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BOOST NETWORK LAUNCHES NEW RESOURCES TO HELP FAMILIES FIND AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

The BOOST Network's updated website and resources come at a time when the need for engaging youth programming is increasing

El Paso, TX - Today, the BOOST Network, launched a new resource geared towards supporting parents to find and enroll their children in local afterschool, summer and spring programs (also known as out-of-school time or OST programs) with the launch of a newly updated website that highlights the importance of out-of-school time programs for youth. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, OST programs played a critical role in helping young individuals develop healthy habits, addressing their mental health needs, and improving their education outcomes; but the pandemic has increased the need for these programs and resources as youth and parents navigate isolation and distance learning.

Established in 2015, BOOST is made possible through a partnership between the Paso del Norte Health Foundation and the United Way of El Paso County. These organizations bring together more than 40 OST providers with the common goals of strengthening the quality of out-of-school time programs available in El Paso, Texas, southern New Mexico, and Ciudad Juárez, and increasing youth participation in these programs. The new BOOST Network website provides a digital hub where parents and guardians can find information about youth programs that exist in their communities.

"Many out-of-school time providers have gotten creative during this pandemic and are offering services and programs that are so crucial for the healthy development of youth," said Bianca de Leon, Program Officer at the Paso del Norte Health Foundation. "We want parents in the region to know that organizations exist that can provide their kids with safe and engaging programs. And the BOOST Network wants to help parents find these programs."

Members of the BOOST Network offer programs ranging from athletics, arts and music, academic support, leadership development, summer enrichment, STEM-based activities and more. As a Network, these OST providers work together to continuously improve the quality of their programs through quarterly networking meetings, an online library of resources, training and workshops, and events.

"Our website - and the BOOST network - will continue to offer many of the same resources that have become crucial for OST providers in the border region, such as our OST library, quality assessment surveys, and information about our quarterly meetings," said Enrique Garcia, Healthy Kids manager at the United Way of El Paso. "It is important for programs in our region to come together to improve their programming, and with the updated branding and website that we launch today, we are hoping to continue supporting OST providers and connecting our members directly with parents and youth that can benefit from their services."

To learn more about the BOOST Network and its resources, please visit: theboostnetwork.org