

From: Priester, Nicole <NicolePriester@gov.sc.gov>
Required: Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>
Packard, Clark <ClarkPackard@gov.sc.gov>
Veldran, Katherine <KatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov>
Mottel, Haley <HaleyMottel@gov.sc.gov>
Optional: Baker, Josh <JoshBaker@gov.sc.gov>
Subject: Early Autism Project Inc. Grand Opening
Location: 3115 Sunset Blvd,
When: 4/4/2014 2:00:00 PM - 3:00:00 PM

Advance: Brandon Landrum
(803)260-0783

APPROVED BY: NRH on 2/11

EVENT: Early Autism Project Inc. Grand Opening
DATE: Friday, April 4, 2014

TIME: 2:00 PM
LOCATION: 3115 Sunset Blvd, West Columbia, S.C.

LOCATION SET-UP: Podium in the open natural therapy area inside of the clinic. The space is not very large, so a microphone is not needed. Attendees will be standing.

ON-SITE LOCATION CONTACT:
Veronica McNeal, Clinic Director, (803) 905-4427 (office)

SCHEDULING CONTACT:
Susan Butler
(803) 983-9201
sbutler@earlyautisumproject.com
(Note: Susan is very good friends with Bill McDaniels. Bill called to follow-up to make sure this request was scheduled.)

Handling Event Details:
Cate Lewandowski
Exec. V.P. & Chief Marketing Officer
Educational Services of America
615-577-5681 (office)
615-202-5747 (mobile)
clewandowski@esa-education.com

PRIMARY STAFF: Katherine Veldran and Haley Mottel

ADVANCE STAFF: Zach Pippin

PURPOSE: Gov. Haley will participate in the Early Autism Project Inc. Grand Opening Ceremony.
PRESS: Yes

PUBLIC: Yes

INVITED BY: Susan Butler

INTRODUCED BY: Ann Eldridge, President and Director of Clinical Services for the South Carolina Early

LENGTH OF SPEAKING:

Ideally we would like to have the Governor say a few words, participate in the ribbon cutting ceremony, take a short tour of the clinic and take a minute or two to shake the hands of our parents and other guests which should take no more than 45 minutes total. We will have a very short introduction by Ann Eldridge, Executive VP and COO of Early Autism Project and have the Governor say a few words if that is something she would like to do.

SPEAKING ORDER/LINE-BY-LINE:

2:00 PM	Welcome from Ann Eldridge -Acknowledge Gov. Haley and any other special guests -Brief overview of EAP and Columbia presence/relationships -Introduce Gov. Haley
2:07 PM	Gov. Haley's remarks Introduce Mayor Benjamin
2:12 PM	Mayor Benjamin's remarks
2:17 PM	Ribbon cutting -Photos
2:20 PM	Media interviews
2:40 PM	Clinic tour Meet guests, staff and parents
3:00 PM	Adjourn

NOTE: The Early Autism Project (EAP) provides intensive, research-based behavioral treatment for children and young adults with autism and related disorders. They provide services to children and their families in their homes, at clinics and in schools.

Though they've had a clinic in Columbia since 2011, this event is for the grand opening/ribbon cutting of their new, state of the art clinic in Columbia.

NOTE: May be updated. Waiting for return call from Pete Liggett at HHS.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS:

Early Autism

- I am delighted to be here for the grand opening of the new clinic. This new state of the art facility will allow the Early Autism Project to provide more children in the Columbia area with the therapy programs they need.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder can be a debilitating, lifelong disorder which can impair an individual's ability to learn, develop healthy interactive behaviors; and understand verbal and nonverbal and reciprocal communication.
- It is also the fastest growing developmental disorder.
- According to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 1 in 68 children has been identified with autism. (Released late March).
- **Autism affects an estimated 1.8 million Americans and more than 52,000 South**

