



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Bacigalupi, Greater Philadelphia YMCA

Contact Phone Number: 215-301-8183

West Philadelphia Y and Barbers Who Care Help Kids "Shape Up" for Back to School

West Philadelphia, PA — The West Philadelphia YMCA (located at 5120 Chestnut Street) is inviting local families to join them **Sunday, August 24th from 10am to 3pm** for their annual Back to School event. The event features school supplies, an afternoon of fun, and free haircuts courtesy of **Barbers Who Care**, a local group committed to raising the self-esteem of youth through grooming.

But this event is not just for boys. **The Beauty and Smarts Academy** will also be on-hand to give girls an opportunity to have their nails done, and hair styled in time for the big first day of school.

United Healthcare will also be there offering book bags and much-needed school supplies.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- A recent report from the **National Retail Federation** projects spending for K – 12 school supplies – including clothing, shoes, electronics and supplies – is expected to hit \$39.4 billion dollars, averaging \$858 per household.¹
- In Philadelphia, where 1 in 3 children live in poverty², school supplies can prove to be a significant economic burden for families.
- A **Reuters/Deloitte** survey found many parents cutting back on discretionary purchases like technology and school supplies, opting for private-label brands and spacing out purchases.³

¹ <https://nrf.com/media-center/press-releases/back-to-school-season-begins-early-for-majority-of-shoppers>

² https://www.phila.gov/media/20200310093216/GrowingUpPhilly_March2020.pdf

³ <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/back-to-school-spending-set-dip-economic-woes-shrink-budgets-deloitte-forecasts-2025-07-10/>

- According to a 2023 study, hair and hairstyle decisions are tightly linked to a child's identity, confidence, and self-expression, important factors to bolster as they start a new school year.⁴

"We're proud to partner with Barbers Who Care, the Beauty and Smarts Academy, and UnitedHealthcare to give our community's children a strong start to the school year. When we show kids we've got their back—by providing resources, support, and safe spaces—it builds the confidence they need to succeed," says Alesha Clayton, Executive Director of the West Philadelphia YMCA branch. "We can't wait to high-five them all this Sunday!"

ABOUT THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA YMCA:

The Y is one of the nation's leading nonprofits, strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Throughout the Delaware Valley, the Greater Philadelphia YMCA serves more than 200,000 individuals each year – regardless of age, income or background – across 16 service locations in Berks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Pike, Burlington and Camden counties. Coupled with 80+ childcare sites, 30+ day camps, and one overnight camp in the Poconos, the Y has extraordinary reach in connecting people to healthier lives. For more information, please call 215-963- 3700 or visit philaymca.org.

⁴ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10457631/>