

Annual Evaluation Report

FY2022

Annual Evaluation Report

July 2021 – June 2022

Evaluation has been an integral part of all Identity programs since our founding in 1998, as we believe that to serve others is a privilege and requires excellence.

Identity tracks and reviews its outputs and outcomes on a continuous basis to ensure that the thousands of youth and families we are privileged to assist are better able to realize their highest potential and thrive. Identity's primary goal is to support Latino and other historically underserved youth in their transition to adulthood by providing a range of programs and services to help improve social-emotional learning, increase academic success and better prepare them for work. New programs and services for adults aim to strengthen youths' ultimate support system, the family.

All Identity programs and services are aligned to contribute to our intended impact. They are trauma-informed and based on the Positive Youth Development model, which works to increase protective factors, such as self-esteem, conflict resolution skills and self-efficacy levels—i.e., the factors that reduce the potential for engaging in negative behaviors. The programs also help reduce risk factors such as substance abuse, involvement in delinquent activities and school disconnection—factors that can lead to negative outcomes.

We focus on assisting in-school and out-of-school youth and their families who live in high-poverty areas of Montgomery County and are most at risk for poor academic and economic life outcomes. That focus did not waver as students struggled to make up for pandemic-related learning loss and disconnection in this first year back in the classroom.

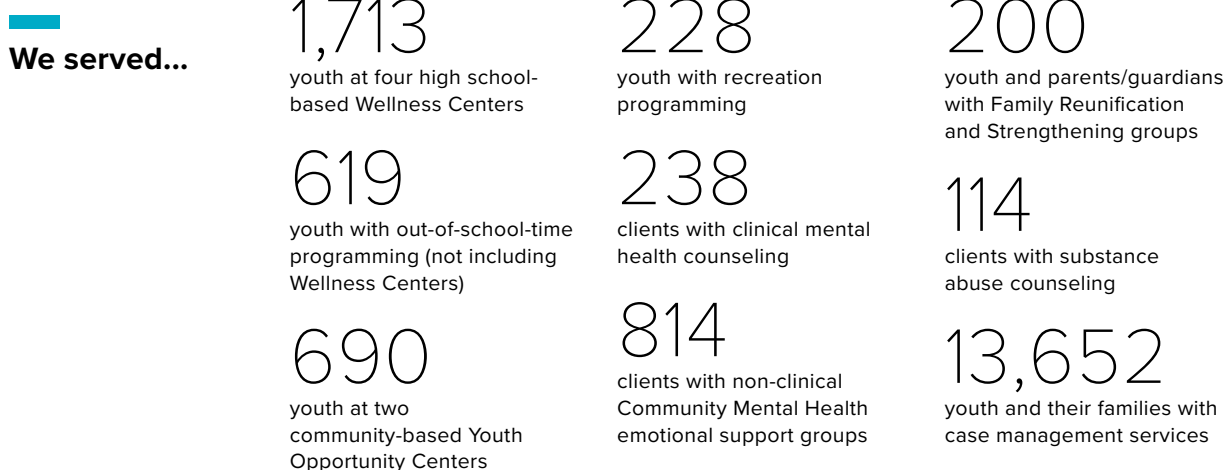
Family case management, always a part of Identity's holistic approach, was again front and center as Identity worked with an increasing number of families across the county who suffered a slower recovery, needing emergency help to prevent hunger and homelessness. Our non-clinical, community-led emotional support groups grew exponentially as a promising program to address the growing mental health crisis for families.

Identity's FY22 Evaluation Report is presented in three sections. The first section describes Identity's COVID-19 response. The second section describes our organization-wide outputs and impact. And the third section presents a deeper look at data by major program or service area. Detailed program-specific evaluation reports are available upon request. The continued social-emotional, educational, economic and health ramifications of the pandemic are reflected throughout.

14,312 CLIENTS SERVED

Benefiting 57,246 residents (based on 9,541 households with an average size of 6 people)

In FY22, Identity worked with vulnerable youth, and the families that love them, after school, in the community and on playing fields. Our programs enabled youth to build the skills they need to thrive and provided their families with the tools to support their children. Our Case Management kept thousands of families from hunger, homelessness and despair. For context, in the last full fiscal year prior to the pandemic (FY19), we served 2,928 clients and their families. Together, we are building a stronger Montgomery County.



Evaluation Methodology

Identity collects process and outcome data on all programs. Extensive evaluation information is collected by way of baseline, follow-up and exit surveys across programs. Outcome data is analyzed by an internal evaluator. The survey questions are grouped into several domains measuring various protective and risk factors. A statistical analysis known as the Paired Samples T-Test is used to determine if changes encountered between baseline and exit are significantly different from each other. Process data such as client demographics and program outputs are entered daily in Efforts-to-Outcomes (ETO), Identity's data management software system.

To evaluate the outcomes of our academic out-of-school time programs, we request academic data from the schools, including quarterly report cards, standardized test scores, attendance and behavioral referral data. Some standardized test scores were not available in FY22 because administering the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) was still not mandatory coming out of the pandemic.

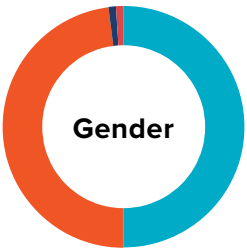
We also partner with the University of Maryland School of Public Health on the evaluation of two projects, including a mixed methods study of our non-clinical emotional support groups with rapid cycle iterative evaluation and in-depth qualitative interviews; and a longitudinal evaluation of the effectiveness of the El Camino curriculum for high school students, a collaboration with Child Trends.

