



**Teen phenomenon Cody Simpson invites fans across the USA to help make over 25,000 stuffed animals to donate to U.S. Marine Toys for Tots Foundation during national “Stuffed with Hugs” birthday celebration weekend**

October 17, 2012

ST. LOUIS--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 17, 2012-- As part of the 15<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Build-A-Bear Workshop®, the leader in interactive retail, over 25,000 stuffed animals will be made and donated to children who might not otherwise receive gifts this holiday season. During the special weekend of October 20 – 21, Build-A-Bear Workshop invites the first 100 Guests in all of its U.S. stores to make a stuffed animal for free to donate to the Marine Toys for Tots® Foundation to distribute to kids in need in communities across the country. Stuffed with Hugs® is a core program of Build-A-Bear Workshop in its eleventh year and the weekend event is part of a variety of activities celebrating the company's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday.

“We are a company with heart and Stuffed with Hugs is a way to give children the opportunity to give back. As we celebrate our birthday, we also commemorate 15 years of giving back to important causes around the world,” said Maxine Clark, Build-A-Bear Workshop founder and chief executive bear. “We are especially pleased to partner with Cody Simpson and Toys for Tots for this special Stuffed with Hugs weekend and to provide our Guests with the opportunity to brighten kids’ holidays with teddy bear hugs.”

Participants in Stuffed with Hugs weekend will be able to meet Build-A-Bear Workshop mascot, Bearemy®, and enjoy a variety of 15<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration activities. As a thank you for helping, Stuffed with Hugs participants will receive a bounce back coupon for a future visit.

“Every child deserves to celebrate the holidays,” said Cody Simpson, who is kicking off the Stuffed with Hugs weekend by making stuffed animals with Marine families in New York City at the Build-A-Bear Workshop store on Fifth Avenue. “As a longtime Build-A-Bear Workshop fan, it is an honor to support this opportunity to encourage kids to help other kids and send a message of comfort and hope through a hug of a teddy bear.”

The need to brighten a child’s holiday is greater than ever this year, according to retired Marine Corps General, Pete Osman, chief executive officer of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation. A recent U.S. Census Bureau report cited statistics that reveal that more than one in five children under 18 years old (or 16.1 million children) live in poverty. The report also showed a yearly decline in median household income.

“With the generous support of Build-A-Bear Workshop, we will be able to fulfill the holiday dreams of thousands of less fortunate children,” said Osman.

Stuffed with Hugs will take place during regular store hours and U.S. Marines may be on hand to collect the stuffed animals. To learn more about Stuffed with Hugs weekend activities or to find a store in your area, visit [buildabear.com](http://buildabear.com)®.

Build-A-Bear Workshop and its associates believe in the teddy bear philosophy of being good people and good bears. Throughout its 15-year history, the company has shared the hug of a teddy bear wherever needed in local communities and abroad. Build-A-Bear Workshop has given Guests a voice in supporting the

causes that are important to them like children's health and wellness, animals, and literacy, and has given nearly \$31 million through its corporate donations and foundation grant programs to these causes.

#### About Toys for Tots

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is a not-for-profit organization authorized by the U.S. Marine Corps and the Department of Defense to provide fundraising and other necessary support for the annual U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. Now in its 65<sup>th</sup> year, Toys for Tots provides joy and a message of hope to less fortunate children through the gift of a new toy or book during the Christmas holiday season.

#### About Cody Simpson

With over 3.4 million Twitter followers, over 3.3 million Facebook likes and more than 144 million YouTube views, 15-year-old pop star Cody Simpson is already a teen phenomenon. Simpson, who is currently on tour supporting Justin Bieber on Bieber's "Believe Tour," marked the recent release of his debut album "Paradise" with a pair of sold-out concerts at Los Angeles' Staples Center. 2012 has been a banner year for Cody, having kicked things off with his own sold out "Welcome To Paradise Tour" and being named "Favorite Aussie Superstar" at the 2012 Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards. Simpson was also among the top stars invited to participate in the 134<sup>th</sup> annual White House Easter Egg Roll, and kept busy leading up to the release of "Paradise" by joining Big Time Rush on the massive "Big Time Summer Tour" and releasing a new interactive film, "Finding Cody," via Warner Music Group's original YouTube channel, "The Warner Sound." For additional information, please visit [www.codysimpson.com](http://www.codysimpson.com).

#### About Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.

Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. is the only global company that offers an interactive make-your-own stuffed animal retail-entertainment experience. There are more than 400 Build-A-Bear Workshop stores worldwide, including company-owned stores in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom and Ireland, and franchise stores in Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa, the Middle East, Mexico and South America. Founded in St. Louis in 1997, Build-A-Bear Workshop is the leader in interactive retail. Brands include make-your-own Major League Baseball® mascot in-stadium locations, and Build-A-Dino® stores. Build-A-Bear Workshop extends its in-store interactive experience online with its award winning virtual world website at [bearville.com](http://bearville.com)™. The company was named to the FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list for the fourth year in a row in 2012. Build-A-Bear Workshop (NYSE: BBW) posted total revenue of \$394.4 million in fiscal 2011. For more information, call 888.560.BEAR (2327) or visit the company's award-winning website at [buildabear.com](http://buildabear.com)®.

#### **TRADEMARKS**

We would like to thank you for your interest in covering our business. As you write your story, we would ask that you use our full name: Build-A-Bear Workshop® and that when referencing the process of making stuffed animals you use the word "make" not "build."

Build-A-Bear Workshop is our well-known trade name and our registered trademark of Build-A-Bear Retail Management, Inc. Build-A-Bear Workshop® should only be used in capital letters to refer to our products and services and should not be used as a verb.

Source: Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.

**Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.**

Jill Saunders, 314-423-8000, ext. 5293

Cell: 314-422-4523

[jills@buildabear.com](mailto:jills@buildabear.com)

or

Shannon Lammert, 314-423-8000, ext. 5379

Cell: 314-556-8841

[shannonl@buildabear.com](mailto:shannonl@buildabear.com)