

**Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association
6601-C Northway Greendale WI 53129 414.423.1210**

"We Create Community Through People, Parks & Programs"

June 19, 2007

Senator Herb Kohl
330 Hart Office Building Room
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Kohl:

The Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association, representing over 2,400 professionals in parks, natural resources, recreation, aquatics, and therapeutic recreation, urges you to consider supporting the "Play Everyday Act", (S.651). Here are just several important reasons that your support is needed:

- Eighteen percent of U.S. children are overweight, with alarming increases in "adult-type" diseases—Type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.
- Two-thirds of high school children DO NOT get 60 minutes of physical activity daily. They spend an average of *six hours daily* in front of a computer or TV screen.
- The increased focus on academics and homework has impacted physical education and physical activity in schools and after-school programs.
- Three decades ago, 48 percent of children walked to and from school. Today, that figure is only 19 percent.
- Federal funding for local parks, playgrounds, trails and open space has decreased.
- There is a shortage of resources for engaging children in daily physical activity.

Over the last several decades, technology and other advances that have benefited society in so many ways have created a host of social and environmental factors that have joined together to position this generation of youth to become the "Sedentary Generation."

Today in many communities we find a lack of safe places and spaces to play, an inadequate number of voices to encourage and support play, and not enough opportunities for, or access to, quality play. In particular, opportunities for unstructured or self-structured play have diminished, even as such opportunities are recognized by developmental psychologists as being critical to the development of problem-solving skills of children.

The Play Every Day Bill will help promote the national recommendation of physical activity to kids, families, and communities across the country. We urge you to support this critical legislation that will impact tremendously on the future generations in Wisconsin and across our nation.

Sincerely,

Roger

Roger Kist, CPRP, President
Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association

- An Affiliate of the National Recreation and Park Association -