

Hungry kids at school: volunteers can ease suffering

One Indianapolis elementary student had received a citizenship award, but on a Monday morning he got in a fight while in line for a school breakfast. Why? He had not eaten all weekend and wanted to be first in line.

We have seen related stories in The Star's "Our Children, Our City" series. Sadly, these stories are very common. Before the recession the Interfaith Hunger Initiative estimated that 18,000 Indianapolis children like this boy were frequently hungry. We were surprised and distressed. How could there be so many in our hometown?

These kids get a good meal or two at school but do not get regular meals in the evening, on weekends or during the summer. In a recent study of Chicago children, nearly half were getting only one meal a day at home. These problems are not limited to urban schools. Elementary school principals in a nearby Indiana school district surveyed this year said hunger is the problem they most need help with.

As individuals, we can respond by increasing support of the many wonderful existing organizations that help hungry kids. I am signing up to be a mentor.

We also need to make sure programs fit with each other so that hungry children are not falling between the cracks.

Dave Miner

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