

PITTSBURG PARK DESTROYED BY VANDALS GETS NEW PLAYGROUND

This is the second playground grassroots parents group has netted for East County

WHAT:

Pittsburg's De Anza Park hasn't had a playground since vandals destroyed it in 2010. Thanks to a grassroots group of parents, the City of Pittsburg recently installed a new playground at De Anza, which will be commemorated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony this Saturday.

The drive to improve the park started when the East County Regional Group, a parents group with 60 members sponsored by First 5 Contra Costa, conducted assessments of every park in Pittsburg. Their findings revealed that many of the city's parks were plagued by crime, graffiti or unsafe conditions.

The parents determined that De Anza Park, an empty field located in one of the city's lowest income and most crime-ridden communities, was the park most in need of rehabilitation. The parents presented their findings to the Pittsburg City Council, who responded with a \$50,000 allocation for the new play structure.

To increase usage of the park, the parents and nearby residents have partnered with the Pittsburg Police Department to start a Neighborhood Watch program and will soon offer free baseball and soccer classes for young children. Combined with funding from the City of Antioch, the parents have raised \$300,000 and refurbished two new playgrounds.

WHEN:

Saturday, April 23, 2016

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. *Rain or Shine*

WHERE:

De Anza Park

East Trident Drive, Pittsburg

VISUALS/ACTIVITIES:

- Children enjoying the new playground
- A ribbon-cutting scheduled for 11:15 a.m.
- Speakers including:
 - Mayor Ben Johnson
 - Parent leaders from the East County Regional Group
 - Representatives from local organizations including First 5 Contra Costa
 - Assemblymember Jim Frazier and Supervisor Federal Glover (invited)

WHY:

Physical activity and outdoor play is important for children's health and development, but not all children in East County have access to safe, usable parks and playgrounds. Crime, vandalism, and unsafe conditions have prevented families from enjoying De Anza park – until now. This

grassroots group of parents aims to increase children's access to outdoor play by improving one East County park at a time.

CONTACT:

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BACKGROUND:

First 5 Contra Costa helps young children start school healthy, nurtured and ready to learn by investing in programs and activities focused on children during their first five years, the most important time in children's development. Since 2000, First 5 Contra Costa has invested more than \$130 million in Proposition 10 tobacco tax funds to help Contra Costa's children get the best possible start in life. First 5 supports three Regional Groups of parents dedicated to making their communities healthier and safer for families. Learn more: www.first5coco.org.

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