

Sunday Edition



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WEST SIDE TIMES

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ESTABLISHED 1940

La Senadora Castro Lucha por Mantener los Celulares y las Redes Sociales Fuera de las Aulas



Los adolescentes que pasan cinco o más horas por día en los dispositivos electrónicos tienen el 71 por ciento de más probabilidades de demostrar factores de riesgo para el suicidio – alarmante fenómeno que la Senadora Estatal Cristina Castro está determinada a cambiar. “Mi legislación quita los medios sociales de las

aulas para que los estudiantes puedan enfocarse en lo que es importante: aprender”, dijo la Sen. Castro (D-Elgin). “Esta medida fija una norma para limitar el uso del teléfono celular durante las horas de clase, pero hace una prioridad la flexibilidad, el permitir que las escuelas tomen la iniciativa en decidir como debe implementarse en su

comunidad local”. Los estudiantes han demostrado que la sola presencia de un teléfono celular reduce su habilidad de capacidad cognitiva – especialmente en los jóvenes que son altamente dependientes de los dispositivos. Investigaciones de más de 70 países y regiones con políticas estrictas en teléfonos celulares han encontrado que las

restricciones dieron como resultado una disminución de casos de acoso, una mejor atención y enfoque y un aumento en las puntuaciones de pruebas estandarizadas. Con la propuesta de la Sen. Castro, se debería pedir a los distritos escolares en Illinois que adopten un juego de políticas garantizando que los estudiantes no usan inapropiadamente

los celulares durante el momento de clase, de forma que cumplan con las necesidades de su comu-

nidad escolar. El Proyecto 2427 fue aprobado por el Senado el miércoles, con apoyo bipartidista.

Castro Fights to Keep Cellphones, Social Media Out of the Classroom

Teenagers who spend five or more hours per day on electronic devices are 71 percent more likely to demonstrate risk factors for suicide — an alarming phenomenon. State Senator Cristina Castro is determined to change. “My legislation takes social media out of the classroom so students can focus on what’s important: learning,” said Castro (D-Elgin). “This measure sets a standard to limit cellphone use during class time but prioritizes flexibility, letting schools take the lead in deciding how it should be implemented in their local community.” Studies have shown that the mere presence of a smartphone reduces available cognitive capacity — especially for young people who are highly dependent on the devices. Research from over 70 countries and regions with strict school cellphone policies has found that the restrictions resulted in decreased instances of bullying, better attention and focus, and increases in standardized test scores. Through Castro’s proposal, school districts in Illinois would be required to adopt a set of policies ensuring students do not inappropriately use cellphones during instructional time in a way that meets the needs of their school community. Senate Bill 2427 passed the Senate Wednesday with bipartisan support.



Chicago Park District's Cherry Tree Blossoms at Jackson Park Are Blooming



Twenty new cherry blossom trees have been planted at Jackson Park since the last full bloom in 2020. Due to the relatively minor spring fluctuations in weather and temperature, we're looking forward to a robust bloom of the Cherry Blossoms in April this year. A majority of the trees have moved to bud Stage 4, and will soon be transitioning to bud stage 5. After 4 years of deferred blooms, the Chicago Park District

is excited to celebrate the blooming of more than 190 cherry trees, located along the Columbia Basin in Jackson Park, will reach peak bloom in 2025. Near 6401 S. Stony Island Ave., east side of Cornell Ave., located just south of Museum of Science and Industry. Current Status: (updated April 15, 2025)

•Our oldest "mother tree" is at STAGE 5-6
•Most of the other trees are at STAGE 4 approaching

STAGE 5

•Many of the white flower trees are still in STAGE 2-3. Visitors will enjoy a self-guided listening tour of the grove. Guests will use their own phones at four (4) listening stations, where they are encouraged to scan a QR code to access a brief audio vignette about the history of the tree grove, the variety of flowers, and the Japanese springtime traditions. For best viewing options, the Chicago Park District recommends visiting the Cherry Blossom Grove during times with smaller crowds, which include weekday mornings, and early afternoons. A map and parking information is available at chicagoparkdistrict.com/cherry-blossoms.

