Lujan Grisham administration releases additional summer resources for families
Multi-agency state effort addresses access to food, child care, cultural learning opportunities

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Friday announced additional resources for New Mexico families interested in summer youth programming. Through a collaboration between the Department of Cultural Affairs, Public Education Department, Early Childhood Education and Care Department, and Children, Youth & Families Department, the state has assembled a comprehensive array of supports for families – including a directory of available programs, online and print resources, child care resources and other materials.

These resources are available on http://www.newmexico.gov/summer-youth-programs/, along with a full list of COVID-19 Safe Practices for in-person programs.

“Children have always been a top priority of this administration. They must be able to play and learn and eat during the summer, even during the current health crisis. Working together, these state agencies are making sure that happens and happens safely,” Gov. Lujan Grisham said.

CYFD will support food deliveries to communities in need in New Mexico, including tribes and pueblos, throughout the summer. To date, CYFD has led the coordination and distribution of more than 1 million pounds of food and 5.4 million meals throughout the state.

CYFD will also continue to prioritize outreach and support to children and youth in custody throughout the summer. Staff are working to connect families and foster parents to summer recreational and educational activities for children and families,
many offered through the Early Childhood Education and Care Department and the Department of Cultural Affairs, including options for child care in addition to fun activities, books, arts and crafts and science experiments that can be done at home. For older youth and young adults, CYFD will continue to help with access to housing, jobs, apprenticeships, and preparation for fall academic activities. Increased video and telephonic “visits” with children in foster care and young people previously in CYFD custody who are now living independently will address any emergent needs through the summer months.

“One thing we’ve seen during this incredibly difficult time has been our staff’s desire to connect more with families and families’ reciprocal engagement as that’s happened,” CYFD Secretary Brian Blalock said. “We’re seeing children and young people trusting more than ever that CYFD is here for them, and that’s helping increase access to supports and helping them thrive. These more frequent and meaningful connections are something we’re looking to continue doing for the long term.”

CYFD also continues to support telehealth services throughout the summer. People who have benefited from the convenience of increased behavioral health access at home and through the New Mexico Crisis and Access Line and its companion app, NMConnect, will be pleased to know telehealth services are here to stay.

The Early Childhood Education and Care Department will continue to assist families in accessing child care for children 6 weeks to 12 years of age in centers and homes. Families who need care can call New Mexico Kids (1-800-691-9067). ECECD is also working to make state government programming available to child care centers – including DCA’s “bookmobile” program.

“Supporting families during this public health emergency means striking a balance: providing opportunities for children to learn, grow, and develop, while preventing the spread of the virus.” said Early Childhood Education and Care Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. “These resources do just that.”

The New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs is dedicated to continuing to provide educational, enriching programming to the children of New Mexico and their families throughout the summer. All DCA’s annual Summer Youth Programs will continue in a virtual environment. Exciting events and programs, including the first statewide summer reading program, will be available online. New Mexico’s museums, historic sites, and cultural institutions are creating fun, educational activity kits that will be distributed to families via programs throughout the state. Families can take advantage of the weekly Friday night concert series, Our Fair New Mexico, and a variety of virtual exhibit tours, fun DIY activities, and engaging video content can be found on Visit Virtually. Explore all of DCA’s resources on http://www.NewMexicoCulture.org. Check back often as content is always being added.

“The incredible educators and instructional staff at all of DCA’s divisions have been working hard to bring our state’s rich culture into the homes of all New Mexicans this summer,” said Cultural Affairs Secretary Debra Garcia y Griego, “We are committed to
providing hands-on activities and virtual experience to help New Mexico families and children throughout the summer.”

The Public Education Department determined that it would not be possible to meet the statutory requirements of K-5 Plus for summer 2020. However, Extended Learning Time Programs may still be possible in August while adhering to public health requirements and best practices.

The PED encourages school districts to run locally funded, remote, or virtual summer school opportunities. The Summer School 2020 Guidance document published by PED on May 21st offers districts and school leaders resources and considerations based on what has been learned in the shift to remote learning and the research behind summer learning. Recent evidence suggests that expanding summer learning beyond remediation to provide students with rigorous opportunities to preview and practice knowledge and skills aligned to upcoming grade-level standards is effective at bolstering student achievement. Likewise, providing social and emotional learning supports for students yields benefits in more traditional school contexts. Families are encouraged to check in with their local schools to learn about remote summer program opportunities in their area.

The PED offers the following resources to families in support of social and emotional well-being:

- [Strategies for Trauma-Informed Distance Learning](#)
- [Supporting Mindfulness in Learning](#)
- [CASEL Resources: scroll down to see links that support SEL at Home](#)
- [Building Positive Conditions for Learning at Home (In both English and Spanish)](#)

In addition, Grab and Go meal sites for children will continue operating throughout the summer – and educational, cultural and social emotional resources will be available for families at these sites. A site list is [available here](#).

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