



EYES ON KIDS: 4.20.20

The reality of this extended time at home has created moments of joy and closer bonds for many families. Solving puzzles, cooking meals together, and playing board games have replaced after-school practices and games, business and civic group meetings, and rushing here and there.



While these scenarios conjure images that might be Norman Rockwell-esque, for some, they are more like nightmares.

Times of stress, be it medical, financial or job-related, have a direct correlation to an increase in child and domestic abuse. In today's stay-at-home world, though, the reports of abuse are unusually low. The reason? Teachers don't have eyes on their students.

It is the law that anyone who has reason to suspect child abuse must report it to the authorities. Educators spend the most time with children, and as a group, report the vast majority of abuse concerns.

And now, in Indiana, it's been several weeks since our school employees have seen their kids.



Virtual learning. Remote learning. E-learning. Home-based learning. Many names for the current reality, where we are doing our absolute best to ensure the smooth continuation of education. Even with Google Meet, and Zoom, FaceTime and Skype, the interaction between staff and students is different.

The child who isn't just hungry, but is malnourished. The child who suddenly withdraws. The child with unusual and frequent bruises. The child who can't stay awake during the school day. The child who simply stops coming to school.



These scenarios happen in schools around the country every day. And every day, trained professionals, who love their jobs and their students, make difficult calls to other professionals who follow up on their concerns. But now, the link in the chain that protects our most vulnerable individuals has been broken.

The phrase, "it takes a village to raise a child," may hold more meaning today than it has in decades. So we implore you to become a part of our village.

Neighbors, extended family, friends, parents of friends ... help us keep eyes on kids. Take note of their appearance, both physical and emotional. And when you have a concern, call the authorities. It's the law, and it's our responsibility.

These resources provide more information about child and domestic abuse.

[The Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Process by the #s](#)

[5 Tips for Kids Online Safety](#)

[If You See a Child With Any of These ...](#)

[Indiana Department of Children's Services](#)

[Sheltering Safely](#)

[Is This Abuse?](#)

[Having a Safety Plan](#)

[Susie's Place](#)

[IN DCS Tip Sheet](#)



Our children need your help!



Did you know?

One in four children will be victimized in their lifetime.



Did you know?

Educators report more concerns about child welfare than any other group.



Did you know?

Right now, reports of suspected child abuse are much lower than normal.



Did you know?

In times of health and economic stress, child abuse increases.



Did you know?

We can all keep our eyes open, and in doing so, help protect our youngest neighbors.



Everyone Hoosier is a mandated reporter. If you suspect child abuse or neglect, you must report it. Call 911 or the Department of Child Services Hotline at 1-800-800-5556.