

# Annual Evaluation Report

FY2024

# Annual Evaluation Report

July 2023 – June 2024

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 every year 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 and emotional learning, increase academic success and better prepare them for work. Identity's growing portfolio of programs and services for parents aims to strengthen youth's 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 use, involvement in delinquent activities and school disconnection—factors that can lead to negative consequences.

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.

Identity's FY24 Evaluation Report is presented in two sections. The first section describes Identity's organization-wide outputs and impact. The second section presents a deeper look at data from select program or service areas. Detailed program-specific evaluation reports are available upon request.

# 13,172 Clients Served

Benefiting over 52,000 residents

In FY24, Identity worked with vulnerable youth, and the families that love them, after school, in the community and on playing fields. Identity programs enabled youth to build the skills they need to thrive and provided their families with the tools to support their children. This hard-working, resilient community of youth and families pressed on with optimism. Together, we are building a stronger Montgomery County.

## We served...

7,754

youth and families with Case Management services

653

clients with Workforce Development services (up 76%)

301

youth and parents/guardians with Family Reunification and Strengthening groups

2,790

youth at five high school-based Wellness Centers (up 25%)

1,019

youth with Therapeutic Recreation programming

86

parents with the Parent Leadership Academy, who were trained to advocate for positive change in their communities and schools

936

youth with Out-of-School Time programming (up 52%)

2,726

clients with Encuentros non-clinical emotional support groups (up 57%)

106

previously trained parent leaders who remained active in community leadership.

708

youth at two community-based Youth Opportunity Centers (up 17%)

419

individually and 359 in groups with clinical behavioral health counseling

## Evaluation Methodology

Identity collects process and outcome data on all programs. Extensive evaluation information is collected by way of baseline and exit surveys. Outcome data is analyzed by an internal team of evaluators. 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 academic outcomes of Identity's out-of-school time elementary programs, we request academic data from the schools, including quarterly report cards, standardized test scores, attendance and behavioral referral data.

We partner with the University of Maryland School of Public Health on the evaluation of multiple projects, including a mixed methods study of Encuentros non-clinical emotional support groups using rapid cycle iterative evaluation and in-depth qualitative interviews. And in our continuous process of review and improvement, we partnered with UMDSPH to re-validate our evaluation scales and update baseline survey questions.

# Who We Served

Identity primarily worked with Latino youth and families but continued to welcome and serve a diverse population of older youth. The five high school-based Wellness Centers and the two Youth Opportunity Centers are operated in collaboration with other agencies, allowing us to serve youth and their families of different races, ethnicities and cultures with excellence. The following demographics come from a sample of 11,768 clients served by Identity in FY24.

## Youth (under 25)

n: 6,571

### Gender



◆ Male	47.0%
◆ Female	52.3%
◆ Non Binary	0.2%
◆ Transgender	0.3%
◆ Did not share	0.2%

### Age



◆ 13 and under	17.4%
◆ 14-16	30%
◆ 17-18	27.3%
◆ 19-25	25.3%

### Race/Ethnicity



◆ Latino	79.5%
◆ Black/African American/African Origin	15.4%
◆ White (Non-Hispanic)	1.7%
◆ Asian/Pacific Islander	1.9%
◆ Other	1.5%

## Adults (26 and older)

n: 5,197

### Gender



◆ Male	26.7%
◆ Female	73.18%
◆ Non Binary	0.02%
◆ Transgender	0.1%
◆ Did not share	0.02%

### Age



◆ 26-35	34.4%
◆ 36-50	48.2%
◆ 51-65	14.1%
◆ over 65	3.3%

### Race/Ethnicity



◆ Latino	97.44%
◆ Black/African American/African Origin	1.33%
◆ White (Non-Hispanic)	0.35%
◆ Asian/Pacific Islander	0.19%
◆ Other	0.69%

## All

The self-sufficiency standard (the amount of money families need to meet basic needs without the help of public or private assistance) is \$122,943 in Montgomery County, MD for a household with two adults, one preschooler and one school-aged child. (Calculated in 2023)

### Average Family Income (n: 887\*)



◆ Less than \$23,000	36%
◆ \$23,001-\$30,000	27.2%
◆ \$30,001-\$39,000	14.5%
◆ \$39,001-\$47,000	8.64%
◆ \$47,001-\$55,000	3.5%
◆ \$55,001-\$63,000	3.3%
◆ \$63,001-\$71,000	1.64%
◆ \$71,001-\$79,000	1.64%
◆ over \$79,000	3.62%

\*sample does not include Case Management clients

### Socioeconomics

**70%**  
of students received Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS).

**90%**  
of client households earned \$55,000/year or below.

### Family Cohesion

**26%**  
of youth lacked health insurance.

**13%**  
of youth lived in a precarious housing situation (rented a room, lived in a shelter or a group home).

**33%**  
of youth lived in a single-parent home; 14% lived in a restructured family (with stepparents); 14.3% lived without either parent.

