

Gymnast Ali Coles Joins 1st Choice Family Services for Back-to-School Giveaway

More than 500 students received backpacks, shoes and gift cards at the agency's Annual Back-to-School Event in Columbus, Ohio.

COLUMBUS, OH, UNITED STATES, August 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than 500 students headed into the new school year with fully stocked backpacks on Saturday, August 1, following the Annual Back-to-School Event hosted by [1st Choice Family Services](#), an Ohio agency serving individuals with developmental disabilities and the families who support them.



Families pick up school supplies and household essentials at the Annual Back-to-School Event hosted by 1st Choice Family Services in Columbus, Ohio, on Saturday, August 1, 2026.

Alongside the backpacks - each packed with grade-appropriate school supplies - the agency distributed new shoes and retail gift cards to help families absorb the cost of getting children ready for the classroom. Food and drinks were provided free of charge throughout the day.

“

Gym life is my passion, but giving back to the community is my purpose. Big things happen when we come together to support and uplift one another.”

Ali Coles, Ambassador, 1st Choice Family Services

Joining the effort as an ambassador for the agency was [Ali Coles](#), a Level 10 gymnast on the elite track and a member of the class of 2029, who trains at Buckeye Gymnastics in Westerville under coach Kittia Carpenter. Coles spent the day on site working with staff and meeting the families who came through.

"Gym life is my passion, but giving back to the community is my purpose," Coles said. "Seeing the smiles on these kids' faces and talking with these families was everything. Big things happen when we come together to support and uplift one another."

For households navigating the additional costs that come with a developmental disability, the

start of the school year can arrive as a financial pressure point. The agency's approach is to meet that pressure directly, with supplies in hand rather than referrals on paper.

"Ali gave up her weekend to be here, and she spent it on the floor with the kids, not standing behind a table," said Monica Lalla, Program Coordinator at 1st Choice Family Services. "That's the kind of ambassador families remember. She showed a room full of young people what it looks like to work hard at something and still make room for the people around you."

The Back-to-School Event is one of several community initiatives the agency operates each year. 1st Choice Family Services also runs outreach programs internationally, with efforts in Trinidad and Tobago, the Philippines, South Africa, and Bangladesh. Planning for a larger back-to-school event in 2027 is already underway.

Families interested in next year's event or in the agency's ongoing services can reach 1st Choice Family Services at (614) 321-2430 or info@1stcfs.org, or visit www.1stchoicefamilyservices.org.

About 1st Choice Family Services

1st Choice Family Services is a Columbus-based Ohio agency supporting individuals with developmental disabilities - including autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disabilities, ADHD, and Down syndrome - from childhood through adulthood. Services include direct support professional (DSP) care, remote monitoring, and [pre-employment and vocational training](http://www.1stchoicefamilyservices.org), delivered across the Columbus, Westerville, and Findlay areas. The agency also maintains community outreach programs in Trinidad and Tobago, the Philippines, South Africa, and Bangladesh. More information is available at www.1stchoicefamilyservices.org.

About Ali Coles



Staff, volunteers and families gather at the close of the 1st Choice Family Services Annual Back-to-School Event, where more than 500 backpacks were distributed



Volunteers staff distribution tables as families move through the giveaway line at the 1st Choice Family Services Annual Back-to-School Event in Columbus, Ohio.

Ali Coles is a Level 10 competitive gymnast on the elite track, class of 2029, training at Buckeye Gymnastics in Westerville, Ohio, under coach Kittia Carpenter. Media and appearance inquiries may be directed to Ali@1stcfs.org.

Monica

1st Choice Family Services

+1 614-321-2430

info@1stcfs.org

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/932255472>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.