



**DESIGNED BY KIDS, BUILT BY VOLUNTEERS:**

**HUNDREDS OF VOLUNTEERS TEAM UP TO BUILD DREAM PLAYGROUND  
FOR FORMERLY HOMELESS CHILDREN LIVING AT HOMESTEAD'S  
VERDE GARDENS AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMUNITY**

*More than 200 volunteers joined organizers from Carrfour Supportive Housing, the Miami-Dade Homeless Trust, the Knight Foundation and KaBOOM! to build dream playground in less than 8 hours.*

*New playground's design based off of drawings created by the children living at the South Miami-Dade affordable housing community.*

**MIAMI, FL – March 25, 2013** – The dreams of hundreds of formerly homeless children living in South Miami-Dade County have finally come true as a brand new playground they designed rose from the ground at Verde Gardens, an affordable housing community in Homestead, Florida. The playground project – funded by a partnership between [Carrfour Supportive Housing](#), the [John S. James L. Knight Foundation](#), and organizers from [KaBOOM!](#) – was launched months earlier, when the community's children were asked to put crayon to paper to draw their “dream” playground.

On Saturday, March 23, 2013, their dreams ultimately became a reality as hundreds of volunteers gathered at the Verde Gardens community to build a new playground from scratch in less than eight hours, with its design incorporating several elements from the children's original drawings.

“Our partnership with KABOOM! and the Knight Foundation has brought happiness into the lives of hundreds of formerly homeless children living at Verde Gardens and in the Homestead area,” said Stephanie Berman-Eisenberg, president of Carrfour Supportive Housing, the community's developer and operator. “The overwhelming outpouring of support from everyone that volunteered their time has resulted in a new playground that will make a positive difference in the lives of our community's children for years to come.”

Home to one of the most innovative supportive housing programs in the country, Verde Gardens – a \$20 million partnership between the [Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust](#) and nonprofit affordable housing developer Carrfour Supportive Housing – is a supportive housing community in Homestead, Florida for formerly homeless families and individuals with special

needs, which includes a 22-acre on-site organic farm and public farmers market that is operated by residents.

The 145-unit Verde Gardens community is home to approximately 580 formerly homeless residents – 367 of which are children. Prior to the partnership with KaBOOM! and the Knight Foundation, the community included a very small playground structure only suitable for children under the age of five. The community's new playground will provide hundreds of children of all ages with a safe and fun place to play.

The Verde Gardens playground is one of three playgrounds being built by KaBOOM! and the Knight Foundation this year in Miami-Dade County and one of more than 150 playground builds KaBOOM! will make possible across the country in 2013.

In addition to the community-built playground, the new play area also includes Imagination Playground in a Cart™ – a breakthrough playspace concept designed by architect David Rockwell to encourage child-directed, unstructured free play. With reconfigurable loose parts, Imagination Playground in a Cart™ allows children to constantly change their environment and design their own course of play.

###

### **About Carrfour Supportive Housing**

Carrfour Supportive Housing is a nonprofit organization established in 1993 by the Homeless Committee of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. Carrfour develops, operates and manages innovative housing communities for individuals and families in need through a unique approach combining affordable housing with comprehensive, on-site supportive services. As the leading not-for-profit provider of supportive housing in Florida, Carrfour has supplied homes for more than 10,000 formerly homeless men, women and children since its founding. Learn more at [www.carrfour.org](http://www.carrfour.org).

### **Media Contacts:**

Schwartz Media Strategies

Allie Schwartz: (305) 308-6351 / [allie@schwartz-media.com](mailto:allie@schwartz-media.com)

Aaron Gordon: (305) 962-3292 / [aaron@schwartz-media.com](mailto:aaron@schwartz-media.com)