy choice and works to drive the national discussion about the importance of PLAYces. KaBOOM! has collaborated with partners to build or improve more than 17,000 playspaces, engage over 1.5 million volunteers and serve nearly 10 million kids. To learn why play matters for all kids, visit [kaboom.org](http://kaboom.org) and join the conversation at [twitter.com/kaboom](https://twitter.com/kaboom), [facebook.com/kaboom](https://facebook.com/kaboom), and [instagram.com/kaboom](https://instagram.com/kaboom). #playmatters #PLAYceforKids