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Hundreds of backpacks handed out to foster children this year

INDIANAPOLIS (Dec. 27, 2018) – The Indiana Department of Child Services is happy to announce its Books for Youth program has helped more than 300 foster children this year.

In 2018, Books for Youth handed out 325 backpacks full of 8,125 age-appropriate books to Indiana foster children.

“It warms my heart that so many foster children now have books they can call their own,” DCS director Terry Stigdon said. “Reading is a huge indicator for success, and the fact that Books for Youth has been able to provide fun and exciting books to more than 300 children this year will only encourage them to keep reading and learning.”

Most of the books were passed out at several Books for Youth events across the state this year. The fun-filled celebrations are put on with the help of the Indianapolis Colts and Cargo Services Inc. At this year’s record-breaking Colts game day Books for Youth collection drive Nov. 11, fans donated 1,409 books and more than \$1,500 toward the cause.

“This is our chance to be able to give back,” Colts General Manager Chris Ballard said. “By giving a book to a kid now, it may spark something that helps them later on in life and that’s a powerful thing.”

Books for Youth launched 12 years ago with the goal of giving a backpack full of 25 new and used age-appropriate books to children entering the Indiana foster care system. The program has since collected more than 800,000 books and distributed more than 8,000 backpacks.

“These children are Indiana’s future, and unfortunately, many of these children have no control over their circumstances,” said Steve Fugate, Cargo Services, Inc. CFO. “By giving them a backpack filled with books, we give them something that’s theirs and only theirs.”

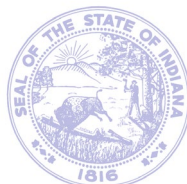


Indiana children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities.

To find out how you can get involved, or to learn more about the Books for Youth program, click [here](#).

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About Indiana DCS: *The Indiana Department of Child Services engages with families and collaborates with state, local and community partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and to provide child support services. Indiana Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 800.800.5556. Child Support Customer Service Kidsline: 800.840.8757 or 317.233.5437. www.in.gov/dcs*



Protecting our children, families and future