

How to Stay Cyber-Safe During the School Year...Or Anytime

It's back-to-school time! That means shopping for supplies and picking out clothes... and, for students of all ages, it means firing up laptops, desktop computers, or other devices. Now's a great time to make sure those computers are ready for a busy school year, and to learn how to avoid common online dangers, especially for younger students. Here are some tips:

1. Update security software.

A great way to help keep computers safe from malware or spyware is to install anti-virus software, which can prevent users from accidentally downloading harmful files (or mitigate the damage if they are installed). Devices provided by schools usually already have security protection installed. Check to make sure, and confirm that automatic security updates are enabled, as cyber-attacks are continually evolving.

2. Get educated about phishing scams.

Anyone can be fooled by phishing scams – including students, who may be increasing their time online during the school year. In these scams, criminals will send email or text messages with links that, if clicked by the recipient, allow the scammer to collect their personal information such as passwords, account numbers, and/or Social Security numbers. Once the scammer has that information, they can gain access to email, bank, or other accounts.

Children can easily be deceived by phishing requests. Parents should educate them about how such scams work, and remind them never to respond to emails that ask for personal or financial information.

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission offers several tips on recognizing and avoiding phishing scams at consumer.ftc.gov/phishing.

3. Watch out for cyberbullies.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices. It can occur through text messages, in apps, and on social media or gaming sites. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else, and it can cross the line into unlawful or criminal behavior. Parents should ask their children to let them know immediately if they are being bullied.

If you think your child is a victim of cyberbullying, you can block messages from the bully and tell your child not to communicate with them. Take screenshots of hostile messages or taunting photos and record any harassing videos for potential use as evidence if needed. If the bully attends the same school as your child, contact the school office. If they're threatening harm, report them to your local police department as well.

4. Beware of online enticement.

Children are also at risk of encountering online predators. In 2020, more than 21.7 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation were made to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline – the highest number of reports they've ever received in one year, and almost double the reported number in 2019.¹

Online enticement is when adults use the internet to engage children in sexual conversations or try to convince them to send sexually explicit images of themselves. Some predators will try to befriend children over time with the goal of one day setting up an in-person meeting.

Parents can speak with their children about these dangers, noting that some adults will pretend to be children online to befriend them. They can tell their children that they can only chat or game online with people they've already met in "real life, and set limits on their online time. ■

1. NCMEC, missingkids.org/blog/2021/rise-in-online-enticement-and-other-trends--ncmec-releases-2020



More Cyber Tips

- **Use strong passwords** – those that include both lowercase and uppercase letters, symbols, and numbers. Use different passwords for each site so criminals can't crack a password on one site and then use it to access other sites that use the same one.
- **Never leave devices unattended** – thieves can be lurking nearby. If they can figure out how to log on (and they often can), they can access emails, files, and other personal information.
- **Use the lock screen** to increase the odds that someone who nabs your or your child's phone can't access the information it contains.
- **Check to see if school-issued laptops use strong filtering software**, which can help prevent children from accessing sites that contain pornography or violent messages.

SLFCU: Where Money Works Smarter



As an SLFCU member, you've already made a smart choice by joining New Mexico's best-in-state credit union.* With over 131,000 members trusting us with their finances, our focus is on ensuring SLFCU is a place where your money works smarter. Here's how we're accomplishing that.

We want you to keep more of your money.

We believe helping you achieve your financial goals can be a good start to building a life where you can focus on the people – and things – that matter most. For some, having a place to call home or a reliable set of wheels can provide the peace of mind needed to tackle the bigger things in life. With no private mortgage insurance requirement and first-time homebuyer options, competitive rates on our auto loans, and three credit card options to choose from, our products are designed to help you succeed.

Another great resource SLFCU offers is convenient access to financial planning professionals who can help you strategize ways to make your hard-earned money work smarter for you. They'll make it easy to pursue your financial goals when it comes to college planning, retirement, investments, or more. Learn more by visiting slfcu.org/InvestmentServices.

We offer financial education resources for all of life's big purchases.

Financing a home or a new vehicle can be daunting, especially considering you are signing up for a financial commitment for years to come. SLFCU is your partner through it all – from researching your options to helping set up your payments, and answering your questions throughout the life of your loan. When you call SLFCU, you

are speaking to local representatives who are here to help you navigate your finances.

