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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WinterKids Teams with Portland Parks, Recreation and Facilities for Annual Welcome to Winter Festival, Presented by Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield

Saturday, January 19th 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Payson Park, Portland

The Welcome to Winter Festival, hosted by WinterKids and Portland Recreation, will give hundreds of Maine kids the thrill of sledding, tubing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, and so much more! The 12th annual family friendly event, presented by Anthem and supported by Family Sport and Spine and Portland Volvo is free and open to the general public. WinterKids will introduce a variety of outdoor winter activities complete with hot cocoa from Coffee By Design and snacks from the St. Brigid School, music, and local mascots including Oakie (Oakhurst) and L.L.Bear with the L.L.Bean Bootmobile and the Portland Mariners' own Beacon. Channel 8 WMTW Meteorologist Sarah Long will be the emcee for the event.

"Our mission is to help children develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun, outdoor winter activity," says Julie Mulkern, Executive Director of WinterKids. "This event is a true community effort that showcases many welcoming, fun activities to help families stay active outdoors in the winter. Come join us!"

Children and their families will get a chance to take part in these fun winter activities:

- Sledding / Tubing (children are encouraged to B.Y.O.S., Bring Your Own Sled)
- Inflatable rafts on the sledding hill courtesy of Adventure Bound!
- Snowshoeing and snow tubing with L.L.Bean's Outdoor Discovery School
- Ice Skating with Portland Gear Hub
- Snowboard demos with Long's Board Shop
- WinterKids Snow Painting
- L.L. Bean Boot Toss
- WinterKids Scavenger Hunt with Prizes
- Zumba in the snow

The park will be closed starting at 10:30 am. For parking, VIP Tour & Charter will run a shuttle from the Ocean Avenue School parking lot to Payson Park from 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. **Thank you to our partners:** City of Portland Parks & Rec, LL Bean O.D.S., Remy's, Portland Gear Hub, Adventure Bound, Headlight AV, Paricon Sleds, Kittery Trading Post, Coffee By Design, Oakhurst, Portland Mariners, Long's Board Shop, St. Brigid School, VIP Tour & Charter Bus Co., Friends of Payson Park, Pyxie, and Joe Bornstein.

*WinterKids is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to help children develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun, outdoor winter activity. This year, WinterKids will reach 23,000 Maine and New Hampshire children through our family programs, school programs, and community events. WinterKids' Major Community Sponsor is Hannaford. WinterKids' Supporting Sponsors are Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, L.L.Bean, WEX, and Irving Oil. **Learn more at WinterKids.org.***