



HeartShare Human Services of New York
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For Immediate Release
June 6, 2007

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New Playground Built in One Day

(Brooklyn, NY)— On Saturday, June 2, over 200 volunteers worked together to build a new playground at The HeartShare School in Bensonhurst. The HeartShare School is a new program operated by HeartShare Human Services of New York for children ages 5-14 with autism and mental retardation. The playground was made possible through KaBOOM! and Sprint.

When the day began at 8:30 am, volunteers arrived to find a 50” x 50” empty space. Throughout the day, play structures were assembled and put into place, cement was poured, engineered wood fiber was brought in for children’s safety, and picnic tables and planter benches were constructed. At 1:30 pm, the wood fiber was being leveled off and everyone was finishing cleaning the area. A brand new playground was in place, complete with a tire swing, spiral slide, rock climbing wall, and a transfer station with noise making toys.

At 2:00 pm, the ribbon-cutting ceremony began with State Senator **Martin J. Golden**, State Assemblyman **Peter Abbate**, 62nd Precinct **Capt. John J. Sprague**, HeartShare President and CEO **William R. Guarinello**, HeartShare Board Chairman **Ralph A. Subbiondo** and Treasurer **Michael Abatemarco**, Executive Vice President **Linda Tempel**, Vice President of Education Services **Carol Verdi**, Program Director **Jill Fitzgerald**, **Maureen Link** from Sprint, **Whitney Hampton** from KaBOOM! and children from the school.

When the children left school on Friday, there was an empty parking lot; when they returned on Monday, they were in awe of the magnificent new play area awaiting them. HeartShare is grateful to KaBOOM!, Sprint and all the volunteers that helped to make this possible for their children.

Celebrating its 93rd year, HeartShare is a nonprofit organization that assists more than 17,000 New Yorkers. Its wide spectrum of services provides counseling, after-school programs and assistance with foster care and adoption to children and families, supports people affected by HIV/AIDS, and administers energy assistance programs. It also helps individuals with developmental disabilities through numerous

programs including education services, adult day programs, residential services, case management, recreation programs, family support services, and health services.

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