

For Immediate Release

THINKERY UPDATES 2020 SUMMER CAMP OFFERINGS, SCHEDULE

May 8, 2020 – Austin, TX – Summer is approaching and a growing number of Texans are returning to work outside the home. Thinkery wants to help Members, parents, caregivers and educators begin making their own plans for the summer.

“We want to make sure that everything we do is in keeping with Thinkery’s educational mission, directly serves the most pressing needs of our community and is done with health and safety as a priority,” said Adrienne Barnett, Thinkery Director of Learning Experiences.

“We have determined that a modified schedule of Thinkery Camps is our best opportunity to serve both the learning needs of children throughout our community and the need of working parents and caregivers for high-quality weekday childcare.”

In order to do so safely, Thinkery announces the following changes to its 2020 camp programming:

- **We are cancelling all Thinkery Camps scheduled for the weeks of June 1-5 and June 8-12.** We will assess our ability to open and run camps on a weekly basis beyond that; however, we will only do so if we have had sufficient time to implement necessary updates to our health and safety protocols and we are permitted by State and Local orders. Families registered for any cancelled camp session will have the opportunity to rebook in any open sessions at the Meredith Learning Lab location or transfer their reservation to a Thinkery Camp at Home.
- **We are introducing Thinkery Camp At Home** – This flexible camp option is for pre-K-5th graders and comes as a pre-packaged camp kit including supplies and instructions (in English and Spanish) for 10 STEAM activities that can be done at home. Camp at Home will be offered June 1 – Aug 14 and include optional virtual engagement opportunities like a Monday kit opening and camp welcome session, end of camp “show-n-tell” and “office hours” with Thinkery educators for questions and encouragement. Complete details can be found on Thinkery’s website (thinkeryaustin.org/at-home-camps).
- **Thinkery Camps will only be held at the Meredith Learning Lab location in Mueller.** We are cancelling off-site sessions at Harmony Schools and Silicon Labs, as well as ALL sessions scheduled for June at National Instruments. Thinkery *may* resume camps scheduled at National Instruments in July and August if the safety protocols outlined below can safely be replicated at that location.
- **We will no longer be offering morning or afternoon extended care options.**

In addition, Thinkery will implement new Health & Safety Protocols which incorporate guidelines provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Austin Public Health for childcare facilities currently serving families of essential workers.

Social Distancing Measures

- The museum will be **closed to general admission visitors** during camp hours until further notice.

- **Reduced camp group sizes** to 9 children to 1 staff ratio; 10-person limit per room.
- **Groups will not be combined**, interact, or use any of the same spaces at the same time throughout the day.
- **Camp groups will be held in separate spaces throughout the museum** to accommodate reduced class sizes.
- **Six feet social distancing** within groups implemented to the degree possible.
- Field trips to community partner locations and guest presentations will be converted to virtual experiences where possible or removed from the schedule altogether.
- If state and local regulations permit, each group will be assigned one exhibit space per day. Disinfecting will occur between each use.

Drop off/Pick up & Health Screening at Entry

- **Camper drop off and pick up outside of the museum.** No caregivers permitted in the building.
- **Daily temperature checks and health screenings** for all campers and Thinkery staff.
- Any camper showing signs of illness will be separated and caregivers will be called for pick up.

Face Masks & Handwashing

- **Camp staff will be required to wear face masks.**
- It is required, to the extent possible, that campers of all ages wear their own face masks.
- Handwashing will be required many times throughout the day, including after transitions and before and after eating.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures

- **Increased disinfecting** of camp spaces, exhibits, equipment and surfaces, especially doorknobs, high-touch surfaces, and restrooms.
- **Each camper will have their own set of non-consumables** (scissors, tape, etc...).

The COVID-19 crisis remains a rapidly evolving situation, so all the above listed dates and information remain subject to change. Thinkery will continue to monitor developments, as well as the most current guidance from State and Local health officials. Any additional changes or updates will be communicated promptly through our website at thinkeryaustin.org.

For more information, please contact Jeff Dellinger at jdellinger@thinkeryaustin.org.

About Thinkery

Thinkery is Austin's home for "why" and "how." Our mission is to create innovative learning experiences that equip and inspire the next generation of creative problem solvers. Thinkery offers 40,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor exhibits for children and families to learn through play.

Thinkery is a 501(c)(3), private nonprofit organization; last year we served more than 460,000 children and their grown-ups.