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# Colts partner with Evansville business to provide books to kids

By [Samm Quinn](#)

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MOLLY BARTELS / COURIER & PRESS Katelyn Williams, 3, shows off the new book she got as part of the Indianapolis Colts Books for Youth program at the DSM Engineering Plastics facility in Evansville on Tuesday. Children got books and backpacks and also listened to a program from Blue, the Colts mascot.

EVANSVILLE — Thirty foster children from the Evansville area received an Indianapolis Colts bookbag filled with books Tuesday to help kick off their school year.

The Indianapolis Colts, Cargo Service Inc., and DSM Engineering Plastics Americas teamed up to put on the event at DMS Engineering in Evansville.

Cargo Services began working with the Colts and the Indiana Department of Child Services to put together the annual "Books for Youth" event three years ago.



Blue, the Colts mascot enlists the help of Kat Taylor, mascot coordinator, left, and audience member, Sylvia Sorensen, center, during the Indianapolis Colts Books for Youth program at the DSM Engineering Plastics.

"We use it as a vehicle to give back to the community," said William Batton, owner of Cargo Services. "We picked up this cause, and we have not looked back."

The event has given 500,000 books to Indiana foster children and has a goal to put books in the hands of all Indiana foster kids, Colts representative Stephanie Mathes said.

"Our goal is to get about 25 age-appropriate books into the hands of every foster child."

Stacy Lozer, a spokeswoman for The Department of Child Services, said at any given moment there are 10,000 children in foster care throughout Indiana.

"We really saw a need in the foster care family," Mathes said.

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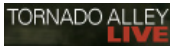
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The Colts gave away books in Evansville last year, but some families didn't get them so they returned to Evansville again.

"Every year it seems to grow bigger and better," Batton said. "It seems to grow legs."

The 30 children receiving books were selected because they hadn't received any before.

DMS Engineering got involved with the event through Cargo Services. DMS Engineering hosted the event, and employees held a book drive to donate more books to the cause.

"It was the perfect fit when it came up to have out employees participate," DMS Vice President of Operations Deb Dykema said.

She said the two companies have the same core values-to give back to the community.

Children of all ages were given 25 books that were appropriate for their age.

The program started after a former foster child attributed his success to reading a book he was given, Mathes said.

The small act of kindness and book helped to turn his life around, she said.

Children and foster families were able to meet Colts cheerleaders, tour the Colts in Motion traveling museum and hear a presentation from the Colts mascot Blue in addition to receiving their new books.

The program will continue throughout the state in an effort to reach the goal of giving books to all Indiana foster children, Mathes said.

Book donations can be made at libraries, book drive events, local DCS offices and at the Colts Blue Fridays.

People can also purchase a Blue bookbag at Colts pro-shops, and a bag full of books will be donated to a foster child.

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