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NEWS RELEASE

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Colorful Playground Just a Hop, Skip and a Jump Away

Indian Trail awarded grant to update outdoor spaces and increase healthy activity

The Town of Indian Trail recently received a grant to transform a public area into an imaginative space for families to play and be active outdoors. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) and the North Carolina Recreation and Park Association (NCRPA) are supporting healthier communities by installing PlayPrints across the state.

PlayPrints are ground markings, or colorful shapes and games that are painted on existing pavement. The bright colors and interactive designs are meant to encourage visitors to take part in more physical activity. Community agencies across North Carolina were invited to apply.

“We were so excited to learn that Chestnut Square Park had been chosen for this grant,” said Indian Trail Parks and Recreation Director Jason Tryon. “These prints are a great way to get even more use out of the park, since they essentially are turning some of our sidewalks into five new play areas. I think the kids are going to get a real kick out of it.”

The PlayPrints are an easy, creative way to add more activities to the already-popular park. And with five of the characters spread across the grounds, they will give children plenty to pick from whether it be hopscotch, game boards or agility challenges. Chestnut Square Park is already a very active play area – with the playground, walking trails, tennis and volleyball courts and athletic fields, not to mention Carolina Courts – and the PlayPrints will take the park even further in the mission of keeping children moving.

“We want to promote healthy habits at an early age and make it fun for North Carolinians to get outside and get active with their families,” said Kathy Higgins, vice president of corporate affairs at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. “PlayPrints are a simple way to take existing outdoor spaces in our communities and transform them into a center for healthy activity and imaginative play.”

Over the next two years, PlayPrints will be popping up at open play spaces as part of BCBSNC’s Get Outside North Carolina! (GO NC!) program. Go NC! builds healthy and active lifestyles through the advancement of greenway systems, increased access to public bicycles and the overall promotion of outdoor physical activity.

“Providing fun and creative avenues to engage our communities by adding PlayPrints to our parks and greenways is an exciting way to encourage citizens of all ages to have a little fun while increasing physical activity,” said Michelle Wells, executive director at NCRPA.

The high-quality designs are made to last up to five years. Installation of the prints is likely to take place next spring.

“The uniqueness of the designs and the bright, happy colors are going to add something wonderful to our already wonderful park,” Indian Trail Recreation Program Coordinator Katy Keller said. “I’m really looking forward to seeing kids hopscotching their way to the playground, and I bet even some of our adults will get in on the fun, too.”

For a complete list of PlayPrints recipients and to follow progress as PlayPrints are installed throughout the state visit www.NCRPA.net/PlayPrints or follow @NCRPA @BCBSNC or #PlayPrints on Twitter and Facebook.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina improves the health and well-being of our customers and communities by providing innovative health care products, services and information to more than 3.91 million members, including approximately 1 million served on behalf of other Blue Plans. Since 1933, we have worked to make North Carolina a better place to live through our support of community organizations, programs and events that promote good health. We have been recognized as one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies by Ethisphere Institute every year since 2012. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Visit BCBSNC online at bcbsnc.com. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

About the North Carolina Recreation & Park Association:

Founded in 1944, the North Carolina Recreation & Park Association (NCRPA) is the premier nonprofit education and advocacy organization, dedicated to the advancement of the park, recreation and leisure professions in our state. NCRPA empowers park and recreation professionals and citizen board members through educational opportunities that enhance their ability to change lives and impact communities on a daily basis for the citizens of North Carolina. For an overview of the programs and services offered by the organization, visit www.ncrpa.net .