



...ensuring affordable, accessible, high quality child care for all young children.

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CCSA Receives Two-Year, \$100,000 Grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation

Chapel Hill, N.C. – Child Care Services Association (CCSA) has received a two-year, \$100,000 grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) Foundation to support healthy meal planning and nutrition education for young children, parents and early childhood teachers throughout the Triangle through the expanded Early Nutrition Matters Program.

For the past 20 years, CCSA has been successfully operating the Early Nutrition Matters Program, a meal service program that provides two healthy meals and one snack a day to children in child care facilities. CCSA will now be able to add a nutritionist on staff to plan nourishing menus and provide on-site training about healthy eating and lifestyles to the early childhood teachers and parents of participating child care facilities. This training will help ensure that the healthy eating habits the children are learning in child care can be practiced at home and as they grow up and leave the child care setting. This educational initiative should reach 30 different child care programs, serving over 1,500 children by the end of the second year of implementation.

“With almost 15% of preschool children and about one out of four school-age children in North Carolina weighing significantly more than is healthy, it is imperative that our children develop healthy eating habits early in life. The addition of a nutritionist will help ensure that children in the Early Nutrition Matters Program are receiving the most nutritious food and that parents and teachers know how to help children in their care stay healthy for life,” said Sue Russell, President of Child Care Services Association.

“We believe that by supporting this effort, we are continuing to align our foundation with organizations, programs and people capable of improving the health and well-being of North Carolinians,” said Kathy Higgins, President of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation.

Founded in 1974, CCSA’s mission is to ensure affordable, accessible, high-quality child care for all children and families. The organization accomplishes its mission through national services, research and advocacy. In addition to its nutrition program, CCSA provides free referral services to families seeking child care, quality improvement assistance to child care businesses, and educational scholarships and salary supplements to child care professionals through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE\$® projects. In addition, CCSA President Sue Russell is a nationally respected expert on child care and is a resource for policy makers and community leaders throughout the United States. For more information, visit www.childcareservices.org.

Statewide, the BCBSNC Foundation invested more than \$690,000 in grants to 14 organizations as part of this most recent grant cycle. More information can be found at www.bcbsncfoundation.org.

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