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

**58%**  
of youth had been separated from their fathers, and 31% of youth had been separated from their mothers.

**6**  
was the average number of years of separation from a parent.

## Unique Challenges

# Our Latino Community

Identity works to improve the lives of Latino and other historically underserved youth and families in Montgomery County, where Latinos are the fastest growing demographic, 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 35% of the county's public school population.

Identity youth are exceptionally vulnerable. At the start of the 2023–2024 school year, only 24% of Montgomery County's Latino children were ready for kindergarten compared to 71% of their White peers (Readyatfive.org, 2023–2024). Despite modest gains, Latinos continue to be the lowest performing in literacy with only 45.8% proficient and in math Latino student outcomes are even lower at 39.4%. They have the lowest graduation rates (79%) and highest dropout rates (16%) in the County (mdreportcard.org, 2024).

## Traditional ACEs

Our FY24 survey of 1,494 of Identity youth shows 72.4% suffered 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. Twenty percent of these youth suffer from 2 or more ACEs, higher than U.S. (17.4%) or Maryland (13.4%) youth (National Survey of Children's Health 2019–2020). 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 survey in FY24 of 887 parents found that 19% suffered 3 or more ACEs, with 48% suffering at least one ACE. This increases the likelihood of health problems for parents and may affect the health and wellbeing of their children.



# Organization-Wide 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

2,101

participants in curriculum-based programs.

3,806

hours of curriculum-based programs.

376

hours of parent education and engagement workshops

## Academic Enrichment

67

elementary school students completed reading support in Identity's out-of-school time Jóvenes de Mañana program.

91

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

56

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

111

older youth participated in GED classes at the Youth Opportunity Centers.

## Workforce Development / Job Readiness

288

clients received 489 hours of employment counseling

33

clients participated in Identity's intensive Entrepreneurship Program, learning the basics of starting a business, pitching at Identity Entrepreneurship Fairs, and receiving a year of mentorship.

## Therapeutic Recreation

201

youth enrolled in our Soccer Program.

818

Wellness Center students took part in Therapeutic Recreation activities.

774

young people took part in field trips focused on re-building social and school connection.

## Case Management

7,754

clients received 29,459 referrals for social services.

14,140

emergency referrals were made for food and 2,389 for clothing.

1,749

referrals were made for health care and/or health insurance.

95%

of all referrals were successfully completed.

## Behavioral Health

419

clients received individual clinical behavioral health counseling.

339

clients participated in clinical mental health groups.

2,726

clients participated in Encuentros non-clinical emotional support groups.

64

cases were referred to Child Protective Services for abuse or neglect.



# Organization-Wide Outcomes

The following are outcomes from a sample of 1,027 youth in middle school, high school and Youth Opportunity Center programs who completed both a baseline and exit survey.

## Social and Emotional Development

### At Baseline

37% (n=394) reported lacking expectations for a positive future.	50% (n=511) reported some levels of depression symptoms.	43% (n=433) reported poor conflict resolution and anger management skills.	58% (n=596) reported low levels of self-esteem.	4% (n=43) reported some level of delinquent behaviors.	16% (n=138) reported low awareness of the danger of using drugs.	56% (n=286) reported low levels of school connectedness, such as not feeling accepted, safe at school, or close to an adult at school.	55% (n=461) reported low leadership skills including the ability to set goals, considered a foundation for academic success.
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### At Exit

69% of this group reported an increase in their expectations for a positive future.	63% of this group reported decreased levels of depression symptoms.	69% of this group reported increased skills.	53% of this group reported increased self-esteem.	81% of this group reported they had decreased their delinquent behaviors.	71% of this group reported increased awareness of the danger of using drugs.	59% of this group reported increased school connectedness.	64% of this group reported increased leadership skills.
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Not all youth responded to all questions, so the "n" varies by question. The improvements shown here were statistically significant.

## Work Readiness / Employment

170 adults and older youth earned career pathway certifications or industry- recognized certifications like IT, Hospitality, Child Care, Certified Medical Assistant, HIPAA, OSHA, CPR and ServeSafe.	105 clients obtained jobs or participated in internships or other paid work experience.	44 GED tests were passed by older youth at the Youth Opportunity Centers.
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## Behavioral Health

68% of adults report a decrease in their anxiety symptoms after participating in the Encuentros non-clinical behavioral health program.	90% of youth reported that participating in the Encuentros program helped them increase their ability to handle or cope with their painful feelings.	77% of youth and parents report an increase in their communication skills after participating in the Family Reunification program.
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Evaluation by Program

# School-based Programs

Identity runs Out-of-School Time programs before, during and after school, and during spring and summer breaks. In FY24, programs took place in five high school Wellness Centers, eight high school Bridge to Wellness schools, three middle schools, and five elementary schools.