Photo Credit: Chicago Park District

La Ciudad de Chicago Publica un Informe Sobre el Impacto en la Juventud



El martes, el Alcalde Johnson publicó el Informe sobre el impacto en la juventud 2024, mostrando un año histórico de inversión, oportunidades y empoderamiento para los jóvenes de Chicago. El informe detalla como, bajo la administración de Johnson, la Ciudad de Chicago ha implementado fuertes estrategias que han aumentado considerablemente el empleo, la educación y las oportunidades de compromiso cívico para los jóvenes residentes de Chicago en todas las 77 áreas comunitarias. "Estamos orgullosos del trabajo que hemos hecho en este año pasado, detallado en

este reporte", dijo el Alcalde Brandon Johnson. "Necesitamos tomar lo que hemos aprendido de este año y duplicarlo en nuestras inversiones en la gente joven en los años venideros. La necesidad es urgente y el momento es ahora. Espero que podamos elaborar sobre este trabajo, ampliar nuestras afiliaciones y finalmente construir una ciudad donde cada joven tiene los recursos y oportunidades necesarios para triunfar". Lo relevante del reporte incluye:

- 106,860 jóvenes atendidos a través de los 18 programas modelo del departamento de Servicios

de Apoyo y Familiares (DFSS)

- 155 eventos de apoyo para jóvenes, organizados por jóvenes de toda la ciudad a través de My CHI. My Future. El programa Safe Spaces (MCMF), con la asistencia de más de 16,750 residentes de Chicago.

- El 97% de los empleados jóvenes estuvieron de acuerdo en que participar en los eventos les hacía sentir más cerca de sus comunidades;

- Más de 2,000 trabajos para jóvenes, todo el año, creados a través de programas de DFSS como Safe Spaces y Chicago Youth Service Corps;

- La plataforma My CHI. My Future conectó a más de 50,000 jóvenes a más de 45,000 oportunidades;

- El programa Piloto Peacekeeper, en colaboración con GoodKids MadCity, emplearon a 100 jóvenes para recibir entrenamiento y promover la seguridad en sus comunidades.

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City of Chicago Releases Youth Impact Report



On Tuesday, Mayor Johnson released the **Youth Impact Report 2024**, showcasing a landmark year of investment, opportunity, and empowerment for Chicago's young people. The report outlines how, under the Johnson

administration, the City of Chicago has implemented bold strategies that have significantly expanded employment, educational, and civic engagement opportunities for young Chicagoans across all 77 community areas. "We are proud of the work we have

done over this past year, outlined in this report," said Mayor Brandon Johnson. "We need to take what we learned from this year and double down on our investments in young people in the coming years. The need is urgent and the time is now. My hope is that

we can build on this work, expand our partnerships, and ultimately build a city where every young person has the resources and opportunities that they need to succeed." Highlights from the report include:

- **106,860 youth served** through the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS)'s 18 program models;
- **155 youth-focused**

"kickback" events planned by youth throughout the city through the My CHI. My Future. (MCMF) Safe Spaces program, attended by more than **16,750 Chicagoans**;

- **97% of youth employees** agreed that participating in the kickbacks made them feel closer to their communities;
- **Over 2,000 year-round youth jobs** created through

DFSS programs like Safe Spaces and the Chicago Youth Service Corps;

• My CHI. My Future. platform connected over **50,000 youth** to more than **45,000 opportunities**;

- The Peacekeeper Pilot program, in collaboration with GoodKids MadCity, employed **100 youth** to receive training and promote safety in their communities;

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Por primera vez, la CTA pone en marcha una planificación estratégica global a largo plazo. Es importante que este proceso sea impulsado por **ustedes**: los pasajeros y las comunidades a las que servimos. Responda a una breve encuesta sobre su experiencia con la CTA y qué tipos de servicios de tránsito le gustaría ver en el futuro.

Obtenga más información en transitchicago.com/strategicplan y escanee el código para participar en nuestra encuesta.