Additionally, members can take advantage of our free resources through our financial education partner: BALANCE Financial Fitness. With BALANCE, you can access webinars, articles, podcasts, and more on financial topics ranging from how to save for an emergency fund to tips on smart financial moves to make when your income changes.

We think hard before spending our money – just like you.

As a member-owned financial cooperative, we want to make sure we're spending money wisely. SLFCU's operating expenses are well below our peer credit unions and the financial industry at large. In 2021, our ratio of operating expenses to average assets was 1.6% – that's 1.13 percentage points less than the average credit union with assets of one billion dollars or more (like SLFCU).

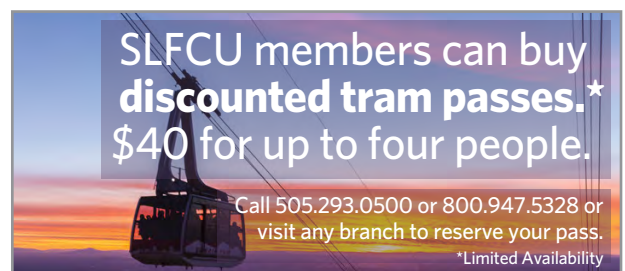
We also seek ways to save our members' money while supporting our community. One way we're doing that is through the implementation of MVD Direct kiosks at our Juan Tabo and Cottonwood branches. With these kiosks, you can save time and money when renewing your vehicle registration.

While SLFCU earns a portion of each \$3.95 transaction fee, we proudly pay it forward: 100% of our kiosk earnings are donated to select community organizations, making your vehicle registration renewal an easy way for you to contribute to causes that matter.

We believe it is the respect in which we treat your finances, and ours, that makes SLFCU a smart place to manage your money. Thank you for trusting us to be your financial partner. Smart and responsible looks good on you!

To learn more about any of the products and services mentioned above, visit slfcu.org. ■

*Sandia Laboratory Federal Credit Union was recognized by Forbes in 2022 as the #1 Best-in-State Credit Union for New Mexico.



Get started today:
slfcu.org/CreditCards

Make it *rewarding*.
Smarter back-to-school shopping starts with an SLFCU Visa® credit card.

SLFCU Business Member Highlight

Nico Ortiz, Owner of Turtle Mountain Brewing Company



As the old adage goes, it's easy to make a million dollars in the restaurant business: You just need to start with two million dollars.

Nico Ortiz, the owner of Turtle Mountain Brewing Company, confirms that succeeding in the restaurant and brewing business is not as easy as serving up your grandma's famous enchilada recipe, brewing a gold medal IPA, or being a "people person." In fact, the statistics are pretty grim: according to 2021 National Restaurant Association statistics, one in three restaurants won't survive their first year. As they enter their 24th year of operation, Turtle Mountain Brewing Company has beaten those odds handily. They boast two Rio Rancho locations and an army of enthusiasts that made sure the venture not only survived but thrived during the pandemic.

Work to your strengths.

"In my opinion, you have to have a certain amount of humility to do this well," shares Ortiz. "It's critical to know what you don't know. When I started Turtle Mountain, I knew very little about the restaurant/brewery business, so I hired a head brewer, a kitchen manager, and a front-of-house manager who helped me fill in the gaps in my knowledge."

What Ortiz does very well is manage the operation. While attending Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, he tried the corporate route as a summer intern at American Express, but soon learned that being his own boss was a much better path. "I figured out pretty quickly that I needed to create my own job and my own rules," he says with a laugh. Nico inherited some money after his father's passing, and in 1999 decided to open a brewpub in what was a quickly growing Albuquerque bedroom community called Rio Rancho.

Become part of the community.

The company's second location has proven to be very successful - even with opening at the tail end of the pandemic in Rio Rancho's Enchanted Hills neighborhood. "We've hosted weddings, anniversaries, and even end-of-life celebrations at our restaurants. Now, we are hiring the children of our first employees, says Ortiz." He adds he is most proud of the fact that working at Turtle Mountain has helped many employees buy cars, purchase homes, start families, and send children to college. "We've had a positive impact in Rio Rancho and are part of the tapestry of the community. We're a refuge and a fixture in many people's lives."

Find a financial institution that is there for you.

"After 20 years as a big bank customer, I moved to SLFCU because they were there for me when I needed them most," says Ortiz. For him, moving to a credit union has come with the side benefit of saving a lot of money. "I was paying almost \$200 per month for a business checking account. With SLFCU, I get dividend deposits every month, so I am being paid to have my accounts at SLFCU. I will never go back to the for-profit banking world again."