**Out-of-School Time**

**Participants:**

- 3,726 students

**Curriculum-based Positive Youth Development:**

- 3,991 hours of programming

**Case Management:**

- 887 Family Intake and Wellness Plans

**Parents Served:**

- 376 hours of educational workshops
- 2,296 parents attended workshops

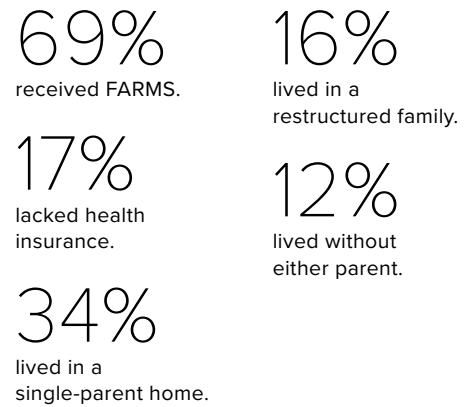
## High School Wellness Centers

Identity managed five Wellness Centers at Gaithersburg, John F. Kennedy, Seneca Valley, Watkins Mill, and Wheaton High Schools. The Wellness Centers are run in partnership with 480 Club, Emerging Triumphantly, True Connection Counseling, EveryMind and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services to support the social, emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing of students throughout their high school years.

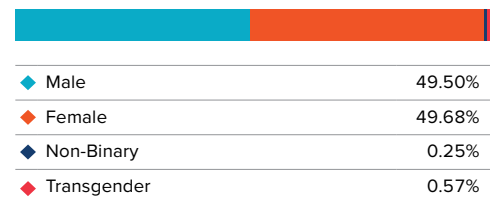
Identity’s trauma-informed, culturally and linguistically responsive programs for young people and their families strengthen school connectedness and other protective factors that have been shown to lead to better academic and life outcomes. The Wellness Centers operated evening and weekend hours to offer greater access to Positive Youth Development, therapeutic recreation, clinical and non-clinical mental health services and case management, especially to accommodate youth and families who may have difficulty accessing Wellness Centers during normal business hours. As we continued to address the youth mental health challenges, wraparound care to students focused on self-care and creating non-traditional healing spaces that incorporated art therapy, yoga, movement, and other expressive techniques.

In FY24, the Wellness Centers served 2,790 youth and their families, reaching 26% of the overall student population of the five schools. Identity-managed Wellness Centers work with students of diverse race and ethnicity proportionate to their representation in the five high-schools where the Centers are located. The five Wellness Centers serve 28% of the Black/African American/African Origin student population (752/2,660) and 30% of the Latino student population (1,822/6005)

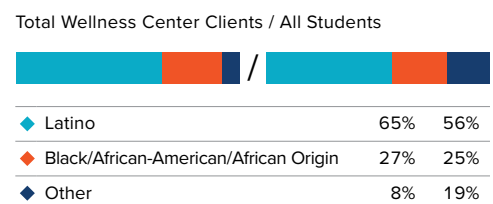
**DEMOGRAPHICS**



**Gender**



**Race/Ethnicity**







**OUTPUTS**

**Curriculum-based programs**

**1,399**  
hours with 1,165 youth participating individually and in groups during school hours

**331**  
youth with 1,200 hours of evening and weekend groups

**Case Management**

**962**  
youth with 3,316 referrals for safety-net supports

**Counseling**

**771**  
youth served with behavioral health services

**329**  
youth with 1,785 hours of individual clinical behavioral health counseling

**359**  
youth with 609 hours of group clinical behavioral health counseling

**Therapeutic Recreation and Other Activities**

**256**  
youth with 90 soccer and other sports activities

**818**  
youth with 194 activities providing emotional support and promoting healing

**774**  
youth with 75 field trips, 718 youth with 167 other special activities

**Volunteer Opportunities**

**6,746**  
hours of Student Service Learning (SSL), which students need to graduate

**Parents and Caregivers**

**582**  
family case management assessments

**1,586**  
(duplicated) parents attended 132 meetings on educational and engagement topics.

**OUTCOMES**

*The following outcomes are from a sample of 692 Wellness Center students who completed both a baseline and exit survey.*

