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DCS fundraiser supports Vanderburgh foster children

Donors contribute \$1,700 toward purchase of duffel bags

Evansville (October 21, 2019) - Nearly 300 foster children will receive duffel bags following a DCS fundraiser held in partnership with Borrowed Hearts, a local nonprofit that supports families in need.

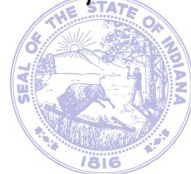
The Vanderburgh County DCS office raised more than \$1,700 this month during its #TrashTalk campaign, which raises awareness of the challenges faced by children in foster care. Donations were collected by Borrowed Hearts of Evansville, a nonprofit clothing closet that will use the funds to purchase duffel bags for foster children in Vanderburgh County.

When children who have been abused or neglected by their caregivers must be removed from their homes for their own safety, they sometimes leave all but a few personal belongings behind. Often, children take only what can fit in a trash bag as they enter foster care.

#TrashTalk aims to educate the public about the power of a \$6 donation, the cost of one duffel bag for a child who might have little else to call their own.

“We understand not everyone can be a foster parent, but there are so many other ways to support foster children,” DCS director Terry Stigdon said. “This is one of those ways. Most of us won’t miss that \$6, but it could mean the world to a child longing for stability.”

On Oct. 10, employees from DCS, Borrowed Hearts and several area service-providers took to the streets, carrying full trash bags and encouraging passersby to ask about the campaign, which serves as a visual reminder of what many foster children experience.



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

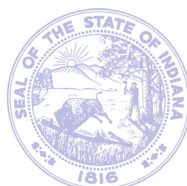
The campaign gives DCS employees a chance to interact with the public in a different way, said DCS local office director Shirley Starks. Those who stopped to talk with employees were quick to show their support once they understood the message behind the trash bags, she said.

“Think of being told you can’t live at your house anymore; then, on top of that trauma, you leave with nothing but a trash bag,” Starks said. “No child deserves to have their entire lives in a trash bag. That \$6 donation does more than cover the cost of a duffel — it buys a foster child some dignity.”

The #TrashTalk campaign is ongoing across the state, with duffel bags being delivered to donors’ local DCS offices. For more information, visit borrowedheartsfoundation.org (select “Trash Talk Campaign” from the drop-down box when donating). Interested in learning more about foster-parenting? Visit IndianaFosterCare.org.

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About Indiana DCS: *The Indiana Department of Child Services protects children from abuse and neglect and works to ensure their financial support. Indiana Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 800.800.5556. Child Support Customer Service Kidsline: 800.840.8757 or 317.233.5437. www.in.gov/dcs*



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