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North Dakota educators to begin training series to implement safe play practices during recess

DEVILS LAKE- With the help of BCBSND Caring Foundation, Northeast Education Services Cooperative (NES) will introduce a new professional learning series for educators across the state to engage preK-6 grade classroom teachers, support staff, and administrators in North Dakota school districts on the importance of safe and healthy play every day.

Derryn Johnson, NES Professional Learning Specialist, stated, “Knowing how much of a child’s daily active time is dependent of recess, it is critical that staff are able to help students maximize that time by making it fun, interactive, and composed of high-quality physical activity.”

This virtual training program enables teachers, paraprofessionals, and playground supervisors to guarantee that children are healthy and active during recess times and that they aren’t inadvertently using supervision practices that may stifle physical activity.

Training for recess staff is made even more important when considering the special challenges posed to North Dakota schools in the winter. Many winter days are dangerously cold, and other winter days schools struggle with snow accumulations that make outdoor recess impossible. “Often indoor recess is comprised of board games, reading, listening to music, or watching videos, all of which are good activities but take away the students’ need of active recess time,” stated Johnson.

“Creating an environment for children to safely exercise is a priority for us,” said Amber Blomberg, BCBSND Caring Foundation Manager. “We’re excited to see this program empower educators and staff to discover innovative and healthy ways to get kids moving.”

About the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota (BCBSND) Caring Foundation

Established in 1989, the BCBSND Caring Foundation (www.BCBSND.com/Caring-Foundation) is a private 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Through giving and investing, the Caring Foundation focuses on key health issues that help improve the health and well-being of North Dakotans and their communities. Caring Foundation staff work with grantees to support nonprofit sustainability, collaborate on shared outcomes and create lasting change.

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