**At Baseline**

**At Exit**

**School Connectedness**

**63%**  
(n=400) reported having low school connection.

**59%**  
of this group reported an increase in school connection.

**53%**  
(n=339) reported poor leadership skills (communication, decision making, goal setting skills.)

**65%**  
of this group reported improvement in leadership skills.

**Emotional Well-Being**

**40%**  
(n=256) lacked expectations for a positive future.

**66%**  
of this group reported more positive expectations for their future.

**47%**  
(n=302) reported low levels of anger management and conflict resolution skills.

**70%**  
of this group reported an increase in these skills.

**61%**  
(n=391) reported low levels of self-esteem.

**50%**  
of this group reported an increase in self-esteem.

**ADDITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

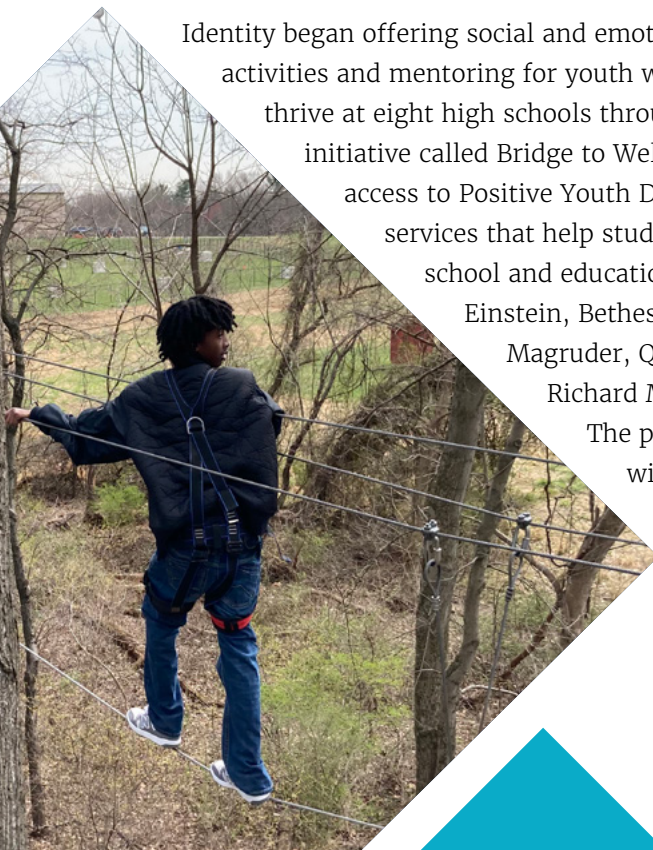
Identity’s 21st Century Community Learning Center partnerships with Wheaton High School (Knight Time) and Watkins Mill High School (Wolverine Time) helped 147 ESOL students stay on track to graduate with academic support in English and Math paired with social and emotional learning programs, opportunities to earn Student Service Learning hours, field trips, recreation and art activities. Students who attend Wolverine Time or Knight Time programs regularly earn better grades (MCPS Reports to WT and KT Steering Committees, June 2024).

We partnered with MCPS on two 3-week sessions of summer school for 82 ESOL and METS students from Watkins Mill, Wheaton and Gaithersburg High Schools who face challenges in completing 9th grade requirements and ultimately graduating. Credit classes were paired with social and emotional skill building, artist in residence projects, emotional well-being workshops and field trips. The students earned 126 credits, with 44 students earning multiple credits recovering at least one semester and many moved on to 10th grade. Students reported feeling significantly more connected to peers, caring adults and school after participating in the program.

# High School Bridge to Wellness Centers

708 youth served

Identity began offering social and emotional skill building programs, activities and mentoring for youth who need extra support to thrive at eight high schools through a Montgomery County initiative called Bridge to Wellness. The goal is to increase access to Positive Youth Development programs and services that help students connect to their peers, school and education. The high schools are Albert Einstein, Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Clarksburg, Magruder, Quince Orchard, Rockville, Richard Montgomery and Springbrook. The programs are run in partnership with the YMCA, EveryMind, Sheppard Pratt and Street Outreach Network.



215  
Bridge to Wellness youth completed PYD programs.

59%  
of those initially reporting low expectations for their future reported more positive expectations at exit.

203  
youth participated in 54 field trips.

63%  
of those initially reporting low levels of anger management and conflict resolution reported an increase in those skills at exit.

1,842  
hours of Student Service Learning (SSL).

**Gender**

◆ Male	58.2%
◆ Female	41.0%
◆ Non-Binary	0.4%
◆ Transgender	0.4%

**Race/Ethnicity**

◆ Latino	65%
◆ Black/African-American/African Origin	23%
◆ Other	12%

# Líderes de Mañana, Middle School

Social-Emotional Learning  
Gaithersburg MS, Montgomery Village MS, Neelsville MS

## OUTPUTS

170  
middle school youth served

234  
hours of curriculum-based Positive Youth Development (PYD)

## OUTCOMES

For the 151 students in Identity's middle 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 and emotional skills. Improvements in these critical indicators of wellbeing strengthen their chances for positive academic and life outcomes

**At Baseline** 74%  
(n=112) reported low levels of self-esteem.

59%  
(n=89) of youth reported low levels of conflict resolution and anger management skills.

48%  
(n=72) reported some levels of depression symptoms.

**At Exit** 55.4%  
of this group reported an increase.

65%  
of this group reported an increase in their ability to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence.

68%  
of this group reported a decrease in their depression symptoms.

# Jóvenes De Mañana, Elementary School

Social-Emotional Learning and Reading Support  
Harriet Tubman, Summit Hall, Watkins Mill, Whetstone, Stedwick Elementary Schools

## OUTPUTS

207  
youth in 2nd and 3rd grade served

769  
hours of curriculum-based Positive Youth Development

## OUTCOMES

For the 181 youth in Identity's Jóvenes de Mañana elementary school program who completed an intake and exit survey, there were statistically significant improvements for those who initially reported high levels of challenges in the social and emotional skills linked to academic success. Improvement in critical indicators such as levels of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, decision-making and school connection (CASEL's Social and Emotional Learning Framework) strengthen their chances for academic success.

**At Baseline** 33%  
(n=60) reported low levels of self-awareness.

28%  
(n=51) reported low levels of self-management.

30%  
(n=54) of program participants reported low levels of social awareness (understanding and empathizing with others).

29%  
(n=52) reported low levels of relationship skills.

40%  
(n=72) reported low levels of decision-making ability.

19%  
(n=35) reported low levels of school connection.

