



For Immediate Release  
Contact: Laura Ringo, Partners for Active Living  
(o) 864-598-9638  
(c) 864-237-3843  
[lringo@active-living.org](mailto:lringo@active-living.org)

### **Ribbon Cutting Slated for Healthy Outdoor Childcare Space in Celebration of Earth Day**

**Spartanburg, SC** – The earlier children learn healthy lifestyles, the more likely those behaviors are “to stick” and become habit. Community partners have come together to create a state model program of encouraging more physical activity and healthy eating in young children.

The model program is called Preventing Obesity by Design. The program, “Preventing Obesity by Design (POD) is aimed at reversing the trend toward childhood obesity by improving outdoor environmental diversity of childcare centers, which research suggests can increase children’s level of physical activity and cognitive development, increase time spent outdoors by children and teachers, and increase children’s awareness of vegetables, fruit, and nuts as healthy foods. POD considers design of outdoor environments in early childhood as a preventive health intervention.

The project is driven by a) evidence that young children learn most effectively (good nutritional habits for example) through hands-on experience, and b) evidence that being outdoors is critical to children’s physical and cognitive development (outdoor environments are correlates of physical activity; green environments in particular support attention functioning). In addition, understanding food selection and preparation may support the development of lesson plans related to language, math, science, the arts, and other subjects.

“The center directors, the teachers, the parents and the children have all been so excited at the centers we are working with in Spartanburg County,” said Liz Perry, the Healthy Kids Coordinator at Partners for Active Living. “The genuine enthusiasm for imaginative outdoor play and gardening is a great thing to see.”

Two Spartanburg childcare facilities will cut a ribbon tomorrow celebrating their improved outdoor space. They are:

1. Big Blue Marble Academy  
1201 Springfield Rd., Boiling Springs, SC  
Open House: Thursday, April 20, 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.  
(Ribbon cutting ceremony at 9:00 a.m.)

2. Kids First Child Development Center  
153 Fosters Grove Rd., Chesnee, SC 29323  
Open House: Thursday, April 20, 5:00-6:00 p.m.  
(Ribbon cutting ceremony at 5:00 p.m.)

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, children at the Centers will be planting vegetables and project and Center leaders will be available for comment.

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*About Partners for Active Living:* Through policies, partnerships, places, & programs, Partners for Active Living inspires a healthy and active Spartanburg County.