Demographics

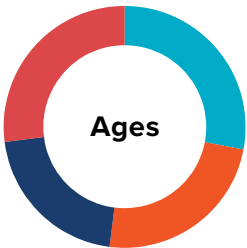
Who We Served

Identity primarily worked with the Latino community, while we continued to welcome and serve a diverse population. The four high school-based Wellness Centers and the two Youth Opportunity Centers are operated in collaboration with other agencies, allowing us to serve youth of different races, ethnicities and cultures with excellence. The following demographics come from a sample of **11,967** clients served by Identity in FY22.

Youth
25 and under



Male	51.12%
Female	48.65%
Non Binary	0.11%
Transgender	0.12%

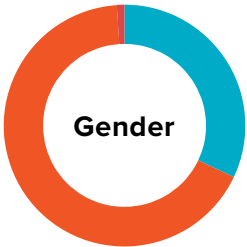


13 and under	28%
14-16	24%
17-18	21%
19-25	27%

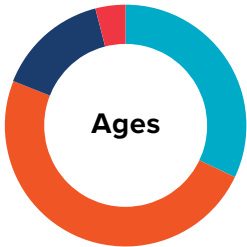


Latino	90.67%
Black/ African American/ African Origin	6.58%
White (Non-Hispanic)	0.71%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	0.82%
Other	1.22%

Adults
26 and over



Male	31.89%
Female	67.99%
Transgender	0.12%

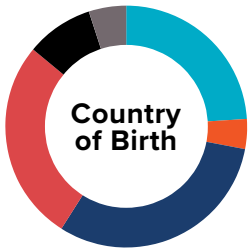


26-35	32.37%
36-50	49.03%
51-65	14.55%
over 65	4.05%



Latino	97.28%
Black/ African American/ African Origin	1.92%
White (Non-Hispanic)	0.35%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	0.10%
Other	0.35%

All



US (with Latino heritage)	24%
US (without Latino heritage)	4%
El Salvador	31%
Other Central American and Caribbean Countries	27%
South American Countries	9%
Other	5%



Less than \$23,000	31.1%
\$23,001-\$30,000	30.9%
\$30,001-\$39,000	17.7%
\$39,001-\$47,000	8.2%
\$47,001-\$55,000	4.4%
\$55,001-\$63,000	1.1%
\$63,001-\$71,000	2.4%
\$71,001-\$79,000	0.7%
over \$79,000	3.5%

The self-sufficiency standard in Montgomery County for a household with two adults, one preschooler and one school-aged child is \$91,252 (the amount of money families need to meet basic needs without the help of public or private assistance) according to the most recent Self-Sufficiency Standard for Maryland, University of Washington School of Social Work.

Socio-Economics

37%
of youth lacked health insurance.

64%
of students received Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS).

18%
of youth lived in a precarious housing situation (rented a room, lived in a shelter or a group home).

Family Cohesion

39%
of youth lived in a single parent home; 15% lived in a restructured family (with stepparents); and 24% lived without either parent.

63%
of youth had been separated from one or both of their parents, mainly due to immigration or divorce.

9
was the average number of years of separation from a parent because of an immigration issue.

6
was the average number of people living in each household.

Unique Challenges

Our Latino Community

Identity works to improve the lives of Latino youth and families in Montgomery County, where Latinos are the fastest growing demographic, having grown from 17% of the population in 2010 to 21% in 2020. Latinos are projected to represent 25% of the county's population by 2040 (Maryland Department of Planning, Projections as of December 2020). The growth is even more dramatic among young people, who now make up 33% of the county's public school population.

These youth are exceptionally vulnerable. At the start of the 2021–2022 school year, only 19% of Montgomery County's Latino children were ready for kindergarten (down from 26% in 2019) compared to 54% of their White peers (Readyatfive.org, 2021–2022). Latino second grade reading scores dropped 46% in 2021 compared to before the pandemic in 2019; 10% of all Latino youth and 21% of English learners dropped out of high school in 2021. Latino students also consistently experience the school system's highest dropout rates (Promise of Latino Youth in Montgomery County, UMD SPH, 2018).

Youths' Acculturation

9 in 10

foreign-born youth selected Spanish as a preferred language, an indication of limited English proficiency.

2 in 10

foreign-born youth were recent arrivals (less than a year the US).

7 in 10

foreign-born youth were in the US for 5 years or less.

Parents' Acculturation

9 in 10

parents were foreign-born.

8 in 10

parents did not feel comfortable with English.

7 in 10

parents had less than a high school education. 60% of this group completed less than 8th grade.



Traditional ACEs

Our FY22 survey of 719 of Identity's Latino youth under age 18 shows 87% suffer at least one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) such as exposure to economic hardship; physical, emotional or sexual abuse; and household dysfunctions including mental illness, violence, substance abuse and/or long separations from parents due to immigration and/or divorce. Thirty-one percent of these youth suffer from 3 or more ACEs, higher than U.S. (11%) or Maryland (8%) youth (National Survey of Children's Health 2011–2012). Children who experience one or more ACE are more likely to struggle with a variety of physical and emotional problems throughout childhood and adolescence. Identity parents also experienced ACEs in their youth. Our most recent survey in FY22 of 224 Latino parents found 19% suffered 3 or more ACEs, with 42% suffering at least one ACE. This increases the likelihood of health problems for parents and may affect the health and wellbeing of their children.

