



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Everybody Wins! DC and CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Partner to Hold Kick-off Event to Launch the Healthy Month Initiative on May 5th 2009

Everybody Wins! DC ([EW!DC](#)), with help from a \$20,000 grant by CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield ([CareFirst](#)), will host the **Healthy Month Initiative** in the Power Lunch Program in local Title 1 elementary schools, this May, to encourage reading and healthy living among students and parents. The new "Healthy Month" of reading program will reach more than 1,000 students in 14 area schools. Health education books will be prominently displayed during in-school program activities and CareFirst's contribution will allow each child to receive two free health-inspired books.

A kick-off event will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2009 at 12:30 pm at Walker Jones Educational Center (100 L Street NW in the Library). Maria Harris Tildon, CareFirst Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Community Affairs will be the featured speaker.

Mary Salander, Founder and Executive Director of Everybody Wins! DC, said of the May 2009 healthy literacy campaign, "Programs such as Healthy Month enhance our students' self-esteem, expand their possibilities for success in school and in life, and help fortify a solid foundation in learning for years to come."

Obesity is a leading cause of cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes. In the U.S., cardiovascular disease is the number killer of adults, accounting for more than 650,000 deaths per year. Diabetes ranks 6th, causing more than 75,000 deaths ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)).

Maria Harris Tildon, CareFirst Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Community Affairs said of the United State's obesity epidemic, "More than 4 million elementary school-age children in the U.S. suffer from obesity. Healthy behaviors learned today can help reverse this alarming trend and prevent chronic, debilitating diseases in adulthood."

Reading Mentors will be encouraged to select featured books during the month and share personal health success strategies with students.

Sample list of books: Oh the Things You Can Do That Are Good for You! (Cat in the Hat Learning Library); Inside Your Outside: All about the Human Body (Cat in the Hat Learning Library); The Body Book for Girls; What to Do When You're Scared & Worried: A Guide for Kids; & The Berenstain Bears Go to the Doctor.

In its 72nd year of service, CareFirst, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, is a not-for-profit health care organization which, through its affiliates and subsidiaries, offers a comprehensive portfolio of health insurance products and administrative services to nearly 3.4 million individuals and groups in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia. Through its CareFirst Commitment initiative and other public mission activities, CareFirst supports efforts to increase the accessibility, affordability, safety and quality of health care throughout its market areas.

“EW!DC & CareFirst partnering together to improve the health and lives of underserved students through literacy”