



CITY OF MERIDIAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 20, 2016

CONTACT: Kaycee Emery, 208-489-0538 or kemery@meridiancity.org

MERIDIAN HOSTS UNPLUG AND BE OUTSIDE WEEK TO PROMOTE HEALTHY ALTERNATIVES TO SCREEN TIME

MERIDIAN – The Meridian Parks and Recreation Department is hosting the fourth annual *Unplug and Be Outside Week*, April 25 – 30. The department has put together free activities, workshops and events throughout Meridian to inspire and empower families to get off the couch and get active.

“This annual celebration is intended to educate families about the negative effects of too much ‘screen time’ and challenge them to explore the endless recreation opportunities in our community,” said Mayor Tammy de Weerd, City of Meridian.

Over the past 30 years, the obesity rate in children 6-11 years old has quadrupled and researchers say there’s a connection between the number of hours spent in front of a television and childhood obesity. The average American child spends more than 30 hours a week in front of a screen (TV, computer, and video games).

“That’s why we put together *Unplug and Be Outside Week*. We want to provide opportunities for families and show them the abundance of activities available in our community away from TV and computers,” said Colin Moss, Meridian Recreation Manager and Event Organizer.

Some of the diverse activities include tennis, golf, fishing, and lacrosse, to more unique offerings like a bookmobile scavenger hunt, beginning gardening class, and theatre workshops. The Meridian Library on Cherry Lane will also be hosting events.

To learn more and to view the complete schedule for this year’s *Unplug and Be Outside Week*, visit the website: www.meridiancity.org/unplug.

###

The City of Meridian is located in the heart of the Treasure Valley in southwest Idaho. Founded in 1893 and incorporated as a city in 1903, Meridian is one of Idaho's largest and fastest growing communities. 24/7 Wall Street named Meridian the *Number One Place to Live in America*. America's Promise Alliance/ING recognized the city as one of the nation's *100 Best Communities for Young People*. For more information, visit www.meridiancity.org.