**At Exit** 73%  
of this group reported being more self-aware.

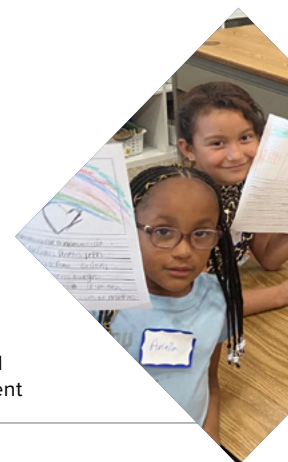
78%  
of this group reported improvement.

72%  
of those participants reported improvement.

67%  
of those participants reported improvement.

71%  
of those participants reported improvement.

71%  
of those participants reported feeling more connected to school.





## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

According to MCPS, chronic absenteeism—defined as 18 or more days absent in a school year (above 10%)—is a growing and critical problem. The subgroup of Pre-K to high school Latino students has the highest percentage of chronically absent students system-wide at 31.5%. Even the percentage of chronically absent elementary schoolers, regardless of subgroup, is 20%. **By comparison, Jóvenes de Mañana program participants have much better school attendance, with a 7.5% absenteeism rate.**

## READING ENRICHMENT

MCPS uses the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) reading assessment tool to determine reading proficiency levels in second grade. For third graders, MCPS uses the MAP-R assessment tool. Given how far below grade level elementary school MCPS students are, each student also has an individual student growth goal to determine if they are on track to being on grade level.

80%

of 21st CCLC elementary school participants increased scores by 10 or more points in DIBELS or MAP-R Literacy Assessments.

66%

of Identity 21st CCLC elementary school participants met their individual student growth goals in reading.

95%

of elementary school participants received a grade of C or higher in reading.

## STEM ENRICHMENT

160 Elementary students participated in 40 hours of STEM enrichment, many in partnership with KID Museum, which included a parent education component regarding how and why to support their child's STEM education.

135

Elementary students participated in 9 STEM experience field trips

90%

of the students reported being more interested in STEM, being better at exploring new ideas and being more confident in what they can achieve after the enrichment sessions.

86%

of youth reported they were better at not giving up when things get hard after participating in the program.

99%

of parents reported they agreed or strongly agreed that STEM is important for their child's future and that they will encourage STEM studies.

# 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 maintain good school attendance, raise their grades and feel more connected to their school community.

In FY24 the program served 201 youth, with 261 soccer sessions. An additional 168 youth participated in 15 other rec activities such as scenic hikes on nearby trails and mindfulness sessions.

66%

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

96

girls played on soccer teams, making up 48% of players.

44

youth were eligible to try out for their school soccer team; 39 made their school team.

57%

of youth that began the program with only basic soccer skills reported improvement in their skills at exit.

91

youth enrolled in a county or local soccer league.

66%

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

53%

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

96%

of youth reported they would recommend the program to their friends.



## Evaluation by Program

# Community-based Programs

Many Identity programs are community-based, serving youth and families from all across Montgomery County, compared to our school-based programs which are delivered in public schools. Youth Opportunity Centers located Up-County and Down-County serve older opportunity youth, both in-person and virtually. Workforce Development, Community Mental Health, Case Management and Community Engagement programs and services are delivered in-person, virtually or both to remove barriers to participation.

## Youth Opportunity Centers

In FY24, the Youth Opportunity Centers served 559 clients.

Identity manages Montgomery County's two Youth Opportunity Centers (YOCs), located in Gaithersburg and Takoma Park. Together with our partners Pride Youth Services and Maryland Treatment Centers, Identity's YOC staff work with young people (up to age 25) who have high levels of risk factors and tend to be disconnected from school, employment, community and/or family, requiring support and structure as they work toward a more positive future. The YOCs help these young people build social and emotional, academic and job readiness skills; connect to education and the workforce; and successfully transition to adulthood. Each YOC is a one-stop-shop helping older opportunity youth reach their highest potential.

### RISK FACTORS AT INTAKE

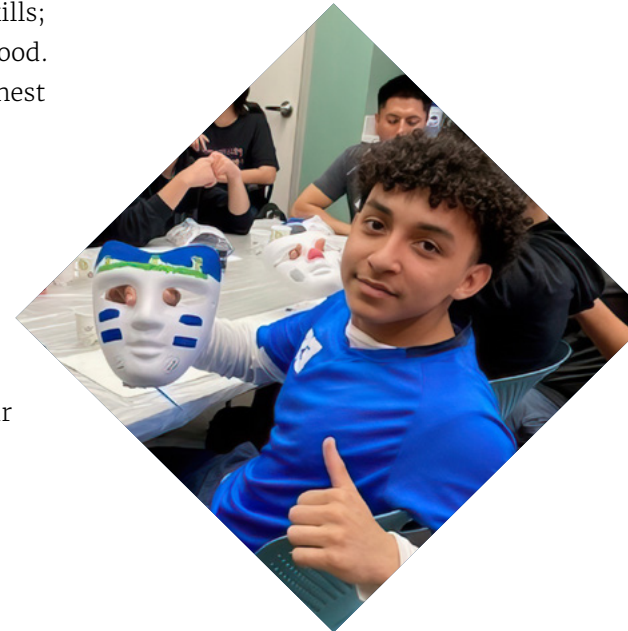
*(from a sample of 372 youth who completed a baseline intake survey in FY24)*

- 80% of clients reported at least one red flag behavior such as delinquent behaviors, high levels of depression symptoms, poor anger management skills or very low self-esteem. Typically, young people under-report their risky behaviors at intake.
- 48% had dropped out of school.
- 39% of youth were not living with either parent.
- 58% of youth had no health insurance.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

42%  
of youth were male

58%  
of youth were female.