Interested in a financial institution where your money will work smarter? SLFCU is local, and we have money to lend. We'd be pleased to be a part of your story. Contact Casey Bresnahan for personalized, expert service: CBresnahan@slfcu.org. ■

The BALANCE "Back on Track" Summer Contest

You could win \$500!



Strengthen your financial skills this summer with the help of the BALANCE Financial Fitness "Back on Track" Summer Contest! Enter by completing BalanceTrack learning modules. For each one you complete, you'll earn a chance to win \$500.

The contest runs from August 1 through October 31, 2022. Visit slfcu.org/BalanceContest to learn more.

The BalanceTrack
BACK ON TRACK
— Summer Sweepstakes —

SLFCU Receives Prestigious Top 'Best-in-State' Credit Union Ranking by Forbes for Third Year

SLFCU Has Made the List of the Top Three Credit Unions in New Mexico For the Past Five Consecutive Years



Sandia Laboratory Federal Credit Union has received the prestigious top 'Best-in-State' Credit Union award for New Mexico from Forbes magazine for the third year since 2019, and has made

"We are honored to receive this distinction again in 2022, and thank our members for their ongoing trust and loyalty. SLFCU is committed to service in action - working in the best interest of our members while growing and helping our communities," said Stephanie Sherrodd, SLFCU's President and CEO. She added, "This award is especially meaningful because it is based on an objective scoring system and the surveys are administered by an independent research firm. The fact that we have made the list for the past five years and have achieved the top ranking in three of them is a testament not only to our members, but also to our talented and dedicated staff."

the list of the top three credit unions in the state for the fifth consecutive year.

The Forbes article noted, "The economic environment in which banks and credit unions operate is now getting more challenging with the Federal Reserve and other central banks around the world pursuing a committed course of short-term rate hikes to fight the highest inflation in more than 40 years...the imperative to maintain customer relationships rises even higher in importance and becomes more urgent business for small banks and credit unions. The firms with the highest levels of customer satisfaction will enjoy a long-term competitive advantage versus less adept practitioners of pleasing and keeping clients."

Forbes has been ranking best-in-state credit unions for five years in partnership with market research firm Statista to "shine a light on the best credit unions in each state," as the publication stated in its June 21, 2022 issue. To prepare this year's list, Statista conducted in-depth interviews with more than 26,000 U.S. citizens from all 50 states. Survey participants were asked to provide an overall satisfaction score with their credit union, and whether they would recommend their credit union to friends and families.

"Members know us as the place where their money works smarter. We are inspired every day to continually exceed their expectations. We are aiming to be number one again in 2023," Sherrodd concluded. ■

Statista also asks a detailed battery of questions focused in six separate areas of their credit union relationship: trust, terms and conditions (including reasonable and transparent fees), branch services, digital services, customer service and financial advice. Based on a scale of 1-100, just 3.4 percent of the more than 5,041 credit unions across the country made the cut for the best-in-state rankings.

Tips for Buying Your Teen's First Car

Start with AutoSMART

Time for your teen to get their first car? Whether you are buying a new or used vehicle, having the right information beforehand can take the stress out of making the wrong decision. AutoSMART, the free online resource for Credit Union members, offers tools to guide you through the entire process, saving you time and helping you find a safe and practical car for your teenager. Visit slfcu.org/AutoSMART to get started.

Set a Budget

Knowing how much you can spend will help you focus on cars you can afford. AutoSMART's Finance section lets you calculate what you can afford and see your potential monthly payments. Simply enter your desired purchase price, loan term, interest rate, and down payment, then click to calculate your monthly payments. Be sure to factor in additional costs such as upfront fees for registration, inspection, and the license plate, as well as ongoing expenses like insurance, maintenance, and gas.

Do Some Research

Now that you have an idea of what you (or your teen) can afford, start exploring your options. AutoSMART lets you view features, ratings, rebates, and reviews for all vehicle make and models, both new and used. You'll also have access to tools such as NADA Guides and CARFAX vehicle



history reports (CARFAX fees apply). Build your own vehicle to calculate the Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) - just select the desired trim, style, color, and other options.

