

Good News Department

Many Still Plan To Have A Helping Holiday

(NAPSA)—A new survey finds reassuring news in the midst of the current economic climate. Most respondents still see charitable giving as a holiday priority—and believe the holidays are a good time to encourage children to be charitable.

Among more than 3,000 adult respondents in a Build-A-Bear Workshop survey (most of them moms), 63 percent said their charitable giving would remain about the same as last year and more than 24 percent said they would increase donations this holiday.

These responses are even more striking when compared to survey results concerning spending in other areas. For instance, more than half of the respondents plan to cut back on eating out at restaurants and 44 percent will forgo redecorating or remodeling their homes. However, moms are still intent on buying for their kids. Just under 60 percent said their spending on children would remain the same this holiday season compared to last and 18 percent said it would increase. More than 60 percent said they prefer products that benefit charities when selecting gifts.

Build-A-Bear Workshop offers a variety of options for charitable giving. For instance, when guests purchase the new Turner Owl, 50 cents is donated to First Book to provide new books to children from low-income families and 50 cents is donated to the Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation to support other literacy and education programs.

Other furry friends benefit domestic pet programs (Jack Russell Terrier is a favorite in the Bearemy's Kennel Pals series), children's health and wellness causes



Of those responding to a recent survey, more than 60 percent said they prefer products that benefit charities when selecting gifts.

(Champ—A Champion Fur Kids), and endangered animals and their habitats (WWF Gray Wolf).

Team up with Toys for Tots

This year, the company will again partner with the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation to conduct a toy drive the weekend of Dec. 3 to 5. Guests at each store will be encouraged to purchase a furry friend or bring a new toy to donate.

During the month of December, guests are also invited to add a \$1 donation (or more if they so desire) to support Toys for Tots when they check out either at the store or online at buildabear.com. Last year, through the generosity of its guests, the company raised nearly \$400,000 for the Toys for Tots program.

Have a "Helping Holiday"

Survey results also reveal that 70 percent of moms think there are opportunities for kids to get

involved with charitable organizations. Build-A-Bear Workshop encourages young people to make a difference in their communities through its Huggable Heroes program, which recognizes leaders for their outstanding charity efforts. This year's class of 10 Huggable Heroes, ranging in age from 11 to 18, raised funds and collected items valued at more than \$22.5 million, and they volunteer more than 650 hours of their time each month. The company asked these young experts for advice on ways to make the holidays better for others. Here are some of their ideas:

- Start a food collection drive for a homeless shelter.
- Go to a nursing home and make handmade ornaments with residents.
- Gather coats, hats and gloves for children who may not have warm clothing for the winter.
- Bake cookies and raise funds for a selected charity through a bake sale.
- Make a basket with some essentials and give it to another family; encourage your friends to do the same and host an event to make the baskets.
- Foster an animal at a nearby animal shelter.
- Use your individual talents to "give back." For example, if a child plays an instrument or sings, encourage him/her to gather friends with a similar talent and contact local nursing homes, senior centers and hospital pediatric wards to arrange musical holiday performances. The positive impact of music on the recovery and immune systems of children and the elderly is significant.

For more information, visit www.buildabear.com.