



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 3, 2021

Navajo Nation Child Care Centers Reopening in Phases

Window Rock, Ariz - The Navajo Division of Social Services (DSS) Navajo Department of Child Care and Development (DCCD) will reopen child care services in three phases.

Phase one reopening began Monday, August 2, 2021, with The T'iists'ozhi Childcare Center in Crownpoint, NM, the Karigan Childcare Center in St. Michaels, AZ, and the Little Miss Muffet Childcare center in Fort Defiance, AZ.

"The three child care centers reopening in phase one will set the trend on how the department should move forward with the reopening of the other child care centers. The number one priority is the health and safety of all children, staff, and families," stated Sylvia Tyler, Department Manager III.

Phase two will reopen the Shiprock and Tuba City area childcare centers on August 23, 2021. Lastly, childcare centers in Chinle and the surrounding areas to reopen on September 6, 2021, completing phase three of the reopening plan.

The DCCD reopening plan is a product of collaborative efforts of the *Navajo Nation Community Mitigation School and Daycare Committee* comprised of the Department of Dine Education, the Navajo Health Command Operations Center, the Navajo Department of Health, and health professionals.

The reopening plan mirrors the *Public Health Emergency Order No. 2021-014, Public Health Emergency Order Implementing the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Safe Schools Framework and Declaring "Yellow Status" for schools.*

"Parents have returned to work while older siblings are returning to school. We need these facilities available for the younger children. The DCCD must follow all Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Executive Orders and the Navajo Division of Health's Public Health Orders. The Navajo Health Command Operations Center monitors the impacts of the pandemic daily. As conditions and situations change in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, so will the availability of child care services," explained Deannah Neswood-Gishey, DSS Executive Director.

For more information, call Grace M. Boyne, DCCD Program Manager II at (928) 871-6629 or the DSS Office of the Executive Director at (928) 871-6851.

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The Navajo Division of Social Services (NDSS) is under the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation's three-branch government. Under the leadership of the NDSS Executive Director, NDSS programs and Departments provide social services and human services, consistent with professional social work ethics and values, and human services in accordance with Navajo cultural values to help reduce and alleviate hardship.

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