Immigration-Specific ACEs


The majority of Identity youth were immigrants or children of immigrants who fled their homelands due to civil wars, violence, political instability or economic crisis. A common consequence of this situation is family separation.

Many of our youth and parents who arrived in the U.S. as minors have immigrant-specific childhood traumas. Our most recent survey in 2019 found 87% of youth and 74% of parents reported immigration-specific ACEs such as being afraid of dying, being lost, lacking food and water during their journey to the U.S. and/or having to leave their home country because of gang or political violence. One-third of all Identity middle and high school youth surveyed worried about a family member or close friend being deported. Nearly 10% of these youth had seen someone beaten or killed by gang members, soldiers and/or police.

Newcomers

Identity supports newcomers from Latin America making their home in Montgomery County with trauma-informed, culturally responsive programs and services for youth and families. Montgomery County is a primary destination for immigrant and asylum-seeking children, youth and families, especially for those seeking to reunite with family after long separations or to find safety from mortal danger in their home countries. Identity works closely with newcomers—defined as those who arrived in Montgomery County after January 1, 2021—to help them feel welcomed, manage difficult emotions and acclimate to their new lives in the U.S.

Identity also works with immigrant families that have been sent to Washington, D.C. by bus from U.S. border immigration facilities in Arizona and Texas. One of the biggest challenges for these newcomers is that they have no relatives, connections or support system.


922

newcomers were served
in all Identity Programs.

880

newcomers were
assisted with 4,145
referrals for safety-net
support such as food,
clothing, healthcare,
housing and emergency
financial assistance.

Unique Challenges

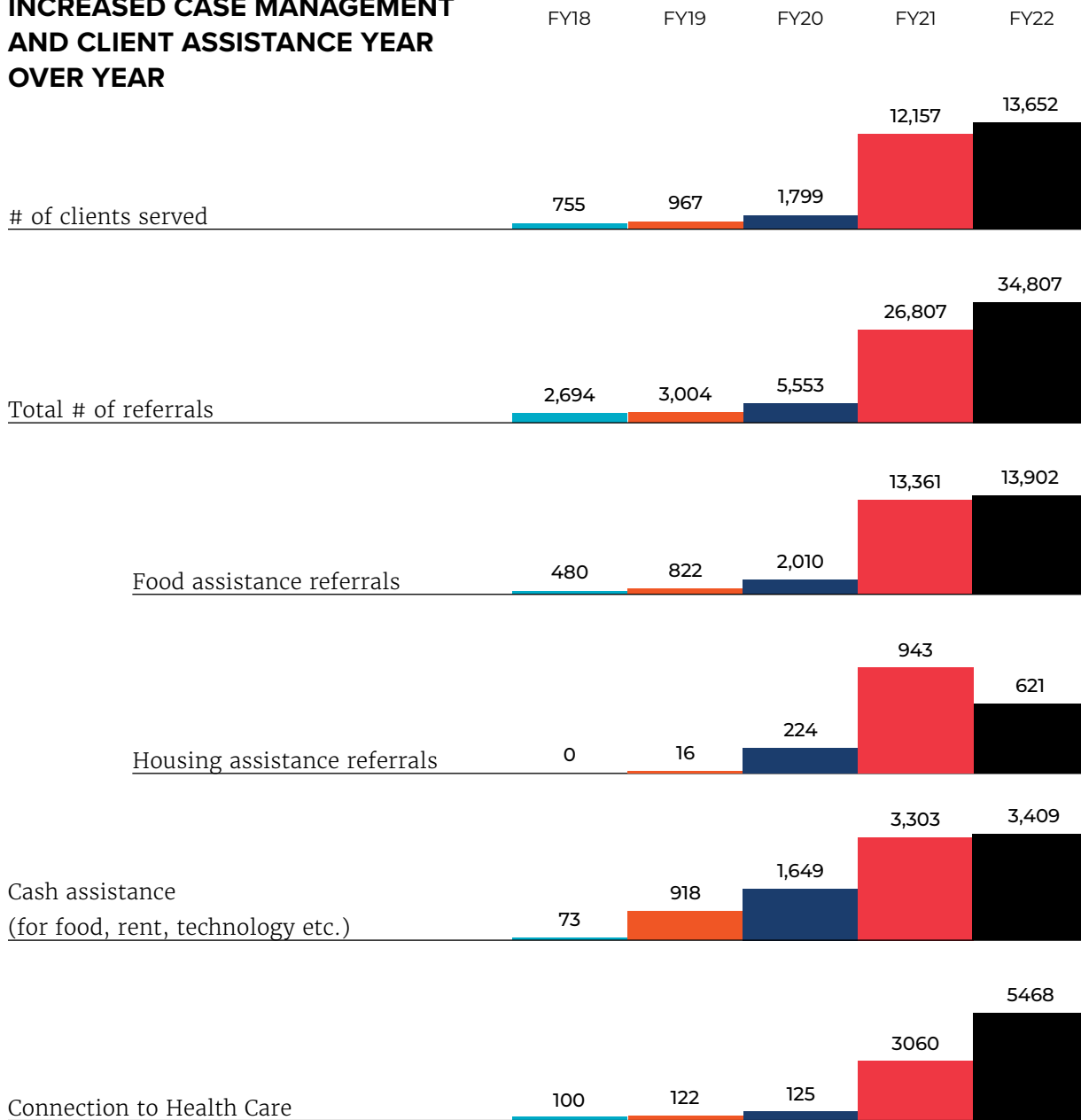
A Slow and Challenging Recovery to COVID-19

Through FY22, the COVID-related needs of our client community continued or worsened as the pandemic shifted from a short-term crisis to one requiring a longer-term approach. We saw unprecedented numbers of people left devastatingly vulnerable due to the health, mental health, education and employment impacts of the pandemic. Many of our clients work in disproportionately hard-hit industries (e.g. hospitality), making their recovery especially challenging. And many Identity youth, who already faced numerous challenges, battled disproportionate learning loss from remote schooling and a worsening mental health crisis.

