

FREE HAIRCUTS AND MORE IMPACT REPORT: 2017

STATISTICS:

More than 150 students
received haircuts or braids

150 backpacks given w/
school supplies

150 bagged lunches consumed
by students

10 pizzas consumed by
volunteers



FREE HAIRCUTS AND MORE

On Monday, August 28, Harford County Department of Community Services teamed up with The EPICENTER at Edgewood to hold its second “Free Haircuts and More” back-to-school event for local students and families.

This year, more than 150 children and teens received free haircuts or braids at The EPICENTER from more than 12 barbers and hairstylists who gave their time and talents voluntarily.

“It was so nice to see the smiles on kids’ faces after getting their hair cut,” said Kristy ‘Kritt’ Heim, who works for Community Services. “So many of them were just beaming— you could really see the self-confidence on their faces.”



Hairstylists like Leila Woods volunteered their time so that local students could look and feel their best as they began school.

Many students also received backpacks stuffed with various school supplies such as notebooks, pencils, glue sticks, markers, colored pencils, and loose-leaf paper that Mountain Christian Church and Extreme Family Outreach donated. In addition, 150 students enjoyed bagged lunches of peanut butter and jelly or turkey sandwiches from Harford County Public Schools Food & Nutrition Services.

This year’s event included a special new feature: Representatives from more than 14 community organizations who offered information and resources to attendees. Participating organizations included the Harford County Health Department, Harford Community Action Agency, Harford County Public Library, and Harford County Public Schools. Thanks to these groups, families had the opportunity to apply for free or reduced-price meals for the school year, enroll in medical assistance programs, have birth certificates and “Kid-Print” photo IDs printed for their children, and much more.

“It was great getting the word out about so many services,” said Mary Slade, the Triage Employment Caseworker for Harford Community Action Agency. “We were able to give a street card, a list of places to get food, and information on our Energy Assistance Program for a woman who came to our table specifically to ask for help with paying an \$8,000 electric bill.”

STAYING HEALTHY

Reflecting both Harford County Department of Community Services and The EPICENTER's commitment to keeping Edgewood youth and families healthy, many organizations that participated in this year's Free Haircuts and More event provided information and services specifically focused on health.

Harford County Health Department, for instance, featured a table with hygienists from its Dental Program. In addition to offering brochures and posters on oral hygiene, free toothbrushes and toothpastes, and information on the Maryland Healthy Smiles Program, the hygienists gave children free two-minute dental screenings in a private space behind their table.



Healthy Harford's Bari Klein helps a local student count added sugars in food.

"We were able to detect cavities and oral infections in a number of children and refer them to our dental clinic," said Dawn Anthony, a dental hygienist and the Health Department's Dental Outreach Coordinator. "It feels very good to know that they now are a step closer to receiving proper treatment."

Bari Klein, who serves as Healthy Harford's Public Health Program Manager, expressed similar sentiments after teaching attendees the importance of consuming added sugars in moderation.

"One of the most special moments for me was seeing kids run to share what they had learned with siblings and friends," Klein said. "It was rewarding to see them so eager to do so and to feel that we had made a difference."

THE EPICENTER THANKS ALL WHO SHARED THEIR TALENTS AND RESOURCES DURING 2017'S FREE HAIRCUTS AND MORE:

Harford Community Action Agency

Harford County Department of Community Services

Harford County Housing & Community Development

Harford County Health Department

Harford County Public Schools

Harford County Public Library

Maryland Children's Health Program

Healthy Harford

Harford County Pupil

We Cancerve Movement

Empowering Minds

Lluminaire Salon

Serenity Beauty Lounge

Fade Masters Barber Shop

NVS Merle Norman

Nate Green

Erika Brandt

Leila Woods

Lisa Gibson