

What's Inside the Box Might Change Everything — The Courage Kit Brings Young Performers Together for One of Their Own

A heartfelt New Mexico short film grew from friendship, creativity, and a group of young performers coming together for another teen in their community

ALBUQUERQUE, NM, UNITED STATES, August 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Courage Kit began with a simple idea: a group of young performers wanted to create something meaningful for another teen within the Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico community.

Created through CCFNM's Performing Arts program, the short film gave students from its acting classes the chance to take what they had been learning and apply it in a real production setting. For some, the project added to previous experience working on film sets; for others, it marked their first time acting in a movie. Together, they rehearsed, learned their roles, worked with a professional production crew, hit their marks, performed for the camera, and experienced the collaborative process of bringing a film to life.



The Courage Kit ©ccfnm

At its heart, the project was about camaraderie — young artists using their developing craft to show up for another young person in their community.

The Courage Kit follows five young people who open a mysterious box containing seemingly ordinary objects. One by one, those objects reveal meanings far greater than what appears on the surface, exploring courage, friendship, hope, fear, and the things people carry with them through difficult moments.

The story behind the camera became just as meaningful as the one in front of it.

The young cast had already been building trust and confidence together through CCFNM's Performing Arts acting program. When the opportunity came to create something for another

teen in the CCFNM community, they came together around a shared purpose and brought that same spirit to the set.

Then the larger community stepped in around them.

The amazing staff at the Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico jumped in wholeheartedly to support the project, helping wherever they were needed and embracing the opportunity to help the young performers take their work from the classroom to the screen. Members of the New Mexico film community joined in as well, with filmmakers, crew members, artists, businesses, friends, volunteers, and other supporters contributing their time, equipment, skills, locations, resources, and encouragement.

What began with a group of kids wanting to do something meaningful for another teen became a much larger community effort centered on helping these young performers create something they could be proud of.

Aaron Alexander, who teaches acting through CCFNM's Performing Arts program, wrote and directed the film, while Performing Arts Program Director Abby Max helped guide the project from the classroom into production. Their role was to help create the opportunity and support structure that allowed the young performers to put their developing skills into practice.

The heart of the project, however, remained with the kids themselves.

They came prepared. They learned their scenes. They supported one another. Whether they arrived with previous film experience or were stepping in front of a movie camera for the first time, they approached the project as performers and collaborators.

For the Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico, The Courage Kit reflects what its Performing Arts program is intended to provide: opportunities for young people to create, perform, grow in confidence, build friendships, and experience something larger than the circumstances that first brought their families to CCFNM.

The Performing Arts program offers opportunities in acting, dance, music, modeling, and other creative disciplines. The Courage Kit demonstrates what can happen when those opportunities grow beyond the classroom and young artists are given the chance to put their skills into practice.

Audiences will have the opportunity to see that work on the big screen when The Courage Kit screens at the 9th Annual Mindfield Film Festival on Saturday, August 29, during the 1:00 p.m. screening block at Guild Cinema in Albuquerque.

For the cast, the screening represents more than the completion of a film.

It is the moment something they created together becomes something they can share with everyone else.

And for the community that helped bring The Courage Kit to life, it is a reminder that sometimes showing up for someone does not require knowing the perfect thing to say.

Sometimes you show up.

You make something together.

And you open the box.

If The Courage Kit moves you and you would like to support the children and families served by the Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico, donations can be made directly through www.ccfnm.org. Those who would specifically like to support the Performing Arts program can choose the designated Performing Arts donation option on the website.

Anyone interested in contributing time, resources, professional expertise, or other forms of support is also encouraged to reach out directly to the Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico. Projects like The Courage Kit are possible because people throughout the community choose to get involved.

[About the Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico](#)

Since 1972, the Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico has supported New Mexico children diagnosed with childhood cancer and their families through practical, emotional, educational, and enrichment programs.

CCFNM provides assistance with essential needs including rent and utilities, groceries, gas, transportation and lodging for treatment, emergency housing, car repairs, clothing, funeral expenses, and other family-specific needs.

The organization also provides counseling, tutoring, scholarships, art therapy, toys and prizes for children undergoing difficult procedures and hospital stays, and a Performing Arts program offering opportunities in acting, dance, music, modeling, and other creative disciplines.

Erin's Place provides a home away from home for families who must remain in Albuquerque during extended treatment and offers a peaceful environment for children requiring pediatric hospice care.

Learn more at www.ccfnm.org.

[About Mindfield Film Festival](#)

Mindfield Film Festival • Albuquerque celebrates independent filmmakers and distinctive voices in cinema from New Mexico and around the world.

The 9th Annual Mindfield Film Festival takes place August 27–30, 2026, with film screenings at Guild Cinema and additional festival programming throughout Albuquerque.

The Courage Kit screens Saturday, August 29 at 1:00 p.m. at Guild Cinema.

Learn more at www.mindfieldff.com.

Media Contact

Children's Cancer Fund of New Mexico

www.ccfnm.org

Abby Max

Performing Arts Program Director

ccfnm@ccfnm.org

Abby Max

Children's Cancer Fund Of New Mexico

ccfnm@ccfnm.org

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