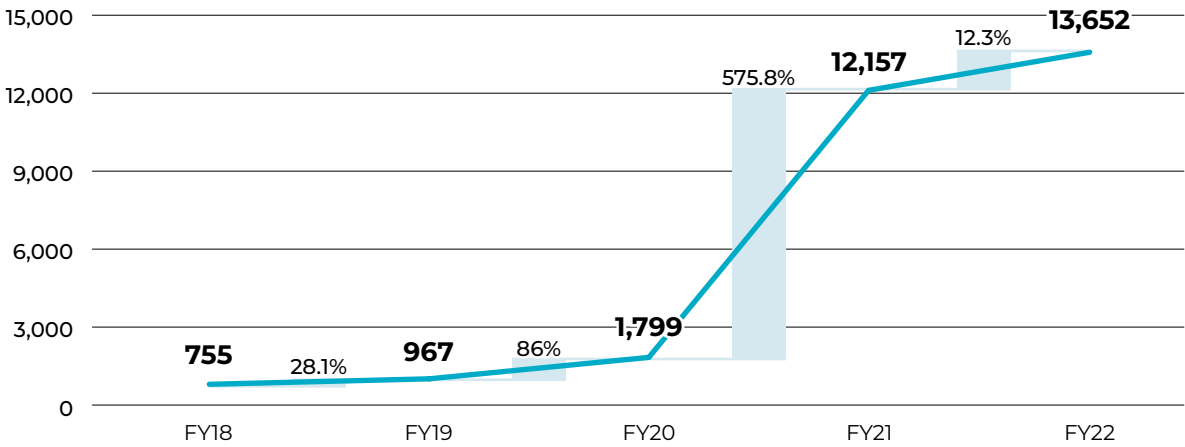
Though COVID-19 exacerbated pre-existing disparities in opportunities and outcomes, Identity continued a tireless response. All frontline staff are cross-trained in case management and non-clinical mental health supports. With over 30 more Case Managers, we connected client families to lifesaving assistance to prevent hunger and homelessness. And we worked with intensity to keep students connected to school and workforce training. In total, from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, Identity provided a range of case management support to more than 13,500 residents—impacting thousands more as households average 6 people.



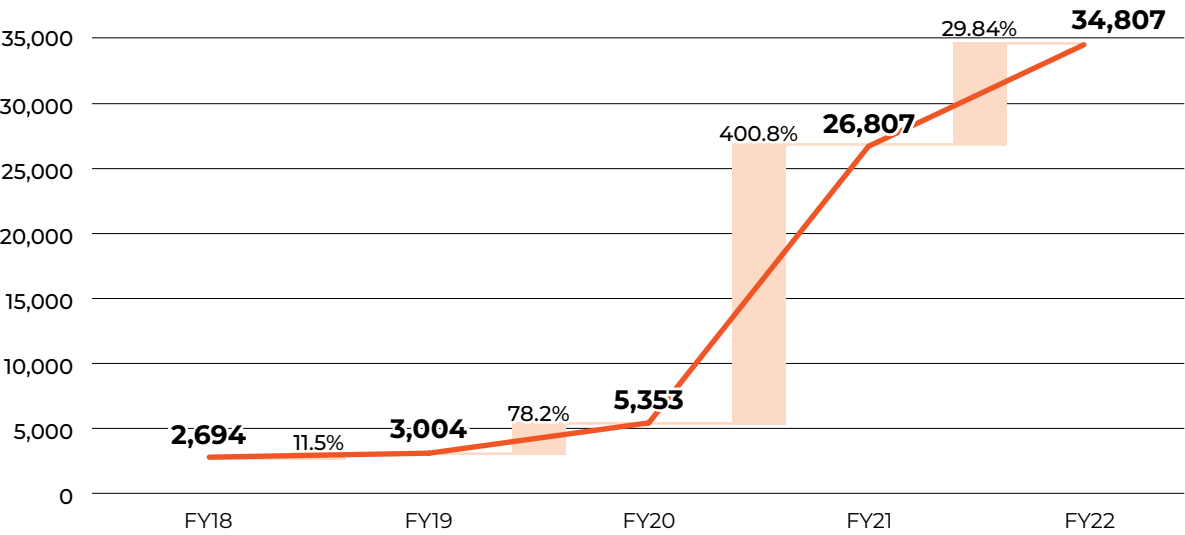
INCREASED CASE MANAGEMENT AND CLIENT ASSISTANCE YEAR OVER YEAR



of case management clients served



of referrals



Organization-Wide Efforts

Outputs

To manage process evaluation data, Identity uses Efforts to Outcomes (ETO), a data collection and management software system that creates a unique ETO identifier for each participant. ETO allows us to track all process data for clients on an individual and group basis (tracking recruitment, attendance, and level of participation for various activities, as well as social service referral information and referral status) while protecting confidentiality. A Red Flag Action Sheet allows staff to act quickly on safety issues and emergency needs.

