

OHEL CELEBRATES BACK-TO-SCHOOL AND THE GRAND OPENING OF OUR TENT FAMILY ENRICHMENT CENTER

**MALKY GROSSMAN, DIRECTOR,
OHEL FAMILY ENRICHMENT CENTER**

On August 24, nearly 2,000 community members came together for an extraordinary afternoon as Ohel Children's Home and Family Services celebrated its annual Back-to-School event together with the official grand opening of Our Tent Family Enrichment Center, a proud program of Ohel.

In conjunction with the Flatbush Community Fund, the celebration brought families, community Board 14 leaders, elected officials, city representatives, partners, and friends together for a day filled with excitement, connection, and community spirit. Children enjoyed carnival attractions, obstacle courses, inflatables, face painting, cotton candy, popcorn, the NYPD Game Truck and rock-climbing wall, while nearly 2,000 backpacks and school supplies were distributed to children preparing for the new school year.

While the backpacks, activities, and entertainment made for an incredible Back-to-School celebration, the day also

marked something especially meaningful for Ohel: the official opening of Our Tent Family Enrichment Center and the opportunity to welcome the community into a space created for them.

The grand opening offered families a firsthand look at what Our Tent represents and what its doors will continue to offer long after the celebration ended.

Our Tent Family Enrichment Center is a proud program of Ohel, created as a warm, welcoming community space where individuals and families can simply walk through the doors, connect, participate, and feel that they belong. It is a place built around strengthening families, fostering resilience, creating connections, and bringing meaningful resources and opportunities directly into the community.

And while the grand opening marked an exciting milestone, the work taking place inside Our Tent extends far beyond a single day.

Throughout the year, families can participate in a wide variety of free programs and community initiatives, including women's wellness and workout classes,



food distributions, children's and family programming, educational workshops, holiday celebrations, community gatherings, support initiatives, and special events designed around the interests and needs of the families we serve.

At the heart of both Ohel and Our Tent is the understanding that strong families help build strong communities. Sometimes support means helping a family through a difficult moment. Other times, it means creating a place where a parent can meet another parent, a child can participate in an enriching activity, families can access resources, or neighbors can simply come together and build relationships.

That is why the Back-to-School celebration was such a fitting way to mark the grand opening of Our Tent.

Families came for backpacks, carnival rides, activities, food, and fun but they were also being introduced to something that will remain available to them throughout the year: a welcoming Ohel community space they can return to again and again.

The day was also a celebration of partnership. Ohel was honored to welcome community leaders, elected officials, representatives from New York City, law enforcement, community organizations, and partners whose continued collaboration helps make this work possible.

Special appreciation is extended to the New York City Police Department for bringing its Game Truck and rock-climbing wall and for continuing to be such a valued community partner, as well as to the many organizations, volunteers, staff members, supporters, and friends who contributed to the success of the day.

For more than five decades, Ohel has worked to strengthen individuals and families and create communities in which people know they are supported. The opening of Our Tent Family Enrichment Center represents another way of bringing that mission directly into the neighborhood creating a space centered on connection, resilience, partnership, prevention, and belonging.

The tremendous turnout for the Back-to-School celebration and grand opening was more than a successful event. It was the beginning of another chapter.

The carnival may have ended and the backpacks may have gone home with excited children, but the doors of Our Tent remain open.

As a proud program of Ohel, Our Tent Family Enrichment Center looks forward to continuing to welcome families through those doors to connect, participate, grow, find support, and strengthen the community together.

The author can be reached at Malka_Grossman@ohelfamily.org

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