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August 26, 1997

## **DENVER KIDS BRINGS OUT THE BEST**

Last Sunday, as I watched the Denver Kids Health Care Invitational, I remembered field days and how carefree school was when I was younger. Even though I was raised without a father, my mother and grandmother were always there for me. I didn't have a care in the world.

But that's not the case for the children involved with Denver Kids Inc. Statistics describe these students as high-risk. Close to 90 percent come from homes in which the parents haven't completed high school, there is only one parent, the families are dependent on public assistance and / or are living at or below the poverty level. But like most kids, they want to make something of themselves.

The Denver Kids Health Care Invitational was designed to promote healthy living and positive interaction between students and adults. With laughter coming from all 12 teams, each consisting of three Denver Public School students and three representatives from sponsoring health care organizations, it certainly looked as if it was working.

Coordinating the day were members of Denver Active 20-30 and The Education Theatre Program of Kaiser Permanente. Alex Andron and Alexis Hertel, co-chairs of the event, were pleased with the donations received from King Soopers, which supplied the food and beverages; the Denver Nuggets, which donated basketballs as prizes; Target, which put together 50 back-to-school bags filled with everything a student needs for school; and James Sibley on keyboards and Jeff Waldman on drums, who provided the day's entertainment. These two boys are students who had never performed together, yet I caught myself tapping my foot every time they started up.

Others enjoying a summer day were Donna Hultin, resource director of Denver Kids Inc.; Margaret Fomer, the group's executive director; Brian Harper, an actor with The Education Theatre Program for Kaiser Permanente; and members of the Denver Active 20-30 - Dan Snipes, Mark Osborn, David Barnes, Steve Christoffersen and Joe Graff.