



# News

[www.co.ramsey.mn.us](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us)

Dave Verhasselt  
Communications Manager  
Phone: 651-266-8017  
Mobile: 651-402-0059

Monday, April 26, 2004

## **NEWS RELEASE:** Mighty Kids earn National Recognition

On Tuesday, April 27, 2004 the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners will recognize the "Mighty Kids" Parks and Recreation program. The recognition will be for the recent national "Act of Caring" award presented to the Mighty Kids program by the National Association of Counties (NACO).

What makes this program so unique is not the program itself, but the collaborative approach to addressing a community based issue of changing demographics in our inner-city community. The Mighty Kids brings together two parks and recreation departments, a community education department, and six different youth hockey associations (otherwise described as rivals) for a common cause, "to provide an opportunity for our economically challenged youth and families to participate in the sport of hockey."

It is the endless dedication of the steering committee and their volunteer efforts in conducting fundraising activities, volunteering as on-ice instructors, acting as adult mentors, and sharing their input and expertise in working in community, that has contributed to this program's success. There are numerous members who contribute 100+ volunteer hours each year to this effort. Their dedication is out of a love for the game and willingness to embrace our very diverse and culturally rich community. They are truly doing an "Act of Caring."

The Mighty Kids Inner-City Hockey Steering Committee was organized in 1995 to guide the development of a program to break down barriers that have traditionally deterred inner-city youth and, particularly, youth of color from participating in ice sports. Under the guidance of the Steering Committee, the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department collaborated with the St. Paul Parks and Recreation Division and St. Paul Community Education. Six (6) youth hockey associations and the Minnesota Hockey Diversity Committee a comprehensive program to address these barriers, entitled the "Mighty Kids Inner-city Skating Program."

## **Interview Contact:**

Jody Yungers

**Office: 651-748-2500**

## **Media Contact:**

Dave Verhasselt

**Office: 651-266-8017      Mobile: 651-402-0059**