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## News

### Gearing up for school

*Event offers free supplies, information for parents, kids*

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Kids and their families became a little more prepared for school returning to session at an event designed for that purpose Saturday afternoon in Matter Park.

Grant County On the Go hosted its annual Get on the Bus event, handing out school supplies and information to families, while providing entertainment and services.

Patricia Lines' two children will return to Allen Elementary on Tuesday. They spent time on inflatable playgrounds in Matter Park on Saturday while their mom watched and laughed.

"We're out having a great day as a family," she said. "We did this last year, and we thought it was great."

While many parents were happy to see the free school supplies, Lines said it was a nice way to get the kids out to have inexpensive fun.

Marion resident Angel Aidt was walking her dogs through the park Saturday when she happened upon the event with her 8-year-old niece, who's gearing up to go to Lincoln Elementary on Tuesday.

"It's pretty neat," Aidt said of the event. "It's nice. Not a lot of people do things for free."

Veronica Duke, 25, said her two daughters had fun while learning lessons Saturday, including how to get school supplies for free. They also wore goggles that simulate drunkenness in a lesson about not drinking and driving.

"It was fun, a lot of activities," Duke said.

Organizations from throughout Grant County offered supplies, services and information Saturday.

Lisa Cart, program manager for Health Families, said organizations want to help parents with school supplies so kids are ready when they get back to school.

"I think it's important for the community to fill in gaps if there are any," Cart said.

Mary Eckerle, Marion Public Library director, said the event was a nice collaboration between different groups in the area.

Many of the school supplies were donated by Indiana Members Credit Union and Indiana Wesleyan University. Marion Parks Department and Family Service Society, Inc. were also big partners in the organization of the event, Eckerle said. The library collected supplies for the event.

Booth workers said at least 300 kids visited during the two-hour event. Many supplies were gone within the first hour. Workers also said they saw students from schools throughout Grant County.



Getting ready — Joanne Hix, left and Mary Eckerle of the Marion Public Library hand out free school supplies Saturday afternoon at their booth. Elaine Moore / [emoore@chronicle-tribune.com](mailto:emoore@chronicle-tribune.com)