

Buckner makes going back to school easier for vulnerable children

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DALLAS—Vulnerable children found going back to school easier this fall, thanks to [Buckner International](#) efforts across Texas.

Working with a variety of partners, Buckner distributed school supplies, shoes and uniforms—as well as provided haircuts—for children in Conroe, Dallas, Longview, Lufkin, Midland and Peñitas.



Children receive haircuts at a back-to-school event at First Baptist Church in Longview, sponsored by Buckner International. (PHOTO: John Hall / Buckner International) “The first day of school is a nervous time for many children,” said Lindsay Miller, Buckner manager of volunteer engagement. “Thanks to these school supplies, students can walk through those doors confident and ready to learn.”

The school supply and shoe distribution efforts also send a message to students: They are loved.

“It is a joy and privilege to be able to help Valley students kick off the new school year with some basic and essential items, such as school supplies and shoes,” said Monica Salinas, executive director for Buckner in the Rio Grande Valley. “To see the smiling faces and feel the excitement when they receive a new pair of shoes is truly amazing. When children feel good about themselves, they feel hopeful for a brighter future.”

A line of people wrapped around [First Baptist Church in Longview](#) before the sun rose in anticipation of receiving school supplies. When the double doors opened at 8 a.m., parents and children smiled as they streamed in to get pencils, pens and other supplies.



Children in Longview receive much-appreciated back-to-school shoes, made possible by the Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls campaign. (PHOTO: John Hall / Buckner International)After the families picked up backpacks full of items, they moved to a room where children received new shoes collected by [Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls](#). Children’s eyes lit up as they held their shoes.

Seeing their response affected those who volunteered with the back-to-

school effort, dubbed the School Supply Train.

“We’ve been involved in Buckner ministries for nearly 20 years,” said Susan Henry, who was distributing shoes. “This is something I look forward to every year—interacting with the people Buckner is helping and providing a really basic need for people in Longview who need it.”

Kristin Reynolds, a member of the Junior League of Longview, handed out backpacks. As a newcomer to Longview, the drive was a way she could be part of the community.

“I feel like the community has given so much to me and has welcomed me into the community,” she said. “This is my way to give back.”



A child receives a new school uniform at a back-to-school event at First Baptist Church in Longview, sponsored by Buckner International. (PHOTO: John Hall / Buckner International) At the Back to School Bash at [Crestview Baptist Church in Midland](#), volunteers distributed school supplies to more than 100 vulnerable children served through Buckner foster care and Family Place ministries.

Children and their families participated in games, had their faces painted

and jumped in a bounce house. Each child received a new pair of shoes, a backpack filled with school supplies and a new school uniform. Volunteers from Crestview Baptist helped run the event as part of their #bethechurch initiative.

“The Back to School Bash is a fun way to celebrate our families and prepare for a great year to come,” said Myndi Easter, gift officer for Buckner in the Permian Basin. “We’re thrilled to be able to encourage these kids in their education and give them the supplies they need to be successful.”

More than 50 members of The Wolverines motorcycle club distributed school supplies to more than 100 low-income children at the [Buckner Family Hope Center at Wynnewood in Dallas](#).



Susan Henry, who has volunteered with Buckner International ministries 20 years, participates in a back-to-school event at First Baptist Church in Longview. (PHOTO: John Hall / Buckner International)The Hope Center currently cares for more than 100 vulnerable children in Dallas through after-school and summer day camp services. The goal of the program is to address each child’s unique needs with love and compassion, creating a safe learning environment for children to grow in character and self-confidence.

Every Buckner child enrolled in the center's after-school programs received school supplies for the upcoming year.

"Many of the children who attend this event come from difficult backgrounds and depend on the bash each summer for supplies to get them through the entire school year," said Sarah Jones, ministry engagement coordinator for Buckner in Dallas.

"The Wolverines go out of their way each year to prepare our kids for the upcoming academic year by ensuring that every child has the tools they need to be successful, while reminding them that they are valued and loved."