



Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation

A Subsidiary of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi.

News

Building a Healthy Mississippi

Spring 2023

Foundation Funds New Health Exhibit Experience

The Mississippi Children's Museum Opens *Kareem's Dreamy Day*



Pictured above: Visitors to the Mississippi Children's Museum—Jackson practice cooking a healthy meal in the "Kareem's Dreamy Day" exhibit funded by the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. (Image courtesy of the Mississippi Children's Museum—Jackson.)

With a generous grant provided by the **Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation**, the Mississippi Children's Museum reimaged and redesigned the Healthy Fun gallery to teach children about "Healthy Habits at Home" through the *Kareem's Dreamy Day* experience. Each of Kareem's friends teach guests about a different aspect of health and well-being, including nutrition, exercise, social wellness, mindfulness and bedtime routines.

"The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is proud of its

continued partnership with the Mississippi Children's Museum to present health and well-being to children and their families through fun, hands-on exhibits and programs that encourage exploration, discovery and active play, said Foundation Director, Eugenia King. Children engaging in creative experiences focused on physical activity, proper nutrition and the importance of a healthy bedtime routine, will guide them to make healthy lifestyle choices outside the museum setting."

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Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation

Vision

A Healthy Mississippi

Mission

Provide leadership and targeted grant funding for sustainable initiatives and programs to improve the overall health and well-being of Mississippians

Strategic Focus

- Communities
- Schools
- Access to High Quality Healthcare Services

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Pictured left and above: Visitors to the Mississippi Children's Museum — Jackson explore healthy activities in the new "Kareem's Dreamy Day" exhibit in the existing Healthy Fun gallery. The new exhibit is funded by the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. (Images courtesy of the Mississippi Children's Museum—Jackson.)

Building HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Funded by:



Lyon Elementary School



Houlka Attendance Center



Jonestown Elementary School

The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation recently held ribbon-cutting events for the final three of 11 school playgrounds funded and installed through the **Building Healthy Schools | Playgrounds** initiative: Lyon Elementary School and Jonestown Elementary School, both in the Coahoma County Public School District, and Houlka Attendance Center in the Chickasaw County Public School District.

Eugenia King, the Foundation's director, made remarks at all three events attended by school personnel, students, parents and local media outlets. The Foundation provided grant funding for 11 school playgrounds across Mississippi (see map at right).

The Foundation also provided each school with teacher education curriculum created as a best practice guide for promoting overall fitness and fun through the use of outdoor play environments.

The evidence-based curriculum is aligned with national physical education standards and help students develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to be physically active for a lifetime.

A four-hour implementation training was held for teachers at each school after the playgrounds were installed. One-hour follow up sessions are scheduled for schools this fall.

Coahoma County Public School District

Friars Point Elementary School
Jonestown Elementary School
Lyon Elementary School

**Greenville Public Schools
(Washington County)**

Weddington Elementary School

Franklin County Public Schools

Franklin County Upper
Elementary School

Walthall County Public School District

Salem Attendance Center

Chickasaw County Public Schools

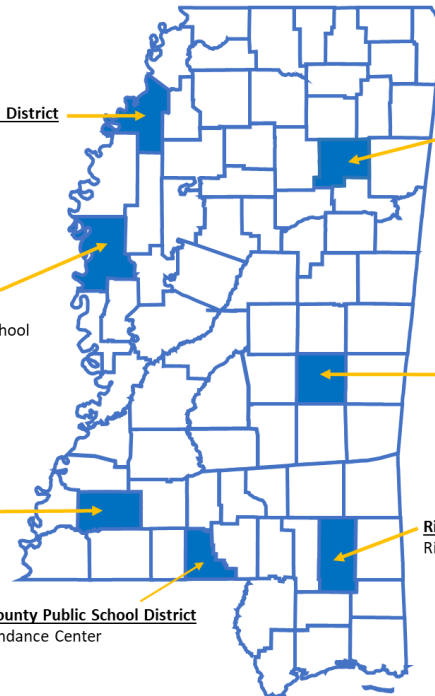
Houlka Attendance Center
Houston Lower Elementary School
Houston Upper Elementary School

Union Public Schools (Newton County)

Union Elementary School

Richton Public Schools (Perry County)

Richton Elementary School



Farmers' Markets: Connecting Mississippians to Healthy Foods



The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation has a vision for a healthy Mississippi and provides leadership and targeted grant funding for sustainable initiatives and programs to improve the overall health and well-being of Mississippians.

The Foundation recognizes that eating a healthful diet is fundamental to well-being, and when combined with physical activity, promotes overall good health. The

Foundation also recognizes that farmers' markets are a staple in many Mississippi communities affording families the opportunity to access fresh, local produce. Farmers' markets connect communities to their food system and create opportunities where farmers can sell fresh, local foods.

The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation established the following strategic goals for farmers' markets:

- Create and increase opportunities for farmers to sell their products directly to consumers;
- Create and increase consumers' opportunities to buy local products directly from farmers;
- Bring together families and neighbors to local food producers to create a sense of community; and
- Provide a platform to educate individuals and families about the nutritional, environmental and economic value of buying local, sustainably-produced farm products.



"The farmers' market is essential and serves as a source of healthy, nutritious food for the community, and many shoppers depend on the local farmers for their weekly grocery needs."

Andy Gipson, Commissioner, Mississippi State Department of Agriculture and Commerce

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce provides criteria for farmers' markets to receive the Mississippi Certified Farmers' Market designation. Through grants supporting the growth and development of locations throughout Mississippi where residents can purchase fresh, locally grown foods, the Foundation is encouraging farmers' markets to work toward and achieve this designation.

Mississippi mayors interested in starting a new farmers' market or enhancing an existing farmers' market in their municipalities with grant support from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, please send an email to Foundation@bcbsms.com.

COMING THIS SUMMER! Healthy Award Winners to be Announced!



2023 Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation Healthy Hometown Awards

Announcement Date*: June 28, 2023
Mississippi Municipal League Annual Awards Luncheon—Biloxi

2023 Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation Healthy School Awards

Announcement Date*: July 11, 2023
Mississippi Association of School Superintendents Summer
Convention—Biloxi



**The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation will distribute a statewide media release immediately following the announcement of winners for each Healthy Award Program, respectively.*

For additional information about the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, please visit our website at www.healthiermississippi.org.

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