Apply for Financing

Once you've found the vehicle that's right for your teen, visit AutoSMART's Finance section to apply online for an SLFCU auto loan, or call us at 505.293.0500 or 800.947.5328. ■

New! Online and Mobile Banking Video Tutorials



Members now have access to helpful videos showcasing tips and tricks for using SLFCU online and mobile banking. Topics include: mobile deposit, transferring money to another SLFCU member, setting up transfers to an account at another financial institution, and more. Not enrolled in online or mobile banking yet? There's a video to help you enroll quickly, too!

Visit slfcu.org/OnlineBanking to get started. ■

How to Save Money on Back-to-School Shopping

Are you shopping for back-to-school gear? You're not alone - 29% of surveyed parents said they've already started, according to a recent Morning Consult report.¹ Many parents are anticipating spending at least \$250 on school needs this year.

Here are some tips to maximize your back-to-school dollars:

- Do your homework before you shop: What's your budget? What new items are truly needed? Can you spread out purchases over a few weeks or months?
- New Mexico residents, make note of the annual New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax Holiday weekend on August 5-7, when you can purchase many back-to-school items tax-free! Learn more at tax.newmexico.gov. Not in NM? Visit taxadmin.org/2022-sales-tax-holiday for tax holidays in other states.
- Keep an eye out for back-to-school sales. They'll be everywhere...and sooner than you may think. Comparison-shop at both online and brick-and-mortar stores.

Two bonus tips for extra credit:

- Shopping with a credit card? Shop smarter with an SLFCU Visa® card! Our low-rate cards offer monthly cash rebate options, no annual fees, and much more. Check out our special offer for new card holders: slfcu.org/CreditCards
- SLFCU Visa Signature® credit card holders can shop with peace of mind knowing that if they buy an eligible item with their card and find it advertised for less within 60 days of purchase, they can be reimbursed for the difference. Certain terms, conditions, and exclusions apply.² ■

¹ morningconsult.com/2022/05/19/back-to-school-shopping-economic-uncertainty
² slfcu.org/files/slfcu17/1/file/Disclosures/VisaSignatureBenefits.pdf

In the Farmington Area

Help Children Say Goodbye to Hunger

August 15 through September 23, SLFCU Farmington branches will collect cash donations for the annual ECHO Food Bank Backpack for Kids Program.

The Backpack for Kids Program offers emergency food assistance for kids who are at risk of going hungry over the weekend or during school breaks. Kids not only receive non-perishable food for themselves but for their younger siblings as well. Backpacks filled with food are distributed to 26 schools across San Juan County. School personnel then distribute the backpacks to children at risk of going hungry. Backpacks help avoid the stigma of carrying home a donated bag of groceries.

100% of donations will be used to buy food and backpacks for children. Please consider making a monetary donation at any Farmington branch. SLFCU will match all donations up to \$2,500.

Last year, members gave \$1,597.78 to this important cause. The Credit Union matched all donations made, for a total of \$3,195.56! Every contribution, large or small, is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

In the Community



School Supply Drive

Thank you to everyone who donated to our 2022 Back-to-School Supply Drive! The SLFCU community raised \$3,075. SLFCU matched our members' monetary donations, for a grand total of \$8,075. These donations will benefit students and teachers in the Albuquerque and Farmington areas and Livermore, California.

Happy Anniversary, Tech Park!



Our Tech Park branch turns 20 this month! Located in the Sandia Science and Technology Park, the branch provides exceptional service that is close to home for Sandia National Laboratories employees and the surrounding community. Here's to many more successful years serving members! ■

2 **DUE:**
2 YOUR TAGS
New Mexico

Due to Renew?

Use MVD Direct kiosks at SLFCU!
Purchase and instantly print your updated vehicle registration sticker.

Kiosks are currently located at our **Juan Tabo** and **Cottonwood** branches. For more information, visit slfcu.org/MVDKiosks

Buying a home without a roof inspection.

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**Sandia Laboratory
Federal Credit Union**

PO Box 23040, Albuquerque, NM 87192

Dollars & Sense

How to Stay Cyber-Safe During the School Year...Or Anytime

SLFCU: Where Money Works Smarter

*SLFCU Receives Prestigious Top 'Best-in-State' Credit Union
Ranking by Forbes for Third Year*

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On the Calendar

Visit slfcu.org/Calendar
to view more events.

August 2-21 • School Supply Drive • All Branches
Tue. August 9 • Webinar • Raising a Money Smart Kid
Thu. August 18 • Webinar • Raising a Money Smart Kid
Mon. September 5 • Labor Day • All Branches and
Contact Center Closed
Mon. September 17 • Shred Event • Juan Tabo Branch



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