Social-Emotional Learning

2,302

hours of curriculum-based programs.

1,454

participants in curriculum-based programs.

93

hours of parent education and engagement workshops.

Academic Enrichment

100

elementary school students received reading support in our out-of-school-time *Jóvenes de Mañana* program.

75

ESOL students at Watkins Mill High School participated in Wolverine Time, a partnership with the school to provide PYD programs to support after-school academic enrichment.

77

ESOL students at Wheaton High School participated in Knight Time, a partnership with the school to provide PYD programs to support after-school academic enrichment.

72

students at Gaithersburg High School participated in the Trojan Experience, a program to support rising 9th graders who need extra academic or social supports in order to thrive in school.

Workforce Development/Job Readiness

122

students participated in GED classes at our Youth Opportunity Centers.

225

clients enrolled in workforce development services at our Youth Opportunity Centers.

60

clients enrolled in job certification courses like Early Childhood Education, Certified Medical Assistant, HIPAA, OSHA and CPR.

Recreational Activities

228

new participants enrolled in our Recreation Program.

248

Wellness Center students took part in recreation and physical fitness programs. 306 took part in therapeutic recreation activities focused on re-building social and school connection.

542

Wellness Center participants attended in-person field trips.

Wraparound Services

13,652

clients received 34,807 referrals for social services.

13,902

emergency referrals were made for food, 621 for housing.

5,648

referrals were made for health care insurance or services including vaccines.

238

clients received mental health counseling.

814

clients participated in the Community Mental Health *Encuentros* program.

114

clients received substance abuse counseling (up from 50 in FY21).

40

cases were referred to Child Protective Services for abuse or neglect (up from 17 in FY21).

Organization-Wide Results

Outcomes

The Positive Youth Development model serves as the foundation through which we foster resilience and promote social, emotional and cognitive development and wellness across age groups. The programs build self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills and social awareness.

The following are outcomes from a sample of 704 youth in middle school, high school and the YOCs, who completed both a baseline and exit survey in our programs.

Not all youth responded to all questions, so the “n” may vary for each question. The improvements shown here were statistically significant.

Social-Emotional Learning

At baseline, 32% (n=228) reported lacking expectations for a positive future.

65%
of this group reported an increase in their expectations for a more positive future at exit.

At baseline, 47% (n=308) reported high levels of depression symptoms.

65%
of this group reported decreased levels of depression at exit.

At baseline, 58% (n=292) reported poor conflict resolution and anger management skills.

73%
of this group reported increased skills at exit.

At baseline, 59% (n=387) of youth reported low levels of self-esteem.

55%
of this group reported an increase of self-esteem at exit.

At baseline, 8% (n=56) reported high levels of delinquent behaviors.

86%
of this group reported they had decreased their delinquent activities at exit.

At baseline, 21% (n=148) reported high levels of substance abuse behaviors.

70%
of this group reported a decrease in substance use at exit.

Work Readiness/Employment

225
youth successfully completed workforce development, job readiness and soft skills training.

33
youth obtained jobs.

57
youth completed paid internships through our Workforce Experience program.

2
youth earned their high school diploma.

10
youth passed one or more of the four GED tests required for graduation.

145
industry-valued certifications were earned by clients, in subjects such as Early Childhood Education, Certified Medical Assistant, HIPAA, OSHA and Food Handling.

Academic Development

At baseline, 51% (n=264) reported low levels of school connectedness.

63%
of this group reported increased school connectedness at exit, an indicator of persistence to graduate.

At baseline, 47% (n=237) reported low leadership skills, including ability to set goals.

66%
of this group reported increased leadership skills at exit.

Evaluation by Program

Out-of-School-Time Programs

Identity runs out-of-school time programs before school, after school and during spring and summer breaks. In FY22, Positive Youth Development programs took place in three elementary schools (Gaithersburg, Stedwick and Whetstone), three middle schools (Forest Oak, Neelsville and Gaithersburg), and one high school (Col. Zadok Magruder). All participants were Latino students. We are also working with students in six other high schools (Albert Einstein, John F. Kennedy, Montgomery Blair, Quince Orchard, Seneca Valley and Springbrook) in partnership with Child Trends to test their 'El Camino' PYD curriculum. This curriculum is being evaluated for Child Trends by researchers at the University of Maryland School of Public Health.

Out-of-school time participants:

- 619 students

Curriculum-based Positive Youth Development:

- 664 hours of programming

Case Management

- 208 family assessments

Parents Served

- 45 hours of educational workshops
- 337 parents attended



Out-of-School-Time Programs (continued)

Social and Emotional Learning

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

100
youth served

182
hours of curriculum-based PYD

For the 57 youth in our *Jóvenes de Mañana* Elementary School Program who completed an intake and exit survey, we saw statistically significant improvements for those who initially reported high levels of challenges in the social-emotional skills linked to academic success. Improvement in critical indicators such as levels of self-control, persistence, academic self-efficacy and mastery orientation strengthen their chances for academic success.

Youth Self-Evaluation

At baseline, 19 youth (33%) reported low levels of academic self-efficacy.

74%
of this group reported increased academic self-efficacy at exit.

At baseline, 14 (25%) reported low relationship skills.

79%
of this group reported increased skills at exit.

At baseline, 57 (23%) reported low school connection.

62%
of this group reported increased school connection at exit.

Facilitator Evaluation of Youth

For the 62 youth who were evaluated at the beginning and end of the program by facilitators, we also saw significant improvements.

At baseline, 27 (44%) of youth presented with low self-control.

