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Back 2 School Resource Fair provides supplies for Lee County children

By Cristina Carreon Daily Journal Jul 9, 2018

TUPELO – On July 21, United Way of Northeast Mississippi will host a “Back 2 School Resource Fair” to provide school supplies to Pre-K through sixth-grade children in need in Lee County.

The fair will provide free backpacks stuffed with school supplies such as paper, pencils, glue sticks, scissors, folders, crayons and markers, while supplies last. Children must be present to receive a backpack of supplies.

A variety of community organizations will also attend to give information about services offered as well as provide some additional supplies to the children.

This year, Regional Rehabilitation Center, Boys & Girls Club of North Mississippi, HealthWorks! as well as the Lee County Library, CATCH Kids, Wear It Well, Macaroni Kid and S.A.F.E. will set up shop at the Lee County event.

Lee County Excel By 5 will have two teachers leading an activity and a table, set up with books to be given to children.

The organization holds resource fairs in seven Northeast Mississippi counties each year.

Eddie Begonia, positive youth development coordinator at the Family Resource Center, will attend four resource fairs this year and said the Center’s booth will provide some supplies to the young students.

“We ordered a bunch of back-to-school supplies and we’re hoping that it gets here in in time, last year we had rulers, pens, pencils. This year, I sent in an order for pencil pouches and folders and things that are more or less on the teachers’ lists, that way parents don’t have to buy it when it comes to that time,” Begonia said.

“From personal experience, my cousins moved here from Florida at the beginning of last year just before school started and they didn’t have any supplies. It was an emergency move. These fairs pretty much supplied the kids with school supplies at the beginning until their parents could get them,” Begonia said.

United Way President Melinda Tidwell said the organization acquired the backpacks already filled with supplies.

“People donate \$12.50 to purchase the backpack prefilled with supplies,” Tidwell said.

There are no restrictions on who can attend the event. Children can participate regardless of where they live, what school they attend or their family income. Grandparents or other responsible adults are encouraged to bring the children if parents are unavailable that day.

The fair will be at The Mall at Barnes Crossing in Tupelo, in the now vacant Charming Charlie space close to the center of the mall.

It is not too late for area businesses and community organizations to get involved by sponsoring a child or children on United Way’s website. For more information, visit <https://www.unitedwaynems.org/b2s/>.

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Local resource fairs

2018 Resource Fair Locations:

Pontotoc County	June 23	8:00 a.m.	West Heights Baptist Church
Lee County	July 21	9:30 a.m.	Barnes Crossing Mall
Itawamba County	July 28	8:00 a.m.	Itawamba Attendance Center Fulton, MS
Prentiss County	July 28	9:00 a.m.	Baptist Memorial Hospital Booneville, MS
Chickasaw County	July 28	10:00 a.m.	Houston Middle School
Tishomingo County	July 28	TBA	TBA
Union County	August 11	9:00 a.m. to noon	Baptist Memorial Hospital New Albany, MS