

# Playmakers

*Children will map out playgrounds not only in their own communities but also in other communities!*

## **Age Appropriateness:**

9-12, 13 and up

## **Key Topics:**

Internet Communication,

Local Culture,

## **Skills:**

Computer,

Group Decision-Making,

Critical Thinking,

Communication,

Mapping,

Geographical Knowledge

## **Materials:**

Computer, pencils, paper, digital camera (optional), colored markers, map (local/North America), envelopes, postage stamps

## **Action Time:**

3-4 hours (including Field Trip time)

## **Resources:**

Kids' US Road Atlas by:  
Rand McNally

[www.kaboom.org](http://www.kaboom.org)

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Youth, the Play Experts, will be able to define and communicate what sets apart the great playgrounds in their community.
- Children will be able to recognize the important role that routine maintenance plays in the quality of their neighborhood playgrounds.
- Children will familiarize themselves with the use of a computer.



## **Discussion**

Discuss the topic of play with a group of children. What is your favorite playground? Why? What is your favorite piece of playground equipment? What makes one playground better than another? How do you find a playground in your neighborhood?

You will be using the internet for this activity. What is a website? What is an online community? How can having a website help a playground? How are playgrounds different in different parts of the country?

## **Action**

- Ask children what playgrounds they already know of within walking distance.
- Visit the KaBOOM! website and find other local playgrounds on the Playspace Finder.
- Go on the local Parks & Recreation website and map a route to find other local playgrounds.
- Select 2-3 playgrounds to visit as a group, preferably sites that are not already listed in the KaBOOM! Playspace Finder.
- Led by an adult, take a field trip to your selected playgrounds. While you are there, be sure to take digital photos, and make a note of what equipment is included in the playground design (slides, swings, etc), as well as the degree of maintenance of the playground.

## **Reflection**

Have a discussion about the playground's quality and how it could be improved. As a group, come up with a rating for each playground and discuss what makes one better than another. Discuss children's role in making sure playgrounds are safe and fun.