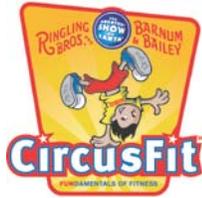




NEWS RELEASE

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PLAYGROUND OPENS AT PAYNE PARK JUNE 16; RINGLING BROS.® CIRCUSFIT® PERFORMANCES SCHEDULED

Sarasota, FL: The much anticipated circus themed playground at Payne Park, 2050 Adams Lane, will open Saturday, June 16 in conjunction with the inaugural Sarasota Sports Festival. To celebrate the opening of the playground, *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey*® will perform several free interactive *CircusFit*® performances throughout the day.



The Sports Festival is free and runs 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. rain or shine. “I’m thrilled the opening of the playground will coincide with the festival,” said Mayor Suzanne Atwell. “It’s been exciting to watch the playground come out of the ground with its circus theme and bright colors. With such a rich circus history in

Sarasota, it’s only fitting *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey*® will be there to help us clown around and celebrate in style,” said Mayor Atwell.

Designed with Sarasota’s circus heritage in mind, the brightly colored playground encompasses one-half acre of Payne Park near the main entrance at Adams Lane and East Avenue. The playground offers two areas for different age groups: one area for children ages 2-to-5-years-old and the other for ages 5-to-12-years-old. More than 300 children can play simultaneously. Located near



the swings, rock climbing walls, slides and crawl tubes is a music circle with three

musical instruments (drums, contrabass chimes and an instrument similar to a xylophone) which are tuned and ready for play. The playground also offers a water feature with four misting rings allowing children to run through and cool off.

Ringling Bros.® will perform three free **CircusFit®** shows near the playground at:



9:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:45 p.m.

The performances will be interactive with the audience and include fun activities such as a laugh-a-thon, obstacle course and fitness training combining fun circus skills with stretching, strength building and aerobic exercise. Several clowns will be on hand at the festival, plus a *Ringling Bros.* balloon artist will bend balloons into a variety of animal shapes and hats. Don't miss the *Ringling Bros.*' Diaper Dash at 10 a.m. -- a fun run for ages 1-to-4-years-old.

The Sarasota Sports Festival will include a one mile family fun run/walk, BMX and Strider bicycling, disc golf, aerobic tennis, 10 & under tennis, Teddy Tennis (ages 3-6), skateboarding and group exercise classes. Equipment will be provided for each sport. *Registration forms must be completed to participate.* To view a schedule of events [click here](#).

Parking: *Free* public parking will be available in the Sarasota County parking garage, located at Ringling Boulevard and School Avenue, adjacent to Payne Park.

For more information about the Sarasota Sports Festival, including the new playground, visit www.Facebook.com/SarasotaSportsFestival, follow the festival on [Twitter](#) @SRQSportsFest or contact [Jan Thornburg](#), Public Information Officer: 941-954-2613.