Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and Playworks Partner to Get more than 14,000 Boston Public School Students Moving

Physical Activity Supports Mayor Menino's Boston Moves for Health Campaign

Boston — March 25, 2013 — Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) and Playworks are partnering to increase physical activity for more than 14,000 Boston Public School students in 31 schools throughout the city.

Playworks, a key partner of BCBSMA, is a national nonprofit organization that transforms schools by providing play and physical activity at recess and throughout the school day. Playworks and its staff of volunteer "recess coaches," which include BCBSMA associates, help turn recess into a safe, fun and inclusive time that gets students active and engaged so they can return to the classroom focused and ready to learn. The program also teaches children to resolve conflicts that may arise at recess and carry over to the classroom, improving school climate both on and off the playground.

Partnerships like Playworks and BCBSMA are making a lasting impact in the community and are also helping to advance key initiatives including Mayor Menino's Boston Moves for Health Campaign. Each day Playworks "coaches" track physical activity levels at each of their schools, and the results have been remarkable. Despite snow and cold weather, 14,000 Playworks students have already logged 110,686 miles during the first two-weeks of a physical activity challenge!

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts volunteer coaches are also increasing their activity levels by partaking in three hours of physical activity throughout several recess periods, which is contributing to many Blue Cross participants doubling their fitness goals as measured on company-issued pedometers. To foster an environment of community involvement, BCBSMA provides paid time off for associates to volunteer during regularly scheduled work hours through the Associate Volunteer Program known as BlueCrew.

"Health and wellness are vital components of our focused commitment to make quality health care affordable," said Sarah Iselin, Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. "For decades we've been dedicated to improving the health of our communities, members, accounts and our associates though innovative, outcome-focused programs and tools. We are proud to be part of such great initiatives that are helping us achieve this mission — including the Playworks program and Boston Moves for Health."

"By investing in Playworks, Blue Cross has exemplified how a company can work to improve both the community and their workforce," said Playworks Executive Director, Max Fripp. "Through creating shared values, our partnership has demonstrated results for both students and their associates."

BCBSMA and Playworks are committed to continuing to promote physical fitness and health initiatives with their workforce and Boston's youth. **On March 28, both companies will team up for monthly recess coaching at the Dever-McCormack school in Dorchester.**

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Blue Cross Blue shield of Massachusetts (www.bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to working with others in a spirit of shared responsibility to make quality health care affordable. Consistent with our corporate promise to always put our 2.8 million members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality.

About Playworks
Playworks (http://www.playworks.org/boston) is a national nonprofit organization that improves school climate, reduces bullying and increases student engagement in school through play and physical activity. Celebrating its 15-year anniversary, Playworks is the only nonprofit organization in the country to send trained, full-time coaches to low-income, urban schools. Playworks currently serves more than 170,000 children in 380 low-income schools in 23 cities throughout the country every school day. What began as small expansion to seven Boston Public Schools in 2006, Playworks Metro Boston is now serving 15,000 elementary school students every school day.

In addition to school based volunteering, Playworks delivers on-sitecorporate recess training to companies by transforming a conference room into a recess yard. Playworks staff gets employees moving while building effective teams through an active one-hour fitness session.

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