



The Atlantic City Free Public Library has provided children's books to city barbershops and salons the last several years through its Fade to Books program - and it is looking to add more locations this year.

As part of the program, the library gives participating businesses a small bookcase and children's books. There is no cost to the business owner. A library staff member visits participating locations periodically to check on the condition of the bookcase and restock it with more books. Barbers and stylists encourage their young clients to select books to read as they sit in the waiting area, during their haircuts or at home. Children are allowed to take home books from the Fade to Books bookcase to keep.

There are currently Atlantic City Fade to Books bookcases located at [Amina Hair Braiding](#) (113 S. Tennessee Ave.), [Just Cutt'n Up](#) (526 Atlantic Ave.) and [Mencia's Barbershop](#) (3109 Atlantic Ave.). Atlantic City barbershops and salons interested in being a Fade to Books site can call Kristen Reid-Ortiz at (609) 345-2269, ext. 3044. Also, residents are welcome to encourage their barbershop or salon to contact the library about becoming an Atlantic City Fade to Books location.

The library first got involved in the Fade to Books program in 2017, when it received grant funding from the [New Jersey State Library](#) (NJSL), in partnership with the [Long Branch Public Library](#) and [Bridge](#)

[of Books Foundation](#). Fade to Books was created to spur young boys to read. It recognized the role of the barbershop as a community gathering space and the role of the barber as a mentoring figure for young men and boys. Once the funding ended, the Atlantic City Free Public Library continued the Fade to Books program and expanded it by opening up the program to salons.

*Pictured are library staff member Kristen Reid-Ortiz, who is the Fade to Books coordinator, and Mencia's Barbership owner Olman Mencia.*