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Happy Easter

FROM COMMISSIONER
FRANK J. AGUILAR



AGUILAR
FRANK J.
ESSEX COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rogers Park Business Alliance Announces State-Designated Mexican Cultural District Camino Clark

The nonprofit Rogers Park Business Alliance (RPBA) is proud to announce a new State-Designated Mexican Cultural District, Camino Clark, to celebrate the unique cultural identity of Clark Street in Rogers Park and encourage economic development. Home to over 200 retail, dining, entertainment, and personal service businesses, Camino Clark spans approximately two miles from Howard Street to Devon Avenue. A new district plan will renew and expand RPBA's Vision Clark Street Master Plan (2017), starting with a series of vibrant, culturally relevant events planned throughout this year: Dia del Niño (Children's Day) Celebration on April 30, a Mercadito craft fair on May 3 and November 22, the return of the annual Taco Crawl on July 17, and a



Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) Celebration from November 1- 2. More information about the cultural district and events will be available at RPBA.org in April 2025. In 2024, the Camino Clark area was one of ten communities selected for the State-Designated Cultural Districts program and the only one on Chicago's North Side. State-Designated Cultural Districts are communities, towns, or specific geographic areas that have a distinct shared historical and cultural identity that binds the community together.

Photo Credit: Rogers Park Business Alliance



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AbsoluteCare y Aetna Better Health® of Illinois Lanzan Servicios Integrales de Atención Médica en Chicago



Aetna Better Health® of Illinois

AbsoluteCare, líder en atención médica basada en el valor, anunció el martes su colaboración con Aetna Better Health® de Illinois, una compañía CVS Health®, para ampliar sus servicios en Chicago en el 2025. Esta colaboración marca un considerable hito, ya que AbsoluteCare introduce su atención Beyond Medicine, para atender las necesidades únicas de los miembros de Aetna Medical en la región. El cuidado completo de AbsoluteCare, integra servicios de

apoyo integrales médicos, conductuales, farmacológicos y sociales para ayudar a los miembros vulnerables a vencer las inequidades de salud y lograr mejores resultados. El enfoque de AbsoluteCare atiende los retos médicos y no médicos que enfrentan los miembros, con intenso enfoque en determinantes sociales de salud (SDoH) incluyendo apoyo para garantizar una vivienda segura, acceso a alimentos, fomento de la comunidad a través de eventos y más. El nuevo centro de AbsoluteCare en Chicago está localizado en el 2627 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago, IL 60608 y ofrecerá cuidado primario integrado, farmacia, cuidado de salud conductual, determinantes sociales de servicios de salud, atención urgente avanzada y equipos comunitarios que llegan a los barrios a través del Condado de Cook. Para más información sobre Aetna Better Health® de Illinois, visite www.aetnabetterhealth.com/illinois-medicaid

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Programs & Events at the Chicago Park District!

Online registration opens **Monday, April 14 & Tuesday, April 15**.

In-person registration begins **Saturday, April 19**.

Summer Programs session runs **June 16 to August 10**.



For more information about your Chicago Park District, visit www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com or call 312.742.7529.

Chicago Housing Authority Office of the Inspector General wins National Award for Excellence

The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has been awarded a 2024 Exemplary Knighton Award for best performance audit among local government audit organizations of similar size across the U.S. and Canada. This national award from the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA) recognizes excellence in local government performance audits among its over 300 member organizations. CHA's OIG will receive the award at the 2025 ALGA Annual Conference, which is being held May 4-7 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The winning report, *Audit of Public Housing Capital Construction Change Orders and Supplemental Contracts*, was judged



on several key elements, such as the potential for significant impact, the persuasiveness of the conclusions, the focus on improving government efficiency and effectiveness, and its clarity and conciseness. Judges from peer organizations determined this audit was among the best of 2024. Each year, local government audit organizations from around the U.S. and Canada submit their best performance audit reports for judging in the Knighton Awards program. The purpose of the competition is to improve government services by encouraging and increasing levels of excellence among local government auditors. For more information on the ALGA, visit: <https://algaonline.org/>.



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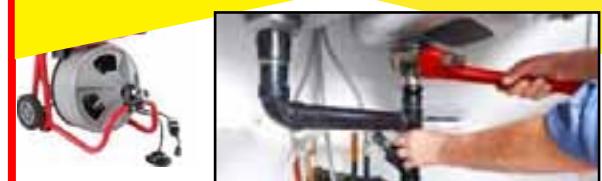
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