

**07 November 2023**

## **SHARE THE MAGIC OF BOOKS WITH CHILDREN WHO NEED IT THE MOST, WITH BOOKTRUST'S 2023 CHRISTMAS APPEAL**

- BookTrust aims to deliver 17,000 surprise festive book parcels across the UK.
- 84% of parents that celebrate Christmas and recall being read to as a child\* say this had a positive impact on their life.

BookTrust, the UK's largest children's reading charity is launching its Christmas appeal and is again working to share the magic of books and stories with disadvantaged children and those living in care.

Donating £10 will help create moments of joy and excitement for these children with a surprise festive book parcel. Each thoughtfully curated parcel also includes a bookmark and a poster beautifully illustrated by Fiona Lumbers, and a letter from beloved author and Waterstone's Children's Laureate, Joseph Coelho.

A YouGov survey commissioned by BookTrust found that 84% of parents (with at least one child aged 18 or under) who recalled their experiences of being read to as a child, stated that this started their love of reading, brought them closer to the person reading to them or helped them succeed in school.

BookTrust wants to extend these memorable and potentially life-changing experiences to more children than ever, especially those who may be facing a more difficult Christmas.

The survey also showed that 45% of parents in the UK have cut back on their spending so they can afford to buy gifts for their children this Christmas. Furthermore, 19% are worried they won't be able to afford gifts for their children.

As many families continue to experience financial challenges, this year BookTrust plans to make the season brighter for 17,000 children across England, Wales and Northern Ireland helped by generous book donations from its publisher partners, Hachette UK, Quarto and Simon & Schuster UK.

Children benefit hugely from regular reading, as evidence shows the many positive impacts a regular reading habit has on mental wellbeing and educational outcomes. Research has also shown reading especially benefits children from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping to overcome disparities caused by inequality.

Not just about books, this appeal is also about creating special, shared moments that will stay with these children for a lifetime.

**Diana Gerald, Chief Executive of BookTrust said:**

"The joy of reading is something every child deserves to experience. Our Christmas appeal is a reminder that books are not just stories - they unlock the imagination and are sources of knowledge, connection and fun.

For children who celebrate Christmas it's traditionally such an exciting time, but for a child living in care who may be spending their first holiday in an unfamiliar home, or the child whose parents are under major financial strain – this year may be very different.

We're asking for your support because we want this Christmas to be wonderfully memorable for thousands of children. We want more children than ever to experience the magic of receiving a beautiful surprise gift that's just for them."

**ENDS**

For media enquiries and interviews, please contact - [press@booktrust.org.uk](mailto:press@booktrust.org.uk)

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**About the poll**

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 4401 adults of which 1024 are parents of children aged 18 and under and who celebrate Christmas.

Fieldwork was undertaken between 13th - 16th October 2023. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

\*Those who selected "Don't Know/ can't recall" or "Not applicable – I wasn't read to as a child" were excluded.

**The benefits of reading**

For more detail on research on the benefits of reading [visit the BookTrust website](#).

**About BookTrust**

We are the UK's largest children's reading charity. We get millions of children reading, especially those from low-income families or vulnerable backgrounds. We do this because research shows that children who read regularly are happier and healthier. They form stronger bonds and relationships. They do better at school, are more creative and enjoy more success in life. This is why we work with families, supporting them to start sharing stories and books together from the earliest possible age.

Some of our key activities include:

- BookStart programmes for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers which provides families with books and resources to help foster a love of shared reading from the earliest age.
- Our writer-in-residence programme which gives a platform to some of the best children's writers and illustrators in the country to champion the power of books. Past writers in residence include Michael Rosen, Nick Sharratt, Onjali Q. Raúf and Dapo Adeola.

- Supporting the work of the Children’s Laureate (currently Josph Coelho). Former Laureates include Jacqueline Wilson, Malorie Blackman, Anthony Browne and Quentin Blake.

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

### **BookTrust’s Christmas appeal**

The BookTrust Christmas appeal is again this year raising money to send surprise festive book parcels to disadvantaged children and those in care. The parcels will be distributed through local authorities, local organisations and partnerships. BookTrust will also be distributing parcels via foodbanks and community organisations in England.

Find out more about the BookTrust Christmas appeal – [www.booktrust.org.uk/xmas](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/xmas)