



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Executive Committee Members

Representative Dale DeVon
District 5

John R. Hammond, IV
Office of the Governor

Senator Erin Houchin
District 47

Hon. Loretta Rush
Chief Justice of Indiana

Director Terry Stigdon
Indiana Dept. of Child Services

Representative Vanessa Summers
District 99

Commission Members

Christine Blessinger
*Deputy Commissioner,
Indiana Dept. of Correction,
Re-entry and Youth Services*

Kristina Box, M.D.
Indiana State Health Commissioner

Senator Jean Breaux
District 34

Jay Chaudhary
*Director,
Division of Mental Health & Addiction*

Bernice Corley
*Executive Director,
Indiana Public Defender Council*

Justin Forkner
*Chief Administrative Officer,
Indiana Supreme Court*

Curtis T. Hill, Jr.
Indiana Attorney General

Zac Jackson
Director, State Budget Agency

Susan Lightfoot
*Chief Probation Officer,
Henry County*

Jennifer McCormick, Ph.D.
*Indiana Superintendent
of Public Instruction*

Chris Naylor
*Executive Director, Indiana
Prosecuting Attorneys Council*

Dr. Jennifer Sullivan, M.D.
*Secretary, Family and
Social Services Administration*

Commission Executive Director

Julie Whitman

Helping Children as Community Responds to COVID-19 MARCH 13, 2020

As school districts around Indiana are closing to protect the public and slow the spread of the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19, our thoughts turn to the children who rely on school meals, who may be home alone while parents continue to work, or whose parents may be unable to work and earn a paycheck to cover basic family needs.

“It’s important we all follow the guidance of our Governor and health officials to try to stay healthy and reduce the spread of this disease. At the same time, we need to be looking out for our neighbors in need, especially vulnerable children and families,” said Rep. Dale DeVon, Chairman of the Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana.

Fortunately, local school districts and the Indiana Department of Education are working together to make food available to students. Many districts are setting up “grab and go” food distribution locations, where families can pick up school breakfasts and lunches without having large numbers of people gathered together. Families should contact their local school district to find out whether and where food is being distributed in their area.

Some food banks are also shifting to “drive-through” food distribution to continue meeting the needs of struggling families while avoiding large group gatherings. Hoosiers needing food assistance can find a list of Indiana food banks by visiting the [Feeding America website](#) or by calling 211.

Families facing additional economic hardships can also call 211 to learn about assistance that may be available to them.

Hoosiers who are fortunate to have sufficient resources may support their neighbors by donating to food pantries and other local social service organizations. Call 211 or your local United Way to learn which community organizations support families in time of need and what types of donations would be most useful at this moment in time.

For health information related to the virus, visit the Indiana State Department of Health’s [COVID-19 website](#).

Contact:

Julie Whitman, Executive Director
Julie.whitman@courts.in.gov
317-232-1945