

■ WHEELING

YSS Celebrate Youth Event Slated Aug. 5

School Supplies Available

From STAFF REPORTS

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced Youth Services System's Celebrate Youth event to be a socially distanced affair for the second straight year. But families who do come through will be able to stock up on necessary school supplies before kids return to the classrooms.

The event will run from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 5, at Wheeling Park's White Palace parking lot. Families can drive through and collect school supplies while enjoying mobile entertainment, including balloon twisting, magic tricks and activity books.

The supplies include a drawstring backpack, crayons, colored pencils, pencil pouches, colored pens, notebooks, glue sticks, erasers, index cards and folders. Families also will receive a printed QR code that will lead to the YSS website where they can access information about local resources that serve children and families.

"We are looking forward to getting back to our in-person Celebrate Youth Festival next year," YSS Development Director Terra Crews said. "Until then, we wanted to make sure we could help alleviate some stress for families and take care of a few items off of the school supply lists for students.

"We are incredibly thankful for the ongoing support we receive from our community and partners so that we can continue to help local families," Crews added.

YSS started the annual Celebrate Youth Festival in 2008 as a way to give back to the community and provide a free day at the park for local families. Before COVID-19, the event included a free park wristband, school supplies, children's activities, inflatables, food, a resource fair and musical entertainment.

Celebrate Youth is sponsored by AEP, Encova Foundation, Marshall County Commission and Northwood Health Systems.

To sponsor or for event information, contact Crews at 304-218-2834 or tcrews@ysswv.com. Agencies and businesses interested in providing resource information may contact Betsy Bethel-McFarland at 304-213-2894 or bmcfarland@ysswv.com.