



An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



NEWS RELEASE

Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation Contact: Trey Baggett
BCBSNC Media Line: (919) 765-3005
NCRPA Contact: Matt Carusona, (919)-832-5868

For Immediate Release: September 4, 2015

Colorful Playground Just a Hop, Skip and a Jump Away

Wintergreen Intermediate awarded grant to update outdoor spaces and increase healthy activity

Greenville, N.C. – Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation 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.

“Receiving a PlayPrints grant at Wintergreen Intermediate is a helpful step as we continue to grow healthy and active opportunities in our community”, Trey Baggett, Recreation Supervisor at Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation. “Park visitors will have new creative ways to engage with our public space and have fun participating in physical activity outdoors.”

The Wintergreen neighborhood park area is located behind Wintergreen Intermediate School and is used for many activities by both the school system and the community. We believe that the use of the PlayPrints will encourage children and teenagers to participate in many types of differing activities, not just the ones they are used to doing. From hopscotch to foursquare, children and even adults may share their experiences with each other and bring back great memories.

“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.

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 Pitt Count Community Schools and Recreation:

The Pitt County Community Schools & Recreation Department is devoted to improving the quality of life for all citizens in Pitt County by maximizing the use of resources through cooperative efforts with other agencies and organizations.

School campuses are used for reunions, meetings, events, public meetings & much more. We also are fortunate to have the Alice F. Keene (AFK) Park; with a two shelters that can be rented out. Many of our elementary schools are used as neighborhood parks and even have walking trails offering more opportunities to stay fit for the community. Many of our recreation programs operate in schools on weekends and after school hours. We are fortunate to have our department located at the AFK Park which helps allow for more programs to be offered during school hours & assist in providing a central location for bigger events. The collaborative relationship between Pitt County & Pitt County Schools has given our citizens many more recreational & educational opportunities.

We also offer several youth sports experiences throughout the school year along with several opportunities to volunteer. Our sports programs for all ages are successful because of the volunteers that give their time and help make it happen. The time & skills our coaches give are priceless, & directly relate to the positive team experiences our children & adults receive. Programs are available at different school locations in Pitt County & in the AFK Park. In 2011 we added the Staff Wellness Program. We offer programs as well as resources to help keep PCS's staff healthy. We also offer an assortment of fitness programs for adults and senior citizens.

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 .

###