

Identity: A Local Organization Offering Stability to Thousands

BY DIEGO URIBURU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IDENTITY

Nineteen-year-old Nick never expected to become the sole caregiver for his three younger siblings. But when a crisis hit his family, Nick found himself responsible for children ages eleven, six, and three, with no breadwinner and no place to live. Overwhelmed but determined to keep his family together, Nick turned to Identity. Together, we helped the family find a safe place to stay, access food, and begin the long process of starting over. What could have been a breaking point instead became a moment of stabilization and hope.

Jenifer's story is different, but no less powerful. At just 15 years old, she became a mother. Many people told her that her future was already written. Jenifer disagreed. She came to Identity determined to earn her GED so she could build a better life for herself and her son. "I want my son to know there are things you can accomplish if you really put your mind to it," she said. "And I can tell him that because I lived it."

There are thousands of young people like Jenifer, who thrive when offered the right support at the right time, and thousands of families like Nick's, for whom the gift of stability allows the breathing room necessary to make hard decisions about their future. Neighbors like you make this work possible.

Over this past year alone, Identity assisted more than 11,000 vulnerable young people and families living in high-poverty areas of Montgomery County, delivering the right services and opportunities at exactly the moments they were needed most.

Throughout 2025, we remained laser-focused on keeping children engaged in school, connecting older youth to meaningful career pathways, equipping parents to support their families, and offering a full range of mental health and case management services. At a time when uncertainty touched nearly every household we



serve, our North Star was clear and simple: stability, dignity, and opportunity.

Make no mistake. The needs today are greater than anything we have ever seen. Families are struggling with job losses, unstable work hours, and rising living costs. Many parents are doing everything they can just to keep food on the table, children in school, and their families housed and together. Children are absorbing the stress they see around them. Some worry daily about being separated from a parent; others carry the weight of financial and safety concerns far beyond their years.

And yet, amid this uncertainty, Identity youth continue to show extraordinary resilience, persistence, and growth. Significant numbers of young people reported real gains in managing difficult emotions, resolving conflict, and avoiding substance use and delinquent behavior. More youth are reconnecting with school, work, and their communities. Parents and guardians tell us they feel more stable and better able to manage stress and fear after participating in Identity programs. Families are not just surviving; many are focusing on the future and seizing new opportunities.



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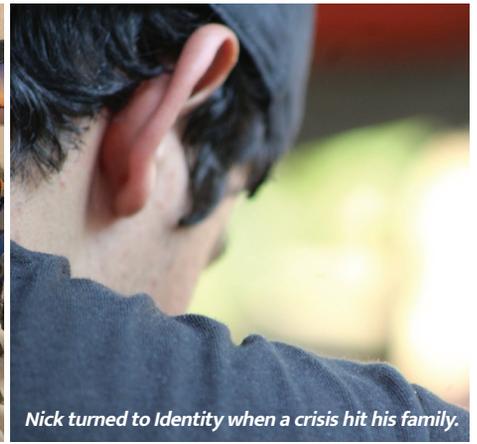




Identity youth and staff enjoy the healing power of nature.



Identity teaches the social-emotional, academic and workforce skills young people need to succeed in school, work and life.



Nick turned to Identity when a crisis hit his family.

For example, 26 GED students recently earned their high school diplomas, while our waiting list for GED classes is the longest it has ever been—a clear sign of determination and hope. At the same time, two cohorts of clients completed a new Spanish Patient Care course at Montgomery College, strengthening their English skills and preparing for further Certified Nursing Assistant training.

Founded in 1998, Identity works alongside youth and families in Montgomery County’s highest-poverty neighborhoods, where the risks for poor life outcomes are greatest. Like an extended family, we teach and model essential social-emotional, academic, workforce, and life skills—at no cost—in 25 schools, two community centers, and neighborhoods across the county. Our programs are complemented by family case management, non-clinical emotional support, mental health and substance use counseling, and recreation. We also empower parents to engage

in their children’s education and to be champions for their success and the success of the community.

We are also your neighbors, headquartered on East Diamond Avenue in Gaithersburg. We invite you to read our most recent annual report found at www.identity-youth.org/reports-financials and stay connected by subscribing to Identity’s quarterly newsletter, where you can learn more about ways to get involved. Investing in young people and families is always a smart investment—and together, we are building a stronger Montgomery County.



Jenifer proudly holds her son who she says is her inspiration, during Identity’s GED graduation ceremony last fall.



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