



## IT'S BEARS FOR BOOKS AT BUILD-A-BEAR AS BRAND CELEBRATES NATIONAL TEDDY BEAR DAY AND ITS ONGOING SUPPORT OF CHILDREN'S LITERACY

*Build-A-Bear Announces Three-Way Partnership With Build-A-Bear Foundation, First Book, and Busload Of Books Tour, To Provide 150,000 Free Books to High-Need Communities Across The Country*

**ST. LOUIS, MO (Sept. 9, 2022)**—Build-A-Bear Workshop (NYSE: BBW) celebrates its favorite day of the year today, [National Teddy Bear Day](#), with the launch of its newest furry friend, [Read Teddy](#), to support its ongoing children's literacy efforts and encourage a love of reading among children. This classic brown bear has super soft fur with an irresistibly cute smile and can be paired with fun clothing and accessories, including the new ["My Weekend is Booked"](#) tee and Book wristie. Proceeds from each purchase will go to support Build-A-Bear Foundation and its partnership with First Book. [Build-A-Bear Foundation](#) is also donating 20,000 [teddy bears](#) to Title 1 schools in the First Book network to provide reading buddies to children in under-resourced communities to help build self-confidence and a love of reading. Children's literacy is one of the core areas of giving at Build-A-Bear Foundation, which announced its partnership with First Book earlier this year in honor of the brand's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

[First Book](#) is the largest online community of educators serving kids living in poverty, building a path out of poverty through educational equity. In a three-way partnership between First Book, Build-A-Bear Foundation, and the Busload of Books Tour, the organizations will provide 150,000 free books to students and educators in high-need communities across the country.

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, Matthew Swanson and Robbi Behr—the author/illustrator duo behind popular picture books and illustrated middle grade novels such as The Cookie Chronicles series and Everywhere Wonder—will spend the 2022-2023 school year on the [Busload of Books Tour](#). This ultimate road trip will visit Title I schools in all 50 states handing out free books to students and teachers who otherwise wouldn't have access to them. They'll be joined on this adventure by their four children, the family dog and their very own special Read Teddy. [Watch Robbi and Matthew](#), along with their children, make the very first Read Teddy who will travel along on their journey over the next year.

Follow along as they chronicle their adventures on their [Instagram channel](#).

"Education and reading are so critical to the trajectory of a young child's life. Knowing that access to education and reading is a key indicator of a child's success through high school and beyond is why we have made this a core pillar of our Foundation's efforts," said Voin Todorovic, President of Build-A-Bear Foundation. "We are pleased that Build-A-Bear Workshop is supporting our literacy efforts with the launch of Read Teddy and the partnership with First Book and the Busload of Books Tour."

"We're thrilled to be celebrating National Teddy Bear Day with a focus on reading and literacy. Septem-BEAR is the perfect time to launch Read Teddy in support of our brand's literacy efforts, with children starting a new school year. Research shows reading to a stuffed animal can build self-confidence with children, and also be a therapeutic tool, and our hope is that Read Teddy will now encourage our youngest guests to snuggle up with

their furry friend and read a favorite story,” said Sharon Price John, President and Chief Executive Officer of Build-A-Bear. “By partnering with First Book and supporting our Foundation’s efforts, we can work together to ensure that even more children will have access to a beloved book and bear.”

“Our goal at First Book is to provide kids in under resourced communities with the books and resources they need to learn and thrive,” said Dana Bond, Senior Vice President, Strategic Alliances for First Book. “We are so grateful for our magical partnership with Build-A-Bear, taking that a step further providing a cozy, reassuring reading buddy to encourage children to engage in reading.”

#### **ABOUT BUILD-A-BEAR FOUNDATION**

Build-A-Bear Foundation adds a little more heart to life by sharing hugs, inspiring creativity, and supporting those in need. A 501(c)3 organization, Build-A-Bear Foundation’s core focus is to support children’s literacy programs as a path to social and educational equity. Build-A-Bear Foundation also provides financial and furry friend donations to organizations that support children’s health and wellness, disaster relief, and families in need of essential supplies. Since 1997, Build-A-Bear has donated more than \$22 million and 1.5 million furry friends to charitable causes around the world. For more information, please visit [www.buildabearfoundation.org](http://www.buildabearfoundation.org).

#### **ABOUT BUILD-A-BEAR®**

Build-A-Bear is a multi-generational global brand focused on its mission to “add a little more heart to life” appealing to a wide array of consumer groups who enjoy the personal expression in making their own “furry friends” to celebrate and commemorate life moments. Nearly 500 interactive brick-and-mortar retail locations operated through a variety of formats provide guests of all ages a hands-on entertaining experience, which often fosters a lasting and emotional brand connection. The company also offers engaging e-commerce/digital purchasing experiences on [buildabear.com](http://buildabear.com) including its online “Bear-Builder”, the animated “[Bear Builder 3D Workshop](#)” and its age-gated adult-focused “[Bear Cave](#)”. In addition, extending its brand power beyond retail, Build-A-Bear Entertainment, a subsidiary of Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc., is dedicated to creating engaging content for kids and adults that fulfills the company’s mission, while the company also offers products at wholesale and in non-plush consumer categories via licensing agreements with leading manufacturers. Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. posted total revenue of \$411.5 million in fiscal 2021. For more information, visit the [Investor Relations section](#) of [buildabear.com](http://buildabear.com)

#### **ABOUT THE BUSLOAD OF BOOKS TOUR**

Author/illustrator duo Mathew Swanson and Robbi Behr will spend the 2020-2023 school year traveling the country in a tiny home school bus, visiting Title I elementary schools in all 50 states, doing presentations on creative empowerment, giving away 25,000 books, and facilitating the first-ever large-scale study of how author/illustrator visits impact literacy and creativity among elementary age students.

#### **For more information, contact:**

Jaime Ludwig  
[pr@buildbear.com](mailto:pr@buildbear.com)

###