82%
of this group showed improved self-control at exit.

At baseline, 27 (44%) of youth presented with low levels of persistence.

70%
of this group showed improved persistence at exit.

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

173
youth served

273
hours of curriculum based PYD

For the 123 students in our middle and high school PYD programs who completed a baseline and exit survey, we saw statistically significant improvements in youth who initially reported high levels of challenges in social-emotional skills. Improvements in these critical indicators of wellbeing strengthen their chances for positive academic and life outcomes.

At baseline, 80 (65%) reported low levels of self-esteem.

56%
of this group reported an increase at program's end.

At baseline, 50 (41%) reported a lack of expectations for a positive future.

58%
of this group reported an increase at program's end.

At baseline, 63 (51%) of youth reported low levels of conflict resolution and anger management skills.

57%
of this group reported an increase in their ability to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence by program's end.

At baseline, 47 (38%) reported high levels of depression symptoms.

70%
of this group reported a decrease in their depression symptoms at program's end.

Out-of-School-Time Programs *(continued)*

Academics

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JÓVENES DE MAÑANA READING OUTCOMES

At our elementary schools (Gaithersburg, Stedwick and Whetstone), we combine academic supports with PYD. We use an array of reading strategies, including one-on-one and group reading practice, individually paced online tutoring through the IXL platform and home reading enrichment materials. Students meet twice a week for 33 weeks.

The following are academic highlights from those programs.

93% (n=66) ended the year with a C or higher in reading.

42%

of these students increased at least one full letter grade.

34% (n=67) increased one or more full grade levels in reading, as measured with an IXL tool at baseline and exit.

In the Spring of 2020, Jovenes de Manana adopted the IXL Online Learning Platform to create individualized literacy lessons for our second and third grade students. IXL has diagnostic tools to help staff determine students' reading proficiency, fluency, and comprehension levels and recommends lessons to build skills and fill gaps in learning. IXL is an adaptive program that helps build foundational phonics, reading fluency comprehension, and grammar skills in students. Due to its capacity to individualize instruction, it meets students where they are and continues to challenge students, so their skills and literacy fluency grows.



Wellness Centers

In 2007, Identity opened the first High School Wellness Center in Montgomery County and in April of 2022 opened the county’s newest one at Seneca Valley High School. We now manage four Wellness Centers in partnership with MCPS and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, to support the social, emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of the students throughout their high school years. In addition to Seneca Valley, we operate Wellness Centers at Gaithersburg, Watkins Mill and Wheaton High Schools.

When schools re-opened in the fall, Wellness Center staff focused on school connection, re-engaging with students through in-person therapeutic recreation activities like nature hikes, yoga workshops, gardening, arts projects as well as SSL and other activities. The Centers added evening hours and began opening one Saturday a month in FY22 to offer greater access to Positive Youth Development, therapeutic recreation, clinical and non-clinical mental health services and case management, especially to accommodate newcomers and serve all clients and families.

In FY22 we served 1,713 youth and their families, reflecting 27% of the overall populations of the four schools.

Curriculum-based programs

- 1,081 hours with 826 youth participating

Case management

- 995 youth with 1,625 referrals for safety-net supports

Counseling

- 998 hours of individual behavioral health counseling

Recreation

- 1,508 youth served with 38 recreation activities + 42 therapeutic recreation activities, 93 field trips, 168 special activities

Extended Hours

- 166 youth with 250 evening and weekend activities

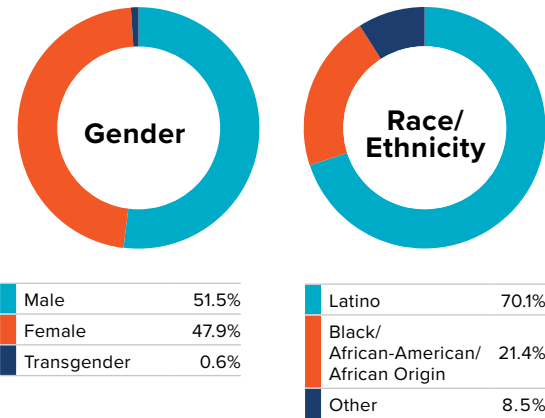
Volunteering

- 1,885 student service learning (SSL) hours earned

Parents served

- 235 family case management assessments
- 452 parents attended 48 education and engagement sessions

Who We Served



63%
received FARMS.

28%
lacked health insurance.

70%
were foreign born.

32%
lived in a single-parent home.

16%
lived in a restructured family.

14%
lived without either parent.

Wellness Centers *(continued)*

The following outcomes are from a sample of 397 students who completed both a Wellness Center baseline and exit survey.

School Connectedness

At baseline, 194 youth (49%) reported having low school connection.

64%

of this group reported an increase in school connection at exit.

At baseline, 174 youth (44%) reported poor leadership skills (communication, decision making, goal setting skills).

64%

of this group reported improvement in leadership skills at exit.

Emotional Well-Being

At baseline, 117 youth (29%) lacked expectations for a positive future.

67%

of this group reported more positive expectations for their future at exit.

At baseline, 135 youth (48%) reported low levels of anger management and conflict resolution skills.

67%

of this group reported an increase in those skills at exit.

At baseline, 123 youth (75%) 143 youth (67%) reported low levels of self-esteem.

