IICF Distributes 100,000 “Book Buddies” Books to Promote Early Literacy

LOS ANGELES (September 20, 2019) – The Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF) today announces that, as part of its Early Literacy Initiative and in partnership with Sesame Workshop, it has reached its goal of distributing 100,000 “Book Buddies” children’s books in underserved communities throughout the US and UK. The IICF partnership with Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street, was designed to advance IICF’s Early Literacy Initiative by providing children with greater access to literacy resources and opportunities, regardless of their economic circumstances.

“IICF is extremely proud to have reached our goal of distributing 100,000 children’s books in communities with the greatest need,” said Bill Ross, CEO of IICF. “Improving literacy opportunities, particularly among children in underserved communities, is essential if we want to create a better future for all children and society as a whole. We’re grateful to our insurance industry partners for their continued support and assistance in providing children with early educational resources.”

The distribution of 100,000 “Book Buddies” storybooks was part of a 6-year, $1.5 million IICF grant to Sesame Workshop and a primary component of Every Day is a Reading and Writing Day, a free, bilingual multimedia early literacy program. Designed to support parents and caregivers in the development of young children’s literacy skills, this program also includes Building a Reader, a free online course for early childhood educators and a webinar for IICF insurance industry volunteers.

“We’re thrilled to celebrate this milestone with IICF, our partner in addressing the critical role of early literacy development,” said Dr. Jeannette Betancourt, Senior Vice President for US Social Impact at Sesame Workshop. “We’re proud to continue our work together through Every Day is a Reading and Writing Day to give parents, caregivers, and volunteers the tools they need to encourage children’s love of reading for years to come.”

IICF distributed “Book Buddies” through its worldwide network of insurance industry supporters and at its literacy fairs, hosted in partnership with nonprofit organizations serving children and their families. Most recently on Aug. 30, 2019, IICF’s Western Division hosted a back-to-school literacy fair at the Child Care Resource Center in Arleta, Calif. and the next IICF Literacy Fair will be held in Queens, N.Y. on Sep. 30, in partnership with the Child Center of NY.

By uniting the insurance industry in this effort, IICF strives to help bridge the gap in children’s literacy rates. Every Day is a Reading and Writing Day and other IICF Early Literacy Initiative resources will continue to be available at www.sesamestreet.org/literacy.

About the Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF)
The Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF) is a unique nonprofit that unites the collective strengths of the insurance industry to help communities and enrich lives through grants, volunteer service and leadership. Established in 1994, IICF has served as the philanthropic foundation of the insurance industry for more than twenty-five years, contributing $36 million in community grants along with 300,000 volunteer hours by more than 110,000 industry professionals. IICF reinvests locally where funds are raised, serving hundreds of charities and nonprofit organizations, for maximum community impact. IICF is a registered nonprofit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Learn more at www.iicf.org or follow us on Twitter @doubleicf.
About Sesame Workshop

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street, the pioneering television show that has been reaching and teaching children since 1969. Today, Sesame Workshop is an innovative force for change, with a mission to help kids everywhere grow smarter, stronger, and kinder. We’re present in more than 150 countries, serving vulnerable children through a wide range of media, formal education, and philanthropically funded social impact programs, each grounded in rigorous research and tailored to the needs and cultures of the communities we serve. For more information, please visit www.sesameworkshop.org.