**OUTPUTS**

559

clients (aged 14-25)

211

clients enrolled in Job Readiness programs.

111

clients received individual GED classes or tutoring.

559

clients received case management/mentoring.

91

clients received employment counseling.

143

youth participated in engagement activities such as the summer welcome barbecue, outdoor sports and recreational events and workshops.

76

clients received 607 hours of individual mental health and substance use counseling.

**OUTCOMES**

42

GED tests were passed by clients.

87

clients obtained jobs, internships and/or paid work experience.

34

clients earned 83 career pathway certifications or industry-recognized certifications like Early Childhood Education, Certified Medical Assistant, HIPAA, OSHA, CPR and ServSafe.

**POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**

*From a sample of 184 clients that completed a follow-up/exit survey during FY24*

**At Baseline**

35%

(60 youth) reported being disconnected from the school system.

26%

(53 youth) reported lacking expectations for a positive future.

32%

(59 youth) reported some levels of depression symptoms.

13%

(23 youth) reported poor conflict resolution and anger management skills.

99%

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

**At Exit**

54%

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

80%

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

83%

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

78%

of this group reported increased skills at follow-up.

98%

of youth say their lives have changed for the better after receiving services at the Youth Opportunity Centers.



# Workforce Development / Job Readiness

## YOUTH AND ADULTS

Identity's Workforce Development program offers a comprehensive range of services to support youth and parents in gaining workforce readiness skills, industry-recognized certifications and internships/work experience. It also provides bilingual (English/Spanish) coaching services to help clients find and maintain a job in their chosen field, including safety net and workforce-related case management critical to removing barriers that could derail their efforts.

# 653

clients enrolled in job readiness or career readiness programs.

# 288

clients received 489 hours of individual employment counseling.

# 33

clients participated in Identity's intensive, year-long Entrepreneurship Program.

# 105

clients obtained jobs or participated in internships or other paid work experience.

# 170

youth and adults earned career pathway certifications or industry-recognized certifications like IT, Hospitality, Early Childhood Education, Certified Medical Assistant, HIPAA, OSHA, CPR and ServSafe.

# 256

clients created 323 resumes.

In September 2023, Identity launched a **pilot career pathways program in hospitality with Marriott International**. Now, 12 Identity clients, and more in the pipeline, are employed by Marriott, with good wages, benefits and opportunities for advancement.

# 32

clients worked on applications,

# 21

clients reached the interview stage,

# 12

clients were hired.

## Case Management

Across the organization and across Montgomery County, Identity's Case Management program provides low-income and historically underserved youth and families with essential resources to stabilize their situation and help them achieve self-sufficiency. Identity's bilingual Case Managers meet with clients to assess needs, develop action plans and coordinate options to address their needs, while also increasing their ability to identify and access school and/or community resources for themselves and their families.

Of those families who receive crisis case management, 64% are unemployed or underemployed or seasonally employed. Sixty-four percent report they don't have enough food for the next 2-5 days.

# 7,754

unduplicated clients received case management services including food, healthcare, clothing, mental health support, legal services, rental assistance, utility assistance and other safety net supports and public benefits. 95% of referrals were successfully completed.

Key Services	# of referrals
Food	14,140
Financial	2,810
Educational	2,412
Clothing	2,389
Health Care	1,749
Employment	913
Legal Services	726
Computer, Phone, Wi-Fi Connection	705
Mental Health	668
Furniture	547
Housing/Rental Assistance/Utilities	488
Baby Essentials	<b>483</b>
Other	1,429
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,459</b>