- **Carolínians. (South Carolina Autism Awareness Society)**

- Autism is 5 times more common in boys (1 in 42) than among girls (1 in 189). (CDC)
- A recent paper published by the National Institute of Health (NIH) estimates that **it costs \$17,000 more per year to care for a child with autism compared to a child without autism.**
- On Wednesday, I issued a proclamation establishing April as Autism Awareness Month and Wednesday, April 2, 2014, as Autism Awareness Day in South Carolina. That night, my family and I lit the Governor's Mansion blue in order to help raise awareness of the disorder.
- While there is no medical test to diagnose the disease, and there is no cure, we do know what treatments can help an individual achieve his or her own potential.
- Early intervention treatments have shown to greatly increase a child's development. We also know that treatment needs to be flexible and individualized to each child and their family. One-size fits all treatments simply do not work.
- **That's why the work of the Early Autism Project is so important: They work with parents and educators to develop Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy to customize treatments to each child with the disorder.**
- In order to support the flexibility needed to ensure special needs children flourish, I signed a bill in 2013 to provide a tax credit to individuals donating money for special needs students to attend private schools.
- My most recent executive budget provided nearly \$45 million (13.2 in state funds; \$31 million in matching funds) in Medicaid funding to reduce wait lists for DDSN-administered Community Supports and Intellectual Disability waivers by an estimated 1,400.

ATTENDEES:

Early Autism Project Employees

Ann Eldridge
Susan Butler
Angie Keith
Beth Dabbs
Mark Claypool
Cate Lewandowski
Robin Embry
Lisa Rollins
Lorri Unumb
Holly Brant, EAP Senior Therapist
Anna Bullard-
Christi Penland-EAP Greenville Clinic Director
Stephanie Burgess-EAP Mt. Pleasant Clinic Director
Marcella Ridley-Winston's Wish
Lucy Hunt-Winston's Wish
Winston Ridley-child with autism

Pat Kelly-Kelly Builders and Property Management
Russell Bryan, Steven, William: Brookwood and Associates
Rob Tyndall, Avondale Partners
Bill McDaniels, McDaniels Automotive Group

Sally Cavar-Nelson Mullins
Dan Fritze-Nelson Mullins
Sara Beth Rush-Pink Sorbet
Beth Baxley-Pink Sorbet
Daniel Davis-Department of Disabilities and Special Needs
Shannon Finch- Department of Disabilities and Special Needs
Irene Ingram-Occupational Therapist, Hartsville
Gail Shelley-BabyNet
Carol Chisolom-BabyNet
Suzanne Yankowitz-Service Coordinator
Becky Peters-Bright Start
Janis Moore-Bright Start
Kim Thomas- SC Autism Society
Melissa Shope-SC Autism Society
Susan Kastner-SC Autism Society
Nicole Norris-Norris Designs
Chasity Davis-Davis and Co CPAs
Ben Abbott-Father of Susan Butler

MEDIA ADVISORY:

Gov. Haley and Mayor Benjamin Join Early Autism Project For Columbia Clinic Grand Opening Friday, April 4

What: Gov. Nikki Haley, Mayor Steve Benjamin and members of the Columbia community will join [Early Autism Project](#) (EAP) for the grand opening and ribbon-cutting of its new state-of-the-art Columbia Clinic.

The 7,800-square-foot clinic provides children between the ages of 20 months and 21 years with the highest quality intensive, research based behavioral treatment for autism spectrum and related disorders. Since opening its original Columbia clinic in 2011, EAP has been the area's leading provider of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy, which is widely recognized as the most effective, evidence-based treatment for autism and is endorsed by the U.S. Surgeon General and American Academy of Pediatrics as the treatment of choice for autism.

When: Friday, April 4
2 p.m.

Where: Early Autism Project Columbia Clinic
[3115 Sunset Boulevard](#)
[West Columbia, SC 29169](#)

Why: The new clinic will allow EAP to provide more children in the Columbia area with customized ABA therapy programs to help ensure each child reaches his or her full potential and has the opportunity to be mainstreamed into a traditional learning environment and become more independent.

Visuals:

- Welcome remarks from [Ann Eldridge](#), M.Ed., Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Early Autism Project
 - Message from [Gov. Nikki Haley](#)
 - Comments from [Mayor Steve Benjamin](#)
 - Ribbon-cutting ceremony
 - Tour of the clinic, which includes a large, colorful, therapeutic play area with a trampoline and slide, and individual therapy rooms with skill building games, books and computers.

Special guests and EAP executive leadership will be available for interviews after the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Additional Information:

- April is National Autism Awareness Month
- South Carolina is one of the most progressive states for autism treatment in the United States.

Media Contact: Robin Embry, Lovell Communications, 615-297-7766, Robin@lovell.com
Katelyn Fish, Lovell Communications, 615-297-7766, katelyn@lovell.com

For more information, visit www.earlyautismproject.com.