54%

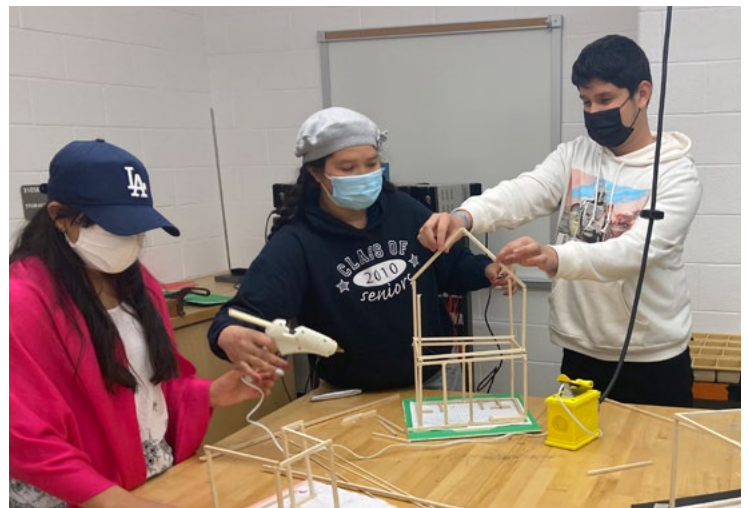
of this group reported an increase of self-esteem at exit.

Academic Partnerships

Identity's 21st Century Community Learning Center partnerships at Wheaton High School (Knight Time) and Watkins Mill High School (Wolverine Time) helped 152 ESOL students stay on track to graduate with academic support in English and Math, social-emotional learning programs, opportunities to earn Student Service Learning hours, field trips, recreation and art activities.

Students who participate consistently in the program did better academically and improved their English levels.

A partnership with the Trawick Foundation at Gaithersburg and Watkins Mill High Schools provided activities designed to connect 105 incoming 9th graders with trusted adult mentors and activities designed to build school connection and academic success.



Youth Opportunity Centers

Our two Youth Opportunity Centers, located in Takoma Park and Gaithersburg, offer integrated programs and services to provide youth that are neither in school nor working and have little or no connections to family or the community with the skills and support they need to move towards positive education and employment outcomes. Workforce, GED and ESOL programs are paired with wraparound services including intensive case management, tattoo removal, and mental health and substance abuse counseling. In FY22, we served youth ages 15–26, with an average age of 22 years old. The YOCs also worked with 24 youth in the county's CREA program (Career Readiness Education Academy) for students up to 21 years old who are still in high school, but unlikely to meet all graduation requirements before age 21.

Workforce Development

- 225 clients enrolled in Job Readiness programs
- 60 clients received employment counseling
- 145 industry-valued certifications were earned
- 57 clients obtained internships and paid work experience
- 46 clients learned to create – and created professional resumes
- 33 clients acquired a job

GED Support Services

- 122 clients received individual GED tutoring
- 3,469 individual GED sessions (in-person and virtual)
- 10 clients passed at least one GED test
- 2 clients earned their high school diploma

ESOL Support Services

- 70 clients participated in remote ESOL classes
- 503 hours of individual and group ESOL classes

Intensive Case Management

- 596 clients served
- 2,098 hours of case management
- 3,570 individual interventions

Behavioral Health

- 47 clients received 428 hours of individual mental health counseling
- 114 clients received substance abuse counseling

Positive Youth Development

74

engagement activities with 104 youth participating, such as the summer welcome barbeque, outdoor sports and recreational events and workshops.

96%

of youth were not involved or re-involved with the juvenile or criminal court system while enrolled in Identity programming.

At baseline, 61 youth (33%) reported lacking expectations for a positive future.

69%

of this group reported an increase in their expectations for a positive future at follow-up.

At baseline, 48 youth (36%) reported high levels of depression symptoms.

79%

of this group reported decreased levels of depression at follow-up.

At baseline, 94 youth (99%) reported poor conflict resolution and anger management skills.

92%

of this group reported increased skills at follow-up.

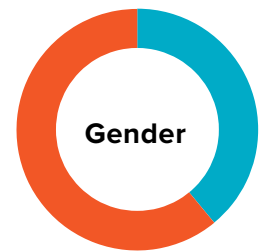
At baseline, 44% reported being disconnected from the school system.

65%

of this group were reconnected either to school or a GED program.

From a sample of 194 clients that completed a follow-up/exit survey during FY22.

Who We Served



Male	39%
Female	61%



Latino	87%
Other	13%

26%

of youth were US-born.

74%

of youth were foreign born. Of those, 55% had been living in the US for less than 5 years.

84%

of foreign-born youth chose Spanish as a preferred language.

Risk factors at intake

70%

of clients reported at least one risk behavior such as high levels of depression symptoms, low expectations for a positive future, low anger management skills or delinquent behaviors.

56%

of youth were not living with either parent.

62%

of youth had no health insurance.

Mental Health Services

Mental health services complement all programs.

Staff and partners provide bilingual and culturally competent counseling sessions to individuals, groups and families:

- 238 clients received mental health therapy (1,517 hours of individual therapy).
- 114 clients received substance abuse counseling.
- 40 cases were referred to Child Protective Services for suspected abuse or neglect.

Community Mental Health

Encuentros

Inspired by Latino cultural traditions of family and friends helping each other in times of emotional distress, Identity's Encuentros emotional support groups help community members manage the mental health impacts of their own and their families' trauma with non-clinical culturally responsive and trauma-informed strategies. Encuentros was designed with the Latino community for the Latino community and is co-facilitated by trained and trusted Latino Community Mental Health Workers with support from Identity staff. Community Mental Health Workers are natural connectors and leaders in their community, the people others turn to in times of distress. The curriculum is evaluated and continuously improved through a partnership with the University of Maryland School of Public Health.

