



## **The Retail Leader of Make-Your-Own Stuffed Animals Opens the First Friends 2B Made® store in Columbus**

November 3, 2004

*Guests invited to It's Hip 2 Help™ to make a free doll for Toys for Tots*

ST. LOUIS, MO (November 3, 2004) - Friends 2B Made®, the newest retail concept from Build-A-Bear Workshop®, the award winning retailer of interactive shopping experiences, is opening its first store in Columbus, OH at Easton Town Center on Friday, November 19. The new Friends 2B Made store is the second store to open with completely unique Friends 2B Made products, décor and experience.

Friends 2B Made invites Guests to come participate in the grand opening at Easton Town Center on November 19. At 9:50 a.m., prior to the ribbon cutting ceremony at 10 a.m, Play, a group of four fabulous girls creating fresh sounds for today's teens, will perform an acappella for Guests. In addition, Play will be performing at Santa's Village at Easton Town Center at 4:30 p.m. and will then sign autograph photos for Guests from 7 p.m.- 8 p.m. at the Friends 2B Made store.

Friends 2B Made gives Guests the opportunity to make their own fun fashionable friend through an exciting doll-making process, while creating an emotional bond with their new doll throughout the entire experience. The idea for this concept has been in the making for a long time according to Maxine Clark, Founder and Chief Executive Bear of Build-A-Bear Workshop®. As Guests stuff their dolls, participate in the heart ceremony, pick out their new friend's personality traits, fashionable clothes and accessories and create a friendship certificate, they will experience the same level of personalized entertainment they are accustomed to having at Build-A-Bear Workshop stores.

Clark is looking forward to opening the Friends 2B Made® store in Columbus. She notes, "I want to take the best parts of Build-A-Bear Workshop and use these concepts to create a fun place for girls to make their very own doll and best friend. Based on Guest feedback, we believe that the new Friends 2B Made store will be a great extension of our Build-A-Bear Workshop brand."

As part of the grand opening, Friends 2B Made invites Guests to visit the store on Saturday, November 20 to participate in It's Hip 2 Help™ to make a doll for free which will be donated to Toys for Tots. It's Hip 2 Help is a Friends 2B Made initiative that gives back to its communities and makes a difference in the lives of children and families who need it most.

### **About Build-A-Bear Workshop**

Build-A-Bear Workshop is an interactive, entertainment mall-based retailer that invites Guests of all ages to create their own customized stuffed animals through an exciting bear-making process. The first store opened in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1997, and the company now operates over 170 locations in the USA with four stores in Canada. Build-A-Bear Workshop opened its first international store in Sheffield, England in the fall of

2003, added additional international stores in Japan, Korea, Denmark and Australia in 2004 and plans to open its first store in Taiwan in 2005 making it the global leader in the teddy bear business. Based on a survey compiled by Shopping Centers Today, a publication of the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), Build-A-Bear Workshop was one of six retailers chosen and presented with the ICSC "2004 Hot Retailer Award". For more information on the company and its products call (877) 789-BEAR (2327) or visit the company's award-winning web site at [www.buildabear.com](http://www.buildabear.com).

#### About Play

Play is: Anais Lameche, Anna Sundstrand, Rosie Munter, and Janet Leon- four teenage girls, who are creating fresh sounds for today's youth. Though the group is based in Stockholm, the appeal of Play's music is universal. Play is co-managed by Mathew Knowles- the founder of Music World Entertainment/Sanctuary Urban Holding Company, and guiding light behind Play's labelmates in Destiny's Child-and Laila Bagge, the woman who discovered the members of Play in Sweden. Play's newest album, Play Around the Christmas Tree, will release on November 23, 2004.

#### Friends 2B Made®

Friends 2B Made is the newest concept launch from Build-A-Bear Workshop®, the entertainment mall-based retail leader. The new doll brand offers Guests not only the chance to make their very own fashionable friends, but also gives them the opportunity to create a special personality for their very own doll! Throughout this interactive process, Guests establish an emotional bond with their doll while having fun choosing from hip fashions and accessories. With sparkly eyes, manicured toes, super hair and most importantly a friendship to last a lifetime, these dolls are the most wonderful friends a girl could ever wish for! Each complete outfit comes with 2 free charms, one for the doll and one for her best friend, enhancing their collectibility and stylish fun! The brand continues to offer the highest quality merchandise, marketing and customer service that the Build-A-Bear Workshop brand established in 1997. The merchandise is also value priced with dolls at \$12, accessories \$2-\$10 and complete outfits for \$8-\$15. For more information visit [www.friends2Bmade.com](http://www.friends2Bmade.com).