# Non-Clinical Community Mental Health

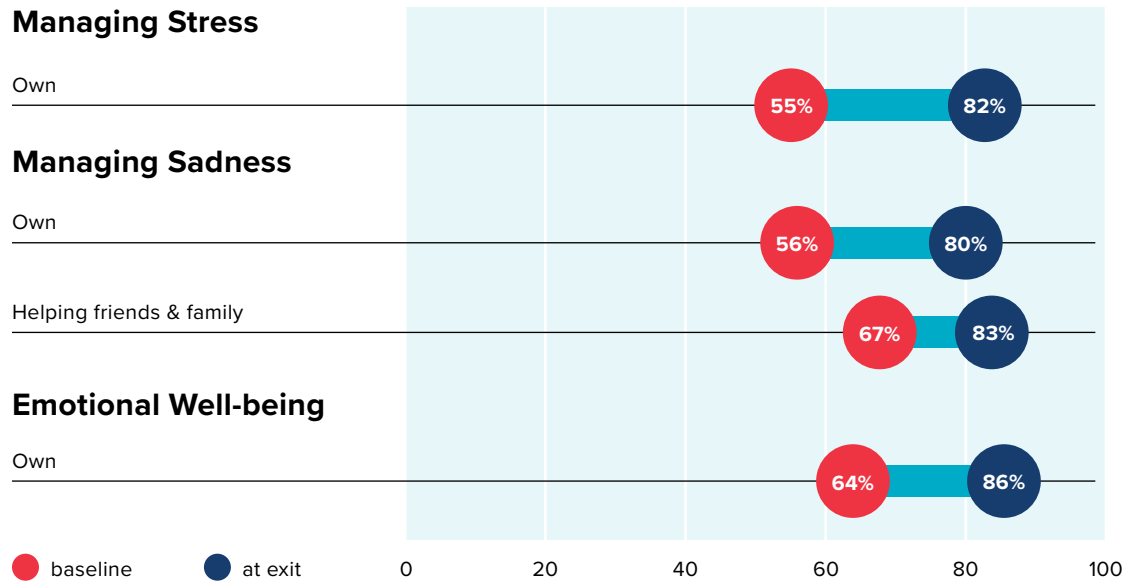
## ENCUENTROS

Inspired by Latino cultural traditions of family and friends helping each other in times of emotional distress, Identity’s Encuentros program provides non-clinical culturally and linguistically appropriate emotional support groups for adults and high school-age youth. These trauma-informed curriculum-based groups offer a safe space to engage in open discussion about mental and emotional health challenges and share strategies for managing them. Encuentros was designed with, by and for the Latino community, and group sessions are delivered by trained and trusted community co-facilitators (Community Mental Health Workers or Youth Peer Leaders) with support from Identity staff. Since the program began in Spring 2021, Identity has served 3,694 adults with 466 groups and 1,254 youth with 110 groups.

Encuentros is evaluated through a partnership with the University of Maryland School of Public Health using qualitative and quantitative methods including surveys and focus groups. With this participant input, we are evaluating and continuously improving the curricula in real time.

### IN A SAMPLE OF 1,915 ADULT ENCUENTROS PARTICIPANTS IN FY24:

(who completed a baseline and exit survey)



### GENERALIZED ANXIETY

We used the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7) scale to measure anxiety symptoms in adults pre- and post- participation. In a sample of 1,765 adult participants who completed the baseline and exit GAD-7 surveys, 68% reported decreased anxiety symptoms. Of those who started with severe anxiety (n=71) 100% reported decreased anxiety symptoms.

### IN A SAMPLE OF 602 YOUTH PARTICIPANTS IN FY24:

(who completed a baseline and exit survey)

89% of youth reported that participation in Encuentros groups increased their understanding of their own feelings

90% of youth reported that participation in Encuentros groups increased their abilities to handle or cope with their painful feelings.

66% reported reduced anxiety symptoms. Of those who started with severe anxiety (n=23),

96% reported decreased anxiety symptoms.

## FAMILY STRENGTHENING

Identity’s multi-session program helps heal and reconnect youth and their families who have experienced long periods of separation. Reunification can pose serious challenges for those struggling to adapt to new and sometimes difficult family dynamics and poor communication. In the Family Reunification program, Identity helped 63 parents, and 72 youth rebuild family bonds and reunify after years of separation. 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. Another 97 youth participated in the Family Reunification program without a parent or guardian.

Additionally, in our Family Strengthening program, delivered in partnership with the Parent Encouragement Program, 69 parents/guardians participated in groups and workshops on strategies for raising adolescents.

126  
hours of coaching sessions  
(augmenting the program  
sessions).

### At Baseline

43%  
(27 parents) reported poor  
relationships with their children.

60%  
(43 youth) reported poor  
relationships with their parents.

### At Exit

93%  
(25 parents) of this group reported  
improved relationships at exit (ADD  
Health scale).

88%  
(38 youth) of this group reported  
improved relationships at exit (ADD  
Health scale).



# Substance Use Prevention and Intervention

## SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In partnership with researchers from the University of Maryland School of Public Health, Identity conducted focus groups of Latino teens, parents and educators on their concerns about increasing substance use in young people. The research found that both children and parents agree on the importance of addressing substance use prevention from a health perspective rather than a punitive or law enforcement approach. All the focus groups expressed an urgent need for better information from trusted sources, and the desire for frank and informed conversations between parents and children. The assessment came on the heels of a recent report showing that Latino youth accounted for 42% of opioid overdose-related ER visits in Montgomery County, the largest of any racial or ethnic demographic, amid an alarming spike in youth drug overdoses overall. The Needs Assessment, which was shared widely in March 2024, guided changes to Positive Youth Development and social and emotional programming across Identity and is informing the development of Montgomery County's response to the fentanyl crisis.

# 355

youth and families were provided with opioid awareness information and education.

# 22

youth experiencing OUD were referred to residential treatment, and 14 youth successfully completed treatment.

# 71

referrals to social services for families, of which 97% were successfully completed.

## SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION PILOT

In early February 2024, Identity piloted an Emergency Youth Opioid Response effort in highly impacted neighborhoods in Aspen Hill, Glenmont, and Wheaton neighborhoods, especially supporting middle and high school Latino youth and their parents.

# Clinical Mental Health

Clinical mental health services are open to most school-based or YOC program participants. Bilingual, culturally competent therapists provide counseling sessions to individuals, groups and families. Substance use counseling was provided in partnership with the Maryland Treatment Center.

# 419

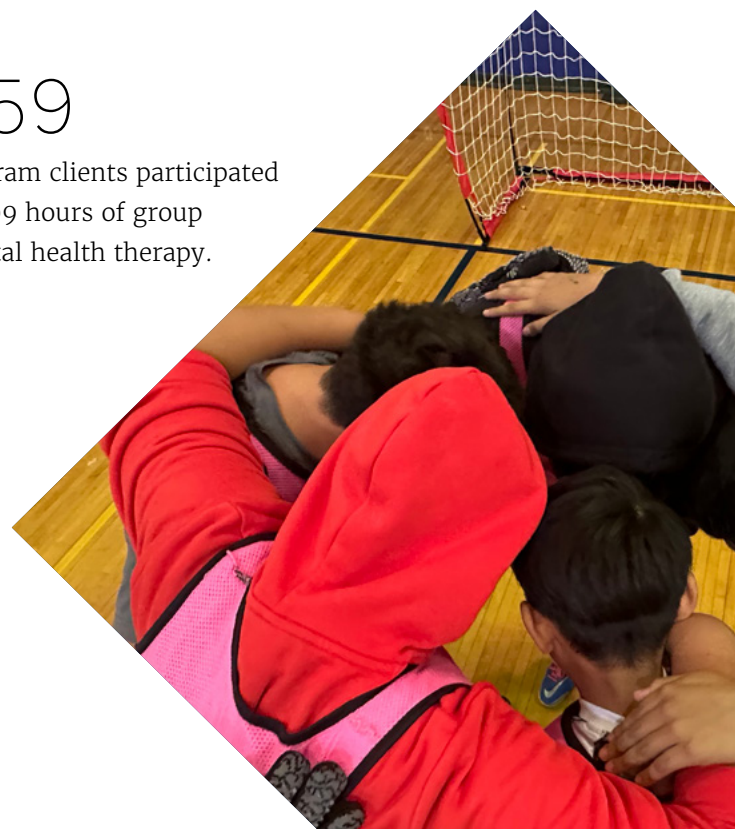
program clients received individual mental health therapy, and substance use counseling.

# 2,602

hours of mental health and substance use therapy.

# 359

program clients participated in 609 hours of group mental health therapy.



# Community Engagement

Identity works with families to strengthen their ability to support their children's and their community's schooling and wellbeing. We offer parents education and engagement workshops and a curriculum-based leadership development program. We provide program graduates with ongoing opportunities to participate in civic discourse and advocate for their community.

## Parent Education and Engagement

In FY24, 2,296 parents attended 195 parent education and engagement workshops (duplicated attendance). Topics included navigating the school system, using ParentVUE, interpreting report cards, communicating effectively with school staff, understanding FAFSA, preventing bullying and cyberbullying, recognizing and preventing substance use disorders, understanding child and adolescent development.

## Parent Leadership Program

Identity's Padres Latinos Conectados program trained 86 new parent leaders and mobilized 106 active alumni to advocate for positive change in their communities and schools. Current and past participants took part in 20 different community engagement activities throughout the year.

## Advocacy events

943 (duplicated) community members attended eight advocacy events, including the Black and Brown Coalition Forum and monthly parent engagement workshops

**At exit (n=84):**

89%

of parents reported being qualified to advocate for improvements in the education of Latino students in their community.

87%

of parents reported knowing the steps necessary to obtain support at the school to resolve any conflict their child may have.

92%

of parents reported feeling comfortable talking to their child about how they can support him or her at school.





## Where We Served in FY24

### Youth Opportunity Centers

- Down-County Youth Opportunity Center
- Up-County Youth Opportunity Center

### High School Wellness Centers

- Gaithersburg High School
- John F. Kennedy High School
- Seneca Valley High School
- Watkins Mill High School
- Wheaton High School

### Out-of-School-Time Programs

- Gaithersburg Elementary School
- Harriet Tubman Elementary School
- Stedwick Elementary School
- Summit Hall Elementary School
- Watkins Mill Elementary School
- Whetstone Elementary School
- Gaithersburg Middle School
- Montgomery Village Middle School
- Neelsville Middle School
- Bethesda Chevy Chase High School
- Clarksburg High School
- Albert Einstein High School
- Col. Zadok Magruder High School
- Richard Montgomery High School
- Quince Orchard High School
- Rockville High School
- Springbrook High School
- Northwest High School
- Thomas Edison High School

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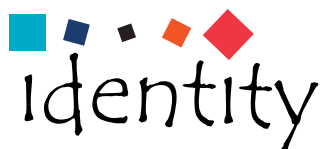
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