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## Building Healthy Communities: Engaging elementary schools through partnership #mikidscan

### Reaching more families through press opportunities

**Building Healthy Communities** engages public, private and nonprofit partners – Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Michigan Department of Community Health, Michigan Fitness Foundation, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, University of Michigan, and Wayne State University’s Center for School Health to make a statewide impact to address childhood obesity in Michigan and improve the health of young people, their families and the communities by implementing a comprehensive, school-wide network of physical activity and healthy eating opportunities and education in elementary and middle schools.

In elementary schools, Building Healthy Communities focuses on improving the current and future health of students through school-based education and environmental initiatives. *Building Healthy Communities: Engaging elementary schools through partnership* is an opportunity for forty-five elementary schools to participate in the program for one year.



The program embraces a comprehensive, school wide philosophy by integrating healthy eating and physical activity into six specific areas of the school environment.

*A partnership between*



*Supported by*



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

## **Messaging suggestions: Fighting Childhood Obesity**

By applying to be part of *Building Healthy Communities: Engaging elementary schools through partnership*, our school is making a commitment to fundamentally change the school culture to combat the childhood obesity epidemic by:

- Educating students through classroom lessons
- Creating an environment that makes the healthy choice the easy choice
- Encouraging students to practice lessons learned in the classroom
- Providing opportunities for physical activity
- Improving access to healthy food and beverages

Healthy habits start young, and the *Building Healthy Communities: Engaging elementary schools through partnership* will help establish the knowledge and behaviors needed for a healthy lifestyle.

Children who continue to practice healthy lifestyles are more likely to grow into healthy adults with fewer risk factors for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other chronic illness. Nearly one in three children in Michigan, ages 10-17, are overweight or obese.

I'm excited to implement *Building Healthy Communities: Engaging elementary schools through partnership* in our school, because not only does this program lead to improved health, but overall health improvements lead to improved academic performance. Healthy students are better learners.

### **Contractual agreement regarding press:**

Please work in conjunction with the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan team, listed below, regarding local press opportunities, efforts and earned media. A statewide press release is scheduled for early September. It is critical to wait to contact your local media until this release is issued. Information on the 2014-2015 participating school buildings is embargoed until that time. All schools will be notified when this occurs.

### **Communications resources available to you regarding *Building Healthy Communities: Engaging elementary schools through partnership*:**

- Communications professionals;
- Proactive communications efforts;
- Messaging assistance;
- Talking points.

**For press assistance, proactive outreach or to inform of ongoing press efforts, please use the contact information below:**

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