814 community members participated in **86** CMH Encuentros groups co-facilitated by Community Mental Health Workers and staff.

In a sample of **512** participants:

- At baseline, 54% of participants felt they were doing a good job at managing stress. At exit, that percentage rose to 78%.
- At baseline, 56% felt they were doing a good job at managing sadness. At exit, that percentage rose to 82%.
- At baseline, 67% felt they were good at helping friends and family manage stress. At exit, that percentage rose to 84%.
- At baseline, 65% felt they were good at helping friends and family manage sadness. At exit, that percentage rose to 83%.
- At baseline, 64% of participants felt they had the skills to take care of their own emotional wellbeing. At exit, that percentage rose to 84%.

Family Reunification

Identity's multi-session healing program helps reconnect youth and their families who have had long periods of separation due to immigration. Reunification can pose serious challenges for those struggling to adapt to new and difficult family dynamics. We ran 8 groups with 60 youth and 50 parents participating. Groups were held both in-person and virtually, and all families participated together in activities and exercises, often with siblings and extended family, to strengthen communication and develop trust, respect and a more cohesive and resilient family unit.

- 115 hours of coaching sessions (augmenting the program sessions)
- 95% (n=48) of parents/guardians who initially reported poor relationships with their children, reported improved relationships at exit (ADD Health Scales).
- 50% (n=49) of youth who initially reported poor relationships with their parents/guardians, reported improved relationships at exit (ADD Health Scales).

Family Strengthening

An additional 90 families participated in Parenting Workshops on skills and strategies for raising adolescents, as part of our Family Strengthening program.



Community Engagement

At Identity, we work with families to strengthen their ability to support their children's and their community's education and wellbeing. We offer parent education and engagement workshops and curriculum-based programs for leadership development. We provide program graduates with ongoing opportunities to participate in civic discourse and advocate for their community.

Parent Education and Engagement

This year, we conducted 76 sessions of parent education and engagement workshops, attended by 789 parents (duplicated attendance). Workshops addressed topics such as dealing with trauma, academic monitoring and computer literacy for school communication, literacy at home, immigration rights and responsibilities, stress management, nutrition and health, and adolescent development.

Parent Leadership Program

Ninety-six parents participated in our multi-part leadership development and civic engagement program, *Padres Latinos Conectados*. Fifty-one completed the program, graduating into the larger active group of 106 parent leaders. Past participants took part in 13 different community engagement activities throughout the year

At exit:

- 89% (n=47) of parents reported being qualified to advocate for improvements in the education of Latino students in their community.
- 85% (n=47) of parents reported knowing the steps necessary to obtain support at the school to resolve any conflict their child may have.
- 100% (n=47) of parents reported feeling comfortable talking to their child about how they can support him or her at school.



Safety Ambassadors

Identity recruited 52 Montgomery County residents between the ages of 14 and 24 years for a paid internship as a Safety Ambassador. These young people completed 40 hours of training on COVID-19 safety and prevention protocols, contact tracing, trauma-informed active listening and workforce certifications like HIPAA. Then they put their skills into practice, sharing information with their networks about COVID-19 vaccines and testing, food and other safety-net resources.

- The Safety Ambassadors surveyed 2,033 young people on their intentions and attitudes related to getting vaccinated, and a second survey of 539 young people on their intentions and attitudes related to getting the booster. The county used this information to refine the vaccine communication campaign for youth.

Recreation

Identity’s Recreation program teaches youth leadership, goal setting and teamwork skills and habits of healthy living while building fitness and sports skills. This program is often the only option for at-risk youth to be involved in sports, as many don’t qualify for school teams due to low grades. The program works to inspire them to raise their grades and become academically eligible as well as to feel more connected to their school community. In addition to soccer, this year youth participated in tennis lessons with Adaptive Tennis, swimming and volleyball. Both youth and families hiked nearby trails.

This year the program served 228 youth, with 290 soccer sessions and other fitness activities.

- 17 youth were eligible to try out for their school soccer team; 16 made their school team.
 - 91 youth enrolled in a county or local soccer league.
 - 98 girls played on soccer teams, making up 43% of players.
- 76% of youth who initially reported low levels of physical activity, reported an increase at exit.
 - 65% of youth that had begun the program with only basic skills reported an improvement in their soccer skills.

58%

of youth who initially reported poor conflict resolution and anger management skills, reported an improvement at exit.

61%

of youth who initially reported poor school connectedness, reported better connection to school at exit.

51%

of youth who initially reported poor self-esteem, reported an increase in self-esteem at exit.



Where We Served

High School Wellness Centers

- Gaithersburg High School
- Watkins Mill High School
- Wheaton High School
- Seneca Valley High School

Youth Opportunity Centers

- Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center
- Up-County Youth Opportunity Center

Family Reunification

- Gaithersburg High School
- Quince Orchard High School
- Seneca Valley High School
- Watkins Mill High School
- Wheaton High School

Out-of-School-Time Programs

- Gaithersburg Elementary School
- Stedwick Elementary School
- Whetstone Elementary School
- Forest Oak Middle School
- Gaithersburg Middle School
- Neelsville Middle School
- Magruder High School
- Montgomery Blair High School
- Albert Einstein High School
- John F. Kennedy High School
- Northwood High School
- Quince Orchard High School
- Springbrook High School

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